

love is our tradition



St. Mark's Episcopal Church 160th Annual Meeting February 8, 2026

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Agenda

Call to Order

Opening Prayer

Approval of 2025 Annual Meeting minutes (see last page)

Election of New Vestry Members

Recognition of outgoing members: Blair McDuff, Scott
Pennington, and Paul Shane

Rules for the Election/Affirmation

Presentation of the Candidates: Nora Thompson, Jennifer
McCauley, Frosty Owen

Nominations from the floor

Business Meeting:

Treasurer's Report

Rector's Report

Closing Prayer

From Our Rector:

Grace and Peace to God's Beloved of St Mark's in the Year of our Lord Jesus Christ 2026,

As we turn over the calendar from 2025 to 2026, we have the opportunity to reflect upon our ministries this past year. Each of our Ministry Teams have offered their own reports in written form for you to read in your packet.

So, to begin, I would like to commend to you all these reports; and use this moment to recognize our Ministry Team chairs.

Gathered Ministry:

Rob McTier, Worship

Karen Franklin, Pastoral Care

Open, Education & Formation - in need of lay chair*

Karen Hardison, Healing Prayer

Fred Crowley, Parish Life

Sent Ministry:

Ed Street, Outreach

Suzanne Long, Evangelism

Penny Adams, Justice and Advocacy

Shared Ministry:

Suzanne Long, Interim, Finance

Wes Kaufman & Dee Whitlow, Audit

Elizabeth Kyser & Isabel Tucker, Stewardship

Brent Graves, Property

Michael Solberg, Personnel

And as we recognize these ministry chairs, we also want to recognize the one who shepherds these leaders, Malinda Collier, our Director of Lay Ministry (and Communications and Formation). Thank you Malinda and Ministry Chairs for helping put our hands, feet, hearts, and souls into the work God has called us all to do!

I also want to acknowledge two people who, literally and figuratively, "keep the lights on" here at St Mark's. Steve Barnes, our parish administrator, and Suzanne Long, our parish treasurer, work tirelessly and with team spirit to help us keep our facilities and finances in good order. A big thank you to Steve and Suzanne!

I also give thanks for the ministry of Cassandra Price our nursery caregiver; and Forrest Whitley, his father Tyler, and Columbus, our sexton crew.

And, as a point of gratitude, I also want to thank you, the parish. You are the people who populate these teams and bring all of our ministries to life! Thank YOU ALL!!!

In addition to the above teams and individuals, I also want to take time to mention some additional leaders of the parish, whose work in 2025 was especially unique.

During 2025 we had the fortunate opportunity to begin work on our capital improvements through your generous donations. And, as we had cash in hand, we were enabled to begin the work of Phases 1 and 2 of our Capital Campaign. There are a number of folks who played critical roles in this effort, and I would like to take a moment to thank them.

Beth Wentworth- has, and continues to chair our Capital Campaign Team; and I know she would like me to be sure to tell you, that, though, we have done the work of Phases 1 & 2; we still need your pledges and their fulfillment in order to make our way to Phase 3 (Narthex and Front Doors). Beth, thank you and your team for getting us this far along!!

Amos Goldie- along with being your minister of music, has poured hours upon hours of behind the scenes work to help make our audio and video connections work for our in-house worshippers and our online Zoom worshippers. And along with Amos' efforts and expertise, I want to also recognize all those working the Zoom experience for our Zoomers (Malinda, Sandy, Nora, Nancy, Elizabeth, Harold, and others), as without your patience and generosity of spirit, we would not have been able to make this transition possible. Thank you Amos and Zoom Teams!!

Brent Graves- We are immensely blessed to have in our parish and as the lead of our Property Team, Mr. Brent Graves. Once we had the money in hand to begin Phases 1 & 2, Brent went straight to work on lining up contractors and subcontractors to help us accomplish our goals of the renovation of the nave and chancel, as well as install the new electrical wiring, lighting, audio, and video systems. Brent has at his disposal a team of parishioners who gave great counsel and support as we fine tuned the decisions on things like paint and carpet colors to pew realignments, and much more. Brent and team, Thank you!!

As the rector of parish with such strong lay leadership, as we just recognized, in the year 2025, you have enabled me to step into ministries which connect us with opportu-

nities outside of our four walls. In the last year I have been invited to serve on three Episcopal Diocese of Virginia Ministry Teams.

The Ministry for Racial Justice and Healing. I am one of twenty individuals (a combination of lay and clergy) who meets monthly to plan and support ministries in our diocese on matters of racial justice and healing. Some of these ministries include: The Youth Triangle of Hope Pilgrimage (Virginia, Ghana, & Liverpool), Native American and Indigenous Ministries, supporting parishes engaged with Sacred Ground, Regional Racial Justice Pilgrimages, Latino Ministries, and a newly developed anti-racism training: *I Will With God's Help: Equipping God's People for the Work of Racial Justice*. Much of my time on this team in 2025 was working on the team to develop the "I Will With God's Help..." training program.

The Executive Board for the Diocese of Virginia. The executive board, in its most generic sense, serves like the vestry for the Diocese. We are an equal balance of lay and clergy representatives. We hear reports from all the diocesan ministry teams, and work with the Bishop and his staff to be the communication bridges between the Diocese and the 16 Regions of the Diocese (for those new to St Mark's or the Diocese of Virginia, we are part of the Central Richmond Region). And similar to our vestry in the parish, this is a 3 year term. In addition to my own participation on the Executive Board, our very own Ms. Karen Franklin is also an appointed member.

The Diocese of Virginia Truth and Reparations Task Force. The 227th Diocese of Virginia's Convention passed Resolution R-10a in November 2021, which committed the Diocese to create a \$10,000,000 fund for reparations to benefit Black, Indigenous, and peoples of color communities. R-10a directs the Bishop to create a Task Force on Reparations "to identify and propose means by which repair may begin for those areas of our structures, patterns, and common life by which Black, Indigenous, People of Color . . . still carry the burden of injustices, exclusions, and biases born out of white supremacy and the legacy of slavery." In the Fall of 2025, Bishop Stevenson began the process of refreshing the Task Force, as its first iteration had laid the groundwork necessary to start this work. And, now, as one of the newly appointed members of the Task Force, I will be serving a one year term on the Education Sub-Committee. In addition to my own appointment on the Task Force, our very own Ms. Karen Franklin is also a member of this newly refreshed Task Force.

I want to return, now, to our shared ministry here in the parish. The year 2025 brought with it more than just our ministry successes that you can read about in your packet; but 2025 also brought about a stark reminder of how much we need one another and, and how much our neighbors need us.

Early in the year we launched a series of gatherings: Parish Pastoral Conversations, in which we came together to share and listen to one another's concerns, fears, and anxiety's as we came face to face with government policies and personalities that brought pain into our collective experiences. We came to realize that we are not alone, and that we are to come together to be sure that we do not drift into a spiral distress.

Additionally, at the January 20, 2026 Vestry meeting, following guidance from the Diocese and Episcopal Church at large, we voted to designate 4 rooms as "Private Space." This designation, allows for shelter for those who reside therein from ICE and CBP, apart from a judicial warrant signed by a judge. Those spaces are: the Rector's Office, the Choir Room, the Nursery, and the Children's Worship Room 2 rooms on each wing and 2 rooms on each floor).

Other ways in which we have been and will continue availing ourselves to support one another and our neighbors is through groups like Justice and Advocacy and "The Good Trouble Gang" who can help give outlets to our energy for change. We have a group that centers our time on the intrinsic work of grief: Gathering with our Grief (1st and 3rd Sundays at 9:00 am in Buck Aiken Mtg Room). And, when we come to our Lenten program, later next month, I will host a series of *Deepening our Faith and Fellowship* meetings. These sessions will be used to build and organize small groups who will embark on shared facilitation spiritual formation. Additionally, there will be another offering of *Sacred Ground* (a deep dive into history or race in America, and the Church's role in this history- intended to work towards racial justice and healing), as well as another offering of *Walk in Love: Episcopal Beliefs and Practices*, for those new to St Mark's/The Episcopal Church and those who want to prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation, Reception, or Reaffirmation.

As I begin to close out my report, I want us to take a moment to offer a prayer of thanksgiving for those in our parish family who have died since our last meeting, and who now dwell in God's everlasting light and love: Let us pray:

Father of all, we pray to you for all those whom we love but see no longer; remembering especially, William Kirks, Jr, Dan Hartman, Grace Myers, Lisa Tucker, Tina Anderson, Barbara Summers, Kent Slonaker, Louise Tucker, Carole, Shahda, David Christia-

na, Foster Billingsley, and Julette Iverson. Grant to them eternal rest. Let light perpetual shine upon them. May their soul and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

And, just as we remember and give thanks for those who have died, we also celebrate and give thanks for those who were baptized into Christ's body, the Church. Remembering especially: Nicholas Roberts, Feild Brown-Pennington, Macee Robertson Moseley, Dylan Smith, Madeline Mastrandrea, Eleanore Mastrandrea, Jena Cilyk, Devon Tooley, Asher Tooley, Aaron Daniel, and Nathaniel Given.

And in 2025, we celebrated the marriage of Emily Kyser and Patrick Carr; as a reminder of Christ's love for the Church.

Additionally, in 2025 we celebrate the Confirmations and Receptions of Macee Moseley, Jennifer McCauley, Julia McCauley, Feild, Brown-Pennington, Nicholas Roberts, Hunter Boschen, Reeves Boschen, Luna Cilyk, William Cline, Tess Downey, Lauren Frazier, Jackson Neal, Miles, Tucker, and David Herman.

And in closing, I want to thank the Vestry for all their faithful work this year. If you are a Vestry member, please stand, so that we can show our appreciation.

Scott Pennington, Blaire McDuff, and Paul Shane, have now completed their three year vestry term. I have already given them their parting gift (at our December meeting), but I want to say thank you again for 3 wonderful years of service to our parish.

It continues to be a joy, privilege, and honor to serve as your rector. Thank you ALL for the love you bring to St Mark's and our community.

Grace and Peace,
Benjamin +

Vestry Nominees

Jennifer McCauley

Jennifer (Jenn) McCauley, is a 20 year resident of Richmond, VA. Originally from San Diego, California Jenn moved to the east coast in September of 2000 to become a flight attendant. In November 2001 she moved to Richmond, Virginia. She holds a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Pedagogy from VCU and has written, performed and taught around Richmond and New York City. After 5 years living in Brooklyn, with her wife, they



moved back to Richmond where they have created a home for the last 10 years. In an effort to grow their spiritual path and community, they found that community, love and spiritual faith at St. Marks. Jenn is honored and humbled to become a member of the vestry to serve the Holy Trinity and the beloved St. Mark's congregation.

Frosty Owen

St. Mark's has been my church home for most of my life. I was baptized and confirmed here on April 24, 1988, and I have been a member of this parish for 37 years. Living just four blocks from St. Mark's, I am deeply rooted in this community and grateful for the faith, fellowship, and guidance it has provided over the years. Professionally, I have spent my entire career at Hunton LLP, serving in several roles and currently as Director of Research & Information Services. This experience has shaped my commitment to service, collaboration, and thoughtful leadership—values I would bring to my work on the vestry.



For many years in the late 1990s and early 2000s, I served as Chair of Outreach, a ministry that truly distinguishes St. Mark's within the wider community. I also served on the search committee in 2005 and on the vestry from 2012 to 2015. In addition, I have the honor of serving in worship as both an acolyte and a chalice, roles that deepen my connection to our liturgy and congregational life.

One of my greatest passions is working each month alongside Mickie, Mandy, George, Fred, Elaine, Jenn, Gaye, Paul, Jean, Columbus, Nick, Jo, Melissa, Michael, Blaine, and Chris to transform the parish hall into a welcoming “fine dining” experience for our Community Dinners. These dinners bring people together for a delicious meal, meaningful conversation, and a sense of belonging. For many who attend, they are the primary connection to St. Mark's, and we strive to ensure everyone feels welcome, valued, and truly part of the parish.

I feel called to serve on the vestry as a way to give back to the church that has shaped my faith and life, and to help guide St. Mark's continued growth, stewardship, and mission in our community.

Nora Thompson

I spent the first sixty years of my life in Michigan and moved to be near family in Richmond in 2017. I am one of seven children in a blended family and grew up attending a

Presbyterian church in the Detroit area, where my grandfather served as choir director. Music was central to my upbringing, and family gatherings often included singing choir music together.



When I left home for college, I had a Catholic roommate whose father died unexpectedly. I spent time with her at the campus Catholic church and was drawn to the liturgy, eventually joining the Catholic church. During college, I also began making annual retreats to St. Gregory’s Episcopal monastery in Michigan and Gethsemani, a Trappist monastery in Kentucky—retreats I continue to attend as much as I can.

Over time, I experienced periods of questioning within the Catholic Church, particularly regarding the inclusion of LGBTQ members and the role of women. Through prayer and discernment, I continued searching for where I was called to be. I found my spiritual home at St. Mark’s in 2021 and participated in the online Compline prayers during the pandemic.

I love St. Mark’s—it is truly home to me. I serve on the justice and advocacy team and the evangelism team, and you may also see me helping with the Zoom community during worship. I feel called to serve on Vestry as a way to give back to a community that has given so much to me.

Vestry members serve a three-year team. Each member also serves on at least one ministry team of the congregation and reports on activities and needs of the teams to the full Vestry.

Vestry meets the third Tuesday of each month at 6pm, and during its annual retreat .

Ministry Reports

Education and Formation:

Children’s Worship continues each Sunday and with the worship space soft spots is enjoyed by our children and their families. We hosted several seasonal Fun & Learning Days for our younger children and incorporated some of our youth in the Food Pantry ministry. This year our Christmas Pageant had 24 & youth children take part.

Adult formation programs are ongoing with both *Sacred Ground* and *Prophetic Faith* (which is a Justice & Advocacy study) forming new cohorts in 2026. Both of these emphasize the formational work needed to better understand ourselves and our community. *St. Mark’s Reads* continues and in 2025 we enjoyed topics from *Social Justice for the Sensitive Soul*, works on the murder of Emmett Till., and the disparity in women’s vot-

ing rights history. The Wednesday AM Bible Study continues weekly September - June. Father Benjamin continues to lead timely and meaningful series such as *Gathering with Our Grief* and adult & youth confirmation preparation.

The Young Adults Discussion group led by Ryn Kennedy continues to meet weekly. We are working to revive our Youth Ministry with service learning projects and monthly gatherings.

In cooperation with Pastoral Care we continue to offer occasional end of life and aging issues programs. *Women Rowing North* meets monthly. Currently we are reading *On Our Best Behaviour* by Elise Loehen.

The church renovation led us to forego an in-person Lenten series and we offered bi-weekly meditations on the Stations of the Cross. *Malinda Collier*

Evangelism:

Before crafting the ministry's recap for 2025, I Googled the "true meaning of Evangelism." Google returned the following language on the matter: "Evangelism is the term we use to refer to the preaching of the Gospel. It comes from the same Greek word for gospel (euangelion) and means, literally, "gospel." When we evangelize we are "gospel" — we are spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ." Okay! Thanks, Google. Without taking a Deep Dive in AI Mode for more clarity, we have some fine examples of successful "gospel" at St. Mark's in 2025! Though we leave the formal preaching to the Clergy and qualified others, in simple terms, gospel is sharing the Good News of God's love while inviting others to join us in the full experience of that love. As a congregation at St. Mark's, we ALL find ourselves gospel. Inviting, welcoming and helping folks get connected in faith and ministry is in our DNA. Evangelizing – it's what we did well in 2025!

To begin, 2025 was a "banner year" for Evangelism at St. Mark's! Literally. After several years and repairs from battles with the wind, we retired our old banner and installed a lovely NEW banner that hangs on the front porch. It's very eye-catching in our brand colors of purple, green and white. Love is Our Tradition is the message displayed. If you haven't seen it, take a moment to ride or walk by the front façade of the church. We were excited to get the new banner and even more excited to have it in place ahead of the Parish Family Photo Event on the front steps. Speaking of the Parish Family Photo, THANK YOU to the team that invited us all into the picture! Our first Parish Family Photo in 100 years (not since 1925) offered a momentous occasion for us to be

together, visibly in community for our neighbors to see. It also provided us with lasting keepsakes to show while sharing the stories of our love and work at St. Mark's as we invite others to join us in faith and ministry.

Evangelism takes many forms at St. Mark's and that was certainly true in 2025. The spirit of Evangelism permeates all the work of our ministries inside and outside the church in RVA and beyond. Through audio, digital, print and action items, we let our community know about the Good News and the core values we hold dear. We updated our website regularly to reflect our offerings and created engaging social media and online content enjoying the storytelling and perspectives of multiple content creators within the parish. THANK YOU to all who post, like, share and comment! Seemingly small actions really have such great impact. As we do so well, in 2025, we invited friends to church and greeted newcomers like "old friends" sharing information about our church while we graciously tried to uncover how they came to be us. "Your website", was an often reply!

In support of spreading the word in 2025, the St. Mark's J & A team took our values, our banners and our swag to the streets for "good trouble" in several peaceful protests for human rights and attended VA Interfaith Day at the General Assembly to advocate and lobby our state legislators for social and economic justice. Benjamin even went all the way to Orlando to represent St. Mark's for RISC (Richmonders Involved in Strengthening Communities) at the annual Clergy DART Conference centered around Justice Ministry. That's not traditional preaching, but we made our voices heard. Gospeling.

In serving our neighbors-in-need, living into the Gospel and doing unto others, St. Mark's Outreach and Youth teams partnered with several local non-profits, churches and 8th District Councilperson (Reva Trammell) to prep lunch bags and collect basic hygiene items, diapers, school supplies, and other gifts for distribution to those who struggle to acquire them or those who would otherwise have gone without. Our Food Pantry served our homeless and marginalized neighbors with hot meals and bags-to-go while offering compassion and a place of peace, safety and renewal twice monthly. In support of our LGBTQ community, in the pouring rain, St. Mark's was in attendance with a booth at Pridefest on Midtown Green! We "show up" for others. Evangelism.

In further support of Evangelism in 2025, we provided fellowship opportunities with Community Dinners, Coffee Hours and small group experiences for children, youth and adults. We extended our facility as a lunch and rest stop for the Triangle of Hope

youth travelers, hosted the annual Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray celebration service and invited the RVA community to the Parish Hall for a successful American Red Cross Blood Drive. Every Wednesday night, we hosted 200 folks in the Parish Hall as they gathered as peers in recovery. We believe in building relationships with God and each other. That's core Evangelism.

On campus, from porch to parking lot in 2025, we held several outreach/visibility events in support of Evangelism, letting folks know we're here, we're in community. Our events included the World Bike Day Safety Clinic, Blessing of the Animals, Boo Halloween Fun and Marathon Cheers. Visibility events are a super easy way for us to share stories about St. Mark's. BTW, dog treats are a terrific conversation starter with owners as we offer them to passersby, dogs that is!

In all the gospeling we did in 2025, our list of achievements in Evangelism is rounded out by the biggest action item we undertook and accomplished in the year for the future of the church, the sharing of our faith and the invitation for multiple generations to join us in mission and ministry. It signals to long-timers and newcomers alike that we are centered in God, united in our work, and preparing to serve God and our neighbors for decades to come. **THANK YOU** to the Property Team and ALL the ministry teams for their participation in the collaboration that led to the completion of Phase 1: the renovation of our beloved Worship space! Talk about a boon for Evangelism. WOW! The improvements made during the renovation have enhanced both our in-person and ZOOM experiences. We have upgraded sound, lighting, logistics and general visibility. Our enhanced worship and celebration experiences are underpinned by the success of the renovation and further amplified by the evangelism efforts of our Clergy, Choir, Worship Team, Altar Team, Zoom/Alter Guild, Floral Guild, Ushers and Greeters. With the investment that we have already made in our beloved facility and the further investment that we are planning regarding the Narthex, we are well on the path for increased opportunities to share our beloved church even further as a resource for our parishioners and our community. Long live Evangelism. *Suzanne Long, Evangelism Chair*

Justice & Advocacy:

"Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public." Cornel West

2025 proved to be a challenging year for the Justice & Advocacy Ministry at St. Mark's. The need for thoughtful, faithful work and witness in our community and country was

tremendous. The stress that members of the ministry team and parish experienced directly and indirectly was significant. We were challenged by the intersection of overwhelming need and deep seeded fatigue. That being said, the work continued.

In no particular order, the Justice & Advocacy Ministry:

- *explored the possibility of formally aligning with other advocacy groups in the community & chose to not do so at this time

- *networked with others in the community who organized vigils & protests related to persons of color & immigrants. We publicized these events in the congregation and St. Mark's folks participated in most all that were held in Richmond

- *provided voter registration information & encouraged voting by all parishioners and others who utilize the building

- *participated in postcard campaigns focused on elected officials

- *established a "Good Trouble" rapid contact list to disseminate important information quickly to those who had expressed a particular interest in this work in general and direct action in particular

- *sponsored & coordinated (with Education) *St. Mark's Reads* with emphasis upon racism and the threats to democracy we are facing

- *undertook the work of getting approval to post safe space notices, designating public & private spaces in the church, and helping others understand the ramifications of the same. (Anticipating implementation in early 2026)

- *considered specific areas where our community is being most significantly impacted by current actions and started working on securing community leaders for forums focused on how the current environment is impacting immigrants, health care, older adults, & housing in our area and what we can do from a J & A standpoint in light of the erosion/destruction of the safety nets for the most vulnerable

- *recruited parishioners who participated in lobbying the General Assembly, making their voices heard on a variety of issues as people of faith

- *restructured the organization of the team to better facilitate the work

- *engaged in ongoing conversation & support within the team during disturbing times

We look ahead to 2026, which will no doubt be busy and even more challenging given the ongoing turmoil in the country. We anticipate offering another session of *Prophetic Faith* in the second half of the year. Anyone interested in participating in this study, the ministry team, or the work of Justice & Advocacy, please speak to Penny Adams or Karen Hardison. *Penny Adams and Karen Hardison, Co- Chairs*

Outreach:

2025 was a busy and meaningful year for Outreach. We continued ongoing ministries and added new initiatives to serve our community.

Our twice-monthly **Food Pantry and Breakfast Ministry** provided nearly 1,000 meals, along with grocery bags, winter clothing, and personal care kits. This ministry is led by Karen Franklin and supported by six volunteer teams. Special thanks to Jackie Bitler, the McDuff family, the Maruca family (who donated a truckload of food), and Columbus Parks for their generous support. Please contact Karen if you'd like to help.

The **12-Step Recovery Group** continued to meet each Wednesday night in our parish hall. On some nights as many as 240 participants attended. Many thanks to Suzanne Long who coordinates this mission. In 2025, she recruited and trained new volunteers for the hosting team. Please contact Suzanne Long if you'd like to help.

Throughout the year, also under Suzanne's leadership, we prepared and delivered meals to **CARITAS** and collected men's clothes for the CARITAS Works Closet.

Other missions:

Beginning on **MLK Day** and continuing through Holy Week, we collected 4,500+ diapers and thousands of wipes for distribution by the Church of the Epiphany.

During Lent, we assembled 115 care bags for the **PACE Center** at VCU which provides a welcoming space for student connection and community. The care bags were given to students to support their well-being during exam season.

In May, Kent Slonaker led a **World Bike Day** End-of-School Celebration. We provided free bike safety checks, food and an opportunity for area cyclists to connect and share stories. This year we plan to honor Kent's memory in a way that includes biking, one of his great passions.

In August, we contributed quarters and laundry supplies to **St. Andrew's Laundry Ministry**. Four of our teens helped St. Andrews distribute these supplies to our

neighbors.

In August, we hosted a **Red Cross Blood Drive**, collecting 39 units of blood. Thanks to Blair McDuff for suggesting and coordinating this life saving mission.

In the fall, we donated school supplies to **Anna Julia Cooper School**.

In September, along with other Episcopal churches, we hosted a booth at **VA PrideFest**. Many members of our congregation volunteered to support this outreach. Thanks to Paul & Malinda for coordinating the effort.

In October, we provided a hearty lunch to 60 students at the **PACE Center** and joined them during their weekly Stories and Lunch program. Many thanks to resident chef Mickie Jones for leading this effort.

In November, our parishioners supported a **Habitat for Humanity** renovation project painting most of the interior of a large Southside home.

In December, we completed our annual **Christmas Gifts Program**, providing generous gifts for 69 neighbors in Southside. Thanks to Don and Elizabeth Kyser for leading this mission again this year.

We are grateful to everyone who volunteered, donated, and led these efforts. Your generosity continues to make Outreach possible—and we welcome all who feel called to join us.

Suzanne put together this list of the monetary value of some of our key missions.

CARITAS Initiatives:

Lunches for Works

- 01/31/25 \$400 Chicken tetrazzini
- 06/20/25 \$500 All chilled foods, a summer lunch
- 08/08/25 \$500 Fried Chicken
- 11/14/25 \$350 Taco Casseroles, Veggie Lasagna

Afterworks Dinners

- 04/30/25 \$440 Chicken Alfredo and Cheese Ravioli
- 02/26/25 \$400 Meatloaf

Men's Dress Attire \$300

PACE Center

- Exam Goodie Bags. \$700 (115 BAGS at \$6ish/bag)
- Lunch 10/22/25 \$235 Taco Chicken Casserole

School Supplies
Anna Julia \$800

Christmas Boxes
69 Recipients - \$9000 - \$11000
Ed Street, Chair

Parish Life/Fellowship:

Parish Life is a small, core group of about 7 individuals who donate their time, talent and energy to the community life of St. Mark's. They are supplemented by:

- Penny Adams, who has taken on the Herculean task of managing the Coffee Hour teams.
- Karen Hardison, who manages our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper.
- Those who assist in the planning and execution of our Shrine Mont Parish Retreat and individual events.

In 2025, the Parish Life Ministry was busy. Over the year we:

- Took the lead on, or supported others, in managing receptions after three funerals.
- Held three special celebrations – the Bishop's Visit, Buck's Retirement Party and our Return to the Sanctuary Sunday.
- Held seven annual events – Epiphany Dinner, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, Palm Sunday coffee hour, a reception after the Pauli Murray service, supported Grace & Holy Trinity with the reception following the Pride Eucharist, held the Parish Picnic and planned the Annual Retreat at Shrine Mont.
- Held three "Souper Suppers", two in support of the Education Ministry ("St. Mark's Reads") and one after the All Saints Service.

We hope to set up additional small group opportunities in the future, but additional manpower is needed to organize this effort.

This ministry also helps maintain kitchen supplies, including "to-go" containers, aluminum pans, coffee creamer, and other supplies used by multiple ministries. This past year we have also purchased a new microwave oven and additional tablecloths.

Parish Life depends on volunteers, and we could not accomplish as much as we do without the assistance of those who help with set-up, clean-up, etc. If you are interested in joining Parish Life or just participating in single events, contact Fred Crowley

(frederick.crowley@dbhds.virginia.gov) or Mickie Jones (mpj4120@verizon.net), or watch your emails for volunteer opportunities.

Immediate opportunities include:

- Diocesan Ordination Service Reception – February 7, 2026. Contact Fred Crowley or Mickie Jones. Help needed: set-up, clean-up, provision of food
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper – February 17, 2026. Contact Karen Hardison (kehardison@aol.com). Help needed: set-up, clean-up and cooks.
- Coffee Hour Teams – If you are interested in joining a team or setting up a new team with friends, contact Penny Adams (nbfginc@aol.com).

We would love to have you join us, and no, you do not need to know how to cook. We take any kind of help, from organizational skills to setting up tables.

"The secret ingredient is always love." – Anonymous *Fred Crowley, Chair*

Pastoral Care:

Pastoral Care meets monthly providing opportunities for group reflection and support of individual needs. Pastoral Care believes in the emotional and spiritual support and growth of all members. We engage in thoughtful reflection over the needs of our parishioners and friends on the prayer list. Pastoral Care has continued to support our parishioners in tangible ways through the sending of cards to home visits providing an opportunity to receive communion. Pastoral Care has warmly welcomed three new members this past year. There is always room for more as the need grows in our congregation.

We welcome all to share the needs of those that our ministry is not aware of, knowing all information shared is confidential.

As always Pastoral Care continued to practice discreet and respectful confidentiality. We continue to welcome new members and explore new ways to live out our goals outlined in the Strategic Plan. *Karen Franklin Chair*

Healing Prayer Ministry:

The Healing Prayer Ministry Team came together in 2025 in response to an observation by a parishioner that having the opportunity for healing prayers at our worship services might meet a need and be well received at St. Mark's. A small but committed group began to meet as a subgroup of the Pastoral Care Ministry, to thoughtfully and prayerfully

discuss, study, plan, and train for the introduction of healing prayers at the Sunday worship service (and other services as deemed appropriate.) Healing Prayer ministers began to offer prayers during communion while we worshipped downstairs. Prayers have continued now that we have returned to the nave. Work is ongoing to discern how to offer prayers with/for all who may desire them in the most comfortable and accessible way possible. We look forward serving the parish through this ministry in the year to come and beyond.

Property: Our Church Property is now 104 Years old:

During 2025, in addition to the completion of the Renovations to all our Interior Worship Space / Sanctuary Renovations by way of our “RAISE to RENEW” Campaign, we still handled the general daily and monthly routine work, maintenance, issues as well as expenses. In 2025 we had the opportunity to make some minor impactful improvement projects as follows:

Regular Maintenance activities associated with existing and older building related items:

In 2025 we made some temporary repairs to the Main Church Entrance Doors, along with the associated Door Hardware to buy us some more time until we are able to start on the Renovations to the Narthex. The Renovations to our Narthex will include the replacement of all six (6 each) Front Entrance Doors facing N. Arthur Ashe Boulevard. The New front Entrance Doors will contain Glass to allow more natural light into our Narthex, as well as conveying a more open and inviting visual message to people who are outside of our Church.

In addition to the maintenance work on our front Entrance doors, this year we also took the opportunity to clean, refurbish, and maintain our well utilized Gas Stove and Oven in the Kitchen.

We refreshed and relocated Aiken Lounge, along with creating the NEW Aiken Meeting Room.

We are now utilizing the NEW Aiken Meeting Room to hold our ministry team meetings – along with the ability to hold and facilitate our Vestry meetings both in person as well as virtually. Both Ralph Stanley and Sanford Eberly were instrumental in these efforts and endeavors.

The successful completion of the New Electrical Infrastructure work along with the Renovations to our WORSHIP SPACE in 2025:

In 2025 St. Mark's Episcopal Church successfully completed our big and faithful step towards the future of our Church by way of the completion of the Electrical Infrastructure work along with the Renovations to our Worship Spaces:

Property work to be completed in the near Future:

FINANCIAL RESOURCES: The Capital Campaign Committee of our Church by way of "The Raise to Renew Campaign" determined the extent of our financial resources, for us to compare against to the work which needs to be accomplished within our Worship Space. In the future, more than likely in 2027 at the completion of the 3-year capital campaign giving time period, we plan to move forward with the Electrical work, New Entrance Doors, along with the Renovations to the entire Narthex, Main Entrance, and Welcome Center portion of our Church.

VISIBILITY: Over the last several years, the Visibility of our Church has been enhanced in more ways than one. These efforts will continue, so stay tuned for more exciting news and progress in 2026!

Brent Graves, Chair

Stewardship:

St. Mark's is a remarkably generous congregation. And while we certainly have some particularly generous parishioners, our church is dependent upon the breadth of the pledge base rather than the depth of individual pockets. Several years ago, the Stewardship Team decided to focus on participation rather than a monetary goal. This means we concentrate and announce the number of pledges we hope to receive and the numbers received. Our aim was and is to affirm that, at St. Mark's, all pledges are valued. The amount of the pledge is less important than the fact of the pledge—the pledge as sign, the pledge as tangible commitment to our common life and work, in Christ. As of this report we are still shy of our 100-pledge goal, but the current 94 pledges still gives us hope that we will get to 100!

It continues to be the Team's belief that a broad enough pledge response will naturally

lead to a successful campaign, which has again proved to be the case. In homilies and postings we have underscored our long-term stewardship goal: to create a balanced budget without drawing down the church's investment account. To date, our pledges for 2026 total \$358,030. It is important to remember that the larger the portion of the budget that can be funded by pledge and plate, the smaller the draw on the investment account—and the more secure our financial future.

In the spirit of broadening our engagement, the Stewardship Team this year was led by two chairs instead of one! We would like to thank Howard for making this such a smooth transition, as his engagement and guidance is still crucial to our success.

Isabel Tucker, and Elizabeth Kyser Co-Chairs

Worship:

The Worship Team was very active in 2025.

When we started the year, St. Mark's was worshipping in the parish hall. Despite the challenges of this cramped space, we continued to worship extravagantly and welcomed many new people to the parish.

While we were in the parish hall we had three special services: Bishop Stevenson's Visit in March, A Celebration of Buck's Ministry in mid-June, and our second annual Pauli Murray service in late-June. We also had a full complement of Holy Week Services with a parish hall adorned with beautiful flowers. Every Sunday, we had a full choir, and Amos rigged up an array of keyboards so we could have "organ-like" music. He even introduced a timpani for Easter!

In September, we moved back to our newly renovated nave with many new lighting and sound opportunities and challenges. During all this season of change, we continued to offer Zoom service to the parishioners who cannot attend in person. And to make use of new sound systems in both the parish hall and the newly renovated nave.

Many thanks to the Property Team, Amos and Malinda and all of those who persevered through many technical challenges.

Here are some of the other items the Worship Team worked on during 2025.

- We worked with the vestry to tighten up the time for announcement during the Sunday service.
- We added a land acknowledgement to the bulletin to recognize and remember the

native people who were removed from the land on which we worship

- We began using Ministry Scheduler Pro (MSP) to make it easier to schedule the many volunteers that are needed each week for Sunday services. Many thanks to Paul Shane for introducing this application to the parish and for administering it.

Fr. Benjamin has led discussion to help us develop a better understanding of the ministry of the second patent and the eucharist in general as the Worship Team discerned having lay persons on the second patent.

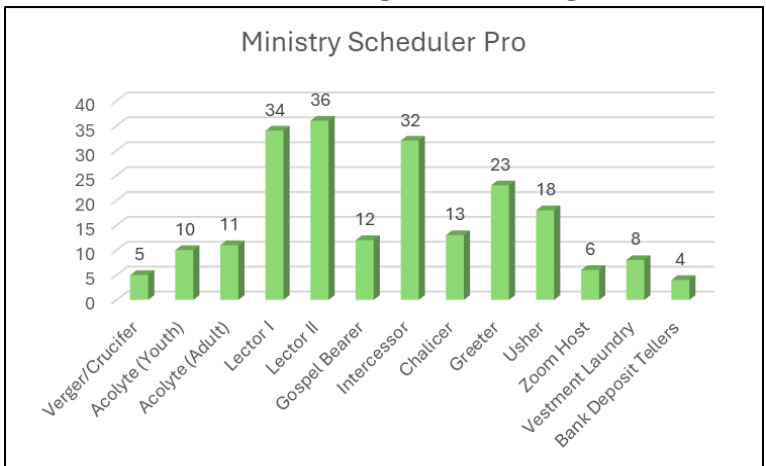
Finally I wish to express my appreciation for Karen Hardison's ministry at St. Mark's. Karen is such a dedicated member of St. Mark's -- a preacher, an advocate and a leader of many ministries. At the beginning of the year, Karen asked me if I would consider being the Worship Team chair after her many years of service. I appreciate Karen's support as I took on this role and her continued work and inspiration as a member of the Worship Team. *Rob McTier, Chair*

Worship Assistants, Altar Guild & Floral Guild

Paul Shane introduced an automated solution for our worship ministry scheduling called Ministry Scheduler Pro (MSP). Starting with the second quarter of 2025 we slowly implemented different ministries of 74 assistants including the following:

The solution provides automated scheduling and sub requests, with full visibility of all services and assistants, including Malinda and Steve, for bulletin and communication updates.

Our goal for 2026 is to continue building additional assistants within our Acolyte youth ministry and continue to grow other ministries that are not included today.



Our 16 member Altar Guild worked diligently with the rector adapting our procedures during our time in the parish hall. And joyously celebrated our return this past October to the nave!

Our appreciation of having a sacristy immediately adjacent to the chancel has grown immensely. Preparing and cleaning the chancel, setting the altar for the Eucharist, changing the seasonal hangings, polishing silver & brass, are just some examples of our fun work. **Help us set the Lord's Table for the Eucharistic Feast. New members are always welcome!**

Our 4 member Floral Guild's major goal during the Church year is to reflect the magnificence of God's creation in nature from all 4 seasons in our altar arrangements and other decorations. And after our weekly Sunday services, to regularly have flowers ready for the **Pastoral Care Ministry**. They oversee the flowers going to our home communicants, members present, friends, neighbors, those in recovery from illness or surgery. Always to brighten someone's day and as an expression of the St Mark's Love for one another. **Everyone is welcome to the flowers following worship to enjoy yourself or share with someone else.**

Also, certain colors in our altar hangings and floral arrangements reflect the Liturgical Church Year seasons of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter and Pentecost. Christmas and Easter we "go all out" with decorations throughout the nave, chapel, narthex and front portico. **If you enjoy arranging flowers for your table at home. You could join our happy band and share your gift here at St Mark's.**

This year during Advent the usage of evergreens was expanded to include dried blue hydrangeas. And under Pam Piercy's leadership, our Nativity reflected the journey of the Holy Family, Shepherds and Magi throughout Advent, the Christmas Birth of our Savior and the arrival of the Magi at Epiphany. Ralph Stanley and Nick Roberts headed up the placing of the lighted trees and garland on the front portico. And members at large heard the call, helping when needed putting the large interior trees in place and back in storage later.

Many thanks to all those who are a part of these behind-the-scenes ministries that enhance our worshipping experience. Altar and Floral Guild work is generally a once-a-month commitment. Our time together is both social, spiritual and rewarding in countless ways.

Please consider joining us. The more the merrier we'll support and mentor you in every aspect of our work!

Pam Piercy, *Floral Guild Chair* & Sanford Eberly, *Altar Guild Chair*

Minutes of 159th Annual Meeting
St. Mark's Episcopal Church—Date: January 26,2025
Location: St. Mark's Parish Hall and Zoom

Attending: 64 Parishioners present in person—8 attending via Zoom. Required: 10% of active communicants. St. Mark's has 363 adult communicants in good standing. A quorum was achieved.

Materials provided to attendees: Meeting Booklet containing the agenda, Rector's Report, profile of Vestry Nominees, ministry reports and minutes of 2024 Annual Parish Meeting; and 2-page synopsis/highlights of the Treasurer's Report.

Meeting was called to order at 12:25 PM with prayer by Rev. Benjamin Badgett, Rector.

Approval of 2024 annual meeting minutes: Shannon Heady moved, and Steve Clark seconded approval of the minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting. Approval was unanimous.

Election of New Vestry Members:

Recognition given to outgoing Vestry members: Karen Franklin, Rob McTier and Mickie Jones.

Slate of nominees introduced: Ivy Burnes, Kent Slonaker and Ralph Stanley. There were no nominations from the floor.. Ivy Burnes, Kent Slonaker and Ralph Stanley were duly elected. 51 ballots were cast.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Suzanne Long provided a handout with the highlights of her report.

Thank you to all present and on Zoom, for all that is done to serve God, God's people and animals. St. Mark's is full of givers and doers. Statistics reviewed.

2024 Budget had a faith component of \$116,000. Through 1) strength of giving, 2) conservation of resources, and 3) savings on ministry budgets, this was reduced to \$10,000.

Capital Campaign has a goal of 100 giving units. We now have 82 pledges. Remember that we are in a 3-year campaign and are only at the start of year 2, so it is never too late to pledge. The standard for a capital campaign is that 50 – 60% of members will pledge, so St. Mark's is doing very well. We have \$603,000 cash on hand from which one pay request has been paid. This has allowed us to award a contract for Phase 1. Cash is needed to award a contract, so Phase 2 has not been awarded. Pledge as you are able and fulfill as you are able. If you can advance fulfillment, please do. Cash on hand drives the work. Our pledges reflect our faith in this Parish.

2025 Budget is \$521,787 and has a faith component of \$131,000. The Stewardship goal for 2025 is 100 pledges totaling \$328,000. We have 92 giving units, with pledges totaling \$369,768. We are already closing the budget gap.

Construction/Property Update was given by Brent Graves. Construction has started.

1. Pews and kneelers have been removed as well as some components of the organ.
2. New LED cove lighting has been installed and new wiring has started. Thanks to Amos Goldie. He has been a tremendous resource on the sound system. We will have delay speakers so we will not have an echo in the church. That has been one of the problems in the past that has made it hard to hear. Electrical chases are being cut into the walls so the new wiring will be in the plaster. This prevents the need to have exposed conduit.
3. We are in the dirty stage of construction. A roll-off dumpster has been placed next to Carroll's Auto Services.
4. Work that is underway but cannot be seen includes: new wiring in the attic; installation of emergency egress lighting (will come on if there is a power outage); and a new dimming and lighting control system.
5. Chasen, our plaster and painting contractor, has offered us a 25% discount for winter work, as well as flexibility in staffing/completion. This will save us approximately \$18,000. This savings will be used to replace the marble flooring in the chancel. The existing setting base has deteriorated, and the tiles are brittle and have lost their finish. This project is being handled as a legacy project in that decisions are being made with the future in mind. The existing tiles and setting base will be removed and replaced with new, modern materials and larger tiles. Once Phase 1 is complete and funds are available, Phase 2, including the Narthex, will start.

Rector's Report is included in the Meeting Booklet.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 PM with the singing of the Doxology.

Respectfully submitted, *Margaret Jones, Registrar*

