

St. Philip's Episcopal Church  
Annual Meeting  
December 5, 2021

**Opening Prayer.** Fr. Eric opened the meeting with a prayer.

**Receipt of Annual Report.** Fr. Eric Mills delivered the Rector's report as part of his sermon at the special 9:00 am service. The sermon follows these minutes and are part of the annual report. The repeating theme in the sermon was "God has begun a new work..."

**Election of Convention Delegates.** After it was determined that a quorum had been established (25% of preceding year's average Sunday attendance of 163), the election of 4 delegates to the diocesan convention was held. Steve Russell made a motion to accept by acclamation the following four nominees: Frank Darzano, Rick Pearce, Steve Moore, and Linda Humphreys. The motion was seconded by Bill Bittenbender and was approved.

**Election of New Vestry Members.** Fr. Eric reviewed how the election of new vestry members would take place. Six places will be filled by the six nominees (Susan Chase, Michelle Barkalow, Margaret Bearden, Geoff Gersen, Rick Pearce, and Bill Carney.) Parishioners will vote for four nominees, and the four receiving the most votes will receive three-year terms. The fifth and sixth nominees will receive two-year and one-year terms, respectively. The shorter terms will complete terms of vestry members who had resigned. The election will be held today by phone, computer and in the church office, and will conclude at 1:00 pm.

**Senior Warden.** Dana Richardson presented and explained our revised bylaws. There had been some contradictions in the prior version regarding filling out unexpired vestry terms last updated in 2018. A general

review of the bylaws resulted in several other changes in order to bring our bylaws into conformity with the diocesan model. Bill Bittenbender made a motion to approve the revision, Frank Darzano seconded the motion, and it was approved. (A copy was provided in the November issue of “Come and See.”)

**Treasurer.** Bob Fuchs presented the 2022 budget. Thanks were expressed to Jim Belvin and Geoff Gersen for their successful stewardship efforts. Considerations for increases in the 2022 budget include Mother Lisa Erdeljon’s full 12-month compensation, a new parish hall mortgage (currently estimated at \$700,000), and an increased diocesan pledge. We achieved a balanced budget of \$686,472, having received to date 158 pledges for the general fund. The new budget will be attached to these minutes as an addendum.

**Rector’s Comments.** Fr. Eric took the opportunity to thank each of the Ministry Board Chairs: Ricky Evans, Nan Bush, Don Halbert, Deacon Pam Hayes, Steve Moore, Bob Fuchs and all of the ministries members that work with them. He also thanked the retiring Vestry members — Deborah Jordan, Debbie Evans, Liz Halbert, Tom Griffin and Rich Alt— as well as the returning Vestry members— Dana Richardson, Steve Russell, Dave Ham, Holly Meiners, Bill Bittenbender, and Bob Wright.

He announced that he was naming Dave Ham as senior warden, and that the Vestry would elect the junior warden for 2022. He expressed his gratitude to Dana Richardson and Dave Ham for their work in our program church transition.

Also thanked were the parish staff: Lorraine Beamer for keeping him on the “straight and narrow”, Debbie Skillman for her flexibility as organist and choirmaster during a trying pandemic year, Deacon Pam Hayes for her pastoral work, Bob Fuchs for his diligence as treasurer, and Mother Lisa for being “good for his heart” as his assistant rector.

Fr. Eric answered Frank Darzano's questions regarding the open hours of the Chapel of the Cross, and the Tree of Lights normally sponsored by the Men's Group. Currently the Chapel of the Cross is only open on Wednesdays or for special events, mainly because of security and insurance issues. The Men's Group currently has no chairman following the out-of- state moves of Jimbo Smith and Paul Miller, and has not met to plan for the tree.

**A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Steve Moore, seconded by Bobbie Fuchs, and approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Bearden, Clerk of Vestry

### **Copy of Sermon/Rector's Report**

Good Morning St Philips!

As I opened my bible and read the scriptures appointed for today, my attention was fixed upon these words from the NT..."He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion."

He who began a good work. Of course that's God. God has begun a good work and will bring it to completion!

And isn't that true for all of us. We are each on pilgrimage. Each of us is on a journey. Each of us has encountered the living God, by nature of our creation, of our birth, of our breathing, of our baptism...God has begun a good work. Truly, God has begun a good work in each of us. ANd God continues a good work in each of us. And this good work continues not only in our individual lives, but in the life of St Philip's as well! PAUSE: God has begun a good work.

I originally wanted to share names, offering appreciation to those who have given themselves in service to God through the various ministries at St Philip's. But I soon realized that we would be here for quite a while. So I started to make a list and it went on for two pages! And I couldn't even complete it because I frankly don't know who all is doing what all! I mean think about it. We have over 50 ministries, 6 Ministry Boards, a Vestry, a Staff, and Clergy - and I

knew that somehow, someday, I would manage to leave someone out - and that's just not right. So very many of you offer your time, your talent, your gifts...and because of that we are able to do ministry. Brothers & Sisters, God has begun a good work at St P's!

And, I originally wanted to share with you all the goings on at St Philip's over the past year. But as I read the annual report which you received by email last week, I realized that those **responsible** for all the goings on at St Philip's over the past year have already presented it in fine fashion! God has begun a good work...read about it!

And so, I simply want to take a moment just to reflect:

In the area of **Worship**, we are back inside, together, without masks, with music, with choir, and with one another...and for this we give thanks. You can read about it in the annual report! God has begun a good work!

In **Faith Formation**, in addition to several studies, there is much excitement by those who are involved in Seekers. This is a group who meets via zoom to read and discuss important spiritual works...and because it's zoom based, previous parish members who have moved away to other states are able to join in! And for those who would rather something completely different, there is Theology Uncorked...a time to gather off campus at a local establishment and together discuss a theme or question of the day over beverages and fellowship. God has begun a good work! Read about it!

**Pastoral Care** has seen the return of several ministries such as Stephen Ministers gathering in person, Eucharistic visitation is firing back up, and a new ministry called Community of Hope International has begun - this ministry is training lay people to serve as first echelon chaplains for our parish. God has begun a good work! Read about it!

**Outreach** continues to amaze me! While the men were **unable** to do their annual lobster sale due to construction and personnel changes, the ECW **did** conduct their Fall Festival and raised over 9K for Outreach...there are many other Outreach Ministries that are doing incredible and important work. Read about it! God has begun a good work!

Commented [1]:

**Parish Life** is returning! By that I mean we are slowly regaining traction as COVID life allows. Dinners, coffee hour, new member gatherings have all returned...Read about it! God has begun a good work!

And in the area of **Finance and Facilities**, we are blessed. From the beauty of the grounds in the front of the church and around the chapel to the technical details of investments and budget, not to mention the building of the parish hall, offices, choir space and meeting areas! We are truly blessed.

In fact, because of your faithful and generous stewardship, because of F&F's wise management, and because of a committed and passionate Stewardship team of Geoff Gersen and Jim Belvin, you are receiving a balanced budget for 2022! This is no small matter. Parishes around the country and even in our diocese are struggling to see their parishioners return to church, they are struggling to meet budgets, some are struggling to keep the doors open. St Philip's is blessed. Read about it! God had begun a good work!!

As you all know, and it says this in the Senior Wardens input to the annual report and you can "read about it". But I want to ensure we all **hear** this.

St Philip's reorganized itself about 3-4 years ago. Previously we were organized as a pastoral church...in pastoral church all decisions cross the rector's desk, or the church's office for permission. Vestry members are managing everything - have their fingers in all the ministries - oftentimes running those ministries.

But we, St Philip's, grew too large. Once a church hits a certain size, it is impossible to run the church in such a manner. Can you really imagine 50+ ministries asking the rector to attend their meetings and offer direction...or wait for the rector to be able to meet and offer direction?

So, before I arrived you re-organized from a pastoral church model TO become a Program Church model. In this model, the Vestry no longer manages ministry, they serve as leaders and strategic planners.

Responsibility for ministry is delegated to those doing the ministry-the laity (that's y'all). You are finally empowered to walk in and exercise the gifts and callings that the Holy Spirit has placed within you! Ministry Boards were established to manage all the ministries - we have 6, and within those ministry boards like-type ministries are clustered together (so all those ministries that have Outreach in common are grouped together in the Outreach Board - same with Worship Board, and so on).

This is where communication and coordination of ministry takes place. And in each Individual Ministry is where the planning and execution of ministry takes place. This means those who are involved in the ministry - those who are rolling up their sleeves and getting their hands dirty, are the ones who are making decisions about the ministry and planning the ministry and executing the ministry. God has begun a good work!

**But I share all this with you to say that after 18 months of COVID, we have in some ways stepped backwards** toward the old pastoral church approach. And as a result, we are unintentionally circumventing the Program Church organization and structure we worked so hard to establish by going straight to the clergy or the office or the vestry for permissions, for resolutions, for answers. And the majority of those answers, those permissions, those resolutions lay within the structure carefully and specifically designed for St Philip's...either within the ministry itself or at the ministry board. It is important, it is critical, that we focus and are intentional about how we do ministry, ensuring we are planning, communicating, coordinating, and executing the ministry we are empowered, entrusted, and called to do!

Indeed, God has begun a good work! And he will see it through to completion!

And while our journey through COVID continues. Your patience and participation in the various protocols we needed to follow has been remarkable. It has made the work and ministry of the clergy, the staff, the ushers and many others possible. Thank you for that. And, as COVID continues to change, we will follow the directives of the Governor, the mayor, and the Bishop in changing our protocols when necessary.

We are looking forward to the New Year. For the opportunity to love God and love others. We are looking forward to the New Year with even more people coming to St Philip's, with new members investing their time and talent to make ministry happen. With a new parish hall and new kitchen. With new parish offices, choir area, and classrooms. With more opportunities to reach out, to be involved in the needs and celebrations of the community. To be a light in Southport as we strive to love God and love others in all we do!

My brothers and sisters, God has begun a good work, right here in Southport, right here in St Philip's, right here in your heart and mine. I've said it a dozen times today "God has begun a good work" But please, don't forget the last half of that verse. And God will see it come to completion. Amen.

Roll Up	2021 Budget	2021 FY Forecast	2022 Budget	Change vs FY Forecast	Change vs Budget
Revenues	653,490.00	648,026.88	686,472.88	38,446.00	32,982.88
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>653,490.00</b>	<b>648,026.88</b>	<b>686,472.88</b>	<b>38,446.00</b>	<b>32,982.88</b>
Parish Staff	433,349.08	409,399.99	443,927.32	-34,527.33	-10,578.24
Administration	35,316.00	35,031.09	32,914.00	2,117.09	2,402.00
Buildings & Grounds	87,596.37	82,940.60	108,124.89	-25,184.29	-20,528.52
Vestry	65,060.00	63,089.20	71,191.08	-8,101.88	-6,131.08
Faith Formation	1,700.00	1,459.59	3,180.00	-1,720.41	-1,480.00
Outreach (*)	7,050.00	7,050.00	0.00	7,050.00	7,050.00
Parish Life	4,924.00	2,514.86	3,650.00	-1,135.14	1,274.00
Pastoral Care	1,080.00	1,030.01	2,700.00	-1,669.99	-1,620.00
Worship	16,894.00	12,392.12	20,785.00	-8,392.88	-3,891.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>652,969.45</b>	<b>614,907.46</b>	<b>686,472.29</b>	<b>-71,564.83</b>	<b>-33,502.84</b>
<b>NET REVENUES - EXPENSES</b>	<b>520.55</b>	<b>33,119.42</b>	<b>0.59</b>	<b>-33,118.83</b>	<b>-519.96</b>

\* Outreach has a good amount of money remaining in their fund, plus the outreach endowment required distribution and they will get donations during the year. Therefore, additional money is not required from the operating budget.

## 2022 BUDGET