

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ADVENT
173RD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
FEBRUARY 7, 2021



MISSION STATEMENT

To show Christ's light in us through worship and prayer,
play and work, sharing and giving, that all may know Him.

VISION STATEMENT

That Christ's light be seen in us.

The Episcopal Church of the Advent
173rd Annual Parish Meeting
February 7, 2021

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

OPENING PRAYER

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING VESTRY MEMBERS

CONTINUING VESTRY

INTRODUCTION OF THE VESTRY CANDIDATES

VESTRY ELECTION

SENIOR WARDEN ADDRESS

RECTOR'S ADDRESS

FINANCIAL REPORT

ADVENT FOUNDATION REPORT

FINAL REMARKS BY THE RECTOR

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTION RESULTS

CLOSING PRAYER

ADJOURNMENT

The Episcopal Church of the Advent 173rd Annual Parish Meeting

Table of Contents

PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES ANNUAL REPORTS

PARISH FINANCIAL REPORT	PAGE 4
PASTORAL CARE	PAGE 5
COMMUNICATIONS	PAGE 6
CHRISTIAN FORMATION: ADULTS, YOUTH, CHILDREN AND YOUNG FAMILIES	PAGES 7-8
MEMBERSHIP AND PARISH LIFE	PAGE 9
STAFF: YEARS-OF-SERVICE RECOGNITION	PAGE 9
OUTREACH AND MISSIONS	PAGE 10
ADVENT OUTREACH DISBURSEMENTS	PAGE 11
MUSIC	PAGE 12
ADVENT CHILDREN'S CENTER	PAGE 13
THE ADVENT FOUNDATION	PAGE 14
MISSION IMPERATIVES	PAGES 15-16

**The Episcopal Church of the Advent
Statement of Cash Receipts and Expenditures**

<u>REVENUES:</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Pledges/Collections	\$ 1,656,832	\$ 1,730,461	\$1,755,839	\$1,792,423	\$1,885,285
Advent Foundation	327,683	346,068	344,782	301,385	380,760
Other	<u>42,911</u>	<u>40,914</u>	<u>24,684</u>	<u>19,307</u>	<u>2,781</u>
TOTAL REVENUES	2,027,426	2,117,443	2,125,305	2,113,114	2,268,825
<u>EXPENDITURES:</u>					
Episcopal Pledge	238,000	240,000	243,655	297,682	298,295
Outreach	132,911	110,615	104,227	108,729	105,217
Salaries/Benefits	1,122,545	1,154,027	1,197,528	1,168,906	1,222,431
Property	354,550	395,199	397,879	394,354	416,502
Administration	96,271	86,149	102,840	104,525	84,883
Christian Formation	12,671	11,924	12,090	13,032	9,136
Youth/EYC	16,343	19,764	15,007	15,398	16,145
Parish Life	12,580	9,555	8,593	14,643	4,410
Music	13,820	15,187	12,228	12,628	9,199
Worship/Spiritual Life	1,947	2,576	2,187	6,087	5,706
Stewardship	1,540	2,620	1,112	2,155	1,318
Pastoral Care	1,630	1,951	1,497	1,373	980
Advent Children's Center	<u>46,932</u>	<u>44,510</u>	<u>34,146</u>	<u>29,195</u>	<u>92,656</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	2,051,740	2,094,077	2,132,988	2,168,707	2,266,876
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR YEA	<u>\$ (24,314)</u>	<u>\$ 23,366</u>	<u>\$ (7,683)</u>	<u>\$ (55,593)</u>	<u>\$ 1,949</u>

**The Advent Foundation
Allocation to the Church**

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
St. Luke's Fund - Outreach	\$ 96,383	\$ 94,591	\$ 93,461	\$ 96,405	\$ 94,224
St. Helena's Fnd - Property	100,406	98,487	97,251	100,216	97,882
Manning Fund	10,648	10,440	10,290	10,438	9,905
St. Cecilia's Fund - Music	4,211	4,137	4,078	4,136	3,933
St. Fiacre	9,651	9,904	10,138	10,756	10,795
Clay Turner Fund	36,201	36,806	36,692	37,388	35,586
Missioner Fund	-	-			
Father Caldwell Fund	54,932	52,974	52,147	52,956	50,622
Administrative Support	<u>7,500</u>	<u>7,500</u>	<u>7,500</u>	<u>7,500</u>	<u>7,500</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 319,932</u>	<u>\$ 314,839</u>	<u>\$ 311,557</u>	<u>\$ 319,794</u>	<u>\$ 310,447</u>
% of Church Budget	15.59%	15.03%	14.61%	14.75%	13.69%

ASSOCIATE RECTOR FOR PASTORAL CARE

The Body of Christ

The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part, the parts we mention and the parts we don't, the parts we see and the parts we don't. If one-part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt and in the healing. If one-part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance. You are Christ's body—that's who you are! You must never forget this. (I Corinthians 12: 21- 26, The Message)

If one-part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt – and this year, we have all hurt in one way or another. And yet as the Pastoral Care Commission, tasked with “providing support and encouragement in the face of life’s constant changes,” the question of how do we continue to provide care became a challenge. Was it safe to still deliver flowers or food? Would we be able to host the Blood Mobile? How would we offer care?

It's been hard. As the Associate for Pastoral Care, I have missed not being able to make hospital visits, to pray with you before surgery, to bring communion to your homes, and to be pastorally present during life changes in ways that I once took for granted. I continue to thank God for the opportunity serve in a parish that recognizes the need for and benefit of pastoral care. I am thankful for Guild of St. Francis and St. Clare who carefully thought through these questions and adjusted protocols to ensure those delivering and receiving flowers or food could do so safely. Unlike some of the other ministries of the parish, pastoral care often happens behind the scenes and with varying degrees of confidentiality, which makes the ministry less public. Yet the faithful teams of volunteers have continued to faithfully share the light of Christ in real and meaningful ways.

Pastoral care happened by using “old school resources” in new ways. For example, each week a printed copy of the sermon as well as copies of the Gleaners Sunday School class lessons were mailed out to approximately 30 members of the parish who do not have internet access. By providing these resources, every member of the parish had access to formation and worship resources.

Pastoral care happened though technology. Over 150 individuals and/or groups participated in the recordings of well over 200 daily devotionals that were viewed by an average of 175 people a day. Every commission of the parish participated at some point over the past year in the sharing of their story, vocation, memories, gifts, and talents. We heard from some of our youngest members as well as some of our more seasoned members. Whether the focus was liturgy, adult, youth or children's formation, music, outreach, or pastoral care, each devotional carried a message of a reminder of the love of God and the hope that the viewer would experience a sense of connection, support and encouragement during our constant changes.

In addition, the following 2020 statistics from the Guild of St. Francis and St. Clare, I believe, demonstrate a parish family who remained active at the work of extending Christ's healing care and manifesting the light of Christ.

Chaired by Patsy Copeland, **the Pastoral Visitors** made 21 visits and 203 phone calls to parishioners in need in 2020.

The twelve-person Pastoral Visitor team continues to minister following a two-person weekly team approach to pastoral calls.

Chaired by Barbara Adams, **the Short-Term Care Ministry** addressed the immediate needs of parishioners facing challenges in 2020. Throughout the year, a total of 26 contacts were made, which included the provision of homemade meals including soups, casseroles, and desserts.

Chaired by Allison Little during the first half of the year, the **Young Families Ministry** provided care and support to young families in the parish. Through this ministry, 148 cards were mailed which included birthday cards to children 12 and under, with many of these written by Kathie Borowski, ACC Director, who offered to assist with this area of ministry

Chaired by Doris Mathews, the Long-Term Care Ministry continued its focus in 2020 on serving the homebound and those with restricted mobility. Throughout the year, this ministry made a total of 123 contacts. This extraordinary ministry is made possible by the support of a team of dedicated volunteers who sign up to make one or more contacts per month.

Chaired by Stephanie Hall, **the Bereavement Ministry** addressed the many needs of families in the parish facing death this past year. Although we were not able to provide our usual receptions, the 24 monthly coordinators worked with Stephanie to contact parishioners to offer support during times of grief and loss. In 2020, 11 parishioner deaths occurred. In addition, 40 parishioner family members or friends died in 2020. Even as we grieved the loss of these beloved family and friends, we also grieved the opportunities to gather as a community of faith “in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Chaired by Connie Caldwell, **the Card Ministry** mailed out 425 cards this year, averaging almost 40 card-mailings per month. Of these, approximately 21 Advent members on the Long-Term Care list received monthly postcards, a birthday card, and/or a greeting card mailed at Easter and Christmas. Monthly cards are also sent to our seminarians, offering a reminder of prayerful support. In addition, cards were sent at times of bereavement, illness, surgery, as well as at times of celebration and thanksgiving. Thanks to the talents and generosity of the Advent Artists, many of the cards mailed out during the year are reproductions of the paintings and drawings created by Advent members.

Chaired by Martha Schwartz, **the Flower Delivery Ministry**, shared 109 arrangements of flowers over the course of the year. These deliveries were made for 30 celebratory occasions and 79 non-celebratory occasions. Also, through the ministry of the Flower Delivery teams, a bit of joy was brought to staff members of The Advent who received a flower arrangement on their birthdays.

Chaired by Kari Warren, **the Food and Freezer Ministry** chopped, stirred, baked, boiled, bagged, and froze literally hundreds of casseroles, soups, and cookies to begin our year with a freezer well stocked to ensure there was always a meal available whenever a need came along. When Covid prevented a traditional “cook day” to replenish the freezer, Gail Owens and Jessica Owens made sure the freezers remained stocked.

For the full year 2020, the Guild of St. Frances and St. Clare initiated and administered close to 1200 contacts with parishioners during significant times of transition, challenge – and also celebration in their lives. Not included in these numbers, are the countless numbers of texts, emails, parking lot and grocery store conversations, and most importantly prayers.

In addition to the Guild of St. Francis and St. Clare, the pastoral care effort at the Advent was also supported in 2020 by other vital parish ministries. The Daughters of the King, led by Judy McCravy, and now by Patty Bock, has maintained regular prayer over a private list of names, grounding our parish in prayer and the belief that all that we are and all that we do is by the grace of God and God alone. Our “little prayer team” divides the names of those on our non-parishioner prayer list and holds them in prayer. Cathy McCabe provides leadership and support to the Ecumenical Blood Drive program. Special thanks this year to all our pastoral care volunteers and especially to David Bowdish who served as our statistician and to Anna Soderberg and Hugh James who served as Vestry Liaisons for Pastoral Care.

All that we are and all that we do together we offer to the glory of God. In gratitude and thanksgiving for the pastoral care ministry at the Advent.

In Christ,
Paula Ruth Griffin+

COMMUNICATIONS

Our communication efforts grew significantly this year due to Covid-19. When the pandemic hit, we had to rethink how we were going to worship and communicate with our parish. We began online services in March 2020 with one camcorder, an old computer, and no knowledge. After recording the first couple of services we proudly broadcasted our first live stream on Good Friday. None of this would have been possible without the help of Boyce Lawton, Ted Gage, Sam Price, John Coleman, Zac Blankenship, and Jeanelle Smith. Much of the summer was spent researching our best options for a permanent broadcasting solution. Thanks to the Turner Fund, we were able to outfit the church in the fall with a new camera system consisting of three 4K capable remote-control Sony cameras, a Sony remote control console, an Apple iMac to provide graphic overlays, and a state-of-the-art Dell Computer to act as a switcher and encode the broadcast to a livestream over several different platforms simultaneously. We also began sharing daily video devotions done by our staff and parishioners.

As part of our long-term planning efforts, the Vestry, Long Range Planning and Vision Committee, Staff, and others worked with Arrowhead Design Co., Inc. to develop a new logo, letterhead, and business cards. We’ve also begun the process of redesigning and improving our website and social media presence.

The Parish Paper also was redesigned with a new look and layout. This has been the result of the hard work of Jeanelle Smith. Jeanelle has a wonderful gift in the area of graphic design and has really stepped-up to the plate to help fill the

gap as the Director of Communications position has been open since July 2020.

Thank you to all the volunteers who assisted with printing and mailing the Parish Paper pre-pandemic: Doris Mathews, Roy Ellis, Pat Frédéric, Kay Foster, Wilson Lanford, Betty Snow, and the front desk receptionists who provide help on an as-needed basis.

Joanne Wood
Parish Administrator

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

ADULT FORMATION

Adult Formation, in the Anglican tradition, is among the ways that we engage scripture, tradition, and reason to help us mature as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. The Episcopal Church of the Advent offers a variety of Sunday and weekday classes and Bible studies, including Confirmation and Baptism preparation. Below is a snapshot of this year's offerings.

Adult Formation in 2020 began much like it had the year before. Regular Adult Sunday school classes, (Gleaners, Seekers and Parents in Community meeting every Sunday; weekly Men's and Women's Bible studies every Thursday morning, and Book and Brown Bag every Tuesday). However, as Covid-19 entered our world, our Adult offerings changed. Changed – but did not stop.

For all of the spring and summer, the Gleaners class continued to follow the Lectionary and every week, members of the class sent lessons on the Readings to the class by email. Thanks to Agnes Martin, Brenda Lytle, Mac Davis, Martha and Mike Honeycutt, Stephen Shepherd, and Patty and Kevin Bock for their commitment to researching and writing lessons for the class throughout the pandemic. And, to Anne Bomar for serving as the class communicator. When the Covid-19 numbers and the weather improved, members of the class met in person outside, and then safely distanced in the Parish and Community Life Center.

The Seekers class also continued to meet via Zoom. Class members offered lessons every week this spring and, in the fall, the class embarked on the theme, "Faith in Turbulent Times." Despite being on Zoom, Seekers continued to attract an average of 35-40 people each week. Guest speakers including Dr. Rob McCormick from USC-Upstate as well as class members presented on a variety of related topics. Many thanks to Melissa Johnson, Donna Creedon, Chris Lynn, and David Pittman for organizing the weekly offerings and to Melissa and Steve Johnson for serving as weekly Zoom hosts and class communicators.

Weekly Bible studies and Book and Brown Bag also shifted to Zoom in late summer. While the numbers have been less than when we were in person, both offerings continue to be well attended.

Our 2020 Lenten Series, "*Practicing Courage, 'I Will, with God's Help'.*" included activities for children, the Word and Music offerings on Wednesdays at noon, and a special speaker series on Wednesday nights focused on the 5 questions from the Baptismal Covenant. A Lenten Devotional Book, *Practicing Courage with All My Heart, Soul, Strength and Mind* was provided to all interested parishioners. While some of the programming was cancelled due to Covid, many utilized the devotional book and other online resources during the season of Lent.

A highlight of Formation during the pandemic has been the daily devotions that were offered every week day from March until December. These short devotions, recorded and sent through our You Tube channel, served as a way to stay connected to one another when we were unable to be together in person. Many thanks to all the staff and parishioners who participated, but especially to Zac Blankenship and Jeanelle Smith, who did the recordings and editing every week. Many have expressed deep appreciation for the devotionals, and we are thankful that they have been a blessing.

As I retired at the end of 2020, Father David Pittman has stepped in as the liaison for Adult Formation. David will be a great asset to our Adult Formation programs.

I have loved serving the church these past 8 years, and I long for the day that we are together in person to study and grow together. Until then, I'll see you online!

Laura C. Bauknight
Ministries Support Coordinator, 2020

YOUTH MINISTRIES

What a challenging new year for the Episcopal Youth Community at the Advent!

The YMCA 2019-2020 Church League Basketball was a great success. The Advent hosted six teams. Each team worked together to grow in both their developmental skills on the court and relationships with each other off the court. Unfortunately, we were unable to host for the 2020-2021 season due to our diocesan guidelines, but stay tuned! We have exciting news to share for our 2021 summer plans.

On February 21-23rd, we hosted 75 participants for our annual Winter Ski Retreat. With both middle and high school students, there was never a dull moment! We learned the importance of questioning our identity in Christ more. We also shared together in smaller breakout groups. Many of our EYC members mentioned this was the best retreat they have been on.

With our in-person worship transitioning into an online presence, we too have adjusted many of our ministries. We would like to thank Anne and Stewart Johnson for the donation of new acolyte alb's and cinctures. We are so excited to share this wonderful gift with you all and a full team of acolytes when we are able to regather fully.

The 2020 Pilgrimage was rescheduled to summer 2021. We have 15 students that are going to Nova Scotia, Canada. Please be in prayer for this group in the upcoming months and especially in the month of June. This is a spiritual journey we hope that will make a life-long impact on our students.

Our weekly EYC events have transitioned from a larger group model to a small group model to meet the guidelines set by our diocese and our parish. Each week we offered High School Prayer Breakfast, Middle School Boys Bible Study, and Middle School Girls Bible Study with First Presbyterian. Every other week we hosted 6th Grade EYC and 7-8th Grade Girls Bible Study. As we plan and prepare for programs, we look towards the future. Despite the many cancelled and postponed events, we continue to plan and prepare.

This summer we are planning to host a five-day summer basketball camp. The week will be centered around the development of basketball skills. We will focus on dribbling, passing, shooting, defense, and above all else teamwork. It is our hope that it will also be a week of relationship development between peers. We hope that this camp is a successful way for our Episcopal Youth Community to feel connected to one another and our parish.

We ask for your prayers during this exciting time for our youth. Our four core values of our Episcopal Youth Community are Growth, Community, Love, and Discipleship. It takes a village to help convey this message and we couldn't do it without the amazing family at the Episcopal Church of the Advent.

Respectfully Submitted,

Zac Blankenship & Caroline Stinson

CHILDREN AND YOUNG FAMILIES

Many thanks to Allison Little for providing leadership to the Children and Young Families program for the first half of the year. Allison coordinated our Sunday School prior to our Covid break. She also helped the children enhance the Alleluia Banner which was buried in the Undercroft after the Pancake Supper and Talent Show on Shrove Tuesday.

When many churches in our community and state chose to forego Vacation Bible School this year, Allison tapped into her creative spirit and designed a virtual Vacation Bible School entitled, "It's a Beautiful Day in God's Neighborhood." With guest appearances from well-loved ACC teachers, talented and entertaining local chefs, and inspiring artists, the VBS provided a window into our community and served as a reminder of our baptismal promise to "seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself." In addition, VBS gave an opportunity to deepen our relationship with St. Christopher's Episcopal Church through their participation. Whether VBS is live or virtual, its success is always, always, dependent on the many incredible volunteers who give of their time and energy. This year would not have been possible without the work of Becky Pittman and Zac Blankenship who filmed and edited each day's sessions.

While formal Sunday School for children has not occurred since Covid, the Children's Commission has continued to plan and provide resources for faith development at home, as well as find ways to continue some well-loved Advent traditions. Backpacks were blessed in the PCLC circle. Thanks to Zoom, the families were still able to hear "The Night Before Christmas" read by Father Ned Morris. Families were also invited to come by and pick up Cookie Kits to decorate while they listened. And the Christmas Pageant still took place.

Thanks once again to a host of Advent staff members, our social media team, and some brave volunteers, the first Virtual Christmas Pageant took place – complete with a real baby in the manger. Thank you to all who helped and continue to be a part of fostering the spiritual development of children by helping them to learn and grown in their relationship with God and each other.

MEMBERSHIP AND PARISH LIFE

Ways you were blessed by the ministry of Parish Life this year:

ECW Bazaar, Wednesday Night Dinners To Go!, Dinners Ready, a virtual Mid-Summer Brunch

We were so very thankful we were able to have the Bazaar outside on a beautiful November day! Thank you to all who prayed that we would have good weather! Over \$27,000 was raised at the ECW Bazaar this year. This money will be distributed to several deserving nonprofits in early April. Many hours were required to make the Bazaar happen and be successful from all the people that spent countless hours cleaning out their house and donating those items to the Love Gifts booth, to the delicious baked goods items made in your kitchens, the talented knitters, crocheters, smockers and artists who shared their talents, and all the chefs that helped prepare soups, casseroles, and the Advent's fabulous artichoke relish. A special thanks to Gail and Jessica Owens who worked hard to make country store and many other products available at the Bazaar.

In addition to these opportunities for fellowship, growth and service, Parish Life oversees the ministry of hospitality. This ministry provides volunteer greeters to welcome visitors to our church every Sunday. We were able to greet 83 visitors in January and February in 2020. We look forward to the day when we will be greeting people in person! We have 13 wonderful members who have joined our church in 2020.

Thank you to the Parish Life Commission members: Rogers Settle, Chair, Barbara Adams, Ryan Delaney, Sally Forrest, Ekky Foss, Betsy Jabbour, Mary Carmen Jordan, Brenda Lytle, Bob Page, Brooke Rowell, Bill Schwartz, Bea Smith, and Anna Soderberg.

Other key Parish Life volunteers in 2020 include: Keenan Mullen, ECW President; Frances Krydinski and Ashley Moody, Bazaar Co-chairs; Lynn Jordan, Country Store chair; and all other ECW Board members. A special thanks to our wonderful leaders and participants of all our Circle and fellowship groups.

It has been an absolute joy to work with the Parish Life Commission, all the volunteers, and so many special friends this year. Thank you all who have been so incredibly supportive during these challenging times. Although things were a little different this year, I am immensely proud of all the things we were still able to do! I look forward to the future when we can gather again in the kitchen cooking for the Bazaar, having a square dance at Kanuga, gathering in the dining rooms for Wednesday Night Dinners, circling up in a living room for Serendipity and many other wonderful things that we have missed in 2020.

Thank you and many blessings in 2021!

Elisabeth Hayes
Director of Membership and Parish Life

ADVENT STAFF YEARS-OF-SERVICE RECOGNITION

We recognize with immense gratitude the following staff members for their years of service and commitment to the Episcopal Church of the Advent. We express our sincere appreciation for their dedication and for the special contributions they make to our church. Thank you!

30+ Years of Service

Gail Owens

20+ Years of Service

Kathie Borowski and Wallace Williams

10+ Years of Service

Ned Morris, Jessica Owens, and Brennan Szafron

5+ Years of Service

Michele Seagraves

OUTREACH AND MISSIONS

Despite the Pandemic, the Advent continued to play an active role in local Outreach. The Outreach Commission continued to meet and held at least one Outreach activity each month beginning in March.

Highlights from the year include:

- Prior to the Pandemic, Zac Blankenship, Suzanne Dantin, Mary Stewart Loring, and Clint Settle participated in a Vision Team Trip to lay the groundwork for future Advent Mission trips to Ecuador.
- Fundraisers for Spartanburg Interfaith Hospitality Network (SPIHN). Due to the pandemic, churches were unable to host SPIHN guests. For each time the Advent was scheduled to host, money and/or gift cards were purchased to pay for motel costs and/or groceries for guests staying in the motels. The support was provided under the direction of SPIHN and parishioners donated to the cause.
- Canned Food Drives for TOTAL Ministries
- Fundraiser with Laura and Jorge Estevez for Education = Hope to provide food for people in Ecuador
- Grant to Hub City Mobile Market for summer food distribution
- Food delivery to Mary H. Wright (MHW) families during summer and fall
- Fresh food collection for Ruth's Gleanings
- School supply drive in July/August for Mary H. Wright
- Ongoing financial support to MHW for special events including esthetic improvements to playground to encourage safely distanced activities, creation of Pumpkin Patch, and Polar Express Day as well as several Teacher Appreciation activities
- TOTAL Turkeys Drive – collected turkeys and money to support goal of 100 Turkeys for families during Thanksgiving
- Cumberland Mission Trip moved from June 2020 to October 2020
- Socktoberfest collection of pajamas and socks for PS, I Love You Ministries
- Operation Magi – “adopted” 50 children from MHW for Christmas

In appreciation of your support to Outreach,

Laura C. Bauknight
Ministries Support Coordinator, 2020

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ADVENT DISBURSEMENTS 2020

Episcopal Church Women and Outreach Commission

Organization	Outreach	ECW	TOTAL
Adult Learning Center	\$6,000	\$0	\$6,000
Advent Children's Center	\$4,800	\$0	\$4,800
Advent Missions	\$9,500	\$0	\$9,500
Angels Charge Ministry	\$2,400	\$600	\$3,000
Big Brothers/Big Sisters	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,500
BirthMatters	\$500	\$600	\$1,100
Boys and Girls Club of the Upstate	\$0	\$1,500	\$1,500
Cancer Association	\$500	\$0	\$500
Children's Advocacy Ctr.	\$4,000	\$3,000	\$7,000
Estevez Family – One World	\$4,000	\$750	\$4,750
Free Wheelchair Mission	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
Girls On the Run Upstate	\$0	\$750	\$750
Healthy Smiles	\$1,500	\$2,500	\$4,000
Hope Center for Children	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$5,000
JumpStart	\$8,000	\$0	\$8,000
Mary H. Wright	\$24,000	\$0	\$24,000
Mental Health America of SC – S'burg County	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000
Northside Initiative	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
PS, I Love You Ministries	\$0	\$1,500	\$1,500
Ruth's Gleanings	\$0	\$2,000	\$2,000
SAFE Homes/Rape Crisis Coalition	\$2,500	\$1,000	\$3,500
Spartanburg Alliance for the Mentally Ill	\$0	\$1,000	\$1,000
Spartanburg SHARES	\$4,000	\$1,000	\$5,000
Spartanburg Soup Kitchen	\$2,500	\$1,000	\$3,500
SPIHN	\$3,500	\$1,500	\$5,000
St. Luke's Free Medical Clinic	\$19,000	\$0	\$19,000
TOTAL Ministries	\$15,000	\$1,000	\$16,000
Vivanco Family - SAMS	\$4,000	\$750	\$4,750
Total	\$126,700	\$23,950	\$150.650

MUSIC

The music ministry's annual report for 2020 will be no ordinary report. Of course, 2020 was no ordinary year. The music ministry was scaled back, almost to a grinding halt after the church offices closed in mid-March. This report will detail the effects on music at the Church of the Advent. By the grace of God, music was still able to play a vital role over the past many months.

2020 started out well enough. The first two months (and even a bit of March) were marked by prosperous numbers across the many ensembles, a fabulous Shrove Tuesday talent show (with new host "Wanda the Wonderful") and a beautiful Lenten Word and Music recital given by Zoe Kushubar, violinist extraordinaire. The annual meeting on January 26th featured for the first time ever a musical offering from the Junior Choir.

Everything unexpectedly changed by March 13th. In-person worship and rehearsals were indefinitely cancelled, all in-person rehearsals were indefinitely cancelled, and music was reduced to a bare-bones offering of yours truly playing the organ for pre-recorded worship in the second half of March followed by weekly livestreaming since April. By mid-April, we added instrumental and vocal selections during the offertory and communion moments of the weekly Eucharists. Adult Choir section leaders and myself would sing along with the hymns. Parishioners who played instruments have included Chris and Kelly Vaneman, along with Sally and Ken Frick.

Speaking of section leaders, Lindsey Brakhage (soprano) and Zach Potter (baritone) have continued admirably in their roles as leaders for the St. Cecilia Schola (our adult choir). Zoe Kushubar (alto) ended her glorious run over the summer when she went to Florida State University to begin a Master of Music degree in violin performance. Ella Hardigree (a freshman at Wofford College) succeeded Zoe in the remaining months of 2020. We gained a new tenor section leader in March, Maddox Cox who is currently a junior at Spartanburg High School. Maddox's first Sunday was March 8th. Little did he know that it would also be his last Sunday of singing in a choir in the way we've always known choirs to be!

By August it seemed that the world was getting used to a virus that permeated our lives. Covid cases were decreasing across SC so I decided to attempt a regathering effort for our ensembles. The theme for the fall was "Ya gotta try!" Our first rehearsal since March 12th happened on 5:15 p.m. on September 9th. By then I had figured out a weekly schedule of rehearsals which continued until mid-December. However, things were very different. "Social distancing" became a brand-new term in 2020. Since mid-March people have been encouraged to stay 6 feet apart from each other, but singers have been encouraged to stay even further apart. Singing was widely promoted as a "super spreader" (if one projects one's voice) during the early days of the pandemic so we all had to adapt. The Cherub choir (4-year-olds) was suspended due to an inability to social distance young children. The Angel Choir, admirably directed by Kelly Vaneman, did return in October. They met in one of the Parish Life Center dining rooms so that they could spread out more. Sally Frick, our Junior Choir director was offered a new challenge. Instead of directing a choir she became the director of a temporary hand chime ensemble for elementary-aged children called the Junior Chimers. The St. Cecilia Schola met in a variety of venues because our choir room is too small for social distancing. We learned that singing without four walls is a huge challenge! Rehearsals were shorter to allow for a "clearing of the air". Studies have indicated that during "Covidtide" it's not advisable to sing indoors for longer than a half hour. The Advent Toners (adult handbells) met in the Parish Life Center combined dining rooms where they could spread out a lot more. The Youth Choir (with two girls) is the one ensemble which has stayed small enough for rehearsals to continue in the choir room. The carilloneurs have continued to ring the bells on Sunday mornings. In fact, some parishioners have sat in their cars on Sundays to hear the bells after church.

When the ensembles regathered, we rethought our role within the church. In "normal" times everyone would rehearse weekly with the goal of preparing an anthem for an upcoming Sunday service. During the pandemic there've been few opportunities to gather for in-person worship. Therefore, we came together with the primary goal of ministry. All of us gathered together to enjoy fellowship through music. We may not have been able to "perform" much, but we've been able to sing or ring and enjoy each other's company. Fun opportunities for real time music making happened three times near the end of 2020, first when the Advent Toners played for the Blessing of the Animals service on October 4th, secondly when the Junior Chimers and St. Cecilia Schola ministered for the outdoor Homecoming service on October 18th, and thirdly when the Junior Chimers and Advent Toners offered a livestreamed bell and chime concert on December 10th. Lest I forget, this year's Christmas pageant featured several child soloists and child ensembles. The other musical events of 2020 were two "virtual" recitals given by yours truly (one for the 335th birthday of Johann Sebastian Bach and one patriotic recital) and a virtual service of Christmas Lessons and Carols offered by all eight Episcopal churches in Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union counties. Many participants in the music program were honored to be featured in the recorded daily devotionals put out by the parish.

In closing, I'd like to thank the many people who participated in the music program-making in the church over this past year, whether child or adult, instrumental or vocal. They are all very dear to me, and they help to make the Church of the Advent the beautiful institution that it is. Special thanks goes to the audio-visual team. They were "baptized by fire" in mid-March and they've recorded all kinds of services and concerts for the parish. They have done so well under the circumstances. We are the Church of the Advent. The season of Advent is all about hope and waiting. We will continue to have hope as we make our way through 2021.

Sincerely, Brennan Szafron, Organist and Choirmaster

ADVENT CHILDREN'S CENTER

The Advent Children's Center had a very successful school year, in spite of the demands of a community in the grip of a pandemic. This success was due, not only to the hard work and dedication of the staff and parents, but also the continued support of The Episcopal Church of the Advent.

The ACC provided thirty weeks of safe, educational and loving care to the parish and community. This is less than our usual school year because of the Covid-19 shutdown. The ACC enrolled 45 children in the fall. There were 14 staff members.

The ACC continued the partnership with Trinity United Methodist Church Afterschool Program. The ACC staff transports six children to Trinity UMC each day. This partnership is provided for families in need of an extended period of care. The ACC was not able to offer our summer camp, also because of the Covid-19 shutdown.

The ACC commission met four times this year, several times via ZOOM. Jim Little served as the Vestry representative to the commission. The commission members were crucial in putting together the re-opening plan for the bishop.

The ACC held the sixth annual ACC Walk-a-thon in November 2020. All of the children participated as well as some parents, depending on our ability to be outside. The total amount raised was \$1,000.00. Besides being a fundraiser, the children learned about pre-run activities, hydration, and post-run nutrition. It was fun for all!

The families of the ACC lovingly provided for the children at The Green River Christmas Project. The ACC parents provided new toys and clothing for a variety of ages. The donations are made available to families at a minimal cost.

Registration for the 2021-2022 school year will start in February 2021. Planning for that school year is underway. Inquiries about the program and enrollment will start in January with tours available through August. We are thankful for the opportunity to provide a safe and loving educational program to the parish and the community.

ADVENT CHILDREN'S CENTER STAFF YEARS-OF-SERVICE

We recognize and thank the following staff members for their years of service and commitment to the Episcopal Church of the Advent and the Advent Children's Center. We express our sincere appreciation for their dedication and for the care they provide to the young children and their families in our church and in our community. Thank you!

20+ Years of Service

Sarah Parker and Kathy Hopkins

15+ Years of Service

Linda Long

5+ Years of Service

Tracey Ballenger, Lindsey Brakhage, Jomary Prus
Brenda Rivera, Melissa Slater, and Jennifer Weaver

THE ADVENT FOUNDATION

Dear Fellow Parishioners:

As we begin each new year, we as a board are reminded that this foundation was created in 1983 with a simple but significant goal in mind: to provide, in perpetuity, additional means to enable the parish to grow its mission and fellowship.

According to our bylaws, our primary purposes may be summarized as follows:

1. To receive, hold, manage and invest gifts of property in trust for the use and benefit of this Church;
2. To utilize reasonable and prudent methods of investment and reinvestment to assure the best preservation of, and income from, those gifts;
3. To distribute periodically for charitable, religious or educational purposes investment income from those gifts; and
4. To distribute periodically, for capital improvements or replacements, investment income or designated principal.

As we wrote last year, our plan in 2020 was to build momentum in three key areas: first, our investment management; second, our expense structure; and third, our approach to informing parishioners and growing the universe of investment gifts to your foundation.

Our benchmarking efforts over the past twenty-two months with sister churches from the Consortium of Endowed Episcopal Parishes (CEEP) have been invaluable, culminating in an RFP process evaluating the past and potential new investment managers. Our Board and Vestry decided to engage The Church Investment Group of Atlanta and Brown Brothers Harriman to manage our endowment going forward. The Spartanburg County Foundation and Prime Buchholz investments has managed our endowment for the last several years, and we appreciate their service, their diligence and their support through those years as they are, and shall always be, an invaluable and indispensable partner in our shared community.

As we transition to our new advisory team, we do so with excitement for our future with an Episcopal-centered network of financial, administrative and philanthropic resources that we believe will help our church realize its greater potential among its congregants, its city and its larger Episcopal family. The future is bright, and the Episcopal Church of the Advent intends to be a growing and dynamic part of that future for generations.

Gratefully,

The Advent Foundation Board

Mac Davis - President
Warwick Spencer - Vice President
Matthew Myers - Treasurer
Jennifer Evins - Secretary
Mary Stewart Loring - Director

Ned Morris - Rector
Nancy Gage - Senior Warden
Bruce Schwartz - Parish Treasurer
Joanne Wood - Parish Administrator

OUR MISSION IMPERATIVES

CHRISTIAN FORMATION: GROWING IN UNDERSTANDING

As followers of our Lord Christ, who is Teacher and Guide, we the people of the Advent are called to grow in our understanding of the gifts and demands of the Gospel as we deepen our faith and strengthen our commitment to Jesus Christ as the Lord of all that we are and all that we have.

Programs and Ministries: Advent & Lenten Programs, Adult Confirmation Classes, Adult Class Leaders (Gleaners, Parents in Community, Seekers, and Welcome to Sunday!), Book & Bible Studies, Basketball, Children's Sunday School, Nursery Volunteers, Troop 1 Scouts (BSA Scouts and Cub Scouts), Girl Scouts (Juniors, Brownies, and Daisies), Vacation Bible School Volunteers, Young Families Ministry, Youth Leaders (Middle School and High School Christian Formation, Confirmation Preparation, Middle School and High School Episcopal Youth Community, Youth Mission Experiences, Pilgrimages, and Prayer Breakfasts)

LITURGY: PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL

As followers of our Lord Christ, who is High Priest and Celebrant, we, the people of the Advent, are called to proclaim the Gospel as our primary reason for being through our worship, our preaching and our personal witness in the world.

Programs and Ministries: Acolytes, Adult Choirs (formerly Advent Schola and St. Cecilia Choir), Advent Toners, Altar Guild, Angel/Cherub/Junior Choirs, Carilloneurs, Chalice Bearers, Eucharistic Visitors, Evensong Choir, Gabriel's Instruments, Lectors/Intercessors, Morning Prayer Officiants, Summit Hills Musicians and Servers, Ushers, Vestment Caretakers, and Youth Choir

OUTREACH: GIVING OURSELVES AWAY

As followers of our Lord Christ, who is Prophet and Servant, we the people of the Advent are called to give ourselves away in servanthood in response to the needs of others beyond the walls of this parish.

Supported Programs and Ministries: Active Living (Free Wheelchair Mission and Partners for Active Living), Adult Education (Adult Learning Center), Building/Housing Ministry (Habitat for Humanity), Children's Education and Welfare (Advent Children's Center, Birth Matters, Boys and Girls Club, Children's Advocacy Center, Citizen Scholars, Healthy Smiles, Hope Center for Children, Hope Remains Youth Ranch, and Northside Initiative), Emergency Shelter and Support (SAFE Homes), Food Collection and Delivery (Ruth's Gleanings, St. Matthew's Food Pantry, and TOTAL Ministries), Helping with Homelessness (SPIHN), Medical Ministry (Spartanburg Shares & St. Luke's Medical Clinic), Mental Health (Mental Health America of Spartanburg County and Spartanburg Alliance for the Mentally Ill), Ministry with Children and Students (Mary H. Wright and SC Test Prep), Mission Experiences (Cumberland and Ecuador), Outreach Commission, and Prison Ministry (Angel Charge Ministry, Jump Start, and Tyger River Chapel Foundation)

PASTORAL CARE: EXTENDING CHRIST'S HEALING CARE

As followers of our Lord Christ, who is Pastor and Comforter, we, the people of the Advent are called to extend Christ's healing care to one another in a nurturing family by providing support and encouragement in the face of life's constant changes.

Programs and Ministries: Altar Flower Delivery, Bereavement Support, Card Ministry, Daughters of the King (DOK), Ecumenical Blood Drive, Food and Freezer Ministry, Guild of St. Francis & St. Clare, Lay Pastoral Care, Pink Sunday, Prayer Team, and Long and Short Term Care Ministries

PARISH LIFE: FOSTERING CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

As followers of our Lord Christ, who is Friend and Companion, we the people of the Advent, are called to share with one another the joys and responsibilities of Christian fellowship through hospitality, celebration, learning, creative expression, play and service.

Programs and Ministries: Bishop's Visitation, Circles (Serendipity, Lunch Bunch, Fruit of the Spirit, and Labors of Love), Episcopal Church Women (ECW), ECW Holiday Bazaar, EpiscoPals, Fellowship Groups (20s, 30s & 40s CONNECT, Baby Boomers/Sorta Young, Fellowship Group I), Greeters/Hospitality, Kanuga Parish-Wide Weekend, Ministries Fair, Oyster Roast, Parish Picnic, Photographers, and Wednesday Night Dinners

PARISH MANAGEMENT: SUPPORTING THE ADVENT'S MINISTRIES

As followers of our Lord Christ, who is Leader and Worker, we the staff and people of the Advent, are called to use our gifts, engage our minds and concentrate our labor on the tasks that enable people throughout the parish to perform ministries of Liturgy, Pastoral care, Parish life, Outreach, and Christian formation.

Programs and Ministries: Advent Gardeners, Archives Committee, Bus Drivers, Front Desk Receptionists, Parish Management Commission, Safety Committee, and Vestry

STEWARDSHIP: GIVING IN FAITH

As followers of our Lord Christ, who is Provider and Giver of all that is good, we, the people of the Advent, are called to give freely of ourselves and our treasure, to enable the people throughout the parish to perform all such good works as our Lord has called us to do, so that we can build up the body of the Church and nourish our souls.

Programs and Ministries: Advent Foundation, Annual Stewardship Campaign, Legacy Society, St. Helena's Commission (Buildings and Grounds), and Stewardship Commission