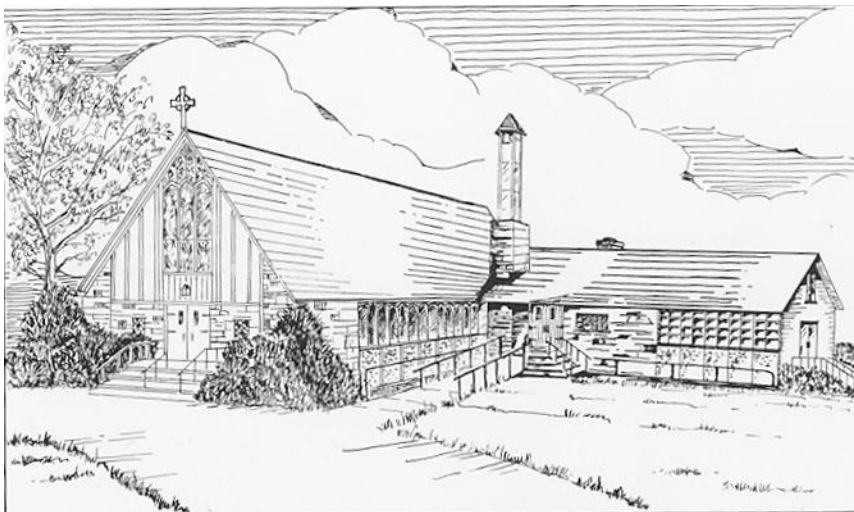


2022 ANNUAL REPORT

PRESENTED TO THE PARISH AT
ANNUAL MEETING
SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 2023



Grace Episcopal Church
150 Chapel Street - Norwood, Massachusetts 02062

WARRANT

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Know all persons by these present
that the Annual Meeting of
GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
NORWOOD, MASSACHUSETTS
will be held on
Sunday, January 29, 2023

The purpose of the meeting shall be to receive the Reports of the Officers and Organizations of the Parish; to elect Officers and Delegates for the terms specified for their offices as stated in the By-Laws of the Parish; and to conduct such other business as may lawfully come before this meeting. All baptized persons, sixteen (16) years of age or older, who acknowledge in writing the authority of the By-Laws of the Parish and who declares his or her intention to aid in maintaining public worship therein by regular attendance at such worship and who are contributors of record, are entitled to voice and vote.

Katherine Wharton
Senior Warden

David Button
Junior Warden

AGENDA FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Sunday, January 29, 2023

1. Opening Prayers
2. Welcome Words
3. Reading of the Warrant
4. Certification of a Quorum by Clerk of the Vestry
5. Review of Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting
6. Wardens' Report
7. Treasurer's Report for 2022
8. Presentation of Budget for 2023
9. Commissions and Organizations Reports
10. Report of the Nominating Committee
11. Election of Officers and Vestry Members
12. Thanks, Benediction and Adjournment

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MINUTES OF THE 2021 ANNUAL MEETING

Held February 6, 2022

(Approval to be voted on at the Annual Meeting January 29, 2023)

Father John opened the meeting at 10:53 am with a Prayer.

Welcoming Words: Father John welcomed all in attendance, including those present and masked in the physically distant church pews and those on Zoom. This meeting originally scheduled for January 30, 2022 was postponed until today due to heavy snow fall.

Reading of the Warrant by Cathy Noble

Certification of a quorum by Cathy Noble included 24 attending in church and on zoom. Total over 18 for a Quorum.

Approval of today's Meeting Agenda: Approved by all 24 in attendance.

Review of the Minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting: A motion to approve the minutes as written was made by Phil Swain, 2nd Jon Grant. Unanimously Passed.

Rector's Report: Was read by Father John at the 9:30am zoom service on January 30, 2021.

Wardens's Report: David Button, Junior Warden read his report. He highlighted the many items in the church and rectory needing repaired in 2021. The largest project undertaken was to put new flooring tiles in Russel Hall, part of downstairs hallway, classrooms, the Food Pantry area, the secretary's office and the Sacristy. As Junior Warden, Dave would like to thank others, especially the Senior Warden and the Rector, for assisting him in all accomplishments.

Treasurer's report-Beth Gurney related that she was only part of a team to facilitate the many aspects of the 2021 Budget. She highlighted that fund raising was \$2,200 over budget. Several groups that utilize the church continued to pay despite being unable to meet here due to the pandemic. The Diocesan assessment was reduced. Some of the interest was utilized from the

Diocesan Trust Fund instead of it being put back into the fund. We continue to be in good financial standing. A motion was made by Debra Morton, 2nd Michael Regner to accept the report as presented.

Passed Unanimously

2022 projected Budget was noted in forms handed out. With no questions, discussion, a motion was made by Michael Regner 2nd Jon Grant to accept the 2022 Budget as presented. Passed unanimously.

Commissions and Organization Reports-A motion was made by Debra Terry, 2nd Karen Stanley to accept all reports as presented as one unit. Passed unanimously

Report of Nominating Committee-Jon Grant accepted the nomination for Deanery representative from the floor. There were no further nominations from the floor for Junior Warden nor assistant Treasurer.

Election of Officers and Vestry Members- A motion was made by Michael Regner, 2nd Karen Stanley to accept the nominations of Dave Button, Junior Warden, Carolyn Escher, Assistant Treasurer, and Jon Grant as Deanery Delegate each for 2 year terms. Passed unanimously.

Discussion-Father John- This Wednesday will begin our Lenten Study on zoom. Season 2 of "The Chosen", with our church, Sarah's church, and all interested. Discussion to follow. Sue Cannon Scholarship Fund 50:50 won by Maggie Rosen, a friend of Deb Morton's. Margie's wish was for her winnings be added to the scholarship fund.

Adjournment- A motion was made by John Stanley, 2nd Karen Stanley to adjourn the meeting at 11:15 am. Unanimously accepted.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Noble
Vestry Clerk

SUMMARY OF 2022 VESTRY MEETING MINUTES

January

- Overall budget for 2021 ended up about \$23,000, thanks to over paid pledges and fund raising > \$2,000.
- Church basement water seepage will be readdressed in the spring when the weather improves. Supporting I beam to be replaced in garage due to potential failure.
- Total pledges for 2022 \$78,900, up \$9000 from 2021, tree sale total \$12,446.
- Planning for a possible shorter outside Sunday school in spring or summer, due to continued Covid concerns.
- Annual meeting will be hybrid, in person and zoom.

February

- New alarm system will go live March 1st. Garage repair completed, repaint in the spring. One of church boilers reading error code. Repair person to come in.
- Souper Bowl of caring collected \$318.

March

- Coffee hour has restarted.
- New alarm launched March 1, going well so far.
- Discussion about replacing at least one boiler due to safety purposes. Money available from endowment funds interest.
- New Covid guidelines from the Diocese as of March 7. Last 6 church pews will now be social distancing. Masks encouraged in rest of the pews. Wine at communion will now be allowed if people bring their own cup. Prayer books and hymnals may now be used.
- **Addendums: 3 on line meetings**
3 estimates reviewed to replace our 2 boilers. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to hire CLEVO to replace current boilers for \$34,970. Motion made, seconded, and passed for the investment committee provide funds from the Covenant Endowment Fund.

April

- Tracey Johnson has been live streaming services, but cannot continue on a regular basis, needs others to continue it.
- Sue Breen continues to collect for Ukrainian Relief, \$3,500 so far. Will continue to collect At grocery stores until Easter. Souper Bowl Sunday for the last 2 years has totaled \$618.
- New boilers are in and working. Water seepage into food pantry area, 2 bids to correct so far.
- Vestry Retreat, April 30, 10-2 PM. will take the place of the May Vestry meeting. Secretary position has been offered to someone to take over after Patty retires.
- Paula King leaving as Organist/Music director, moving, and taking another position. Search committee, Father John, Katherine, Cathy and 2 members of the congregation

Vestry Retreat, April 30, and May meeting

- Discussed possibly excavating the church foundation near the front steps to prevent water leakage into food pantry area. Dave to request quotes. Replacement of door sweeps in the church to keep mice out.
- Beth will explore taking on a new role in Christian Education with summer schedule for short Bible reading and craft session during the service.
- Need to record church service live every Sunday, Tracey to document all procedures for others to broadcast service.

June

- Wages for secretary up due to paying Heather and Patty during training for a month.
- Servant Keeper plus, Heather Belden (new secretary) reviewed pros and cons of Servant Keeper as well as other similar programs. She will get back to us about another program that is less expensive and fits our church better. She also mentioned Constant Contact, a better way of reaching parishioners via email. Motion made, seconded, and passed to get Constant Contact at a cost of \$83/year.
- Had 2 great celebrations in May, Patty Begin's retirement and Paula King, choir director relocating.
- Excavation of the outside wall where water seeping into the basement may not correct the problem for long. Dave to look into a French drain instead.
- Summertime Children's Program available as of June 5, for any children in attendance.
- 150th Norwood Anniversary, September 24, churches around Veteran's park, will have an open house from 1-3 PM
- More church pews will be available without distancing and optional masking except for the last 6 pews by the clock.

Addendums:

6/20/2022, after an on line motion made, seconded, and passed, Michelle French to be our new organist starting in September.

6/30/2022, after an on line motion was made, seconded, and passed to recommend we purchase "Faith Team" for the church office and financial software.

No Vestry Meeting in July

August

- Stewardship, John to consider dates to kick off stewardship campaign
- Norwood Day September 10th. Grace church will be there.
- Faith Teams software, Heather evaluated and installed as our new database, found to be very easy.
- Still looking for people to live stream 10 am services.
- Waterproofing foundation on hold trying to divert downspout water to another area and thus prevent water seepage in the food pantry area.

September

- Carolyn, Assistant Treasurer, is transitioning off the position at the end of the year
- John Stanley and Deb Morton working on Stewardship kick off.
- Summer children's gathering during services had occasional children attending.
- Norwood 150 Anniversary Saturday open house September 24.

- Michele French resigned as our organist, reposting the position this week. Will have subs in the meantime.
- Need to think of Vestry positions to be filled.

October

- New boilers completely functional
- Stewardship mailings will be out October 20, Father John's stewardship sermon, Sunday October 30, ingathering November 13, Pancake breakfast November 6.
- 5 children are registered for Sunday school. Leslie Grant will sit with Beth for classes.
- Equipment for recording Sunday services has been updated.
- Bombas socks are coming. Personal Care items continue to be collected.
- September 24 open house for Norwood, 150 Anniversary, 4 people visited Grace church.
- Joohwa Park, our summer organist has expressed interest in being our permanent Music Director/Organist. Committee will meet with her on October 11. We were pleased with her organ experience this summer.

Addendum: 10/11/2022- On line motion made, seconded and passed to hire Joohwa Park Choir director/Organist for Grace Church for 10hrs. Per week.

November

- Motion made and passed to increase staff raises to be performance percentage with cost of living percentage added to that.
- After motion, made, seconded, and passed, rectory rent will be increased to \$2,600 per month putting it more in line with rentals in the area.
- After discussion a motion was made, seconded, and passed to purchase a copier and cancel Konico lease at the end of contract in February. Having our own will be cheaper.
- Discussed increases in several areas on the 2023 budget, such as Repairs & maintenance, utilities.
- 27 pledges in so far totaling \$6,739.
- Joohwa will start as our permanent organist on November 15. Her first service will be November 20.

Addendum: 12/8/2022, An on line motion, was made, seconded, and passed to accept the \$1,000 quote from Pioneer Basement and provide a \$300 down payment to alleviate the Water seepage in the basement where the food pantry is.

December

- Current Pledges \$70,019, about \$9,000 less than hoped for. Leaving us \$15,608 in the red. Motion made, seconded, and passed to approve the 2023 budget.
- 33 total pledges returned for 2023 totaling as above. Christmas tree sale \$13,482.80. About \$1,000 more than last year.
- Housing authority approved new 12 month lease, as well as a 6 month lease. With a 6 month lease the rectory would be available if needed for a new rector.

RECTOR'S ANNUAL MESSAGE

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of our hearts, be right and acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and redeemer. Amen

Annual Report Sermon, 4th Sunday after Epiphany

January 29, 2023

God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong... Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 1: 27, 31

For me, this is how many events in our parish life turned out in 2022, a year of tentatively emerging out of our country's COVID isolation, fears, and suspicion.

It was that traditional *Grace-Church-November-Saturday-before-Thanksgiving* when our Christmas trees arrive on a big truck from Antigonish, Nova Scotia, and all have to be unloaded and strategically placed by size and price around the corral on the front lawn.

For many years the truck came equipped with fantastically muscled helpers to unload the trees, but, over the last four or five years, we have to do ALL the unloading. ourselves

We have tried everything imaginable to make it easy to do the unloading, and sometimes we are successful. We had phone trees and text message trees; we recruited high school teams, and we tried to carefully track the truck much like NORAD tracks Santa and his sleigh on Christmas Eve.

This year we prepared in all the all-possible ways, but, since this was 2022, none of our strategies, of course, worked.

The truck arrived early, all our connections to helpers fell flat, and no compliment of hulking high school athletic teams arrived to unload and place the trees.

Yes, there was Eric Bedard like *Man Mountain Dean* (go ahead and look it up on Wikipedia) shoveling them off the truck, and Chris Jordan like Hercules not only dragging them to their appointed locations, but placing them perfectly for size and price, and, most importantly, doing so for hours.

Once Man Mountain Dean and Hercules had finished their toil, two people came unexpectedly—they had missed all the internet chatter and text messaging—Michael Regner and Matthew Wellins one of Michael's friends arrived towards the end.

They got right to work cutting off the strings mummifying many of the trees (mind you they also successfully cut off some of the color price tags also on the bottoms).

But they worked hard for a long time, helped, and went back home loaded up with a box of donuts.

To me, that's been the lesson of 2022 in this COVID era when our Sunday attendance has gone way down, and our usual volunteers have been unavailable, sick, moved, or have even died. And yet, with weakened abilities, our parish has been Graced by God to shoulder our duties of

- celebrating the Eucharist together in-person each Sunday—this year unlike last, we were able to do this each Sunday;
- teaching our children in Sunday School—this year Beth Gurney has had to be guerrilla-Sunday School teacher as the children present have been unpredictable, and yet she still tried and has succeeded to gather classes;
- gathering a small Confirmation class in the Spring who were most faithful, though we all missed the usual overnight Diocesan camp experience;
- singing our hymns when for many Sundays the choir consisted only of Michael Regner and Cathy Noble;
- losing our long-term choir mistress and even longer-term parish secretary only to be blessed with a new choir mistress, Joo-wha Park, and an amazing new parish secretary in the person of Heather Belden;
- having fewer people to sell our Christmas trees, we cut back on days and hours, and yet sold out quicker than ever and generated a profit higher than ever;
- saying our good-byes to Phil Swain, Roberta McCormack, and Jim Beardsley among others, but we also said hellos to two new Christians, Henry Peter Loescher, and Sawyer Jacqueline Taken;
- eating together at our Young at Heart luncheons even when Patty our former parish secretary appeared out of the blue with lovely soups;
- delivering socks and personal hygiene items to the homeless, even when most of the work fell on Sue B's shoulders;
- preparing outreach such as drive-by ashes on Ash Wednesday or Blue Christmas or our participation in Norwood 150th Anniversary by offering a historical exhibit here in the nave—we were here and ready, though many scared away by COVID did not come this year; and
- celebrating Christmas Eve with a near capacity crowd though many of the familiars were absent—but having the most magnificent choir we've deeply missed for a very long time.

So, each time it looked to us as if our weaknesses were going to undermine our parish's ability to live up to God's goals and tasks, God's grace shown through and showed us the unusual, unpredictable, way to do what we were called to do as a parish in this last year.

I think I would like to make Michael Regner, Grace Church Man of the Year, in how he exemplified in so many ways, the best things about our parish—our joy in using our talents whatever they are; our persistence in showing up at events and preparing them well even if few attend; and our creative flexibility in doing the work God has given us to do.

Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.

Amen

Fr. John

SENIOR WARDEN'S MESSAGE

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of our hearts, be right and acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock, and redeemer.

Matthew 4:12-23

We must step out of our comfort zone and place ourselves in a position that puts us beyond what we know and understand with our minds...and into a place where we must trust God for a miracle.

Most of us are familiar with the parable of Jesus calling out to Andrew and Simon Peter to “come be fishers of men”. Like many of the readings in the bible there is much going on in the background that enriches the story. When I studied the bible in the EfM course a few years ago, one of my takeaways was there was a lot of things going on at the time that I was not aware of. And while I hear the gospel every week, I didn't always understand how the story fit in chronologically. When writing this sermon, the first thing I did was try to learn what was going on at the time this story took place.

Right before this story starts Jesus heard that John (the Baptist) had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea. From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” So that is what was happening before gathering his disciples.

In the rural fishing villages, the synagogue was the center of the village, the social and religious center. All the young male children ages 6-10 were educated on the Torah, they learned to memorize the first 5 books of the Old Testament. The very smart (exceptional) children were INVITED to continue with their education for the ages from 10-14 and they learned the rest of the Old Testament. The best of the best children would approach the Rabbi to ask to become a disciple of the TALMUD (The Talmud is the link between the Torah and Jewish practices and beliefs). The Rabbi would respond “come follow me” into this program. It was one of the highest honors for the children and their parents to be asked to follow the Rabbi.

Andrew, Simon Peter, James and John, all professional fishermen, had spent the night fishing with dragnets. Their manner of fishing was using nets, and, 2 apparently, they were kind of circular nets with weights that they would throw out into the Sea of Galilee. And the weights would sink down and someone would dive down and tie them off at the bottom, and then they'd pull up the nets. It was backbreaking work, casting and drawing in a 100-foot net over and over again. It was hard work that only strong men could perform. It's what they did, all the time. On this night the group had sweated through the night.

At dawn they beached their boats, ate breakfast, and under the warming sun engaged in the tedious and necessary process of washing, mending, and arranging their nets for drying. Once dry, the nets would be folded and placed back in the boats for the coming night.

On this day, the monotony was broken by the presence of a large crowd pressing around Jesus. Jesus, as you may recall, is out in a boat preaching to his followers on the shore.

When Jesus went looking for disciples, it is interesting to note he avoided the large cities and went toward his home – near the sea of Galilee. “He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea” . He went to rural fishing villages looking for ordinary average, unschooled young men. So, if they were not the scholars of the Talmud what did these 4 young men (ages 16-20) have that was so significant?

Simon, Andrew, John and James were all from good families with caring parents. They all worked together. James and John, sons of Zebedee were all together mending the nets. They were part of a close-knit family demonstrated by successfully working together. They followed and obeyed the teachings of their parents and maintained brotherly love. Fishermen are active- hard working - not easily discouraged at results. All-important characteristics for future disciples.

Jesus is walking along the Sea of Galilee when he calls out to the brothers, Simon, and Andrew, and he says, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other young men, James, and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee (Zebedee had a very large fishing enterprise with many boats and men) , mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their 3 father and followed him. Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people. I will show you how to fish for people and they left their boats and nets and followed Jesus.

This is a recognizable story, Jesus calling out to his disciples to follow him. And follow him they did, Simon, Andrew, James, and John, left their nets, their home, their families, everything familiar and followed Jesus.

As Christian we are faithful witness to our Lord, Jesus Christ. There is, I believe, hidden away in the heart of every believer, a desire to make disciples — to see other people come into the kingdom of God. Yet we often shrink back from sharing our faith, and the Gospel message because we feel uncomfortable. We wish we could fish for men and women, but we really don’t know how. Some even wonder if being fishers of men and women is any of our responsibility. After all, that’s what we “hire” preachers and church staff to do. But

Jesus makes it clear, that anyone and everyone who follows him, ought to be fishers of men and women. It is not “just the rector’s task” it is the church’s task, and we by the grace of God, are part of the church.

When we decide to follow Jesus, we are deciding to believe beyond belief. We believe Beyond our experience. We believe Beyond our knowledge. We believe Beyond our expertise. His teachings do not always make sense to us. We can never take the position to decide that what Jesus demands of us is too much, ineffective, of no use. After all isn’t that what prayer is for?

Imagine what it would take for you “to come follow me.” Depends on who is asking right?

When I read this parable, I imagine what it would be like to “drop everything and follow”. I tried to imagine situations in the 21st century –

Have you ever just laid down your nets and followed or perhaps had a dream or a cause that called out to you to follow? Something in your life that requires a giant leap of faith. When I think of a giant leap of faith, I think of falling in love, meeting your soul mate, choosing your life’s calling, or supporting a cause, maybe taking a new job, moving to another state or 4 maybe even leaving your country. Taking a chance when you don’t know the outcome requires a “leap of faith”.

When I imagine what it must be like to leave your everything you know, your family and your job – the closest is when I left home for college. I left my home, my friends, my family, my state. When my mother drove away and left me on the sidewalk on the campus in NH my stomach was on the ground. I had faith that it would all work out. And it did.

Faith also can have a big impact when someone has faith in you. Like when Jesus had faith in Simon, Andrew, John, and James. What happens when someone puts their faith in you? Think of the people that have had faith in you, encouraged to you to reach your dreams, or just try something new. Consider all the people in your life who have encouraged you to stretch out beyond your reach. A teacher, a family member, (parents, grandparents) a friend, a boss, a rector, a fellow parishioner; all can give you faith in your ability to try something new or different. Everyone here can be one of those people supporting each other to reach out and give encouragement. You could even be the person who is reaching out and gathering others to support you.

But what does it take to be the person following, encouraging, and helping others follow their passion. Sometimes Just Ask the question. The people of Grace church fished for me when I first attended services .

Father John approached me and asked and eventually I said yes to being a reader. Deb Morton hooked me into joining the Vestry and fisherman Nancy Fleming asked me to be an usher. Do you remember who first fished or welcomed you into Grace Church? We all have our stories. Bob Parsons and John Stanley were the first people I met as we joined Grace in December and guess what we were doing that December – selling Christmas trees and getting to meet others from Grace Church. Grace Church has a good record of fishing for men and women that arrive at our door. We hear from new members that the parishioners of Grace Church were so welcoming. And we need to keep doing it.

You can reach out to those who have not made their way back. Who would not enjoy hearing from a friend and being told I miss you at church – when are you coming to church? We have a busy coffee hour, we have beautiful 5 music, excellent readers, a dedicated Vestry, new clever office administrator, exciting Lenten Programs, Luncheons, and even more things to come.

Most of us if not all of us have taken a leap of Faith. What I speak about now is having Faith in Grace Church, faith in our fellow parishioner's, faith in our time and talent. Faith that all will be well in 2023 at Grace Church.

Consult not your fears, but your hopes and your dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern not yourself with what you tried and failed in, but what it is still possible to do. Now is the time to put aside past and present setbacks and failures and look with confidence to the new day called tomorrow.

This is my last week as Senior Warden. It has been an honor to have filled this role for the last 3 years. It was only after long and thoughtful prayers that I decided to resign. When I agreed to take this position in the fall of 2019 the world and my life were much different than they are now. Covid was a challenge for all of us, but Grace Church adapted to the requirements of the day, having Zoom and Facebook services, and for being one of the first Episcopal churches opening for in person services in June 2021. The building has been improved and the long-term staff has changed but is as dedicated as our previous staff was.

As for me, my life has taken some unexpected turns and I am adapting to it as best I can. Regrettably, one of the adjustments as I transition into my new reality requires time and energy that keeps me from continuing as the senior warden. I have faith that another will step up and with your support and encouragement keep Grace Church to be a place of fisher of men (and women). We must step out of our comfort zone and place ourselves in a position that puts us beyond what we know and understand with our minds...and into a place where we must trust God for an answer. *AMEN*

Katherine Wharton

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT FOR 2022

Much of the Warden's activities in year 2022 were colored by the COVID-19 virus, though the onset of the viral attack was in year 2021. I think it fair to say that practically everyone in the church had at least one friend or family member that "caught" the virus. Your Junior Warden's daughter was one of those. Mercifully, she had a complete recovery.

With one notable exception the Warden's reportable items were small compared with last year's big reflooring of most of the Undercroft and on the upper floor, which was comprised of the Sacristy and the Secretary's office.

The large project, which really hasn't gotten off the ground is the sealing of the foundation of the Church that is right up against the front steps of the church. After a heavy rain the water seeps into the soil next to the foundation and, after a while, the hydraulic pressure builds up to the point where it forces its way into the small room there. The Food Pantry uses this space for storage of computer equipment and records. As of this writing we are waiting for Pioneer Basement to come and perform the work.

Other projects were smaller in scope. The largest of that group was the replacement of the old burglar alarm system with a modern homeowner-style system. A smaller project was the painting of the new center pillar in the garage. My son-in-law Elvis was able to break off a little chip where the basketball hoop was mounted, and Home Depot used their computerized color matching system to do the rest except the actual painting that was done by yours truly. Another small project was the repair of Circuit 14, which fed power to the outside lighting. We hired electrician Greg Petrucci for the actual work.

Finally, I would like to mention pedal F2 on the organ, which doesn't speak. In a related problem the organ, which usually has its annual voicing in late Fall did not receive that treatment. As should be obvious to the casual reader, the Junior Warden had a fun time last year.

Submitted by,
David Button

ASSISTANT TREASURER REPORT FOR 2022

The Assistant Treasurer's primary duty is to record donations, and to send individual reports to each parishioner at least 3 times a year. Any parishioner is welcome to addition reports simply by asking. No additional report is needed at this time.

Many thanks to Karen Stanley and Leslie Grant for their assistance through the year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carolyn Escher

HOSPITALITY/FELLOWSHIP REPORT

There are six teams of people from Grace Church providing the weekly coffee*, juice and treats for you in the Fowler Room after the 10am service. Father John frequently joins us and the conversations are engaging. Please do come if you haven't already! Our Assistant Warden, Dave Button (who is also called Cookie), usually makes the coffee. The treats vary from cookies to coffee cake, donut holes, and crackers and cheese.

*Hot tea may be offered soon as well.

All will be well!

CAROL

aka Carol T. Johnson

HEALING MINISTRY REPORT

Due to Covid, the Healing Ministry team put a hold on praying one-on-one with people in 2020. This Fall we started up again. We have had to pivot for safety reasons. We now use a cord with a cross on one end and a tassel on the other. The person requesting prayers holds the cross while the Healing Minister holds the tassel. This gives a 2-3 foot distance between us.

There is so much to request prayers for at this time. A sick friend or relative, someone who is struggling after losing a spouse or family member, the people of Ukraine, the divisions in our country. There is power when people pray together. We would like to invite you to pray with us when we offer this once a month during church services.

We hope to pray with more of you.

Submitted by Deb Morton,
on behalf of Your Healing Ministry Team

MUSIC AND CHOIR REPORT

November 15, 2022 was my first official date as music director/organist at Grace Episcopal Church. At that time, there were two choir members, Michael Regner and Cathy Noble. While we were preparing the Christmas Eve service, Brent Mathews and Elizabeth Wilson joined the choir as a bass and an alto which made 4-part harmony possible.

For Christmas Eve service, we had a nice voice ensemble with six singers, Cathy Noble, Charlotte Mathews, Elizabeth Wilson, Jamie Kweon, Michael Regner, Brent Mathews and Joshua Kweon. For the offertory, we sang "Oh Holy Night" and Michael and Charlotte sang solos for the beginning of each verse and Jamie did a violin solo in the middle. We had a one-time Wednesday rehearsal for the Christmas Eve service and it was a wonderful music making opportunity with young talented musicians.

The COVID-19 situation is now better than before. Mask wearing is optional, and no distancing is required between singers. We hope this remains the case as we continue making music this year. Looking toward the future, I would like to focus on choir recruitment, which will lead the congregation to worship through music.

Submitted by
Joo-hwa Park, Music Directress

OUTREACH REPORT

January

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY COLLECTION. \$318 collected and presented
To the Norwood Ecumenical Food Pantry

April

COLLECTION FOR UKRAINE. \$3663.57 Collected from parishioners
And the greater Norwood community and sent to The Episcopal
Relief and Development Fund

May/June

MOTHER/FATHER'S DAY. Plants given out to honor mothers, fathers
And guardians of children and fur babies

October

2000 PAIRS OF BOMBAS SOCKS obtained from a grant were received
And distributed to women's, children's and men's shelters in the
Greater Boston area and to The Norwood Ecumenical Food Pantry

November

PERSONAL CARE ITEMS DRIVE; 12 bags of items were collected and given to
Hope and Comfort, to help people in need.

Submitted by

Sue Breen, Outreach Chair

PARISH HISTORY 2022

Covid 19 has proven to be a stubborn virus and we continue to feel its effects. Protocols in the church were loosened early in the year – masks are optional and only one area at the back of the church is now set up for those who prefer social distancing from others. Communion is offered at the base of the sanctuary steps, in-person healing prayers have resumed with a few changes, vestry continues to meet via Zoom, and coffee hour is held in the Fowler Room. We continue to adjust and remain vigilant to keep ourselves and loved ones safe and healthy. Although with vaccines and boosters we may feel more comfortable being with others, some parishioners in the congregation pre-covid have not yet returned to Grace services. And sadly, we lost several cherished long-time members this past year. They all are missed.

Many annual events have not yet returned – such as the annual church picnic, NPS sculpture art show in the sunken garden and book club. But the Young at Heart Luncheons are still held. Christmas tree sales were a success and raised a record amount but there was no Cookie Walk or Christmas Shoppe in 2022. Some of these special events have suffered from a lack of leadership – help/assistance is always welcome! The annual plant sale continues to be a staple in the Norwood community and the church grounds beautifully maintained by John Stanley, Helen Rintala and others.

We participated in B-SAFE for the last time in 2022. With changes in the overall program and the vacancy of Grace's B-SAFE leadership in 2023 a decision was made that 2022 would be our final year of participation. But we ended our involvement in a grand way! We again partnered with Church of the Holy Spirit to provide a fun-filled Friday field trip at the Showcase Cinemas at Patriots Place and then pizza, sundaes, games and fun under the sprinklers at Grace in the afternoon. Our Outreach Coordinator Sue Breen led a very successful collection for humanitarian aid to Ukraine. Sue collected donations through appeals to the congregation and Norwood community and raised more than \$3500 that was donated to Episcopal Relief and Development for humanitarian relief in the war-torn country.

“YFCS” Patty Begin, our long-time church secretary, retired in May and a retirement party was celebrated to commemorate her many years of faithful service. We also lost our Music Director Paula King when she and her family moved to the Cape in the fall. We were extremely fortunate to welcome Heather Belden as our new parish secretary and Joohwa Park as our Music Director who are both wonderful new additions to our church family!

This will be my last year as your parish historian and serving on the board of the diocesan Parish Historians Society. It's been a pleasure researching Grace's history over the years and I'm going to miss finding new clues of how we started and became the wonderful church family that is Grace Church, Norwood!

Respectfully submitted,
Deborah Terry
Parish Historian

PUBLICITY REPORT

In 2023, we had 2,227 website sessions, up 11% from the previous year; 1659 unique visitors, up 12% from the previous year (1,596 which is 97% of visitors were new). The average time a viewer stayed on the site was 3m 53s. 52% of the views were Mobile while 43% were from Desktop and 4% were from a tablet. The majority of traffic sources were from Google at 1,230, next was direct entry of our site address, with Facebook, Bing and Yahoo providing some traffic.

Several Facebook and online ads were placed to provide more visibility to Christmas tree sales, Blue Christmas service and Lent and Easter services. In addition, the Facebook page featured several pictures submitted during Holy week, B-Safe, blessing of the animals and also Christmas.

Many cross posts were placed on the Patch and Facebook Community pages. This year, the Nov 22 post announcing the Christmas Trees had arrived was boosted (paid ads). This post reached 1,736 more Accounts Center accounts than the median post of 96 on Facebook. This post also received 144% more reactions (22 reactions) than the median post (9 reactions) on Facebook. Our Social media followers increased. The Facebook page now has 179 followers and Instagram has 59 followers.

Our best posts were around the Christmas tree sales, with above average interactions from the public with questions and comments.

There was a paid newspaper ad for Christmas week and Holy week, to make sure we maintained visibility in the local community.

Submitted by,
Tracey Johnson

SAINT FAITH'S ALTAR GUILD

Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does. Ephesians 6:7

St. Faith's Altar Guild continues its faithful and devoted service preparing the altar for worship. The services returned to a new "normal" in 2022 although only bread is offered to all and wine to those who bring their own cup from home. To minimize the risk of Covid spread, Communion is offered at the bottom of the sanctuary steps and not at the altar railing.

Altar guild is usually a behind-the-scenes ministry and when done properly no one knows we are there. However, during the Maundy Thursday Service, members perform the Stripping of the Altar Ceremony which reminds us of the coming sacrifice of Christ on Good Friday. The Altar is stripped bare of all its adornments and the sanctuary candle is extinguished. Grace hosted the Easter Vigil service in 2022, celebrated jointly with Emmanuel Lutheran, and the celebration of Jesus's resurrection. An Ash Wednesday drive-through provided individual packets of ashes and a prayer to those who wanted to administer the ashes to themselves or to family members and a Palm Sunday drive-through for palms were once again offered to the Norwood community.

St. Faith's continues to be very small in number, and we seek new members to serve on this quiet but rewarding ministry. Training is provided and new members are mentored by experienced members until they feel comfortable performing the weekly duties on their own. In 2023, one of our long-time members will be moving out of state so it is essential to welcome new members to the ministry.

Flower offerings were still suspended in 2022 although fresh flowers were provided for several special occasions. The sanctuary candle continues to always be lit. A sign-up list to offer the weekly sanctuary candle is located on the bulletin board outside the rector's office. Suggested donation is \$6.

St. Faith's looks forward to fully serve the parish and to have the ability to adorn the altar each week and prepare for Holy Communion services in 2023.

Respectfully submitted,
Deborah Terry

STEWARDSHIP 2023

The 2023 Grace Church Stewardship campaign has concluded with a total of **35 pledging units and a dollar total of \$70,359**. Compared to 2022, this is a **decrease** of 2 pledgers and \$8,517.

The breakdown of the pledges are as follows:

- 3 pledges of \$5,000 and more
- 5 pledges of \$2,500 - \$4,999
- 3 pledges of \$2,000 - \$2,499
- 3 pledges of \$1,500 - \$1,999
- 10 pledges of \$1,000 - \$1,499
- 11 pledges of under \$1,000

The mean average dollar donation amount is \$2,010 and the median average is \$1,300.

The reduction in pledge dollar amounts was primarily due to the passing of 2 long time church members and a few pledgers that had to reduce/eliminate due to retirement and other personal financial reasons. We received 1 new pledge this year.

Thanks to Deb Morton for her ongoing work on the committee and, with the rest of the parish, we miss the presence of long time committee member Phil Swain.

A big thanks to all who have very generously contributed this year!

Respectfully submitted,

John Stanley

SUNDAY SCHOOL REPORT

In 2022, we were excited for the return of our Children's Programs!

We started with a brand new Summer program called *Bible Stories & Crafts for Kids: A Summertime Drop-In Program*.

This program began with the first one service of the year in June and ran thru the end of August. The kids heard a story from the Children's Bible that corresponded to the Gospel being heard by the adults, and then worked on a craft.

We had a great time and plan to offer the program again in the Summer of 2023.

In September, we re-opened the *Sunday School!*

Lessons are held every Sunday during the 10am service. Sunday School is a drop-in program, much like the Summer program. We run the *Godly Play* program:

Godly Play is a unique way to present Bible stories in a very simple, natural form with no bells or whistles that allows the child to find their own meaning.

We start our sessions by gathering in the Russel Hall with a reading from the Children's Bible that corresponds to the Gospel being heard by the adults. We then move into the Sunday School room for our lesson. After, we work on a craft, or revisit the lesson or a previous lesson the children have heard. We rejoin the congregation before Eucharist.

You are welcome to join us anytime!

Submitted by,

Elizabeth Gurney

WORSHIP REPORT

This past year, we continued with in-person services, with segregation in the back pews for people concerned about safety and social distancing. We also encouraged people to bring their own cups to share in the communal wine, as opposed to drinking from the common cup. This past spring and early summer we had a few outdoor services in the Sunken Garden, and Pentecost in front of the church. We also celebrated the traditional holidays, celebrations and feasts including the Blessing of the Animals and the last year of BSafe.

This past year for stewardship was brought together by a pancake breakfast, that had a large attendance of families and friends. It was nice to see everyone gathered again in celebration.

Blue Christmas was again put together by a team of parishioners to include special readings, candle lighting, uplifting ornaments and a burning bowl ceremony (where one could write their troubles on a card and release them to the fire). The service was held indoors with a burning bowl fire outside.

Submitted by Tracey Johnson

PAROCHIAL STATISTICS 2022

20__		10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Average Sunday Attendance		76	74	61	63	57	56	57	50	48	45	NA	NA ⁱ	29
Easter Sunday Attendance		213	182	128	160	188	186	202	129	166	124	NA	75 ⁱⁱ	105
Number of Holy Eucharists	Sunday		89	96	93	90	86	92	91	90	89	22	47 ⁱⁱⁱ	82
	Weekday		13	8	14	14	14	8	6	9	8	1	0	3
Communions	Private		16	21	34	33	26	36	16	35	41	6	8	10
Daily Office	Sunday		3	5	8	5	2	7	4	6	4	46	17	1
	Weekday											34	5	0
Daily Devotion Using Non-digital Media	Sunday											37	15	0
Marriages		3	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	0	0	1	1
Burials		3	4	5	8	7	5	6	6	6	5	3	4	6
Baptisms		5	8	7	5	3	8	3	3	5	3	4	0	2
Confirmations & Reception		0	0	0	0	0	4	3	3	5	0	0	0	0
iv														
Church School & Youth Group Enrollment ^v						19	23	25	25	14	12	12	12	6
Active Baptized Members as of 12/31 ^{vi}		247	233	236	239	239	245	248	248	210	215	215	215	180
Communicants in Good Standing ^{vii}		179	181	182	186	186	192	223	223	190	195	195	195	160
Communicants in Good Standing Under 16		23	26	24	27	22	26	25	25	25	25	24	24	24
Households as of 12/31		102	102	102	104	102	105	103	103	95	99	99	99	85

ⁱ From Sunday January 3rd until Sunday June 6th the parish operated (except in unusual circumstances noted next) with a 9 AM Zoomed Morning Prayer with sermon followed by a Free Conference Call Morning Devotion with Sermon at 11.

ⁱ This was one of the first to be held outside in the parking lot to the sunny eastern side. This was followed by a Eucharist 5/9 on the front steps, and 5/23 in the Sunken Garden. Special services included 2/17th Ash Weds in-church noon service followed by two drive-through imposition of ashes. On 4/1 there was an in-church, live-streamed eucharist for Holy Thursday, and on 4/2 for Good Friday, there was a service in the driveway.

ⁱ From in-church return of services on June 6

ⁱ For the next five categories, the numbers have simply been replicated from last year since we have no basis for determining any changes since COVID has prevented in-person services from January until June.

ⁱ A Communicant in Good standing is, according to the canons of the National Church, a baptized member who contributes financially, attends church three or more times per year, and volunteers for a ministry in the parish.

ⁱ An Active Baptized Member is, according to the canons of the National Church, a baptized person who has attended church at least once during the calendar year.

ⁱ A Communicant in Good standing is, according to the canons of the National Church, a baptized member who contributes financially, attends church three or more times per year, and volunteers for a ministry in the parish.

RECTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND REPORT

The Rector's Discretionary Fund is used to help the needy in our community and to help finance non-budgeted items that come along from time to time.

Individual donations are always welcome and are tax deductible.

Opening balance 1/01/22		\$898.39
	Contributions	0
Expenditures	Purchase Food Gift Cards for Walk-in Donations	\$200.00
	Sexton Fee for Russell Hall Event By Outside Group Who Left a Mess	\$100.00
Closing Balance 12/31/22		\$598.39

The Rev. R. John Brockmann

FROM THE PARISH REGISTER (2022)

Baptisms

Henry Peter Loescher

Sawyer Jacqueline Teken

Weddings

Jonathan Thomas Teken & Jacqueline Nichole O'Donnell

Funerals

Richard F. Wenstrom

Gail Vivian Bean

Frederick G. Slade

Phillip Swain

James Beardsley

Roberta McCormack

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee composed of Senior Warden, Katherine Wharton and Rector, Rev. R. John Brockmann put forth the following candidates for election at the annual meeting:

- Leslie Grant is nominated as Assistant Treasurer (two-year term (2023-25), maximum of three successive terms (2023-29))
- Susan Jarrell is nominated as Deanery Delegate (one-year term (2023-24) with a maximum of three successive terms (2023-26))
- Deborah Morton is nominated as Vestry Member for Outreach Portfolio (three-year term (2023-26), maximum of two successive terms (2023-29))

The Committee **has been unable to obtain any prior nominees** for the following and are open to nominees from the floor:

- Vestry Member for Open Portfolio (three-year term (2023-26), maximum of two successive terms (2023-29))
- Senior Warden to replace Katherine Wharton (two-year term (2023-25), maximum of three successive terms (2023-29))

Our Bylaws (January 27, 2013, Article VII) state “In the absence or incapacity of either Warden, or of a vacancy, the powers and duties of the Wardens shall devolve upon the remaining Warden.”
