



ST. MARK'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

2020 Annual Report



The 81st Annual Parish Meeting

Sunday, January 24, 2021

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ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AGENDA

January 24, 2021, 11 a.m.
Hauser Hall and via Zoom Webinar

***The mission of St. Mark's Episcopal Church is to learn, to worship,
and to serve as a joyful Christian family.***

- I. Invocation and Welcome Introduction: The Rev. Patrick J. Miller, *rector*
- II. Declaration of Quorum: Reagan Pratt, *chancellor*
- III. Approval of Meeting Format: The Rev. Patrick J. Miller
- IV. Appointments for the Meeting: The Rev. Patrick J. Miller
 - a. Clerk of the Meeting
- V. Approval of the Minutes for the 2020 Annual Parish Meeting: The Rev. Patrick J. Miller
- VI. Nominations and Elections: Marisa Zapata, *chair of the nominations committee*
- VII. Ministry and Committee Reports
 - a. Finance: Paul Hanson, *treasurer* and Kim Thoss, *director of finance*
- VIII. State of the Parish: The Rev. Patrick J. Miller
- IX. Gratitudes: The Rev. Patrick J. Miller
- X. Necrology: The Rev. David M. Goldberg, *assistant rector*
- XI. Closing Prayer: The Rev. Samantha Smith, *associate rector*
- XII. Adjournment

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, HOUSTON, TX
Sunday, January 26, 2020

- I. Invocation
 - a. The Rev. Patrick J. Miller gave the opening prayer.
- II. Declaration of Quorum
 - a. The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by the Rev. Patrick J. Miller.
 - b. A quorum was confirmed and declared by Chancellor, Reagan Pratt.
- III. Appointments for the Meeting
 - a. Appointment of Clerk: Carolyn Hanson.
 - b. The Rev. Patrick Miller welcomed the 2020 Confirmation Class. He recommended giving the Confirmation Class a seat and a voice but no vote for the 2020 Annual Parish Meeting.
 - c. A motion was received from Steve Banks. A second confirmed. The Quorum present approved the Confirmation Class has a seat on the floor for the meeting.
- IV. Approval of Minutes
 - a. The Rev. Patrick Miller requested approval of the St. Mark's Episcopal Church 2019 Annual Meeting minutes.
 - b. A motion was made from the floor for approval. The motion was seconded. The Quorum present approved the Annual Meeting minutes for 2019.
- V. Elections and Nominations
 - a. Grant Ashlin, Chair of Nominations, announced the nominations for the St. Mark's Episcopal Church 2020 Vestry. Allen Case, Greg Koush, Kendall Tamlyn, and Marisa Zapata were presented as candidates. There were no nominations from the floor.
 - b. The Rev. Miller asked for a vote of the slate by acclamation. With no opposition, the Quorum present approved the candidates for the 2020 Vestry.
 - c. The Rev. Miller presented the nomination of Will Hawkins as the Diocesan Council Delegate.
 - d. Wm. "Bill" Ladd was nominated to serve on the St. Mark's Episcopal Church Endowment Board.
 - e. A motion was made to elect the Diocesan Council delegate and Endowment Board member. A second was received from the floor on each of these nominations. The St. Mark's Episcopal Church Congregation Quorum unanimously approved.
 - f. The Rev. Patrick Miller seated the new Vestry members at the head of the table.
 - g. The Rev. Miller announced Mary Round as Senior Warden for St. Mark's Episcopal Church. Amelie Carlton will be Junior Warden.

VI. Ministry/Committee Reports

- a. Senior Warden Review of St. Mark's was given by Fred Wasden.
 - i. Fred highlighted a successful two years of the Strategic Plan.
 - ii. He also recognized Charlie Stiernberg and Peter Randazzo as candidates for ordination.
- b. Paul Hanson, Treasurer for St. Mark's Episcopal Church, reviewed how the church budget is approached and configured to meet the needs of the church and community.
- c. Garhett Wagers, Headmaster of St. Mark's Episcopal School, presented St. Mark's School report.
 - i. Garhett stated he is thankful for the partnership of the church and school.
 - ii. He reported the overall status of the school is very healthy.
 - iii. Garhett gave a future vision of St. Mark's school.

VII. State of the Parish

- a. The Rev. Miller expressed his gratitude to his family, St. Mark's School, Rev. Samantha Smith, and the Vestry.
- b. During the Rev. Miller's 2019 spiritual journey to Jerusalem, he visited Church of St. Mark where parishioner Mary Quito attended in her youth. Church of St. Mark is the historical location of The Last Supper.
- c. The Rev. Miller visioned the next decade with a different clarity and vision. He is striving for a friendly balance and more parishioner involvement.
- d. The Rev. Miller acknowledged the retiring Vestry members with a gift in their name to a St. Mark's charity partner.
- e. The Rev. Miller commissioned the St. Mark's 2020 Volunteer Committee members.

VIII. Necrology

- a. The Necrology of 2019 for St. Mark's Episcopal Church was recited. The Rev. Samantha Smith led the prayer in honor of the deceased.

IX. Closing Prayer

- a. The closing prayer of the St. Mark's Episcopal Church Annual Meeting was led by the Rev. Samantha Smith.

X. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

CLERGY REPORTS

RECTOR, the Rev. Patrick J. Miller

A review of the history of our parish reveals a common theme. Each moment in our life as the people of St. Mark's has prepared us for the moments that will come next. In 1939, the decision to name our church St. Mark's prepared us for the kind of church we would become. St. Mark is often considered the 'evangelist', the bringer of good news. Naming ourselves after this saint organized us to bring the good news of Jesus to people and to bring people to the good news of Jesus. We prepared ourselves to the work of invitation. We invited people to church, and on our first Sunday, 150 people came.

Each decade inadvertently prepared us for the next. In the 1940's we elongated the nave. In the 1950's we expanded our staff. In the 1960's we started our school. In the 1970's we installed a pipe organ. In the 1980's we built Hauser Hall. In the 1990's we worked on our internal structures. In the 2000's we reimagined our ministries into four 'pillars'. In the last decade we renovated our church sanctuary, retired a significant portion of our debts and created a strategic plan to guide us through 2023. In 2017, Hurricane Harvey stress tested our common life as a church. I believe that each moment in our history, big and small, have all coalesced into this one moment, and given us the ability to withstand the disruptive impact of COVID-19. My report to you for 2020 is that while we didn't realize it, God had prepared us to meet the challenges the pandemic has wrought.

2020 began with our Vestry reviewing the goals of our strategic plan and realizing a significant bequest from Joan Ryba Gillis. The gift from her estate doubled our endowment, from \$1.4 million to \$3 million. The Vestry began dreaming how this gift would enhance our strategic plan and serve the community. By March, the pandemic would arrive and force us to close our church doors from March 15 to June 7. The clergy would arrive each Sunday and pray, keeping a succession of continuous prayers, but public worship was postponed. In three days, from March 12 to March 15, The Rev. Samantha Smith created an on-line version of our worship, and parishioners were asked to tune in. Holy Week and Easter was completely on-line. In-person worship returned with a prayer vigil from June 7 to August 2. From August 2 to October 4, we offered morning and evening prayer. We slowly returned music and the Eucharist from October 4 until the end of the year. We had a hybrid celebration of Christmas, online and in person. We were prepared, and we endured.

The organizational model for our Vestry to divide its work between Governance and Engagement is an example of another way we were prepared. The Vestry oversees the efforts of our pillar ministries. Worship, Connection, Formation and Service. Since the Vestry committees and the pillar ministries had a staff liaison, a vestry liaison, a chair, and a committed group of volunteers, we had devoted groups of people to think creatively. These groups all worked in concert with the goal of keeping our parish tethered to each other, our charity partners, and our community. We were prepared and met the challenge.

Our leaders were gifts to our ministry. Mary Round headed the Vestry. Charlie Stiernberg chaired Finance. Amelie Carlton managed the property. Jay Burgess led the Engagement committee. Nathan Phelps helped guide our school. Jack Waddill provided key insight to the life of the staff. Kay Wasden, Allen Case and Marisa Zapata led our Connection effort. Cindy Case and Kendall Tamlyn managed our Service work. Jason Berryman and Greg Koush guided our Formation. Grant Ashlin and Jay Burgess steered our Stewardship campaign. Erin Donovan supported the worship for our parish, the centerpiece of our life together. Dorrie Pearson oversaw our Endowment. Each of these people positively influenced our parish in an unprecedented moment in our history. They were prepared from the good work by the men and women who came before them.

We were prepared to take a leap of faith and add three new members to our staff. The addition of Joseph Rawley in June to lead to the work of Formation, Gregory Cross in July as our technology intern, and the Rev. David Goldberg in September for Connection and Service rounded out a full team. A full staff meant that everyone on the staff could concentrate on his or her area without distraction during required social distance, limited office time, or hybrid meetings and ministry settings.

Tina Moses enhanced her efforts on parish administration. Josie Wilson and Carolyn Hanson kept focus on administrative support. Kim Thoss held steady in the unsteady work of church finance. Cameron Hammon concentrated on communication and our 5 p.m. service. Renee Rybolt directed new forms of live and recorded music. Alex Hillis gathered young people to keep them involved and together. The Rev. Samantha Smith diligently and creatively worked to bring a robust online presence and to raise the funds necessary for us to manage and maintain our ministries and achieve our goals of thriving together during an isolating pandemic.

Our school was well prepared. The School Board, led by its chairwoman Sara Elkins, has been an effective and agile group that has lent unwavering and dynamic support to our school. Garhett Wagers and his team took the entire campus to remote learning for the last three months of the 2019/20 school year. This was a daunting and complicated task, but the technological infrastructure that the school had invested in over the last 10 years needed only a few tweaks to give our students as strong an online learning experience as possible. This way of instruction is not ideal, but it carried the school through the end of the year. As the summer arrived, Garhett's team worked to create a school year that was hybrid in design with online and in-person classrooms. The staffs of the church and the school each worked to reimagine the various campus spaces to maintain a standard of care and distance for a learning environment during a pandemic. The youth room was converted to a teacher work area, Hauser Hall and the vesting room were reimaged as workspaces. The music room, art rooms became learning classrooms. The back parking lot was tented to provide an outdoor learning area. I am proud to serve with Garhett. His tireless efforts have served our school well. His friendship and counsel have kept me going as your rector.

As we face 2021, we do so well prepared and ready. We remain committed to our one goal, proclaiming Jesus, and the good news we have inherited as baptized Christians. Our work over the next few months is to strengthen our ties to each other. We will do this through our four pillar committee's efforts. The Worship committee will work to make our traditional in-person worship vibrant and safe. We will work to keep our online worship experience interactive and energetic. Our Connection committee will use our neighborhood connection groupings to maintain our relationships with each other. Our Service committee will assemble volunteers to support our charity partners. Our Formation committee will continue to offer online opportunities, as well as exploring ways to gather in safe ways as the pandemic experience makes its way through 2021.

As we are prepared for this moment, over the next months we need to prepare for our parish's post-pandemic ministry. It will be important for our Vestry and various committees to identify the tactics necessary to solidify the visions each group has for their respective areas of ministry. We have a strategic plan to guide us, but we will need to make ourselves ready for an unknown future. We need to galvanize our financial resources by asking all our parishioners to make a pledged gift to the ministry of our church. We will need to lean on each with and offer of each other's insights and expertise. We each have something to contribute to the effort of proclaiming Jesus to the world.

I begin my 14th year as your Rector. I am amazed by all that we have accomplished since 2008. Our family has grown up before your eyes. Our church and school have prepared my children for adulthood. In May, our son graduates High School, and our daughter will graduate from St. Mark's. Together, we have walked through pandemics, hurricanes, renovations, baptisms, confirmations, weddings, funerals and more. As a way for me to prepare for our future, I plan to take a sabbatical from May 1 to August 31 to refresh and renew my ministry. Your

generosity of this time for me and my family is greatly appreciated. As we prepare for the future, I look forward for a brief time to reflect and remember all the good we have done with and for each other, our charity partners, and our communities.

As we close 2020, we are set for 2021. We will have challenges, but we are prepared to meet them with the same faithfulness and care that have marked our eight decades of service as the people of St. Mark's. Thank you for your trust in me, and for the many ways you make me a better rector.

ASSOCIATE RECTOR, the Rev. Samantha Smith

When I returned from maternity leave in January, I could not have envisioned the year that was ahead for us. A pandemic, an infant, a shift to working from home, worship online, continual uncertainty and constant change. It was a year I will not forget for as long as I live. I would be lying if I said I was less than exhausted by it. More than anything, however, I will remember the fortitude and dedication of the people of St. Mark's. Together, we successfully moved our worship life online, we found ways to serve our neighbors at a time of dire need, we gathered in neighborhood groups for community building, and we found ways to thrive despite the environment. I was so proud to oversee our Worship and Stewardship efforts in 2020, and to work with the countless volunteers who gave their time and talents to the beauty and growth of St. Mark's throughout the year. I was also grateful for the additions to our staff. David, Joseph, and Gregory brought wisdom, energy, and leadership to our church in significant and immediate ways that we all needed and hoped for. Most of all, I am grateful to serve as your priest. You all continue to teach me more and more about the love and grace of Jesus Christ, and I am honored by your trust and faith in me to walk alongside you in your journeys.

ASSISTANT RECTOR, the Rev. David Goldberg

It has been a privilege to minister among you since September of this past year. I find it a great testament to the power of our faith that I have come to know a few members so well in such a short period of time. Of course, there are so many others who I look forward to getting to know better in the months to come. St Mark's is a special place. With its gifts for hospitality and humor, I find such joy amid our parish.

In the year to come I hope to capitalize on this happy disposition in order to grow the church. Coming out of isolation, neighbors will be hungry for the kind of community we have. I look forward to creating opportunities for new members and their families to connect, find solace, break bread, and celebrate with the saints of St. Mark's. In the months to come it will be tempting to look back and despair at the time we have lost gathering, worshipping, and learning together. Such an outlook though runs contrary to "the hope that is in us." God has made St. Mark's for this moment.

On a final note, I want to thank those parishioners who have reached out to me to welcome me; the staff of St. Mark's who have facilitated my transition into life among you; the Rev. Samantha Smith for her friendship, insight and confidence in me; and the Rev. Patrick J. Miller who has been so gracious a supervisor and so wise a mentor. And lastly and most of all, to God for his manifold and great mercies.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Paul Hanson, Treasurer
Kim Thoss, Director of Finance

OPERATING INCOME STATEMENT 2020

Description	2020 Actual	2020 Budget Revised Mid-Year	Over / (Under) Budget
Revenue			
Pledge Offerings	\$820,587	\$951,190	\$(130,603)
All Other Contribution Offerings	244,036	164,179	79,857
Endowment Earnings Distribution	38,639	36,994	1,645
EDOT Financial Services-Diocesan Assessment Grant	55,462	-	55,462
Paycheck Protection Program Loan Now Forgiven	146,500	-	146,500
All Other Income	27,521	53,618	(26,097)
Total Revenue	1,332,745	1,205,981	126,764
Expenses			
Salaries & Benefits	992,361	1,046,103	(53,742)
Building Operations & Maintenance	40,990	18,798	22,192
Office Operations	60,242	56,264	3,978
Communications	9,027	6,219	2,808
Fundraising	4,944	3,783	1,161
Offsite Administrative Work	15,215	18,827	(3,612)
Parish History	1,174	985	189
Diocesan Assessment & ECW	119,592	119,604	(12)
Worship	57,443	42,196	15,247
Formation/Education	32,981	18,639	14,342
Connection	24,680	31,488	(6,808)
Pastoral Support	7,574	3,265	4,309
Other Expenses Without Depreciation Expense	7,923	14,699	(6,776)
Total Expenses Without Depreciation Expense	1,374,147	1,380,870	(6,723)
Net Income /(Loss) Without Depreciation Expense	\$(41,402)	\$(174,889)	\$(133,487)

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS THROUGH DECEMBER 2020

	Current Month	Year to Date
Net Income (Loss)	254,959	(264,206)
Adjustments to reconcile increase in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation and amortization	5,896	148,501
(Increase) decrease in:		
Prepaid Pledges	1,000	1,000
Misc. Receivables	(371)	13,329
Misc. Receivables-Capital (Net)	44,647	238,296
Prepaid Expenses	(1,809)	5,321
Other current assets	-	-
Investments	-	-
Other assets	-	-
Long Term Assets	-	-
Increase (decrease) in:		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	26,553	462,631
Accrued Liability (Prepaid)	(18,992)	(30,661)
Accrued Mission/Youth Activities	-	-
Discretionary Funds	5,068	1,455
Other Liabilities	(136,150)	(102,510)
Net cash (used in) provided by operating activities	180,799	473,156
 Investing Activities		
Acquisition of property and equipment	13,075	152,171
Proceeds from sale of property and equipment	-	-
Decrease (increase) in assets limited as to use	-	-
Net cash used in investing activities	13,075	152,171
 Financing Activities		
Payments on long-term debt	(1,318)	(206,778)
Capital Assets Transfer	-	-
Fund Transaction	17,693	(73,530)
Proceeds from issuance of long-term debt	-	-
Net cash provided by financing activities	16,376	(280,308)
NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	210,251	345,018
 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT BEGINNING OF PERIOD	712,269	577,502
 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF PERIOD	\$ 922,520	\$ 922,520
	0	0

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF HOUSTON ENDOWMENT, INC.,

Walter Lynch, Treasurer

The Endowment Committee (the "Committee") met twice in 2020 (once virtually) to review investments, determine the annual distributions to the Church and Women of St. Mark's and discuss the future of the Endowment.

In February 2020, the Committee held its annual meeting and elected the following officers to serve: Dorrie Pearson, President; Walter Lynch, Treasurer; Bill Ladd, Secretary and; Erin Salisbury, Vice President.

In the regular meeting in February 2020, the Committee voted to approve the distribution of 4% of the income from the combined funds to the designated beneficiaries – the Church and Women of St. Mark's.

The committee met again on November 4, 2020. During that meeting, the Committee discussed, among other things, the Vestry Resolution related to the gift from the Ryba estate.

As of December 31, 2020, the Endowment investment account had an approximate value of \$1.35 million, which was an increase of 2.3% for the year. The Eberling Fund had an approximate value of \$221,000 at December 31, 2020 increasing by 7.5% for the year. And notably, the new Endowment investment account created from part of the proceeds from the Ryba estate had an approximate value of \$1.64 million on December 31, 2020.

As part of the audit of all Church related accounts, the Endowment participated in the audit in April 2020 and the auditors reported that all documents related to the Endowment are in order and there were no adverse findings.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE, Grant Ashlin, Chair

God has entrusted us with the care, development, and enjoyment of God's world according to God's wishes. Our service work, our worship, our operating budget are based on your stewardship pledge and those of your fellow parishioners. Your annual pledge affirms your membership at St. Mark's, your commitment to an active faith, and your intention to grow in your faith. Whether this was your first or 81st pledge to St. Mark's, thank you for your financial support. Your pledge and participation in our community are invaluable. If you have not pledged yet, you can do so by visiting our website and clicking on the "Giving" tab at the top of the home page. On our Church app, tap the Connect icon, then 2021 pledge.

At its very core, stewardship is about the community making up the congregation of St. Mark's. This year's campaign was focused on that core value – St. Mark's is nothing without God's enduring love and each other. With that mindset, the Stewardship Committee convened in February to begin planning for the year. The 2021 theme for the Stewardship campaign is "Thriving Together: Building a church we love," using Romans 15:5-6 as inspiration: "May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Jay Burgess served as Engagement Chair and Grant Ashlin served as Vestry Representative. Committee members included Trevor and Katherine Brown, Hilary and Brian Green, and the Rev. Samantha Smith and Kim Thoss served as Staff Liaisons. The committee would like to thank the church members that graciously agreed to submit testimonial videos, sharing why giving to St. Mark's is important to them, and what Stewardship meant to them.

Every gift whether it is a monetary gift/pledge or through someone's volunteer hours is truly appreciated. While we are still short of our 2021 pledge goal, we have many things to be thankful for and to celebrate. This year St. Mark's received 26 new pledges! This includes new families, as well as families that have pledged in the past, but not last year. In addition, this year almost one-third of the families pledging were able to increase their pledge amounts.

St. Mark's is nothing without its people. We are better due to everyone's presence and participation in our community. Together, we can not only endure, as our scripture says, but we can thrive, even in the face of all the adversities and challenges that 2020 presented. Since its founding in 1939, St. Mark's has thrived and Together we are Thriving now!

As of January 15:

Number of 2021 pledges: 159

Amount pledged for 2021: \$678,812.00

Number of 2020 pledges: 163

Pledge revenue for 2020: \$813,840.00

BUILT WITH PURPOSE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN, Kim Thoss, Director of Finance

The capital campaign conducted in 2017 was designed to provide debt relief from a bank loan used to pay for renovations to the sanctuary in 2011. By paying off the debt early, St. Mark's will save a minimum of \$1,000,000 in interest over the 20-year loan period. \$3.1 million was pledged by 152 households to the campaign, to be fulfilled by 2021. Our end-of-year statements will include updates on contributions made and due on pledges. We are grateful to those who have pledged and remained up to date on their gifts, and especially thank those who have paid ahead of schedule, enabling us to pay down more on our loan.

2020 donations: \$262,000

2020 payments on loan: \$207,000

January 2021 loan payment: \$77,000

January 2021 loan balance: \$295,000

WARDEN REPORTS

SENIOR WARDEN, Mary Round, MD

2020 was the year that our congregation could not traditionally congregate. Despite the pandemic constraints, St. Mark's had an extraordinary year. St. Mark's Vestry worked to preserve our mission, and plan for our future within our financial boundaries. The 2020 Vestry oversaw the mission of St. Marks through its four pillars: Worship, Service, Connection and Formation. This year, we added to our staff and invested in our physical plant preparing our church for 2021 and beyond. We oversaw financial matters to balance our current responsibilities and facilitate our future.

It is most fortunate that St. Mark's embarked on its strategic plan in 2018. Our mission to reach a programmatic church is in progress, and our four pillars: Worship, Service, Connection and Formation, are populated with hardworking, dedicated parishioners. During 2020, the Worship Committee had to change from an in-person service to an online service. St. Mark's succeeded efficiently and economically. Additionally, Worship offered in person gatherings while protecting the health and well-being of our parishioners. Prayer vigils were offered to aid our parish during these difficult times. The Service Committee supplied food to Kids' Meals, Christian Community Service Center, and Lord of the Streets. St Mark's hosted seven successful "contactless" food drives during the pandemic. Additionally, St. Mark's donated funds to our service partners, including Hospitality Apartments. The Connection Committee started outdoor services uniting our parishioners by zip code. Specifically, 13 neighborhood groups were created. Eucharist on the Lawn was a new gathering to create a socially distant outdoor service which served more than 140 parishioners in October alone. Communication added a mailed *The Messenger* newsletter to the weekly emails to keep all of us informed. The Formation Committee created an online Sunday school. St. Mark's continued classes for all age groups, Bible studies, parenting classes, and virtual music performances. Christian Formation classes adhered to socially distant guidelines to enhance our faith and protect our health.

In addition to our mission, St. Mark's also continued our close associations. Our associations with St. Mark's Episcopal School, the Diocese, and Camp Allen remained strong. To further document St. Mark's commitment to our faith, one of our parishioners is pursuing a call to the ordained ministry.

Planning for the future was an important 2020 objective. We have added to our staff. The goal was to improve Sunday school and increase our opportunities to connect with parishioners and welcome new members. The Rev. David Goldberg joined us in September 2020. The Rev. Goldberg joins the St. Mark's clergy and helped create outdoor services. Mr. Joseph Rawley has joined St. Mark's staff full time to further our Formation pillar. As a teacher and a musician, Mr. Rawley is expected to benefit our Formation pillar as well as his continued work in music. We welcomed an intern, Gregory Cross, who helped the Worship pillar pivot to a digital presence. He facilitated our social media connections during this socially distant time. Our new clergy and staff add enthusiasm and optimism now and going forward. Our physical plant was also addressed. Specifically, the air conditioner and organ were repaired. The plans to improve our Formation and Connections pillars as well as tending to our physical plant were all implemented in 2020. We hope these plans improve our church and encourage people to join our congregation. We plan for a robust, active congregation with an abundance of joyful music in the coming years.

Although 2020 has been a difficult financial year for the world, St. Mark's has been most fortunate as it has been able to invest in the future. We chose to invest in people. We maintained our staff. We added key people to facilitate our future goals. We performed maintenance procedures to plan for our future physical plant use. We were able to pay down some of our debt. We enhanced our endowment. We are proud of our capital and stewardship campaigns. We are most grateful for our generous congregation.

2020 was not a typical year, we have all faced numerous challenges. At St Mark's, we worked toward our mission through our four pillars. We planned and invested in our future. I thank all of you for being a part of our congregation, and I especially want to thank Carolyn and Paul Hanson and the Rev. Patrick Miller. Carolyn and Paul Hanson have relocated to Montana, their dedication and work are appreciated and will be missed greatly. Thank you both. I am most grateful for our energetic and devoted Rev. Patrick Miller. Thank you for your leadership. Although our congregation could not congregate traditionally in 2020, we maintained our mission and planned for our future. I am grateful to every member of St. Mark's, and honored to serve.

JR. WARDEN, Amelie Carlton

It has been another full year on the St. Mark's campus. Through collaborative efforts between church and school, and with guidance from the Building Solutions of Dallas assessment report, the following work was accomplished in 2020:

Safety and Security

- Added more exterior doors to our key card system.
- In addition to communicating through our lockdown app, we prepped classrooms and offices for additional lockdown security.
- Continue to contract with the Frizell Group International providing uniformed off duty police officers on campus during school hours and special events.

Landscape/Exterior

- Changed landscaping contractor at an annual savings of \$2,000.
- Trees planted in large playground.
- Shade structure installed in large playground.
- Contractor power-washed exterior of church and all other buildings, including pavers and sidewalks.
- Removed and installed new asphalt in the fire lane by the church offices.

Facilities

- Replaced all exterior doors in Hauser Hall.
- Added a wifi access point in the balcony of the church.
- B Building 2nd floor (PGIL, computer lab and hallway) repainted, and did touch up painting throughout the year.
- DTK Facility Services continues to work well.
 - Campus is cleaner overall especially with COVID-19 protocols.
 - Day Porter added to clean all door handles, handrails, etc. throughout the school days.
- Moved unnecessary furniture and supplies from all buildings to a leased storage warehouse for COVID-19 protocols.
- Erected a tent in the enclosed G Building parking lot to add outdoor meeting space.
- Added plexiglass enclosures in the church and school offices, added plexiglass desk shields in classrooms.
- Rethought our working space to accommodate social distancing.
 - Hauser Hall, Vesting Room, and Youth Room turned into space for teachers.

HVAC

- Changed contractor at an annual savings of \$11,000.
- Several units repaired and parts replaced throughout the campus.
- Compressor replaced in the church.

Plumbing

- No major projects or repairs

Electrical

- Added extra power/outlets for the front yard of the church.
- Replaced five courtyard fixtures in the breezeway of the school.
- Upgraded two digital timers for outdoor lights (Hauser Hall, front of church and church offices)

We said farewell to John Giffin, Facilities Administrator, who left St. Mark's in August. And we welcomed Brandon Krus, our new Facilities Coordinator. We remain grateful for the tireless work of our entire facilities staff including sextons Guillermo Monge, Camilo Patino, Jose Flores, and Fernando Garcia, who maintain our property, keeping it functional and beautiful. And we remain grateful for the officers of the Frizell Group International for keeping our campus safe.

STAFF REPORTS

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR, Tina Moses

2020 was a busy year! In addition to the year-round projects we accomplished, in March we quickly changed the way we worked and worshiped and shut down the campus. To make it possible for all the church staff to work remotely, we enhanced (and for some added) Zoom, Dropbox and Splashtop so we could communicate with each other and access and share files. We relied on our website, YouTube channel, social media and Constant Contact emails to communicate to and remain in touch with our parishioners. We invested in new computers for new staff and added filming and editing equipment and software to our operations. We established and enforced safety protocols for all to adhere to keep everyone healthy and safe. This included removing all prayer books, hymnals and printed materials from the sanctuary, creating a traffic pattern for all to enter the sanctuary from one door and exit another, adding numerous hand sanitizing stations inside the church and throughout the campus, a sign-in system for staff and parishioners to fill out each time they are on campus, creating social distance seating by adding gold roping to designate which pews to sit, removing chairs and additional seating, removing communal items from the kitchen and turning off water coolers, limiting the number of people who gather, and requiring everyone to wear a face mask or shield.

I would like to express my gratitude to Eve Grubb, Director of Operations, for her partnership and collaborative spirit on all things church and school. And to the clergy, and office and facilities staff for their hard work, humor, and dedication to St. Mark's. We have a great team!

INTERN, Gregory Cross

Digital Improvement

Over the past year St. Mark's has seen a tremendous area of growth in its digital offerings for the parish. The church is now on par and in other areas outperforming parishes of similar size throughout the Diocese of Texas. These areas of growth are manifested in the YouTube channel, which has been updated with an opening video, link to our website, links to other social media, and has grown in numbers of subscribers. The St. Mark's website has been utilized as a conduit of information about both in person and online worship. The updates to the website include portions dedicated to online offerings, links to social media, and reorganization. Other social media growth can be found in Instagram, and Facebook where numbers of views, interactions, and followers have increased. A new social media tool was added this year, Twitter. This platform offers another way to interact with the parish and potential newcomers. Additionally, another area of growth can be found in the Soulfull Sunday's podcast. The podcast's production was brought in house. This also brought on new platforms on which it is now published, from two to now four platforms. In short, St. Mark's has leaned into the problems faced this year and grown its digital footprint into an organization that offers multi-platform worship and learning opportunities as well as multi-platform communication.

Digital Worship Production

Digital Worship saw a growth in offerings and in sophistication as the year went on. The production quality increased by the investment into new camera equipment, an iPad, and editing software. The camera equipment purchases allowed for more stability while filming resulting in better quality in the final product. Lighting was a significant problem in the filming process early on; but, the purchase of lighting equipment solved this issue, and it

also allows for additional lighting for other services. The video editing software allowed the transitions, video quality, and media opportunities to increase. The investment of the editing software also allowed for the podcast editing and publication to be brought in house.

As the year went on the sophistication of our content greatly increased. The addition of our logo, giving information, and at times bloopers to the worship videos created a more polished look to the content. Seasonally, there were changes made that included different intro and outro music, background slides, and fonts which marked the changes in the church year. Likewise, a point of pride for St. Mark's should be the Children's Sermon videos which engage both the young members and the most senior members of our congregation. St. Mark's was one of if not the first churches in the Diocese of Texas to produce children's content which has now been replicated by other churches in the Diocese.

Church COVID Procedures

Safety of the congregation was at the forefront of the planning of worship opportunities offered during 2020. This included a video with the Rev. Samantha Smith showing how to properly enter the space, creation of directional signs, a sign in sheet system for contact tracing, and sanitization procedures. Upon arrival at the church there was a sign directing members to the chapel doors. Next sign includes a message about masking and offers a mask to those who may have forgotten. Third, there is a sign by a table announcing the need for everyone to sign in. This table is monitored by the greeter who makes sure everyone signs in, uses the correct process, and is wearing a mask. The greeter also informs members of location of bathrooms, appropriate pews to sit in and how to safely exit the space.

Before and in between services, the greeter disinfects the areas that are most commonly touched by those entering the church. This includes but is not limited to door handles (including bathrooms), pens, tables, and handrails both inside and out. After the service, the greeter looks through the pews for left behind items, collects gifts from offering plates, and gathers sign in sheets. Next, the sanitation process is repeated before leaving and making sure the church is locked and secure.

Special Projects

There are several additional items that do not fit into the categories above. These include the Saint's posts, Book of Common Prayer videos, Stewardship videos, and Veteran's Day video. The goal of the Saint's posts is to raise awareness and understanding of the liturgical calendar of Saints Feast Days and create content that strengthens our social media presence with content of a non-announcement nature.

WORSHIP

Submitted by the Rev. Samantha Smith

There are not adequate words to describe the year that has just passed. In the midst of so much change, so much uncertainty, and so much upset, it is no small miracle that the worship life of St. Mark's not only endured but blossomed. At the beginning of 2020 we had no wifi in the sanctuary, no infrastructure to film worship, no idea how to best worship digitally in our context. By the end of 2020 St. Mark's filmed and produced 175 unique online worship opportunities, received more than 11,000 views, included more volunteers than we thought possible in the digital worship life of the church, and found a way to gather both in person and online to glorify God with our prayer and praise. We were able to upgrade our equipment economically and effectively, we taught ourselves how to use editing software and social media plug ins, and we developed an online brand from scratch. It was a year for the record books in so many ways, but most of all it was a year of learning the true reach and meaning of what a worshipping community is - what binds and defines it. Though we were spread across the city, state, and country in some cases, we still found ways to gather and praise God together. It was not the year we envisioned, but it produced some wonderful fruits in the worshipping life of St. Mark's, and for that I give great thanks.

Submitted by Cameron Dezen Hammon, Music Director of 5 p.m. Service, and Communications

2020 was a complicated year, and though the 5 p.m. service as well as our communications work was no exception, it proved to be a fruitful year as well. The 5 p.m. service integrated new band members (Will Story and Mike Johnson), learned new music, and continued to refine the musical identity of our unique and well-loved service. With the onset of the pandemic, the band pivoted from in-person performance to video performance and learned a new video production app in order to offer new, live, music to the parish every week. We've continued to work hard to offer engaging musical worship and respond to the changing pandemic landscape with flexibility and fluidity. Since the start of Advent, I've been back to singing on Sunday evenings. Throughout Epiphany we will be scaled back to just piano, guitar, and vocals, and will continue to remain flexible as needed. Our in-person events like the reading series *The Slant* is temporarily on hold, so my focus outside of worship has shifted toward enhancing, maintaining, and refining St. Mark's communications efforts across platforms. 2020 saw me officially take on the title of Communications Director, which means, in practice, that I am working closely with our communications team to support their efforts in promoting our offerings to the parish, as well as shaping communication about vital changes to our worship schedule, safety protocols, the work of our pillars, and more. In 2020, I took the lead on producing our monthly newsletter, *The Messenger*, providing staff with updates and reminders, shaping the theme and stories for each edition, working closely with our designer and printers. I look forward to continuing to grow and expand our online offerings from both a worship and communications standpoint and am hopeful that 2021 will be a better year for all.

THE ORDER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE KING, MARTHA CEIL LOZO CHAPTER, Carolee Koonce, President

The Daughters of the King is an order for women in the Episcopal Church with chapters in the Roman Catholic, Anglican, and in the Evangelical Lutheran Churches in America. The Daughters of the King are dedicated to prayer and service for Christ's Sake. Members undertake a Rule of Life, incorporating the Rule of Prayer and the Rule of Service. By reaffirmation of the promises made at Confirmation, a Daughter pledges herself to a life-long program of prayer, service, and evangelism, dedicated to the spread of Christ's Kingdom and strengthening the spiritual life of her parish.

The Motto of the Order:
For His Sake
I am but one, but I am one.
I cannot do everything, but I can do something.
What I can do, I ought to do.
What I ought to do, by the grace of God I will do.
Lord, what will you have me do?

The DOK meets on the second Saturday of every month. Our meetings begin by celebrating the Eucharist together in Enderle Chapel at 9:30 a.m. and continue in the Church or Margaret's Parlor at 10 a.m. Meetings vary in content, including local or guest speakers, Bible study, quiet days. We often go to lunch together after our meetings.

During the COVID pandemic, the DOK ceased to meet monthly in person but did continue to pray for the needs of St. Mark's members and loved ones. Prayers can be requested through any Daughter by personal requests, the clergy, or the church office. Our prayer list, which we pray daily, is confidential. We send monthly notes to the homebound and perform various other service projects at the request of our clergy. In 2020, we made a \$500 donation to Kids' Meals.

Our meetings are open to all women of St. Mark's and we welcome you to join us. If you are interested in joining us, or would like further information, please contact Carolee Koonce at cakoonce@comcast.net or 832-746-1780.

CONNECTION

Submitted by the Rev. David M. Goldberg

The Connection Committee began January of 2020 with an all-parish retreat at Camp Allen coordinated by Vickie and Jay Loftis. This should have been the beginning of a program year with overarching goals such as to expand opportunities for newcomers beyond Sunday morning hospitality, deliberately endeavoring to integrate new members into the life of St. Mark's. Unfortunately, within months the world had to adapt to the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic and church life changed with it. The Connection Pillar responsibly responded to this turn of events by adapting from a posture of welcoming newcomers to maintaining community given the difficult circumstances and using the time as a period of reflection and revisioning. Far from being an "off-year", this year has proved positively constructive for the work of both upholding community and reimagining hospitality.

One exciting development of Connection ministry is the launch of St. Mark's Neighborhoods. Thanks to the work of Kay and Fred Wasden, St. Mark's has mapped out the location of the homes of the members of St. Mark in order to divide our community into thirteen neighborhood groups. Each group has two co-chairs who will organize activities including outdoor, socially distanced eucharists, receptions, and other social events. Fostering community, relationship, and friendship has always been the life blood of St. Mark's Church and I look forward to fostering the growth of St. Mark's Neighborhoods. It is our hope that these groups will provide opportunities for connecting new members into life at St. Mark's.

In a survey taken in the Spring, 70% of St. Mark's members believed that it was easy to connect with other members of St. Mark's. However, of the 30% who did not find it so easy, almost 80% believed that St. Mark's had room to grow in inculcating a disposition of "welcome," including practices like better follow-up, wearing nametags, and implementing programming geared toward incorporating newcomers into the life of the Episcopal Church and St. Mark's. In the fall of next year, as social distancing restrictions ease, the Connection Committee intends to take-up this important ministry. In coordination with Joseph Rawley and the Formation Pillar we will introduce a newcomer program that will exist alongside a course for adult confirmation and reception. We will also appoint two co-chairs for welcome who will help shepherd new members and their families. These programs will be run in the "spirit" of St. Mark's, which is to say fun and engaging as well as informative and will build upon a long and happy tradition of newcomers' dinners hosted by St. Mark's clergy.

To enhance congregational life, it is our desire to spearhead the publication of an updated directory, which will include photographs of parishioners and their families. The updated St. Mark's Church directory will also enhance our existing database of the contact information for St. Mark's Church parishioners and create targeted lists for those members who are interested in specific areas of ministry.

I would like to thank Marisa Zapata for her leadership as Chair of the Connection Committee as well as for her "let's just do it" attitude. Also deserving of thanks is Kay Wasden for her careful stewardship of St. Mark's Neighborhoods. Finally, I'd like to thank Liz Zivley, Kristin Horn, Scott Merville, Emily Todd, Gary and Susan Clamurro, Amy Wildt, Bryan Lethcoe and Allen Case, our vestry liaison. Finally, I look forward to the 2021 year with Kelley Rosales assuming leadership of the Committee.

In all that this important ministry does, I am reminded that we serve for the glory of God. Jesus did not spend his days on earth as a dour prophet of doom. Our Lord came among us as one "eating and drinking" (Matthew 11:19), a man of abundant hospitality and of good cheer. Amid the pandemic and the post-pandemic world, I am excited to serve in a place that takes the Christian vocation to fun so seriously!

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Submitted by Joseph Rawley, Christian Education Director and Children's Choir Director

I was brought on board full-time as the Christian Education Director at St. Mark's Episcopal Church on July 1, 2020, while also maintaining my previous title of Children's Choir Director. In that time, the Formation team with the help of our fabulous committee members and chairs (special thanks to Jason Berryman, Katie Yarborough, and Peggy Christman) have worked hard to offer new and diverse classes and educational opportunities for children, youth, and adults.

Upon starting, I began utilizing data from our Parish Survey to craft new classes for adults, while also moving Sunday School to an online format. Since July, we have offered new courses in The History of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America, The Nicene Creed, and a book study on parishioner Hillary Green's co-authored book, *The Paradox of Generosity*, led by Hillary herself.

We have continued offering Women's Bible Study, the Rector's Bible Study, and the Sunday Lectionary Bible Study, and have added a weekly Men's Bible Study. We are also continuing to offer classes in Christian Meditation, Religious Studies, and Parenting. Children's Chapel has also remained a staple of our Sunday offerings, led by the Rev. Miller's Children's Sermon, some fabulous volunteer readers, and Alex Hillis' musicianship and leadership.

We have offered a few online musical selections from our Choristers, successfully put on our online Christmas Pageant, and continue to work with our youth in both online and socially distant in-person settings.

We are very excited about our offerings for this Spring, including Confirmation for our youth (this year and last) and adults, three different offerings for Music in the Church, and a course on Lent, to be presented during Lent with the help of St. George's College in Jerusalem. We are investigating a Zoom format for Sunday School to be offered after Easter and are already hard at work preparing for VBS this August (in-person, with an online contingency plan) and looking ahead to September and beyond.

It has been and continues to be an honor and a privilege to serve St. Mark's in my capacities as Christian Education Director and Children's Choir Director, and I look forward to an exciting and educational 2021.

YOUTH MINISTRIES, Alex Hillis, Youth Minister

SMYG (St. Mark's Youth Group) has spent the past year developing a healthy community and inviting others to join. By focusing on these principles, the group has continued to grow as a strong body of believers who study scripture together and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their schools and communities.

Adjusting for the safe protocols of the pandemic fellowship on Sundays was combined into one group including both: Junior High and Senior High. Each group continues to grow and flourish in their own way. Sunday Night Youth Group was changed to 3 to 5 p.m. A virtual Youth Group meeting was added. This meeting would happen weekly on Thursday nights from 6 to 7 p.m.

SMYG participated in the first ever Virtual Episcopal Strong mission trip this past summer. This trip partnered with multiple churches throughout the diocese to gather with one another virtually and participate in online mission projects. Mission Trips continue to be an important checkpoint for many of the youth each summer. Many St. Mark's Youth count mission trips among the most important events in the continuation of their spiritual formation.

The confirmation class had 17 student participants. They have yet to be officially confirmed as the service was postponed as a safety precaution during the pandemic. We plan to officially have this class confirmed with the current Confirmation Class in May of 2021. The weekly class focuses on the importance of confirmation individually and as a member of the Church. Sixteen youth are to be confirmed in May 2021 along with the 17 from 2020.

St. Mark's Youth Ministry is continually growing and adjusting to the challenges 2020 brought before us. SMYG is focusing on the fact that the youth of the church are the church of today, not just of the future. It is also very blessed to have the full support of the parents, members, and clergy of St. Mark's. God continues to move through the youth ministry at St. Mark's.

SERVICE

SERVICE COMMITTEE, submitted by the Rev. David M. Goldberg

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the importance of the work of the Service Pillar. Each of our charity partners faced unique challenges as they responded to the needs of the Houston community. St. Mark's parishioners endeavored to meet these needs with the generosity and determination that characterize our church family.

St. Mark's participated in the **CCSC** toy drive. We had three volunteers assist with the collection and delivery of a little less than fifty toys. In addition, upwards of nine members of the congregation made donations directly to CCSC. St. Mark's also assisted in their back-to-school drive. In the future, the Service Committee looks forward to engaging the St. Mark's School community as a partner for the toy drive in order to maximize the support of St. Mark's for this special ministry. We also look forward to enjoying the new facility and offering numerous in-person opportunities to volunteer. A special "thank you" to Bitsy Chamberlain who serves as chair for CCSC.

Due to the vulnerability of the residents, St. Mark's members were restricted from volunteering at **Hospitality Apartments** but were able to donate food during our November food drive and 34 boxed lunches in December in lieu of our traditional Christmas dinner. We appreciate the continued willingness of Lynn Stevens in her unofficial role as a "bridge" between Hospitality Apartments and St. Mark's. Thanks to Mike Norman too for his willingness to serve as chair and to Darrell Uptmor for serving as co-chair for this important ministry to the sick and suffering.

Kids' Meals met every month, one Sunday a month, except for a period between March and October when meals were made from home. Kids' Meals hosts ten volunteers (of all ages) at a time. In 2020 alone, Kids' Meals-St. Mark's prepared over 3,000 lunches to children in need throughout the Houston region. St. Mark's volunteers gave over two hundred hours in service to this ministry. Kids' Meals is a great opportunity for families to volunteer together and volunteers include all ages. Thanks to Bryan Young for his indefatigable support and leadership of this ministry as well as Siubhan Wilkerson for her work as co-chair.

The people of **Lord of the Streets** faced particular hardship that St. Mark's Church members worked to meet. Socially-distanced working groups of 2-4 persons met weekly to produce a total 3,584 lunches that were provided during a period of great need through the Spring and early Summer. Parishioners contributed 270 hours to the work and ministry of LOTS in addition to generous donations of food that included an astounding 1,246 bags of chips, 1,586 breakfast items, 1,216 various snacks, 1,529 packages of cookies, 1,607 bottles of water or juice, 8,340 sandwich bags, 1,460 lunch bags, 136 toiletries, 167 canned goods. Thanks to Karen Clemmensen and Karen Smiley for their leadership of this ministry.

The total amount distributed directly from St. Mark's budget to each service partner in 2020 included \$3,851 to CCSC; \$4,851 to Hospitality Apartments; \$4,851 to Kids' Meals; \$3,601 to LOTS. In addition, the December Alternative Giving fair resulted in individual parishioners allocating \$470.24 to CCSC; \$970.24 to Kids' Meals; \$970.24 to LOTS; \$970.24 to Hospitality Apartments, and \$470.24 to the Rector's Discretionary Fund. In total the fair raised \$3,851.20. Finally, several significant donations were made to support Santa Maria Hostel on behalf of St. Mark's by parishioners. Santa Maria Hostel provides shelter and programming to vulnerable women. Parishioners also volunteered to assist at a recurring food drive for Iglesia San Pablo, Houston.

Beginning with the summer of 2021, it is our expectation that there will be many in our community who are currently holding back from in-person gatherings that will be eager to participate in service-oriented events. Going forward, it is the desire of the Service Committee to increase integration with the Connection Pillar. Service events

and projects can be opportunities for parishioners, including newcomers and their families, to come together and get to know one another. In order to achieve this goal, the Connection Committee will work to establish a contact list of parishioners and perhaps school families who specifically have indicated their willingness to volunteer. In addition, the Service Committee staff liaison will work to coordinate Service projects with St. Mark's School, especially vis-à-vis food drives and the CCSC Toy Drive.

Finally, I would like to express my personal gratitude to a few persons in particular. Kendall Tamlyn has been of great assistance in helping me transition into my role as clergy liaison. Also, special thanks to Cindy Case. As chair of the Service Committee, Cindy has had the unenviable task of convening monthly meetings over Zoom and navigating the logistical challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Her oversight and organization have made the Committee's work possible. Under her leadership St. Mark's has fed the hungry, clothed the needy, and cared for the sick.

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL, Garhett J. Wagers, Headmaster

Staying focused on our mission is always an important aspect of leading St. Mark's Episcopal School, and this focus is important perhaps, in no year more than 2020. With that, I cite our mission here:

The community of St. Mark's Episcopal School celebrates the uniqueness of each child. We are stewards of our students' intellectual curiosity, faith, and passion for discovery. We cultivate joy, playfulness, and growth in a child-centered environment.

The challenges of 2020 are not lost on anyone, I'm sure. Each of the most substantial challenges have their own unique impact on our school, like any; a global pandemic and public health crisis, social unrest related to issues of justice and equity, and a growing political divide among our citizens.

Each year, we aspire to take next steps of our Strategic Plan, as a part of strengthening our school community through our mission lens. I argue this remains our greatest need, and we will see both challenges and opportunities within the context of the now infamous 2020 year. In this report, I'll attempt to capture our experience through the lens of each disruptive force.

A Global Pandemic & Public Health Crisis

We were barely into 2020 when the need to consider adjustments to how school is delivered was in our lap. In early February, my team began to consider the implications of Covid-19 when it arrived here. As quickly as possible, we made decisions and modifications to pivot to a virtual platform, which ultimately became necessary as we went into Spring Break in early March. This was literally like paving the road in front of the car as we drove. There was consistent learning and growth among faculty, staff, students, and parents. There were stories of success and gains as well as those of frustration. Throughout the spring and summer, we worked to learn and grow in our ability to begin in the fall with the same challenges. Many modifications were made.

- We adopted many physical changes on campus, including directional signage to reduce traffic in halls, limit student capacity in classrooms, and enhance safety protocols through cleaning.
- Enrollment and schedule changes cohorted students and reduced class size to allow for social distancing.
- Teachers and our technology team improved our virtual classroom platform to perform with greater consistency and reliability, and for teachers to strengthen their confidence in its use. Additional technology was purchased to ensure all students in Kindergarten - 8th grade had a digital device to support virtual learning.

- We hired additional faculty and staff to account for substitute needs, smaller groups, and supporting both sick and well students by adding an additional nurse.
- Policies were rewritten for enhanced safety at all times, from arrival through dismissal, such as handwashing, distancing, and masking.

We began the year with two weeks of all students in our distance learning platform, then began bringing students back to campus after Labor Day. Through Christmas Break, we did a great job of identifying exposure, symptoms, and positive cases, contact tracing, and either quarantining or isolating to reduce spread. Most students and faculty were able to stay on campus throughout this time. We saw growing confidence from our parents as more and more students returning to on-campus learning, with our voluntary distance learning population dropping from 20% in September to 5% by December.

The modifications and adjustments, while necessary, are not easy; the blending learning we are providing is a challenge. In this environment, teachers are asked to do more than ever before and with a significantly higher level of stress. These challenges certainly have worn on everyone, and fatigue is a real experience in some parts of our school. That said, there have been amazing opportunities to advance how we teach and learn and to strengthen our use of resources to better support our strategic goals, particularly **Goal 1: *We are committed to continually exploring and implementing teaching resources and strategies that support the development of the whole child through their years at St. Mark's.***

Social Unrest Related to Issues of Justice & Equity

The terrible death of George Floyd, among so many others, fanned the flame of systemic racism in our country and highlighted issues of equity, inclusion, and social justice. This is a huge challenge under any circumstance and was taking place amidst the issues related to Covid-19. St. Mark's is an Episcopal school, and through our Strategic Plan we have worked to clarify what that means in relation to these issues. **Goal 3 states: *We will embrace and celebrate our identity as an Episcopal school as we nurture the spiritual foundation of every student.*** Our objectives in Goal 3 go a step further in clarifying what we intend to accomplish, which relates specifically to these issues.

- Objective 1 - Develop a clear understanding among our faculty, parents, and students of the principles that form our identity as an Episcopal school, practiced through school worship, community life, religious formation and study, and social justice.
- Objective 2 - Practice and model a culture of civil conversation around diversity and inclusion.

The Goal 3 Task Force, led by Roma Coleman (Director of Athletics) and the Rev. Kristin Sullivan (School Chaplain) has guided our efforts to look inward first. We will administer a group of experiences and a survey to better understand the existing attitudes and beliefs within our community. This will serve as a guide to help us identify where our first next steps will be as we lead our students, faculty, and staff to live into our identity as an Episcopal school, which cares deeply about issues of social justice.

Political Divide Among our Citizens

Despite the contentious atmosphere that has permeated politics over the past year, St. Mark's has done a good job of remembering our role. To prepare children for the path ahead, we want them to develop the ability to think critically, communicate effectively, and collaborate with others. Our job, as noted in our mission, is to *steward their intellectual curiosity, faith, and passion for discovery.* We are called to *cultivate joy, playfulness and growth.* All of this *in a child-*

centered environment. In a year with many challenges, it was extremely important for us to have our mission to lean on as our guide. If we want children to think, we have to make space for it to happen by listening to them, meeting them where they are, and following their curiosity. Meanwhile, as educators, we are tasked with remembering how old they are and not asking them to see the world through our adult eyes and biases. As parents and teachers, developmental readiness must be a guide for how we broach these topics. Democracy requires an informed citizenry, and for this to be possible, the citizens will need critical thinking skills, which can only be developed through practice.

Like many others, our school would like to turn the page on 2020. Yet we understand that the turning of the calendar doesn't make everything better. Each of the issues I've highlighted in this report will follow us into 2021 and require our attention. With most people feeling fatigued, this presents a challenge, but a challenge we are up to. We realize that the winter and spring of 2021 will require courage and resilience among everyone in our community and a strong partnership between the school and our families. We also realize that some of these issues could, and likely will, continue to impact the fall of our 2021-22 school year. As such, we are already planning for a variety of scenarios to help us grow from what we've experienced this year and become stronger in our ability to celebrate the uniqueness of each child at St. Mark's.

Now in my 11th year as Headmaster at St. Mark's, I continue to feel blessed to be a part of this community. There is something undoubtedly special here, made possible by the healthy relationship between the Church and School. We continue to celebrate growth as an organization, even through the challenges of 2020. We are fortunate to have a Vestry and Board of Trustees who serve as strong governing bodies. It is through our partnership that we navigate the benefits and challenges of our growth. I feel grateful for our Rector, Patrick Miller. The Headmaster - Rector relationship is both a delicate and important part of a parish school-church relationship. The stability and thoughtful collaboration St. Mark's benefits from is not to be taken for granted. I could not ask for a better partner.

WOMEN OF ST. MARK'S, MJ Berryman, President

This was of course a very different year to what we had originally planned, but in true fashion, the Women of St. Mark's ("WOSM") rallied and were quite creative in fostering meaningful fellowship opportunities, despite the pandemic.

We continued our highly successful book club, which now meets monthly on Zoom, and even introduced a movie club, where participants watched the group movie at their leisure, logging on to Zoom to discuss their thoughts. Since Bunco proved too challenging for Zoom, we switched to Bingo and have had two successful Bingo afternoons, complete with prizes dropped off on winners' doorsteps. WOSM held our Fall Meeting, also on Zoom, to discuss current business, monetary grants and new fellowship ideas (which is where the movie club was born). We both sponsored the annual Advent wreath-making event and delivered them to fellow parishioners. Our annual Ornament Exchange remained our largest "gathering" despite the unique circumstances; out went the usual number drawing and gift stealing... instead everyone was assigned a fellow member to present a wrapped ornament. Then, during the Zoom party, the ladies took turns unwrapping and guessing who their ornaments were from.

WOSM continued to steward the Women's portion of the Endowment Fund, providing grants to the community and the Church. In 2020 we awarded a total of \$8,700 to the following community recipients: CCSC, Hospitality Apartments, CanCare, Bel Inizio and to the Church to purchase an archival display cabinet for a 1619 King James Bible.

The gatherings the Women held this year and the cheerful familiar (and new) faces of our members helped to ease our “new normal” into feeling more like “normal” and for that I’d like to offer thanks to all our members and my officers, without whom none of this would be possible. WOSM is truly awesome and we are very much looking forward to brighter days and gathering together in 2021.

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA, Gerry Loreda, Chartered Organization Rep.

Boy Scout Cub Pack 34, Troop 211, Troop 1211, and Venturing Crew 211 thank St. Mark’s Episcopal Church and School for their dedication to BSA Scouting and their continued support especially during a most difficult year marked by the Covid health crisis.

Never has the Boy Scout motto ‘be prepared’ been more salient than during this past scouting year where our scouts had to learn to deliver the program in a safe and responsible manner. In fact, one of the last in-person scout events in 2020 was the Scout Sunday service at St. Marks in February. Since then, we have met virtually, planned a ‘drive-in’ Court of Honor ceremony, coined the term ‘driveway patrol meeting’, met in small groups in outdoor settings, mastered the art of creating scout ‘how-to’ videos and a number of other innovations driven by the need to conduct scouting safely and responsibly. The scouts showed great care, innovation, audacity, and tenacity to make the most out of a very challenging year.

Along with following the scout oath, law, motto and slogan, the scouts at St. Mark’s are also committed to helping further the missions of St. Mark’s Church and School. You may have seen these scouts helping distribute our advent wreaths this Christmas; or you may have seen them in the parking lot collecting food for the Scouting for Food drive that provides help to those in need. The scouts greatly appreciate the support that St. Mark’s Episcopal Church continues to provide.

Pack 34 is comprised of 108 scouts, and 18 registered adult leaders. The Pack includes students from five different elementary schools and covers kindergarten through 5th grade.

Troop 211 currently has 88 scouts, 6 patrols and 46 registered adult leaders. Troop 211 includes students from approximately 14 different schools. In 2020, despite the difficult circumstances 4 scouts achieved Eagle rank. That brought the total number of Eagle Scouts at St Mark’s to 184 over 81 years.

Troop 1211 celebrate its second birthday February 1, 2021. While their second year in scouting was conducted under the Covid limitations, the girls achieved several important milestones during the year. Firstly, the troop expanded from 17 to 21 scouts and from a single patrol to 3. Lastly, a number of the older scouts are on course to achieve Eagle Scout status and we had our first Eagle Scout awarded in January 2021; among the first girls in BSA history to do so.

Venturing Crew 211 is the high adventure component of scouting available for ages 14 - 21. The St. Mark’s Crew sailed at Sea Base in the US Virgin Islands.

MEET THE 2021 CANDIDATES

VESTRY

Catherine (Cathy) N. Crabtree, member for five years



Spouse: David Crabtree

Children: Andrew and Brooke Crabtree

Present Employment: AEGSI Holdings LLC as Chief Financial Officer

Church Activities: Neighborhood Group Coordinator, Group 6; newly joined member of the Altar Guild

Goals for St. Mark's: As a member of the vestry, I would do my best to help the church further its vision and mission in the community. Also, to help ensure the financial security of the church.

Community Activities: Food Bank volunteer; Annual Fund Grade Level Captain – St. Mark's School and Episcopal High School

Awards and Honors: Certified Public Account, University of Texas – Texas Exes

Vickie Hayslip Loftis, member for 10 years



Spouse: Jay Loftis

Children: Ian Loftis

Present Employment: SigmaBleyzer Investment Group

Church Activities: Member of Altar Guild for eight years; Co-Chair of Altar Guild for three years; Coffee Hour Chair for three years; Chaired the Camp Allen Parish Weekend for 2019

Goals for St. Mark's: Bring people together after the Covid separation.

Cass McNinch, member for 10 years



Spouse: Scott McNinch

Children: Massey, Colin

Present Employment: Aberdeen Building Group, President

Church Activities: Service Committee member and chairperson, Women of St. Mark's

Goals for St. Mark's: Encourage growth and effective in-reach to our parishioners as well as outreach to our larger community

Community Activities: Kids' Meals, Young Audiences of Houston (Education Committee)

Ken Smiley, member for nine years



Spouse: Karen Smiley

Children: Avery, Vaughn

Present Employment: Amegy Bank

Goals for St. Mark's: Minimize the financial and membership effects of COVID-19, expand membership by 10-15%, expand neighborhood reach

Community Activities: Advisory Board Member of Houston Community ToolBank, former Board President of Houston Community ToolBank, former United Way Chair for Amegy Bank, Amegy Business Resource Group (BRG) Ally for Woman's BRG, African American BRG and Hispanic BRG

DIOCESAN COUNCIL DELEGATE

Lynn Stevens, member for 52 years



Spouse: Jon Stevens

Children: Mark and Beth, daughter-in-law Missy, grandsons Harvey and Pete

Present Employment: retired Spanish teacher (St. Mark's School)

Church Activities: Altar Guild, Thursday Religious Studies Class

Goals for St. Mark's: A welcoming community where tradition and new ideas complement each other and members find a place with opportunities for all ages to worship, serve and grow.

Community Activities: Office volunteer and board member at Hospitality Apartments,

ENDOWMENT BOARD

Robert (Bob) Anderson Lane, member for nine years



Spouse: Jacklyn R. Lane

Children: Kristi L. Stites

Present Employment: Retired from Shell Oil

Church Activities: Vestry, Service Committee Chair, Leader of the LOTS Cook Team, LOTS Bishop's Committee Representative

Goals for St. Mark's: Grow and prosper!

Community Activities: Former Chairman of Abilities Experience, Iowa State Foundation Governor, ISU Foundation Finance Committee

Awards and Honors: Pi Kappa Phi Fraternity Citation of Distinguished Service, ISU College of Engineering's Professional Achievement Citation in Engineering

2020 NECROLOGY

Richard Bell
Marylou Curran
Charles David Evans
Kirk Joachim Fleischer, MD
Henry Furler
Darleen Gibson
Linda Elizabeth Gibson
Ron Hlavaty
Charles (Skip) Arthur Kasdorf, III
John (Jed) Kenna
Rose LeBlanc
Emily Lin
Marion Mathis
William (Bill) McNinch
Richard Morgan
Pat Northcutt
George Parker
Doyle Emmitt Perkinson
Louise T. Perry
Mary Rose Quito
José Ismael Rubio
Bill Smith
Bonnie Smith
Elizabeth (Betsy) Smith
Tom Smith
Vollie William (Skeet) Sponseller
William Randolph Tamlyn
Gerry Thoss
Roy Francis Walker, Sr.

May their souls, and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

ST. MARK'S WELCOMES ITS NEW MEMBERS IN 2020

By Baptism

Tinsley Anne Barchie
Emma Rose Chalabala
Emma Josephine Escobedo
Lillian Elizabeth Havard
Connor Raymond Hintz
Isla Kennon
Billie Allison Kreiner
Quinn Kreiner
Andrew Dossett Miller
Avery Charlotte Miller
Maisie Welker Mitchell
Evelyn Parrott
Ruth Everett Laine Smith

By Confirmation, Reception or Reaffirmation

None due to cancelled Bishop's Visitation due to COVID-19

By Transfer

Ayak Garany Ajak
Michael Boyars
Gregory Wyatt Cross
Emma Josephine Escobedo
Jose Roberto Escobedo
Diane Finch
Susan Richelle Fleischer
Catherine Elizabeth Foster
Leah Hoepfner Kennon
Bradley Walker Mitchell
Fiona Mitchell
Stephanie Mitchell
Terri Mossige
Bill Palamountain
Paula Palamountain
Charlotte Robinson
Margaret Robinson
Thomas Robinson
Warren Robinson

***PARISH MEETING BYLAWS OF ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
OF HOUSTON, TEXAS***

*Pertaining to the Conduct of the Parish Meetings and the Election of the Vestry and Council Delegates
as Amended January 15, 2011*

ARTICLE I

Authority

The parish of St. Mark's Episcopal Church of Houston, Texas, acknowledges the authority of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Texas and of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America and accedes to their Constitutions and Canons. These bylaws are adopted to assist us in doing Christ's work.

ARTICLE II

Annual Parish Meeting

Section 2.1 Date

The annual parish meeting shall be held each year in January on the premises of St. Mark's Church. The exact date, time, and place shall be designated by the Rector and Vestry.

Section 2.2 Notice

Notice of the date, time, and place of the annual parish meeting shall be published in the parish bulletin, announced at Sunday services, and otherwise broadcast as appropriate at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. Notice shall be given at all scheduled services the Sunday before the annual parish meeting.

Section 2.3 Chair

At all parish meetings, the Rector, the Senior Warden, or the Junior Warden, taking precedence in the order named, shall have the right to preside.

Section 2.4 Purpose and Agenda

The purposes of the annual parish meeting are to elect communicants to serve on the Vestry and to elect communicants to serve as Delegate and Alternate Delegate to the Council of the Diocese; to receive reports from the Rector, the Wardens, and from parish officers and organizations; to recognize service; and to attend to other matters as established by the Rector and Vestry.

Section 2.5 Persons entitled to vote

Men and women eighteen years of age or older who are enrolled communicants in good standing of the parish, as defined in the Canons of the Diocese of Texas, are entitled to vote for Vestry members and upon all questions requiring the action of the congregation. Voting by absentee is not permitted.

Section 2.6 Quorum

A quorum shall be constituted by the number of communicants entitled to vote for Vestry members which equals the lesser of (i) one hundred, or (ii) the number which is equal to fifty percent (50%) of the number of written pledges of time, talent and/or treasure received by the parish for the current year.

Section 2.7 Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of the "Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised" shall govern the conduct of the annual parish meeting in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws, with any special rules of order the congregation may adopt, or with the Constitutions and Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Texas and of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America.

ARTICLE III

Special Parish Meetings

Section 3.1 Call

A special parish meeting may be called by the Rector or in the Rector's absence by the Senior Warden and shall be called by either the Rector or Senior Warden on written request signed by a majority of the Vestry.

Section 3.2 Notice

Written notice stating the date, time, place, and purpose of a special meeting shall be given two weeks in advance by publication in the parish bulletin. The date, time, place, and purpose of the special parish meeting shall also be announced at Sunday services the Sunday before the day of the meeting.

Section 3.3 Limitation

Only business which is within the stated purpose in the call of the meeting may be transacted at a special meeting.

Section 3.4 Rules

Rules for the annual parish meeting concerning quorum, entitlement to vote, presiding officers, parliamentary procedure, and other matters as appropriate shall apply to special parish meetings.

ARTICLE IV

Election of the Vestry and Delegates

Section 4.1 Composition and Terms - Vestry

The Vestry shall consist of twelve communicants of St. Mark's Episcopal Church of Houston. The term of office shall be three years, and the terms of one third of the Vestry, or four Vestry members, shall expire each year. Vestry members shall hold office until their successors are elected. Each year at the annual parish meeting four Vestry members shall be elected to three-year terms by the congregation, and additional Vestry members shall be elected to fill unexpired terms as necessary.

In case a vacancy shall occur on the Vestry, the Vestry shall fill the vacancy until the next annual parish meeting by electing a communicant who meets the qualifications to serve on the Vestry.

Section 4.2 Term of Delegate to Council

The terms of office of each Delegate and Alternate Delegate to the Council of the Diocese shall be three years. The term of one Delegate and one Alternate shall expire each year. At the annual parish meeting each year, one Delegate and one Alternate shall be elected by the Congregation to a three-year term.

Additional Delegates and Alternates shall be elected to fill unexpired terms as necessary.

In case a vacancy shall occur, the Vestry shall fill the vacancy until the next annual parish meeting by electing a communicant who meets the qualifications to serve on the Vestry.

Section 4.3 Qualification

To qualify to be a Vestry member or a Delegate or Alternate Delegate to Council, a person must:

- a. Be at least eighteen years of age.
- b. Be a communicant in good standing of St. Mark's Episcopal Church of Houston, Texas.
- c. Subscribe to the following declaration: "I am persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine required as necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ; and I accede to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church."
- d. Be enrolled on the parish register as a communicant of St. Mark's for at least two years.
- e. Be on record in the financial office of the parish as contributing for at least two years.
- f. Indicate a serious commitment to Jesus as Lord in his life as demonstrated in the St. Mark's community.

No retiring Vestry member elected by the congregation for a full term shall be eligible for re-election until a period of one year shall have elapsed, unless approved in writing by the Bishop.

Section 4.4 Nominating Committee

There shall be a nominating committee to choose nominees for election to the Vestry and for election as Delegate and Alternate Delegate to the Council of the Diocese. The nominating committee shall consist of the Rector, the Senior Warden, the President of the Women of St. Mark's, and three other communicants appointed by the Rector. Those appointed shall be a man-at-large, a woman-at-large, and a retiring Vestry member. The Rector shall serve as chairman. The composition of the committee shall be announced via parish publications by the first Sunday in November. The committee shall nominate at least one person for each position to be filled and shall complete its task by the first Sunday in Advent.

Section 4.5 Notice of Nominees

The report of the nominating committee shall be presented to the parish bulletin with a short biographical sketch of each nominee at no less than three weeks before the annual meeting and ideally shortly after the nominating committee has completed its task. The Sunday before the annual meeting, the nominees will be presented at an informal "Meet the Candidates" meeting with the goal that parishioners will know all of the nominees by the annual parish meeting.

Section 4.6 Nominations from the floor

Nominations for the Vestry and for Diocesan Council Delegate and Alternate may be made from the floor at the annual parish meeting, provided that the nominee consents and provided that he has prepared a written biographical sketch, in the form prescribed by the nominating committee, for distribution to those present.

Section 4.7 Conduct of the Elections

- a. If the number of nominees for an office is equal to the number of positions to be filled, the nominees shall be elected by acclamation.
- b. If the number of nominees for an office is greater than the number of positions to be filled, elections shall be by secret ballot. To be valid and counted, a ballot must contain one vote for each of the total number of Vestry members or Delegates to be elected on that ballot;
- c. The votes required:
 1. If two persons are nominated for a single office or if there are more nominees than positions available, a simple majority of votes cast shall be required for the election of a Vestry member or Delegate. A majority of the valid votes cast for each office shall be computed by dividing the total number of votes cast (i.e., number of ballots cast times the number of offices or positions to be filled) by twice the number of offices or positions to be filled and adding one vote. If all nominees, or a greater number of nominees than positions, receive a majority, then the nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall fill the positions available.
 2. When more than two persons are nominated for a single office, or when two or more persons are to be elected on the same ballot and there are more nominees than twice the number of offices or positions to be filled, and if upon the first ballot there is no majority of the votes cast for one or more of the offices to be filled, a second ballot shall be cast. The nominees on such ballot shall be the candidates receiving the highest number of votes cast on the preceding ballot, not to exceed twice the number of the offices remaining to be filled, except in the case of a tie vote in the last place, in which case the candidates receiving the tie vote shall also be candidates on the next succeeding ballot. Similarly, ballots shall be cast until all offices are filled.
 3. When elections are for different terms of office, the nominee first elected shall be the one elected for the longest term; or if two or more are elected on the same ballot, the candidate or candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be the one or ones elected for the longest term.
- d. Election Managers: The four Vestry members retiring from full terms on the Vestry shall constitute a committee of election managers to distribute and collect the ballots and to count the votes. If some or all of the retiring Vestry members are not available to serve as managers, the Rector shall appoint communicants from the congregation at large to constitute a committee of four election managers. The managers shall certify in writing the result of the election to the Rector, if there be one, and to the Junior Warden, to be announced to the retiring Vestry and the congregation.

ARTICLE V Amendment of Bylaws

Section 5.1 General

These bylaws may be amended by recommendation of the Vestry and vote of the parish.

Section 5.2 Recommendation

The Vestry may recommend amendment of these bylaws at any regular meeting of the Vestry by a two-thirds vote of the entire Vestry, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting.

Section 5.3 No Approval by the Bishop Required

The Bishop's office has stated that no approval by the Bishop is required for amendments to these bylaws, as these bylaws pertain only to the conduct of parish meetings and elections.

Section 5.4 Parish Vote


The congregation may amend these bylaws upon the recommendation of the Vestry by two-thirds *vote* of those present at an annual or special meeting, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing to the congregation by publication in the parish bulletin for two weeks in advance of the meeting.

ANNEX A TO THE BYLAWS OF ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH MODEL AGENDA
Annual Parish Meeting

1. Invocation
2. Appointments for the meeting
 - a. Secretary
 - b. Parliamentarian
3. Announcements
4. Prayer for the deceased with roll call
5. Recognition for service
 - a. Retiring Vestry members and Delegates
 - b. Continuing Vestry members
 - c. Other
6. Election of Vestry and Delegates of Council
 - a. Explanation of procedures
 - b. Announcement of managers
 - c. Report of nominating committee
 - d. Nominations from the floor
 - e. Presentation of nominees
 - f. Distribution of ballots and voting
7. Treasurer's report
8. Reports from parish organizations and officers
9. Old business
10. Comments
 - a. Rector
 - b. Retiring Senior Warden
11. Other recognition for service
12. Report of election
13. Other business
14. Benediction and adjournment

CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

I hereby certify that these Bylaws, as amended, were adopted by the congregation of St. Mark's Episcopal Church of Houston, Texas, as recommended by the Vestry, on the 15th day of January 2011.



Name: BARTLEY PICKROW
Title: Senior Warden