



ST. MICHAEL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



The Annual Report for 2022

Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 29, 2023



PARISH STAFF

The Reverend Mary D. Lindquist, *Rector*

The Reverend adwoa Wilson, *Assistant Priest*

Jeanie Crosby, *Parish Administrator*

Susan Dedell, *Director of Music*

John Laamanen, *Sexton*

Darlene Rutnik, *Financial Administrator*

The Reverend Jean R. Smith, *Priest Associate*

The Reverend Phillip Wilson, *Priest Associate*

WARDENS & VESTRY

Annie Landenberger, *Senior Warden, class of 2024*

Christine Hart, *Junior Warden, class of 2025*

Nancy Ames, *class of 2023*

Steve Guerriero, *class of 2024*

Alan McBean, *class of 2024*

Rebecca Olmstead, *class of 2023*

Jared Rediske, *class of 2023*

David Treadwell, *class of 2025*

Rosie Wojcik, *class of 2025*

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

✠	<i>Agenda</i>	<i>Page 4</i>
✠	<i>Minutes of 2022 Annual Meeting</i>	<i>Pages 5-8</i>

WORSHIP

✠	<i>Rector's Report</i>	<i>Pages 8 -11</i>
✠	<i>Assistant Priest</i>	<i>Pages 12-13</i>
✠	<i>Altar Guild</i>	<i>Page 14</i>
✠	<i>The Daily Office</i>	<i>Page 14</i>
✠	<i>Contemplative Christianity</i>	<i>Page 15</i>
✠	<i>Sacramental Healing</i>	<i>Page 15</i>
✠	<i>Music Ministry</i>	<i>Pages 15-16</i>

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

✠	<i>Christian Formation Team/ Adult Education</i>	<i>Page 17</i>
✠	<i>Christian Education/ Children & Youth</i>	<i>Page 17</i>
✠	<i>Godly Play</i>	<i>Page 18</i>
✠	<i>Holy Mayhem</i>	<i>Page 18</i>
✠	<i>Confirmation</i>	<i>Page 19</i>

MISSION & MINISTRY

✠	<i>Outreach</i>	<i>Pages 19-20</i>
✠	<i>Pastoral Care</i>	<i>Page 21</i>
✠	<i>Christ Church Guilford</i>	<i>Page 21</i>
✠	<i>Seasonal Overflow Shelter Meals Ministry</i>	<i>Page 21-22</i>
✠	<i>Schroeder Fund</i>	<i>Pages 22</i>
✠	<i>Loaves & Fishes</i>	<i>Pages 22-23</i>
✠	<i>Prison Ministry</i>	<i>Page 23</i>
✠	<i>Tag Sale Ministry</i>	<i>Pages 24</i>
✠	<i>Dobson Refugee Ministry</i>	<i>Pages 24-25</i>
✠	<i>Buildings and Grounds</i>	<i>Pages 25-26</i>
✠	<i>Building Hope for the Earth Capital Campaign</i>	<i>Pages 26-27</i>
✠	<i>Stewardship Team</i>	<i>Pages 27</i>

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

✠	<i>Vestry (from the Senior Warden)</i>	<i>Pages 28-29</i>
✠	<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Page 29-30</i>
✠	<i>Endowment Committee</i>	<i>Pages 30</i>
✠	<i>Technology Ministry</i>	<i>Page 30</i>
✠	<i>Communications Ministry</i>	<i>Pages 30-31</i>
✠	<i>Nominating Committee</i>	<i>Page 31</i>



ST. MICHAEL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

Sunday, January 29, 2023

2 PM on Zoom

AGENDA

Call to Order

Opening Prayer

Verification of Quorum

Appointment of Clerk of the Meeting

Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting

Annual Meeting Slide Show

Reports Received by Title

Report from Rector and Acknowledgements

Report from St. Michael's Interfaith Refugee Ministry

Report from Assistant Priest

Stories from the Field

Report from Treasurer

Report of the Nominating Committee

Candidates for Vestry & for Delegates to Diocesan Convention

Adjournment

St. Michael's Episcopal Church
16 Bradley Ave., Brattleboro, VT 05301
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
Via Zoom Videoconference
January 30, 2022, 2:00 – 3:35 p.m.

1. Call to Order

The Reverend Mary Lindquist called the meeting to order at 2:13 p.m.
As we prepared for an opening hymn, Mary thanked Susan Dedell and the choir.

2. Opening Hymn (“God of Grace and God of Glory”)

3. Verification of Quorum

Adwoa Lewis-Wilson, our seminarian, declared a quorum. 65 members participated (from 55 households). Adwoa oriented attendees to the protocol and tools for participating in the Zoom videoconference.

4. Appointment of Clerk of the Meeting

Carol Beninati was appointed clerk of the Annual Meeting.
MOVED: Ricky Davidson SECOND: Judy Davidson MOTION PASSED

5. Acceptance of Minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting

MINUTES WERE ACCEPTED with the following corrections:
Carolyn Taylor-Olson on Vestry three years, not five. One as Jr. Warden and two as Sr. Warden.
Carol Beninati notes that in item 5, “were attended” should say only “attended”.

MOVED: Ruth Tilghman SECOND: Joyce Vining Morgan MOTION PASSED

6. Annual Meeting Slide Show (12 minutes)

Mary ended with a prayer of thanks for the people in our parish who died this year.

7. Reports Received by Title

The parish approved reception of the reports as printed in the Annual Report.
MOVED: Judy McGee SECOND: Greg Lesch MOTION PASSED

8. Report from Rector and Acknowledgements

Mary said a special thanks to

- Ricky Davidson, our senior warden this year and junior warden for two prior years. She noted his warmth, efficiency, and welcoming nature.
- Nancy Ames who has been a hardworking and passionate junior warden and will be continuing on the vestry in the upcoming year.
- Judy Davidson who has had a hand in many activities in the last year, from buildings and grounds to social justice.
- Outgoing vestry member Christy Fritz for her insight and her involvement with our children and youth.
- Annie Landenberger, who has agreed to be senior warden for 2022.
- Liz Vick who has had a strong role in keeping the tag sale and other ministries going.

- Tom Ely who has preached and presided at key times in the past year, including Christmas.
- Adwoa Lewis-Wilson who will be graduating from seminary in June. It has been transforming to have her as a member of our church. Mary noted that Adwoa started the Becoming Beloved Community initiative.
- Our wonderful staff (Jeanie, Darlene, John).

9. Report from St. Michael's Interfaith Refugee Ministry

The Rev. Jean Smith drew a connection between this effort to welcome Afghan refugees and the struggles of people of the Bible who were in exile. She called it an exercise in “hopeful imagination.” Jean described the collaborative efforts of several area organizations, from the Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC) to the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community. We are now actively involved in circles of support for two families, one which has already begun settling into our community and another arriving on Tuesday, February 1. Jean announced that new members would be welcome on the team. Mary thanked Jeff Lewis and Daniel Dobson who have been “working overtime” on this ministry.

10. Report from Building Hope Project

Alan McBean reported that our church has needed a new roof for around 25 years. Moreover, the slate roof is too heavy for the church's structure. We've put a deposit down with Phoenix Roofing so we can be on the roofer's schedule for this summer. Alan noted some of the details and pricing of the proposed work and the rationale for spending extra money on using copper. (Chiefly, copper lasts a lot longer than steel and is easier to repair). Due to supply chain difficulties in this era of COVID-19, the materials may take longer than expected to be delivered, but we're scheduled for service as soon as materials arrive. Alan noted that shortly the Bradley Wing and Rectory roofs will also need work. The total cost of all roof replacements and repairs is expected to be \$287,000. This includes insulating the sanctuary roof.

Cary Gaunt gave an overview of the solar and energy conservation efforts that we hope will be implemented in conjunction with the roof project. Cary thanked the congregation and vestry for their overwhelming enthusiasm for this project. (The diocese has set a 100% renewable energy goal to be met by 2030.) Cary described efforts such as solar panels (on our property and/or on land elsewhere), insulation, lighting systems, minisplit heating and cooling systems, etc. that can be implemented not only in our church buildings but in our homes. Cary also mentioned an “education and spiritual formation” component. We're hoping to be a visible inspiration and mentor to other organizations trying to be more energy-conscious.

12. Report from Seminary Intern

Mindful that this meeting was running over the planned length, our seminary intern, Adwoa Lewis-Wilson, called our attention to her reports in this Annual Report. Adwoa reflected on the three years she has been part of our parish in Brattleboro. She noted the challenge of studying full-time over the past year while doing a 20-hours-per-week pastoral care internship at St. Michael's. Adwoa thanked Mary for her mentorship and also observed what an outstanding, courageous, and loving leader Mary is. Adwoa also thanked Phillip, Jean, Jeanie, and John. She also thanked her internship committee, Wylene, Chris Hart, Jeff Lewis, and Teresa for walking alongside her in her formation, providing meals to keep her going, and pushing and questioning her. Adwoa noted the congregation's “vocation of calling and sending”, our fostering of seminarians (not only herself but Darcey Mercier and Jeff Hiam currently, as well as Duncan Hilton and others in the recent past).

11. Report from the Becoming Beloved Community Initiative

Regarding the racial reckoning that our parish and the diocese have been doing, particularly around the role of the first Bishop of Vermont, John Henry Hopkins, Adwoa took a few minutes to reflect on Susan Dedell's comment that "when the old is not possible, there can only be a new." Adwoa noted that we are all beloved and we are all broken. She acknowledged the challenge of talking about hard things and spending time on them rather than just trying to get past them quickly. She encouraged us, when she's gone, to continue striving for a beloved community with God's help.

13. Report from Treasurer

Treasurer Bruce Lawrence highlighted:

- 2021 year end income, expenses, and major features
 - Expenses were quite a bit less than we planned on (less snow removal, good fuel price locked in, not using the building as much due to COVID-19 restrictions).
 - Income was more than we had planned on.
 - We ended the year in very good shape.
 - Bruce praised everyone who kept supporting St. Michael's even when they couldn't attend worship and other activities in person.
- Bruce thanked our bookkeeper, Darlene, and Jeanie Crosby for their excellent record-keeping.
- 2022 projected budget
 - Jared Rediske, Doug Switzer, Jeanie, Darlene, and Bruce put together a budget that projects income of \$368,000 and expenses of \$360,000.

14. Report of the Nominating Committee on Candidates for Vestry and for Delegates to Diocesan Convention

- Ricky Davidson, on behalf of the Nominating Committee whose other members were Judy Davidson and Christy Fritz, presented the three Vestry candidates to serve three-year terms:
 - Christine Hart
 - Rosie Wojcik
 - David Treadwell
 Mary asked whether there were further nominations. There were not.

Motion to approve slate of new Vestry members:

MOVED: Ruth Tilghman SECOND: Margery McCrum MOTION PASSED

- Delegates to Diocesan Convention (presented by the Rev. Mary Lindquist):
 - Valerie Abrahamsen
 - Carol Hesselbach
 - Senior Warden Annie Landenberger
 - Alternates Liz Vick and Craig Hammond

Motion to approve Diocesan Convention delegates:

MOVED: Judy McGhee SECOND: Joyce Vining Morgan MOTION APPROVED

15. Closing Prayer (Mary)

16. Adjournment:

MOVED: Ruth Tilghman SECOND: Brian Morgan APPROVED

The annual meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Beninati
 Clerk of the Vestry
 St. Michael's Episcopal Church
 16 Bradley Avenue
 Brattleboro, VT 05301



Rector's Report

As I look back on 2022 in the life of St. Michael's, the adjective that comes to mind is *energetic*. The second half of 2021 was a time of vision and inspiration with our three initiatives – Refugee Ministry, Becoming Beloved Community & Building Hope for the Earth; 2022 was a year of action and implemented of these initiatives as well as another pandemic chapter and many transitions.

The next pandemic chapter:

I would like to have named this section “post-pandemic,” but as I myself missed Christmas services because of catching Covid, it does not seem like we can really call this time “post” anything. We even returned to Zoom last winter (January -February) because of the Omicron surge. However, it does feel like a new chapter. We are living with Covid and gathering more and more, albeit often with masks. Our worship and ministries are looking more like 2019 with some notable exceptions.

- In-person educational opportunities: Godly Play, Holy Mayhem, Adult Forum, Exploring the Episcopal Church, Breakfast with the Psalms.
- We are rebuilding our liturgical ministries with regular Altar guild, readers, ushers (and offerings), bread and wine offered at Communion, regular choir practice, anthems and offerings....even a mystery play (“Michael”) last fall and our first in-person Christmas Pageant since 2019!
- In addition, we have re-started Coffee Hour and had our first Annual Picnic since 2019.

Transitions:

We experienced many leadership transitions this year, as well as deaths of people who were very important to our church.

- **Darcey Mercier** and **adwoa Wilson** were ordained to the diaconate on June 4 and then ordained to the priesthood on December 3.

- **Adwoa** completed her time as our seminarian in June, but returned to work for St. Michael's 1/3 time in August. We were able to afford this because of a grant we received from the Diocese of Vermont for one year. Adwoa is now St. Michael's part-time Assistant Priest. She also serves the wider Diocese of Vermont as the Vicar for Formation and Discipleship.
- **Susan Dedell**, St. Michael's Music Director, announced her retirement in October. This is a huge change for St. Michael's, as Susan has served St. Michael's for 32 years – longer than any rector or other staff member. Susan's last Sunday is January 15, 2023.
- Finally, we said goodbye to many important people of our church in 2022: **Corky Elwell, Wendell Howard, Pat Cameron, Parker Huber, Daniel Dobson, Judy McGorey, Robert Anderson...** The loss of so many people (most occurring over a short period in the summer of 2022) was unprecedented and difficult! These folks represented some of the most dedicated and long-term members of St. Michael's. We miss them tremendously, even as we are deeply grateful for their examples of what it means to live a Christ-centered life.
- We are grateful also to welcome many new people into St. Michael's over this last year. Some of these new members live in our community and some of these new members live far away. This is one of the new realities of our congregation – our Sunday Livestream has enlarged our congregation by connecting us to people who live far away and/or are not able to attend in-person worship.

REPORTS ON THE THREE INITIATIVES

Building Hope for the Earth:

I had to laugh when I looked back on the Annual Report from last year. In the title for this initiative, we had typed “New Name.” This calls to mind, the initiative did not have a name yet beyond, “roof/solar.” In December of 2021, the Vestry signed a contract with Phoenix Roofing for the replacement of all of St. Michael's roofs. The necessity of replacing roofs and the climate crisis of our earth spurred us to consider a project much wider and more ambitious than the replacement of roofs. There is nothing like a deadline (the roofers are coming in the fall!) to bring to focus the necessity to plan, raise funds and prepare for what was finally named “Building Hope for the Earth.”

- On January 9, St. Michael's hosted a parish-wide Zoom gathering called “Renewable Energy & Roof Meeting.” We had great participation, with a great talk by Alan McBean stating our plans (and costs) for the new roofs, an inspiring reflection of the importance of renewable energy to our faith by Cary Gaunt and a chance for the congregation to ask questions.
- Having received great enthusiasm and support from much of the congregation, the Vestry resolved at their February meeting: *St. Michael's commits to its mission of stewardship of the earth by pursuing an end to our reliance on fossil fuels and a transition to 100% clean, renewable energy by 2030; furthermore, to demonstrate our commitment, St. Michael's will begin a phased approach to transition its heating and cooling systems to all electric.*
- In March, St. Michael's hired Christine Graham as our Capital Campaign Consultant (Christine has been our consultant in 2011!) and the Capital Campaign Committee (Christine Hart (chair), Laura Andrews, Chris Chapman, Cary Gaunt, Judith McBean, Jared Rediske and Mary Lindquist) got to work.
- In April, we had the Resilient Energy Group and Green Mountain power do energy audits of our building to see where we needed to improve insulation and energy efficiency.
- After much evaluation and site visits, we hired ARC Mechanical (Bradford, Vt) to install heat-pumps and mini-splits in the rectory and most of the church; we hired Norwich Solar (White River Junction, VT) to supply our solar panels.
- In the Spring, the Capital Campaign Committee began the Silent Phase of the campaign.
- In August, we received grants from Vermont Interfaith Power & Light totaling \$26,169.

- On September 1, we opened the campaign to the public with a festive Building Hope for the Earth Open House, held in the Rectory Yard.
- By mid-October, we had reached our goal of raising \$800,000!
- For Sunday worship, we celebrated a new liturgical season (for us) called Creationtide; we invited lay people in our church to preach and the prayers and liturgy was focused on creation care and faith.
- In October, the roofers and the insulators began their work! We had to live without the organ for a few weeks, but the Sanctuary roof, the biggest construction of the Building Hope project, was completed right after Christmas. We definitely notice a difference in our sanctuary's ability to retain heat...and for a few weeks (until the copper oxidizes) we have a pink roof!

While this project will bring us a good distance towards our goal of 100% clean, renewable energy by 2030, it will not take us all the way. Once we finish the roofs, solar panels and heat-pumps, we will have a better idea of how much electricity we need to produce 110% of our needs. The next steps will be to convert the sanctuary and undercroft's heat to heat pumps and find an offsite location to obtain more solar energy.

The Interfaith Refugee Ministry:

While I cannot speak to the day-to-day realities of this ministry, I can speak to the effects this ministry has had on our parish. The welcoming, support and nurture of first two, then three, then four families through the "circles of support" facilitated by Daniel Dobson, Jeff Lewis and Jean Smith, has facilitated the building of relationship with people from across the world and with people in our own community. The depth of the engagement has been astounding, from the initial welcome, gathering of household goods and search for housing, assistance with transportation, medical appointments, religious connections, language and driving instruction, and so much more. I am so grateful for the leaders and many volunteers who had the courage to say YES to this ministry and to all the ways in which we have experienced ourselves as connected to people and organizations outside of our church doors. I do have to say a special thank you to Daniel Dobson, who even in the throes of fighting cancer, gave 100% to this initiative and whose death came within hours of the birth of Zahidullah, the first baby born to one of our Afghan families, the Khawaja family.

I also want to recognize the Tag Sale ministry that worked so hard to raise funds for the Refugee ministry through the Online Auction and the Spring Tag Sale.

Becoming Beloved Community:

This initiative grew out of a problem. What do we do with the portrait of Bishop John Henry Hopkins, the first Bishop of Vermont, hanging in our Common Room? We had learned in 2021 about Bishop Hopkin's many writings that defended slavery. This "problem" of course spoke not to an isolated incidence of racism within our church but pointed to the much larger reality of systematic racism within our church, within our state, within our country and within ourselves.

In the fall of 2021, we began organizing a small group to help us discern how to confront this reality. We decided to do an in-depth study with small group conversation and prayer through 11 weeks of the Epiphany and Lenten seasons of 2022 called the **Beloved Community Covenant Groups**. The Covenant Groups required great commitment on behalf of the participants – reading, praying, reflection and once a week online engagement of two hours. We were surprised and delighted that 40 individuals signed up and were true to their commitment. We used [The Church Cracked Open](#), by Stephanie Spellers, as a starting point each week. Each session began with the larger group in worship, prayer and reminders of the covenant we held in our conversations. Then we split into small groups to discuss our reading or reflections for that week. We ended again in the large group with sharing and prayer.

In addition, Phillip Wilson, Carolyn Taylor Olson and Rosie Wojcik organized **Storytelling and the Beloved Community**, a monthly story sharing session on Zoom, where people from our church could share stories about their own experiences of race. There were some extraordinary stories shared!

On May 21, we gathered people from St. Michael's to look again at the question, "What should we do with the portrait of Bishop Hopkins?" We had a lively conversation and came to the agreement that we would not take the portrait down altogether (as it is part of our history and important to remember that we continue to have work to do), but that we would have a smaller portrait that would be part of a larger display of our history, including both the difficult parts of our history and the joyful parts of our history. We also would like to display where we are today.

Where are we now? We have a **Common Room Taskforce** organized that will proceed reimagine the Common Room, including a historical display and other displays that reflect who we are. The Task Force (Chris Triebert, Annie Landenberger, adwoa Wilson and Mary Lindquist) has begun to meet, but has not completed the task yet!

WORSHIP

Holy Eucharist, Morning Prayer or Antecomunion was celebrated on 52 Sundays.

The Wednesday weekday Eucharist met in person weekly from April-December.

During 2022 we offered 51 weekly Contemplative Services Thursdays at 5:30 pm, on Zoom and in the chapel.

We help Saturday morning Centering Prayer every Saturday beginning in April.

There was one baptism celebrated (Alex O'Pray).

Holy Communion was brought to nursing home residents (Pine Heights, Holton Home and Bradley House) every month.

We celebrated two marriages: Jeffrey Hiam & Ruth Venman-Clay and Darcey Mercier & Susan Nichols.

The Burial office was conducted for Sissi Loftin, Bill Ames, Judy McGorey, Corky Elwell, Wendell Howard, Pat Cameron, Daniel Dobson, Robert Anderson and Nathan Olmstead.

Morning Prayer was prayed daily on the weekdays for all of 2022.

Darcey Mericer and adwoa Wilson were both ordained to the diaconate on June 4 and ordained to the priesthood on December 3.

Average In-person attendance in 2022 was 97 per Sunday. Average Livestream attendance was 34 unique viewers/devices per Sunday.

ASSISTANT PRIEST

Moses demanded a Name to tell the Hebrew people. God responded, “my Name is YHWH” – “I am who I am, I will be what I will be.” With a Name, God revealed something not only of the Divine nature but of ours as well. In our various identities, we also discover ourselves not so much by what we are called or what we say, but by living into what these identities make of us. After years of discernment, resistance, formation, and practice, in one moment, a bishop “ma[de me] a priest in God’s church.” A transformation. An affirmation of what already was. A pledge of what I am yet to become as I live faithful into the path entrusted to me. I rejoice to share this milestone with a community as flexible and vibrant as this one.

In 2022, was a full year of ministry together.

Our Becoming Beloved Community initiative had a robust initial phase. Announced late in 2021, the work was especially concentrated in the first half of 2022. Over 40 people participated in an 11-week program of covenant groups, worship, and study. The initiative was sparked by the picture of Bishop Hopkins, a proponent of slavery, in our common room. However, over the course of the Spring, it was clear that the work we really needed *and wanted* to do was on our own contemporary racial reality. In small groups, people shared vulnerably about their joys and pains regarding race, class, and other differences. At monthly storytelling hours, more voices of testimony were included. The vulnerability of that time far surpassed anything I have yet witnessed in so large a congregation. It was also a profound experience of collaborative staff and lay leadership – itself witnesses to the full nature of the Church.

You may have noticed that Hopkins’ picture, along with those of previous rectors of the church, has been removed from the common room and a sitting area arranged. These steps are intended to cleanse the palate as we consider how best to represent our collective identity. A small group continues to explore a more holistic telling of our history, present ministry, and hopes for the future through interior design. I remain available to consult with that work as needed.

This fall, we launched *Breakfast with the Psalms*: a weekly fellowship and study at The Works. It has been a wonderful opportunity for new connections within the parish, deep study, personal vulnerability, and prayer. It has also been a beautiful space for relational evangelism. People take note of the band of seekers laughing, crying, and praying together. Relationships are formed with the staff of The Works as well as those who take our extra coffee at the end. One staff person at The Works shared how precious it was for her to hear people singing ‘This Little Light of Mine.’ Four visitors from beyond the parish and of various faiths have joined us. Drop-ins are welcome, and bring a friend!

St. Michael’s Morning Prayer continues daily at 8:00 with a growing core group. The ministry is now firmly grounded in lay leadership and reflects a variety of spiritualities. The concerns of the parish, the diocese, and the world are regularly brought before God. Thank you pray-ers for your service.

After ordination in December, I have begun to step more fully into partnership with Mary in pastoral leadership. This has included celebrating the Eucharist, preaching, joint leadership of this year’s confirmation class, and pastoral visitation. I’ve also begun to discern with others the possibility of two additional ministry experiments at St. Michael’s for 2023 – group spiritual direction and alternative places/forms of worship.

Since the summer, my clerical ministry has been a ‘constellation’ as parttime Assistant Priest with St. Michael’s and parttime Vicar for Discipleship and Formation through the Green Mountain Online Abbey (GMOA). The vicar role focuses on creating opportunities for adult formation and fellowship between parishes through virtual and in-person offerings. During Advent, I brought several of the practices we’ve cultivated here at St. Michael’s to bear on this diocesan ministry. For example, this year’s Advent Devotional gathered voices statewide and was used by three congregations as the foundation of their parish adult formation. Over 40 people from different churches gathered on the GMOA on Thursday evenings to study the book of Revelation, share worship, and share the stories of their faith (and doubt) in a model based on our covenant work last winter. Not too many people walked away loving

Revelation more than when they began, but nearly all walked away with a stronger sense of their faith and a soul connection to others from across the state.

I am grateful for a yearlong grant that enables me to exercise my priestly ministry here through August 2023. At St. Michael's I have the rare blessing of collegial mentorship with a senior priest, continuity of ministry, and spacious opportunity to experiment with new ways of doing ministry within a vibrant context. Through the Vicarship, I can help build connection between what we do here and the wider church of which we are a part. Bishop Shannon has signaled that constellation ministry is the future for Vermont. However, many imagine this is only for struggling parishes. It is essential that we experiment with ways to partner together across our 'diocesan household' at all stages of our vitality. I give thanks for being a part of this new way of framing our diocesan life. I am grateful not only for the grant but especially for Mary and her willingness to imagine what could be, in the next stage of staff partnership for St. Michael's, and for Jeanie, who has tirelessly supported the administrative load of navigating this new ministry. Thank you!

Finally, perhaps a word about collars and shoes since some have noticed that I wear one quite often and the other hardly at all. The collar has a very personal significance for me, much like wearing a wedding ring, as a statement of identity and belonging. When one feels her blood rising in the car or on a checkout line, the pinch of a collar reminding Who the next words will represent sure is humbling! However, I've also been awed by how many people have opened their hearts and their hurts when they recognize what is around my neck. People of all faiths, and no faith, have done this – asking about evil, angels, injustice... railing against the church, speaking of their own search for the divine. Like the simple witness of our psalm group week by week, I encourage all of us not to take for granted how much people long to see a witness of something larger piercing through the cynical shroud over our daily existence.

As for shoes – Moses was tending sheep on a muddy, manured hillside one day when he spied a bush on fire that was not consumed. Surely this was a sacrament – the bush, just a bush yet also so much more. God said, "Moses, Moses, take off your shoes; the place you stand is holy ground." When I serve the altar, I take off my shoes. That space where I stand with all of you on my heart before God and God on my heart before you is holy ground. When I place the Sacrament in your hands, I do not have on shoes. The person receiving that meal is holy ground. As I pray and bless, consecrate and anoint, I do not wear shoes. Our very bodies are the holy ground where heaven and earth meet. We are an incarnational people! Feeling our spirits rise while our flesh touches down is quite a wondrous thing. Perhaps, one day I will place heavenly food in your hands and before moving on be delighted to glimpse your own bare feet firm on the cool caress of the holy ground that unites us.

Shalom,
adwoa+



Reports from Worship Ministries

ALTAR GUILD

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! Psalm 84:1

This year as we are taking care of our church building with a new roof and insulation, I feel the warmth already. Altar Guild teams continue to take care of our sanctuary keeping it clean and shiny and preparing the Altar for worship on Sunday's, weddings, funerals and other festive services. This ministry is often called "holy hospitality".

We have 11 dedicated members who rotate once monthly. Members include: John Byrnes, Kiersten McKenney, Judy Walker, Carol Hesselbach, Sue Dyer, Craig Newbert, Charlene Kemp, Rebecca Olmstead, Zadie Olmstead, and Sherry Stimmel. Our 12th member is Marie Lawrence who beautifully arranges and organizes our altar flowers weekly.

Little by little we are getting back to normal (pre-COVID). We added wine, grape juice and element bearers rather than bread alone later this year. Our biggest challenge this year was getting the oil filled candles to burn for both Sunday services without filling them in between. We bought new candles last year and the burning time was supposed to be for 5 hours. After many weeks experimenting and calls to the company, we learned that keeping the wick 1/8 inch the flame burns low and steady. This allows us to not have to fill the candles between the services - saving much time.

Many thanks to our dedicated Altar Guilders and for Craig Newbert ordering the altar supplies.

Jane Sbardella

THE DAILY OFFICE

Every weekday morning at 8 am, between 3-9 people gather in-person and on Zoom to pray Morning Prayer together. St. Michael's has been praying the Daily Office of Morning Prayer since 2018. While we used to gather in the chapel daily, we transitioned to Zoom during the pandemic. Now we meet in person in the chapel (and on Zoom) on Tuesdays and Wednesday and on Zoom only on the other weekdays. We rotate leadership of the Morning Prayer, asking participants to help be "the congregation" and read the scripture lessons appointed for the day. We read the appointed prayers, but also have a robust time to bring our own personal intercessions and thanksgivings before God. Sometimes we sing or chant, sometimes we include spiritual readings. We are generally done by 8:30 am every day. It is a wonderful practice and a great way to start our day. New people are always welcome! Thank you to prayer leaders Teresa Saval, David Hayden, Judith Riexman, Nan Tierra, adwoa Wilson, Yoojin Lee, Linda Elkan, Matt Miller. – *Mary Lindquist*

CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTIANITY

The Contemplative Ministry at St. Michael's returned to its regular pre-pandemic schedule of weekly Thursday Contemplative Service and Saturday morning Centering Prayer. Many thanks to Kim Peavey who helped us re-start our Saturday morning Centering Prayer group. Parker Huber, who was the champion and quiet leader of our contemplative services, died in July of 2022. This was a huge loss for us! As we say in our Saturday morning Centering Prayer time, "We give thanks for Parker, seeker and spiritual companion, who held this service for so long and so beautifully." Many thanks to John Daly, Jean Smith, Parker Huber, Caroline Hammarlund, Kim Peavey, Erika Alin and Margit & Jack Lilly who have taken turns leading these services.

SACRAMENTAL HEALING

"Rise and go; your faith has made you well." Luke 17:19

As followers of Christ, we believe that we are called to continue his ministry of healing. This healing takes many forms — physical, spiritual, and emotional—and is an important part of the church's ministry.

A "Healing Team" of prayer companions from the parish, feel called to this ministry, to support those who request prayers of healing for themselves, for others, and prayers of thanksgiving. Everyone who comes for prayers is also anointed with oil that has been blessed by the Bishop. The blessed oil is sent to each parish at the end of the Diocesan Convention in November.

The sacrament of healing is scheduled on most Sundays. During CoVid, we were less present. At the 8 o'clock service it follows the service proper. At the 10:15 o'clock service it is available during communion. No prayer request is too big or too small. We know it may not always be easy to come forward whether it is for the first time or the one hundredth time.

Our team meets for meetings that offer spiritual support for each other and an opportunity to read and discuss faith, prayer, and what it means to heal and be healed. Confidentiality is essential to our work; we do not discuss any concerns or prayer requests brought to us by parishioners outside of the "sacred space" of the prayer encounter. We have hand sanitizer and masks, as needed.

We have a shared leadership structure where individual team members take responsibility for arranging meetings, minutes, and other administrative tasks on a quarterly basis. Our current members include: Janet Cramer, Judith Junkins, Greg Leash, Jeff Lewis, Margit Lilly, and Carolyn Taylor-Olson. Megan Buchanan, Robin White-Diamondstone have also been part of our team and we are grateful for their time and commitment over the years.

We invite members of the parish who would like to learn more and explore sharing in this ministry, to speak to Mary or a member of the Sacramental Healing team.

For the Sacramental Healing ministry, *Carolyn Taylor-Olson*

MUSIC AT ST. MICHAEL'S

2022 was a great year for music and liturgy at St. Michael's. Although we had a brief return to zoom church in January, we were back in the building in fairly short order, and both choir and congregation were able to enjoy singing and worshipping together in person once again. Our live stream capability made sure that those who could not attend in person were still able to be part of our spiritual body.

Lent and Holy Week proved to be perhaps the richest musical and spiritual experience of my entire time here. During Lent, the choir provided extraordinary richness of musical expression and inspiration, and began preparation for a Good Friday liturgy ("*Were you there?*") based on the stations of the Cross, using both newly composed music and hymns and spirituals. In the weeks just prior to Holy Week, we installed Susan Wilson's powerful sculptures of

migrant peoples, and on Palm Sunday afternoon, a packed church heard a moving performance of Paul Dedell's "Stations", featuring 3 renowned guest cellists. And for the first time since my early years as music director, I physically attended and played a sunrise service on Easter Day, and...it was wonderful!! Thank you, Mary and Adwoa, for being such firm advocates for this!

Over the summer, both Paul and I worked in writing and composing a parish-wide mystery play, "Michael". Thanks to the varied and skillful contributions of so many in our congregation, and aided by the stunning visuals of our friend Finn Campman, we presented 3 performances, complete with puppet dragons, 4 Michaels of various ages, choir, instruments, and narrators. What an adventure -- huge thanks to all of you who made this large scale dream a reality.

Shortly after that, we had a lovely All Saints Taize. As Advent approached, the choir once again ramped up their rehearsal schedule and worked towards an ambitious and glorious Lessons and Carols. The beauty of their singing was only matched by the generosity of their spirits, as they not only raised their voices, but opened their hearts. Thank you, dear choir.

Maybe it was the stir of emotion in the air, but by the time we reached Christmas Eve, spirits were high, and laughter and tears were mingled with the prayers and incense. This was my 32nd Christmas at St. Michael's, and for once, I was so glad that Christmas Day was on a Sunday, because I got to play one extra service. What a blessing.

I have just reread the report I made for last year, in which I wrote "when the *old* is not possible, there can only be a *new*." By the time this report is made part of the annual parish report, there will be a whole lot of new in all of our lives, I and don't mean that to indicate just a change of musical leadership. The new that I refer to is the ongoing renewal of opening ourselves to "everything that is infinite, everything that is *yes*." I pray that the St. Michael's people will continue to find joy, solace, and inspiration in music, as you continually open and re-open the doors of your heart. And I bid your prayers for myself and for Paul, as we take this difficult leave of you, our beloved church family.

After working as a church musician for close to 50 years, I have a lot of hymn lyrics rattling around in my mind, and this is the hymn verse that just came to my mind: "Great is Thy faithfulness, great is thy faithfulness, morning by morning new mercies I see. All I have needed thy hand has provided; Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me."



Reports from Christian Formation

CHRISTIAN FORMATION/ADULT EDUCATION

The **Adult Forum** is designed to be an informal drop-in opportunity to gather and deepen our understanding of our Christian faith and practice. Happening between the two services, Adult Forum is one place where the people from the 8 am service mingle with the people who go to the 10:15. It is planned by a group of parishioners.

As Covid restrictions eased and we came back to in-person church we attempted hybrid adult forums. These were not hugely successful. The reality is that to do a Forum well for two groups of people, one in person and one online, requires a level of technology we don't have. We gave up the effort in the fall.

Our presenters have our deepest thanks. Without their willingness to share their knowledge and research we would not have forums. Thank you to Valerie Abrahamsen, Nancy Ames, Betsy Bates, Chris Chapman, Janet Cramer, Susan Dedell, Jack Lilly, Mary Lindquist, Annamarie Pluhar, Lise Sparrow, Carolyn Taylor-Olson, David Treadwell, adwoa Wilson and Phillip Wilson.

Here's what we hope we do.

Mission Statement

We will offer a diversity of topics covering:

- different interests (outreach, scripture, contemplative Christianity, spirituality, tradition, community interests, etc.),
- experiences of faith,
- the basics of Christianity and the Episcopal Church (for both those new to the church and those who want to rediscover their roots) and
- specialized topics (for deeper understanding)

In the context of:

- small, high-commitment/confidential small group offerings,
- open, low-commitment offerings (forums), and
- a balance between content and discussion.

All offerings are to be connected to our context (Christian, faith community); all topics should ask the question, "How does this connect to our faith?" or "So what?"

As we plan for future Adult Forums please contact the committee with ideas, offerings, and recommendations. We'd love to hear from you.

Your Adult Forum Planning Committee: *Nancy Ames, Janet Cramer, Mary Lindquist, Annamarie Pluhar, Carolyn Taylor-Olson, Ruth Tilghman, David Treadwell, Phillip Wilson*

CHRISTIAN FORMATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Christian Education for children and youth started back in earnest in the fall of 2022. We are thankful for the ability to gather with children and youth in person. We are grateful for new little ones to introduce to the life of the church and it is our hope to nurture every child's knowledge and experience of God's unconditional love. We are still rebuilding this ministry and would love more volunteers to continue to strengthen our offerings and our community.

GODLY PLAY

So many volunteers have loved and worked on our Godly Play ministry for our younger children over the years. If you have never done so, check out our Godly Play room, with lovely handmade bookcases, which is ever a work in progress with stories authored by Jerome W. Berryman and/or Sonja M. Stewart added every year: <https://www.godlyplayfoundation.org>. The dedicated team of storytellers and doorkeepers make the Montessori-based presentations of scripture stories to children come alive. Each story has its own box or basket of props that the children can then play with themselves after presentation to the group.

This key element of hands-on play did not translate well for social distancing. The threat of Covid really hit hard. While many ministries could go remote, we discovered that zoom did not work for our younger children, so our team staffed the Godly Play room in the Spring, but attendance was way down as parents explained they were worried about cross-school exposure with children's own schools now meeting face to face, and vaccinations not available for children under age five until June 2022.

In August the Nursery School made our gathering space into a classroom and the Godly Play Room into a nap room, with the rooms continuing to be ours on Sundays. Upgrades were appreciated by the children who started joining us again in the fall. It was a joy to again start to see some "regular attendees" as families felt the need for "covid caution" had greatly subsided.

A nice addition this fall was an introduction to liturgical dance by Judith during our transition time from waiting in our gathering space to coming in for our story. The children loved it.

We are now back to the beginning in rebuilding community for children who were isolated during the last couple of years. Our "Welcome Back Open House" was an enjoyable time for them, as was the Christmas Pageant (which should really be considered its own ministry--thank you to all who volunteered and participated!)

It is our hope that the Godly Play curriculum, rich in liturgical image and language, will build Christian community and encourage children as they get to know each other again, and all of us joining with them, to come closer to the wonder and mystery of God's presence.

Susan Heimer, with Miranda Smith, Judy Davidson, Judith Reichman, Rich Cogliano, Lise Osborne, Rosie Wojcik, Mark Horton, Jesse Ridgeway, Liz Vic, and Mary Lindquist

HOLY MAYHEM

Last winter and Spring Lydia Taggart and Liza Howe led the class in excursions and community service every other week until summer. Among other lessons and activities, we enjoyed winter sports together, helped with a planting project at the Retreat Farm, visited the Jewish temple in Greenfield and learned about Judaism from Rabbi Andrea. We also assisted with the annual parish Easter egg hunt.

This Fall, Rev. Lise Sparrow joined Lydia and carried on explorations with the Ahlan Wa Sahlan (Welcome to the Holy Land) curriculum which helped introduce and explore the Holy Land and the three faiths (Christianity, Islam and Judaism) which strive to coexist there. Letters from children living there, food and games from the Middle East spiced things up. The class also made cookies for coffee hour one week and made a trip to the Groundworks Shelter with. donated food for Christmas. Preparing for the pageant, the class learned about the sites of the different scripture involved in the pageant, and many class members went on to participate in the pageant as narrators or actors.

Lise Sparrow and Lydia Taggart

CONFIRMATION

Last fall, adowa and Mary Lindquist began a monthly class called “Confirmation Conversations” for high school age youth. We meet over lunch and discuss our readings from “My Faith, My Life.” In March, we will go on a retreat and in May, Bishop Shannon will come to offer the sacrament of confirmation to the youth who have discerned their readiness and commitment to affirming their baptismal vows and living out their Christian faith.

Mary Lindquist



REPORTS FROM MISSION AND MINISTRY

OUTREACH MINISTRY

“Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food? We saw you thirsty and gave you something to drink? We saw you a stranger and welcomed you? We saw you sick and took care of you? We saw you in prison and visited you?” “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” *Matthew 25:37-40. Episcopal Relief & Development Mandate. “Joel’s Prayer”*

Mission Statement: The Outreach Ministry of St. Michael’s Episcopal Church initiates and supports efforts through which we, committee and parishioners alike, can manifest our Christian beliefs by helping those in need locally, nationally and internationally through charitable organizations. This work involves not only our “treasure,” but also our “time” and “talents.” Distribution of our resources is limited to meeting needs for heat, shelter, health, and food insufficiency.

2022 began in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and Outreach began the year with a modest MLK Service Day which produced a number of Bags Of Basics which were distributed among Foodworks, Loaves & Fishes, and the Springfield Correctional Facility. Outreach also benefited from a \$13,000 allocation again from our Vestry. We also welcomed David Treadwell to the committee as the new Vestry representative.

Outreach and the Tag Sale Ministry have established a healthy working relationship, in that each committee has a representative on the other committee. Initially, Outreach nominated Judy Davidson to represent Outreach, but Judy eventually became quite overwhelmed by the needs of her Afghan co-sponsorship family who arrived in February. Judy resigned from Outreach as a result, and Lori Palmer has graciously agreed to take her place on the Tag Sale Ministry. Sherry Stimmel is the Tag Sale Ministry representative to Outreach. Additionally, the Tag Sale Ministry has invited Outreach to nominate a second recipient for the Tag Sale proceeds each year. This year Outreach donated \$3,736 of those proceeds to the Community Asylum Seekers Project (CASP)

Yet again, we were unable to hold a Pancake Supper on Mardi Gras, but St. Michael’s parishioners Drs. Mary Abell and Don Erwin, founders of the St. Thomas Clinics in New Orleans, received a visit from committee member Janet Cramer in April. Janet brought back several photographs that illustrate the great work that the doctors do and that St. Michael’s supports.

After a successful Mothers’ Day Diaper Sunday (3,748 and several packets of wipes), the Thanksgiving Diaper Sunday was even more successful with a count of 6,451 diapers that were divided between Foodworks, Parks Place in Bellows Falls, and Loaves & Fishes, where our Afghan neighbors are able to access them. For the second time,

some parishioners donated money rather than diapers, and the additional \$145 will be used to purchase diapers next Mothers' Day.

In June Outreach offered an adult forum on the history of the St. Michael's Mission and Outreach Ministry and its role as the alms giving arm of St. Michael's. We always keep in the forefront of our minds Deacon Joel Hill's admonition to "give from our abundance."

Pastor Duckens and the Orphélinat Evangélique in Haiti suffered even more horrendously in 2022. The country is now effectively controlled by internecine gangs. The international community is unable and/or unwilling to help, despite the pleas from the ineffectual Haitian government. The Outreach Team voted to send the entirety of its international budget and to supplement it with the remnants of its disaster relief fund to help the children at the orphanage.

For the first time, Outreach has requested names of parishioners who checked "Outreach" as a ministry of interest on our pledge cards. We urge others to consider joining us. The Committee usually meets virtually at 5:30 pm on the first Monday of the month. If you are interested in joining the Outreach Ministry, feel free to contact one of the Committee members: Janet Cramer, Susan Wilson, Lori Palmer, Shirley Hodgdon, Judith Junkins, Jeanette Landin, Alix Fedoruk, Joyce Vining Morgan, David Treadwell, and Brian Morgan.

Over the course of the year the Outreach Team voted to distribute funds at its monthly Zoom meetings staggering disbursements so as not to overwhelm the Church budget. A comprehensive summary of distributions follows:

Sources:

Vestry allocation:	\$13,000
Donations:	\$ 180 (+\$145 for 2023)
Total:	\$13,180

Distributions:

International:

Orphélinat Evangélique \$ 4,333

National:

St. Thomas Clinic, NOLA	\$ 2,333
Mercy Chefs	\$ 2,000

Local:

Groundworks	\$ 1,000
Heat Fund	\$ 1,500
Diapers	\$ 780
Afghan Refugees	\$ 450

Transfer to Disaster Relief Fund \$ 1,000

Total: \$13,396

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Morgan, convener.

PASTORAL CARE MINISTRY

The Pastoral Care Team continued to meet most months through 2022. We were relieved that in-person visits became a viable option again in the spring of 2022 and we were able to visit people in their homes, in hospitals, and in nursing homes. We continue to try to support and keep in touch with the needs of St. Michael's through our monthly meetings. Many thanks to the dedicated and generous members of the Pastoral Care Team: *Betsy Bates, Lindsey Boss, Judy Davidson, Jenny Karstad, Mary Lindquist, Margery McCrum, Rebecca Olmstead, Joan Pinilla, Jane Sbardella, Jean Smith and Ruth Tilghman.*

CHRIST CHURCH GUILFORD

The Christ Church Guilford Society is alive and well! An active Board of Directors meets regularly to tend the beloved Mother Church of St. Michael's and plan future events that will benefit our wider community.

Over the past year, as we were preparing to host events in our beautiful 1817 building, we learned that there were structural issues that made using the church unsafe. We embarked on a major effort to assess the damage, raise funds, and solicit bids for the work (mainly on a few sections of the roof). We worked closely with Brattleboro-based Stevens and Associates and have received a generous Vermont Historic Preservation grant for matching funds. We prepared two major fundraising mailings, wrote articles in several local newspapers to inform our neighbors about our activities, used our new website (<https://www.christchurchguilfordsociety.org/>) as the public face of our efforts, made improvements to the grounds and the building's security, and joined the Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce. We were able to collaborate with the Christ Church Cemetery Association and the Guilford Historical Society on initiatives of mutual interest, and we remain fully engaged with Friends of Music at Guilford.

We have formed a small Task Force to plan events that can be successfully held outdoors at Christ Church next year as we hire contractors, roofers and others to do the necessary repairs to the interior. We look forward to keeping the St. Michael's community up-to-date on our progress, and we are extremely grateful for your talents and labor as well as your moral, spiritual and financial support!

Board of Directors, The Christ Church Guilford Society, Inc.: *Valerie Abrahamsen, Andy Burrows, Jack Lilly, The Rev. Mary Lindquist, Kate McGinn, Edmund Meade, Anne Montgomery, and Linda Rice.*

OVERFLOW SHELTER MEALS MINISTRY

It has been a tradition for many years for parishioners of St. Michael's to prepare and serve homemade dinners for residents at a shelter for people experiencing homelessness in Brattleboro—initially at the 1st Baptist Church on Main St. and then at the Winston Prouty Center (formerly Austine School) campus where a shelter was housed for a few years after Groundworks Collaborative was established in 2015. In September of 2021 Groundworks opened a new shelter, called the Groundworks Drop-in Center, on South Main St. in Brattleboro.

From the fall of 2020 through the summer of 2021, due to COVID, many unhoused people were given shelter at one of the motels in Brattleboro. St. Michael's meals were suspended due to safety concerns and the large numbers needing meals at the motels.

In the fall of 2021, our Shelter Meals Ministry resumed, with meals being provided on the second Monday of each month, from November to April. These meals typically include a homemade main dish such as lasagna or macaroni and cheese, tossed salad, bread and butter, milk and dessert for 35. In the past, before the health risks of COVID made it inadvisable, St. Michael's volunteers also helped serve these nutritious meals to the residents and enjoyed getting to know them. We hope that direct contact will be able to resume soon.

Our bountiful thanks to all the generous volunteers who have helped prepare these meals. ***There is no more direct way to help those in need than this.*** It is truly a labor of love. If you would like to know more about participating in this ministry, please contact Benson Bobrick at shiloh98@sover.net, or Liz Vick at ebethvick@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted, *Benson Bobrick and Elizabeth Vick*

SCHROEDER FUND COMMITTEE

Members: Ruth Tilghman, Susan Heimer, Jack Lily, Rosie Wojcik, Pam Carr and Alix Fedoruk

Education: We supported Jeffrey Hiam for his seminary tuition. We also supported a parishioner for a conference, confirmation lunches and ordination gifts and reception for Adwoa and Darcey.

Total for Education: \$3461.75.

Outreach: The money allotted for outreach goes to support the Help Fund. We also give our time by serving on the Help Fund Committee. We meet through Zoom for the Help Fund meetings on Wednesdays at noon. All the social services agencies in the area can attend. SEVCA (Southeastern Vermont Community Action) runs the meetings and is treasurer. The Help Fund gives grants up to \$250 to individuals and families for: housing deposits, car repairs, back utility payments and moving and storage expenses. The goal is to keep families and individuals in housing. At the weekly meeting, requests for grants are vetted. This is important because other agencies who may know more information about the person who is requesting, and we will know if the request is viable. This year there were fewer requests for housing help because so many people were housed in hotels. This will change in March of 2023. There were car repair requests so people could get to work and medical appointments and requests for back utility bills as well as storage unit rentals. Since there is now a large surplus of funds, we are relaxing our rules a bit: more money for each grant, keeping people in transportation and housing and money for refugees. The mission of Help Fund is to keep people in their housing and to help others obtain housing.

Help fund received \$8760

Total for Outreach: \$8760

Ruth M Tilghman

LOAVES AND FISHES

This year Jack Lilly joined the Steering Committee and David Treadwell worked to reduce Loaves and Fishes' heating and electric costs through contact with the Heating Fund and Green Mountain Power. Centre Church contributed through their Sunday caring plate and Project Feed. New By-Laws were accepted to reflect our new joint mission relationship. We established an Afghan food Shelf.

The Mission and work of Loaves and Fishes

On Tuesdays and Fridays:

- * 40 meals are sent to Groundworks when the hotel program closed.
- * 75 boxed meals are sent to Foodworks to also serve the homeless.
- * 31 bags of groceries are bagged up by Teri Robinson and Pam Carr to be given away.

* Food is distributed in boxes to Dalem Chalet, Red Clover, High Rise, Hayes Court and individuals. Adwoa liaised getting meals to St Michael's people.

* Families in Hospice are delivered meals.

* 50 to 80 meals are served out the door.

* Frozen and fresh foods are also supplied with the bags of groceries.

* 120 Everyone Eats meals are distributed.

David Treadwell, Lloyd Graf, and Cliff Wood help with cooking; Becky Anderson, Lloyd Graf, David Treadwell, and Steve Faure help with deliveries; Nancy Ames, BB Ames and Judy Davidson help with recycling; and of course Wye Wood, Joan Pinela, Charlene Kemp, Jack Lily, Betsy Bates are our bakers.

Afghan Food: With grants, donations and money and food from the Food Bank as well as NAACP, we have been able to provide our Afghan families and their community food particular to an Afghan diet including Halal meat and fresh vegetables, eggs and milk from Miller Farm.

Project Feed

A community fund raiser for over 30 years raises awareness about food insecurity with food drives and donations. In 2022, St Michael's donated:

- Pounds of canned goods and dry goods: 460
- Donations of money: \$2625

Ruth M Tilgman

PRISON MINISTRY

St Michael's program of support for the inmates at this state prison continues even though Covid has limited our ability to offer non-denominational services each Sunday. We are prepared and hope to resume these services early in the new year. Also, the excellent coordinator of Volunteer Services Kristen Sultzman retired in July and was not replaced till November. In December her replacement was assigned other duties because of a staffing shortage at the prison. He hopes we can resume our work soon.

As we have done throughout Covid, we will continue to collect paperback books magazines, games, puzzles toiletries and individually wrapped snacks and desserts and deliver monthly to the SSCF. Also, during Covid, there was an early release program and we provided backpacks with four changes of clothes including socks and underwear to those who were released and had no outside support. We also provided sleeping bags and tents to some. We still have these items available for persons who are released. Our team which now includes parishioner Matthew Elkan and Rev. Duncan Hilton will continue to collect your donations which are essential to our work. Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

Cliff L. Wood, Liaison for Prison Ministry

TAG SALE MINISTRY

The St. Michael's Tag Sale Ministry team had an unusual and productive year in 2022. In January, we decided to use some unique and somewhat valuable items in our "collection" to raise money for the St. Michael's Interfaith Refugee Ministry, which was on the verge of welcoming, as co-sponsors, no fewer than four Afghan families to the Brattleboro area.

This fundraising was done in the form of an online silent auction. We offered over 100 different items from gift certificates for haircuts and fancy dinners, to a hand-weaving floor loom and concert tickets. To our amazement and delight, the silent auction, which ended in the last days of February, 2022, netted over \$7500!

It was clear that with better testing and vaccines available, Covid-19 severity was decreasing. We felt safe making plans for an indoor-outdoor Tag Sale for May of 2022. The two organizations we had decided to raise funds for were the St. Michael's Refugee Ministry, since the need for income continued to be great, and the Community Asylum Seeker's Project (C.A.S.P.), another local organization assisting people fleeing oppression and an organization strongly supported by the St. Michael's Outreach Ministry, with whom we collaborate.

The May Tag Sale was very well-attended and offered delicious food and a huge amount of housewares, linens, clothing, and some great furniture. Most of the items were offered on a "take what you need, leave what you can" donation payment basis. Our net income at the end of the day was over \$9000, of which the St. Michael's Refugee Ministry was given approximately \$5600 and C.A.S.P. was given approximately \$3700. The hard work of many in the St. Michael's family really paid off!

You are probably wondering about our plans for the 2023 Tag Sale, right? We have begun planning! The date will be SAT., MAY 6th, 2023. We will start accepting donations of housewares, books, clothing and linens on SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5th, so get ready! Furniture will be welcome later in the spring- we are looking for a storage spot right now. This year we will again be directing Tag Sale proceeds to 2 organizations which help the community's most vulnerable residents -- Groundworks Collaborative and the Windham County Heat Fund.

We would like to mention that we lost a huge supporter and prime organizer of the Tag Sale this past summer, Daniel Dobson; he was a person of true vision and a generous spirit. We miss him and we feel grateful to have had him as a friend.

We also would like to thank every member of the St. Michael's community who donates items, helps with sorting and moving all sorts of things, setting up and taking down tents, cooking yummy food, making beautiful posters, and much more ... the Tag Sale couldn't happen without you, and it is really a fun project because of your involvement! Thank you!!

Respectfully submitted, *Liz Vick with Becky Anderson, Betsy Bates, Suzann Jones, Charlene Kemp, Linda Rice, Joan Pinilla, Jane Sbardella, Sherry Stimmel, and Rosie Wojcik.*

DOBSON REFUGEE MINISTRY

The Ministry began in mid-2021 when ECDC, at the invitation of BDCC, was exploring opening a refugee resettlement office in Vermont; its first to do both co-sponsorship as a strategy and to work in a rural area. We were enthusiastic in our support both for ourselves as servants of Christ in welcoming, and as members of the Brattleboro community. There are now well over 120 refugees, nearly all Afghans, in Southern Vermont, mostly in Brattleboro. We, at St Michael's are co-sponsoring six different families totaling 23 people. All our families have close family, including wives and children, in Afghanistan.

Our Mission is:

The St. Michael's Interfaith Refugee Ministry was conceived out a deep desire to act and to demonstrate our commitment to our Mission. That we are a "welcoming and dynamic faith community," committed "to deep generosity" and that "through these works of compassion, love and service, we hope to manifest the presence of God in our time." This hope became manifested in a gift calling us to assist in the resettlement and support of the many Afghan refugees landing on our shores.

We have found tremendous generosity and energy in the congregation. The project has raised and received a robust sum, including a very generous gift from Anne Dobson implementing an intention of our project founder, Daniel Dobson. The generosity has inspired us all.

Deeper than financial generosity is the energy of volunteers. We have about 50 people engaged in the Ministry, most St Michael's members but other community members who are working with us. This is captured in the observation of one of our volunteers who, looking out from the choir on Sundays, reports recognizing the heads of many people who are engaged in one way or another.

Our six families are at quite different points of integration to the community, again, bearing mind that this whole project is a radical change for them and they are burdened with concern for family, children, spouses, parents and friends, in Afghanistan. All the people in our families who want to work are working, some are on their second or third job. For many duplicating here the success they had in Afghanistan is deeply challenging: transferring earned credentials is very, very difficult, finding exactly the right and opportunity for advanced skills is hard (we are still a small town in a small state that cannot satisfy all needs).

Our new neighbors are learning to survive in America. They have had the benefits of substantial support from the State of Vermont, some of which will run out this spring. There are still many things to learn.

While we tend to focus on the benefit to our new friends and to our community, there are also substantial benefits to St Michael's, collectively and individually. I'll let individuals share their own stories and will only say that lives have changed because of their work with refugees. Collectively, as noted, this is perhaps the widest engagement of any project we've undertaken. Many of our members and friends have been touched by our engagement whether through direct interaction, contribution of funds or items, support for Loaves and Fishes or Carry Me Home, or the myriad little ways people support one another.

Peace to you all, and thank you.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

The committee had a busy and productive year, completing a variety of projects around the property.

THE CHURCH

The Roofs: It is so nice to say that the sanctuary roof is completed after all the planning and waiting. The last flashings have been installed and we are watertight and warm! What a difference the roof insulation has made on our ability to heat our church. The remaining roofs on the Rectory and Bradley wing will be addressed in the coming months as weather permits.

Nursery School: The nursery school has expanded into several rooms in the Bradley Wing which required some painting and minor modifications to the rooms for their use. The painting was completed by nursery school parents and everything seems to be going smoothly. A new contract was negotiated to reflect the increase in use of the building.

Other: Ross Kinney built and installed a new window in the Rectory garage and the Rectory porch post was replaced. Craig Hammond rebuilt the trim on the lower church entrance posts which had been battered by vehicular mishaps. Hopefully the new bollards will prevent damage in the future. Thanks to Vince Johnson for constructing a catwalk in the attic space of the Bradley wing. This will allow access to the space without disturbing the new cellulose insulation to be placed soon.

Solar: Norwich Solar has been chosen and contracted to install panels on the upper pitch of the south facing Sanctuary Roof, the southeast facing pitch of the Bradley wing and the south facing roof of the Rectory. This will happen this spring once the new shingles have been installed.

Heat Pumps: ARC Mechanical has been chosen to install heat pumps in the Church and Rectory to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. The Rectory system will run in parallel with the existing oil hot air furnace and utilize the same ductwork. This system will also supply cooling in the summer months and be powered by the roof mounted solar panels. The church heat pumps will provide heating and cooling to the nursery school and Dunham room downstairs and the Meeting room, Godly play, Nursery, Children's Chapel and Offices on the second floor. Plans to install a heat pump system for the Undercroft and Sanctuary are still in the planning phase as different options are being evaluated. Our new church solar panels will offset the electrical use of the heat pumps and lighting in the building. We anticipate the need for some additional solar to offset all of our electrical needs but will wait and see what our onsite installation provides for kilowatts.

THE GROUNDS

Gardens: Once again a dedicated group of gardeners led by Judy Davidson did an amazing job on the flower gardens and shrubs to make the church grounds look beautiful all summer and fall. Thank you Judy!

New Playground: Due to the construction, we had to place a temporary fence around the Rectory yard to house the nursery school playground. It seems to be working well and reports are that the steep pitch running up to Harris Ave. is a popular sliding spot!

Clean Up: Spring and fall cleanup days went off without a hitch this year and thanks to many hands the load was light. It really does make a huge difference when a crowd shows up for these events. We are usually done in a couple of hours. Don't be shy! There is something for all ages and abilities at these work days.

Our Sexton: I just wanted to say a big Thank You to John Laamanen for all of his hard work on the grounds this year. Your day-to-day care of the grounds John make our clean up days a breeze! Also, a big thank you for your help on the temporary fence.

Submitted by *Alan McBean with members Judy Davidson, Bruce Lawrence, Greg Allen, John Byrnes, Jonathan Davis, Josh Fritz, Ross Kinney, Steve Meyer, Vince Johnson and Craig Hammond.*

THE BUILDING HOPE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

The Capital Campaign Committee was tasked with raising the funds needed to implement the Building Hope for the Earth building and rectory energy improvements found elsewhere in this Report.

The Committee members were: Chris Chapman, Gary Gaunt, Laura Andrews, Jared Rediske and Judith McBean. Reverend Mary Lindquist was a co-chair of the committee with Chris Hart. We were well served by an exceptional giving consultant, Christine Graham.

On behalf of the Committee and the Building Hope Team, we wish to express our deep appreciation to all those who gave to make the Campaign a success. \$803,673 was pledged by 99 pledgers and we have received \$25,869 in grants so far. These pledges and grants will help us make far reaching and much needed energy improvements to our properties. The parish demonstrated its commitment to our local community and doing its part to stem the effects of climate change through this project. We are blessed to be the Parish of St. Michael's and we thank you all for this. *Chris Hart*

STEWARDSHIP

The Annual Stewardship Campaign for 2023 was called 'Nourished by Grace, Giving with Love.' We chose this name out of a recognition for the tremendous grace of God that has sustained us through these last difficult years and the resulting desire by so many in our community to give with love and service to our world.

We had three wonderful stewardship speakers share reflections about why they support St. Michael's: Alex O'Pray, Joyce Vining Morgan and Matthew Elkan.

Because our annual stewardship campaign was our SECOND fundraising campaign this last fall (following the Building Hope for the Earth campaign), we knew we were asking our parishioners to stretch in their giving. While we did not meet our total dollar goal of \$295,000, we exceeded our pledge number goal by 6 pledges; in addition, 50% of our pledgers increased their pledges AND we received 18 new pledges – more than we have received in recent history (see the chart below). This is a wonderful sign of health for our church.

Thank you, St. Michael's, for your amazing generosity and support of our common ministry, especially in this most challenging year!

Year	Total pledged	# of pledges	# new pledges
2011	\$198,837	119	12
2012	\$211,693	128	11
2013	\$218,293	129	12
2014	\$217,293	128	12
2015	\$215,878	123	9
2016	\$234,724	128	9
2017	\$262,282	133	11
2018	\$255,947	141	13
2019	\$268,498	140	15
2020	\$261,155	142	11
2021	\$274,155	130	8
2022	\$290,651	136	9
2023	\$281,249	140	18

The 2022/23 Stewardship Committee: *Imogene Drakes, Steve Guerriero, Brian and Joyce Vining Morgan and Mary Lindquist.*

Reports from Administration & Finance

VESTRY

After yet another online retreat in February, the St. Michael's Vestry has continued to honor ongoing concerns and precautions around COVID. While many meetings—including the Vestry's—have been via zoom or hybrid, we've all recognized the essential benefits of being together live—in communion. Progressing toward normalcy, I'm happy to say the Vestry will be on retreat live again in February.

What a year 2022 was! A year full of gains and losses—especially of beloved parishioners who passed away this year and of our music director of nearly 32 years, Susan Dedell, who has retired. But gains have been abundant, too: among them, the retention of our former seminarian, now Assistant Priest at St. Michael's and Vicar for Discipleship and Formation, Diocese of Vermont, adwoa Wilson.

Through it all, the Vestry supported three timely initiatives: Building Hope for the Earth, Becoming Beloved Community, and St. Michael's Interfaith Refugee Ministry.

In February '22, the Vestry endorsed the Building Hope for the Earth initiative by affirming St. Michael's commitment to its mission of stewardship of the earth thus pursuing an end to our reliance on fossil fuels. We work now toward a transition to 110% clean, renewable energy by 2030, tithing 10% of this energy back to our community.

It started with a leaky roof and has ended, thanks to a visionary team led by parishioner and new Vestry member, Cary Gaunt, to a comprehensive efficiency project involving:

- replacement of our elegant but failing slate roof with a new standing seam, copper roof and replacement of the Bradley Wing roof
- additional energy efficiency measures, including adding insulation and reducing air leakage from the building through weather-stripping and other measures.
- installation of onsite solar panels as a first step towards producing 110% of all our own electricity.
- electrification of our heating and cooling systems
- investment in an offsite solar array to cover all our energy needs, plus our tithe 10% back to the community

As faith leaders around the world, including our own Diocese, step up to meet this urgency as a core part of our mission, St. Michael's hears the call and commits to responding as a community leader.

The next initiative, sparked by a heightened awareness of Bishop Hopkins, first bishop of Vermont whose portrait had dominated our Common Room, was joining the nationwide Becoming Beloved Community movement in the Episcopal church focused on truth, healing, and justice.

Our Rector, Mary, reflected: "Through much thought and discussion about what to do with the picture and in discussion with our seminarian, adwoa Wilson, it became clear that we were being called to engage with wounds of racism in our church's history as well as to examine the role of racism in our lives today." Wilson adds, "George Floyd unearthed something painful that we may have thought was (nearly) buried. Then the Episcopal diocese

launched a Hopkins study. Then we saw Hopkins' picture on our own wall... through its invitation, we are beginning to speak more honestly together, to hope with more specificity and scope." In late January 2022, St. Michael's parishioners gathered to begin an 11-week series focused on Becoming Beloved Community, "beginning the process of confronting the wounds of racism in our church and in ourselves and discerning who God is calling our community to be in this time and in the future," Mary explained. This work is not done: discerning where to go next is on the table. In the meantime, renovation of the Common Room is underway guided by wishes expressed at a November 13 adult forum and aided by the aesthetic expertise of parishioner Chris Triebert.

The final initiative the St. Michael's Interfaith Refugee Ministry. "An opportunity walked in the door" is how parishioner Jeff Lewis described the beginning of this new ministry at St. Michael's and in the wider Brattleboro community. Jeff was approached by the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation about a community initiative that would help resettle refugees in Southern Vermont. Responding to a call to faith communities to work as co-sponsorship groups, several members of St. Michael's assumed the complex challenge of organizing volunteers within the church and collaborating with other area organizations. "This new work with refugees," said Rev. Jean Smith, one of the initiative's leaders, "is not a service project, unless by 'service' we mean God's service to us for our growth in faith." The Ministry has been responsible for the resettling of four Afghan families in our area. Covering soup to nuts of the process, they have taken on more tasks and more families than other area entities combined. This ministry will need more volunteers to be sustainable. Stay tuned for more information on how to become involved.

Many thanks are offered here to our outgoing Vestry members Nancy Ames, Rebecca Olmstead, Jared Radiske. Steven Guerriero, Alan McBean, David Treadwell, Rosie Wojcik, Junior Warden Chris Hart, and I look forward to welcoming and working with new Vestry members Paul Gallagher, Cary Gaunt, and Susan Heimer. We also give thanks for the ongoing work of our clerk Carol Beninati and for the many contributions of outgoing treasurer, Bruce Lawrence. We welcome and are grateful for our new treasurer, Tom Cain.

Special thanks go, too, to all of our church staff: you are invaluable—essential to our everyday work, well-being, and growth: Jeanie Crosby, Church Administrator; Rev. adwoa Wilson; John Laamanen, Sexton; and Darlene Rutnik, Bookkeeper. And to our newly-retired Music Director, Susan Dedell: God speed knowing our undying gratitude for all you have done with and for us for over three decades. To our priest associates, the Reverends Jean Smith and Phillip Wilson: we are ever grateful. And to our Rector, Mary Lindquist, long may we benefit and grow with your spiritual guidance, steady leadership and support of our lay ministries.

Ever grateful to be in this blessed community of faith and action,

Annie Landenberger

Sr. Warden

TREASURER

A Church budget is built on faith; faith that the income will be there when needed, faith that no large unforeseen needs arise and faith that the estimates for the expenses are close to the actual expenses. Even in these hard economic times, Saint Michael's faith-built budgets have been met with the actual income needed to operate the Church exceeding the bills that need to be paid every month. This is due to the great generosity of the Saint Michael's community. The wonderful giving of everyone's time, talents and treasures are a great help in keeping the finances as low as possible. Meeting and even exceeding your annual pledge make the Treasurer's job so much easier and allows us to provide that extra outreach to our local and world community.

2022 ended as a good year financially. Our income was better than we had anticipated, and our total expenses were slightly over what was planned. The final end-of-year figures are still being compiled, but the year 2022 ended with all expenses being met and no outstanding loans or long-term debt.

I am stepping down from the Treasurer's position and wish to thank everyone for the help and guidance they have provided to me during the past three years, especially Mary, Jeanie and our bookkeeper Darlene. They all have been very patient and helpful to me as I learned the job of Treasurer. I am especially thankful for the support and generosity of all of you and am sure our new Treasurer, Tom Cain, will be just as thankful as it continues.

Peace and God's blessing to all,

Bruce Lawrence

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

The year 2022 has been a disappointing year for our invested funds. The year began with a balance of \$1,819,784 and ended with a balance of \$1,455,773, a loss of 20%. This follows the stock markets as a whole.

The Endowment Committee met 4 times during the past year to discuss the status of the Fund. No concerns were found that needed addressing during the year.

I would like to thank the Endowment Committee for their support and time spent at committee meetings, Jeanette Landin for being the notetaker, and especially Steve Hamlin, Trust Officer for Greenfield Savings Bank, for his time and effort in setting up our zoom meetings and reports on the status of our Funds.

Doug Switzer, Chair

Committee: Steve Harrison, Jeanette Landin, Bruce Lawrence, Mary Lindquist, Steve Meyer, and Sudan Wilmott.

TECHNOLOGY MINISTRY

It is hard to over-estimate the importance of this new ministry, which began during the pandemic. Because of the generosity and foresight of St. Michael's parishioners in 2020, we have wonderful cameras and audio equipment to produce a livestream of our services. This means that people can participate in worship from wherever they are. This serves both people who are unable to attend church in person (because of health or distance) AND our regular parishioners who may miss services because of many other reasons. We are so grateful to Galen Robinson and Tian Ragle for their excellence with the livestream technology and faithfulness in showing up week after week!

We were proud to actually receive an award from Brattleboro Community Television for the quality of our services (which they air weekly on BCTV). You can view the awards ceremony here:

<https://youtu.be/mli3YAzpirQ?t=561>

COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY

The Communications Team formed early in 2021 with Rosie Wojcik, Mary Lindquist, Jeanie Crosby and Annie Landenberger. Our purpose is to get the word out --within the community and beyond-- about the good works in which St. Michael's is engaged.

Rosie has been great at keeping St. Michael's visible in social media--she knows the platforms and uses them well. Jeanie continues to send services listings and event information to the press and Annie has been writing features when opportunities arise; among them were pieces on the Refugee Resettlement Project (which was picked up by both the State's Diocesan newsletter and the nationwide Episcopal News

Service); the new Vestry; Building Hope for the Earth, Winged Productions' latest.

The Communications Team meets monthly via zoom to get updates from Mary on projects, plans, and initiatives; we then assess whether getting the word out is called for and, if so, to whom and how.

There are so many interesting people among us and projects to write about at St. Michael's, but we can only cover basics at this point. That said, if you'd like to join us as a writer, we'll use your talents well. Just contact Annie Landenberger if this interests you: verbatimvt@gmail.com.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

We are pleased to announce this year's Vestry candidates for election for three 3-year terms: Paul Gallagher, Cary Gaunt and Susan Heimer. The candidates who are nominated to be elected as delegates for the Diocesan Convention are Elizabeth Vick and Craig Hammond, along with Annie Landenberger, our Senior Warden. Carol Hesselbach is the alternate to Diocesan Convention.

Class of 2023: Nancy Ames, Rebecca Olmstead, Jared Rediske

Class of 2024: Steve Guerriero, Annie Landenberger, Alan McBean

Class of 2025: Chris Hart, David Treadwell, Rosie Wojcik

