

November 2023 Reports

Priest-in-Charge Report

Friends,

Two months have passed since our last meeting, and they were quite busy months, so this will be a longer than usual report.

The confirmation class I started in September went well and we had 16 people attend, of which 8 got confirmed when the Bishop was here. Others, who had attended, are still interested in being confirmed, but had not attended for long enough for me to be comfortable with having them be confirmed. It was the first time for me to lead a confirmation class and I am fairly happy with the bare bones curriculum that I managed to put together. Over the years I can build on that and make sure the curriculum is robust and worthwhile.

We had an Instructed Eucharist at the beginning of October and I also taught one to the BYU World Religions class when they came in September. I thought it went well, I had made some notes to add a few things for next year and hopefully that will also get better with time. It will remain a fixed yearly occurrence at the beginning of October, as I can make it part of the confirmation class that way and it can also serve as a reminder for the parish of the beautiful internal logic and poetry of our liturgy.

Also in October we have started the Thursday evening events and I am very happy with how they are going.

The first Thursday, Lon and I are leading a Faith Transitions group and in the two meetings that we have had, I was blown away by how many people are interested and how much they want to learn and explore and wrestle with the concepts that we bring forward. The plan is that sometimes we have some discussions that are more academic and Lon and I present more information, and other times it is just a group discussion where we offer a safe space and a listening ear to those who need to share about their lives and their hurts.

Second Thursday is Social Dinner and that is just for fun and community building. I am grateful to all who are willing to show up. It is a ministry of presence and the work is in just being willing to gather with the community and getting to know the newer parishioners.

Third Thursday is Contemplative Practice and we are exploring various ways to pray and get closer to God for people who are seeking. We have explored the labyrinth in the back and this month we will learn how to pray the Anglican Rosary.

The fourth Thursday we have Movie night and I am taking suggestions for the following months. The first movie we watched was Babette's Feast and this month we are watching It's a Wonderful Life.

The Blessing of the Animals was also a great gathering moment. It was lovely to see people's excitement at having their dear companions acknowledged and honored in a church service. I am looking for your impressions and your feedback on how that went.

The Bishop's Visitation is a bit of a blur for me because I was very sick when she was here and not at my best. She seems to have had a great time and has greatly enjoyed our gifts and the hike. Much gratitude to all who put in such an effort to provide food for the event.

My last vacation Sunday was spent on a trip to Illinois with my husband where I officiated the wedding of one of my dear friends. It was a good time for relaxation. Much gratitude to Lon and Gidge for officiating and preaching.

The big topic is, of course, Deacon Alison's departure. You all know well by now that she is going to be the deacon at St. Paul's in SLC. The Bishop has asked me if I wanted another deacon assigned to us and I have declined her offer because we currently do not have someone who resides in Utah County, and I believe that is an important aspect of the role of the deacon in a parish. Deacons should be attuned to the needs of the larger community and be a bridge between the community and the congregation.

We also have two discernment processes going on at the moment: Gidge is in discernment for the diaconate and Lon is in discernment for the priesthood. I am

beyond excited about them exploring the ways in which God is calling them to serve the Church and they have my full support on this journey.

The Bishop has reduced the clergy meetings to twice a month (from weekly) and that makes me very happy and it clears up time in my working day to do things that are more useful for St. Mary's. Lately a lot of my office work has been assigning what Deacon Alison did, I had a meeting with the Worship Committee that I needed to prepare for and we have planned all the services till Pentecost and I am also trying to prepare for Advent and Christmas in more detail.

I hope this covers most of it.

Blessings,

Dani+

Senior

Warden

Report

We had a Finance Committee meeting last week and had time to briefly go through the budget line by line. We will have Andrew merge and inactivate a few accounts, but will not be deleting anything. Andrew also had time to prepare a 2024 draft budget based on our recommendations.

I talked with Samantha about the potential benefit concert opportunity with the Santos Chamber Singers and she told me that their director didn't believe that they could put on a whole concert with as little material as they've worked on (could probably fill about 25 minutes). So, they opted to just give a donation in lieu of the use of our space.

The pie social (mandatory support group meeting) went well overall. We got a lot done that day, but gave some grace to groups who needed to figure out the logistics. Last I saw, there were just a few things left in the library, but everything else had been moved to the storage area by the utility closet. So, we have our kitchen and library back; and just in time for Oktoberfest.

I wasn't here for the Oktoberfest themed stewardship dinner, but heard that it was very enjoyable by many. I'm not sure pledges have increased because of it, but do believe it is definitely an event worth continuing. Marilyn was hoping to find out more about our pledge status so we can feel confident with our 2024 estimate.

We did get the Priest-in-Charge account for the discretionary account open, but still need to transfer existing funds from the General Fund. Deacon Alison gave back the

checkbook for that discretionary fund, but because she is the only signer, we still need to figure out what is needed in order to hold that account with no deacon.

I got two interior cameras installed this week. So, we now have visibility to the parish hall, upstairs, library, and office entrances and the entrance hall; as well as the sacristy, sanctuary, and adjacent exterior door.

Angel Tree will start on the 26th of this month. We will have about 36 tags on the tree this year, which is six more than last year; but I believe we have more in attendance, so I think we can handle it.

Junior Warden Report

Everything's going fine. Nothing new or unexpected has happened. We got some locks changed and bulbs replaced, but that's about it. It's been pretty busy at work, so I haven't even thought about the changing tables much, but hope to get to them next week.

Treasurer's Report

Income

- Pledge contributions were ahead of budget for the month of October by over \$2.7k. Year-to-date pledge contributions (January-October) were ahead of budget by \$8.9k.
- Plate contributions were above budget for the month of October. Year-to-date plate contributions were significantly ahead of budget (by over \$5k).
- Grant income for October was received as expected.
- Overall, income year-to-date is ahead of budget by \$13.8k.

Expense

- Copier costs (lease and actual usage) are consistently over-budget; however, we likely under budgeted this category. We will revisit copier costs when we meet to discuss the 2024 budget this fall.
- As expected, utility expenses will be over budget for the year. Annual increases in cost should be considered during 2024 budget discussions.
- The organist expense will be well over budget for the year. This is likely another under budgeted category for the budget committee to consider.
- Yard expenses will be well over budget for the year. This is likely another under budgeted category for the budget committee to consider. There was a \$885 surplus for

the month of October. There was a \$4,945 surplus year-to-date (a year-to-date deficit of \$7,710 was budgeted). St. Mary's is in a solid financial position with 83% of the budget year expired.