

St. Mark's

EPISCOPAL CHURCH



**Report to the Annual Parish Meeting
January 31, 2021**

**St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Annual Parish Meeting
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Agenda**

1. Opening Prayer & Call to Order
2. Rector's Report
3. Senior Warden's Report
4. Junior Warden's Report
5. Finance & Stewardship Report
6. Head of School Report
7. Election of delegates to Diocesan Council
8. Appreciation & Presentation of Gifts
9. Closing Prayer & Adjournment

Rector's Report — The Rev. Susie Hebert

2020 has been a challenging year. We didn't have an Easter egg hunt, nor did we have confirmation classes. No big St. Mark's Day event, or Rally Day. We didn't get to have a follow up to the big Fall music event with Bill Brawn's Band, nor did we have a gala for the School. There was no gathering for a picture together, but Bill Abbott graciously put together a digital one for us.

We began last year, working to have each vestry member in charge of a committee, to increase participation in a variety of our ministries. We had tightened our belts as a church in 2019 and were looking to have a spare year, but were looking forward to spending more time together in fellowship, deepening our relationships with one another, by gathering over food between the services and for special church lunches.

We had just made it into Lent last year, into the middle of March, when we had to close down the church offices and go to online only worship, because COVID had begun to spread rapidly in our area, and churches were asked to go online and work from home, like schools and businesses. At the time we knew little about COVID and people were frightened.

We went into emergency mode. We scrambled to worship online, using a phone or a laptop. Tom and Brent Thompson held Sunday night vespers from their home. I held compline online for a time. But then we began to check on each other. I called members as I could and the vestry, bless them, also called everyone, twice, to check in with church members as well.

The digital version of our annual photo for 2020 will be a permanent reminder that we "stayed together by staying apart". It really gave us a boost that we needed.

I worked to keep up with folks by phone, sometimes knocking on a front door to talk with someone or by sitting on lawn chairs in a back yard. I remember Lee Leaman and I sitting near an old oak tree in Richmond in the spring and dodging caterpillars which were everywhere, in order to talk together safely.

In June and July, Jon Eiche and Chris Abbott worked with me, via zoom, to develop a reopening plan that we submitted from the vestry to Bishop Ryan. We got it back, and with just a couple of tweaks, were given permission to go ahead. We were the first Episcopal church in our area to reopen for in person worship, and I attribute that to three things, the architecture of our building - (that grand covered front entrance!), our shared yearning to worship in person, and the organization of our subcommittee that got the plan done.

In early August, we began in person services once again, meeting outdoors for the 8 a.m. service, and it was with great relief and joy that a safe number of us began to worship together. We tweaked and learned by doing, and early each Sunday, Tom and Brent Thompson and I put out the chairs and tables, and then the folks who attend helped us bring it all back in. Bettye Newberry got there early each Sunday to prepare the altar and we were absolutely delighted to have church together again!

Then, August 23, the vestry had an online vestry meeting with our Bishop Kai Ryan, who said, "church will never be the same again. Online worship is here to stay". She challenged us to get out of emergency mode, and become more professional in our online worship services, and figure out how to do church ministries safely.

We applied for a technology grant from the diocese and got a camera that streams directly online, and we also improved the internet reception in the sanctuary, solely for the purpose of improving the quality of our online services.

On All Saint's Day, November 1, we began to worship indoors at 10 a.m. in person, keeping the doors open in three directions, and so with a fresh breeze blowing through, masked and distanced as family units, and plenty of gel alcohol, we have been able to worship together since that time.

We have had one person attending the 8 a.m. outdoors test positive, and one person worshiping indoors at 10 a.m. test positive. Everyone who had contact was notified, and indoors, we went online only for one Sunday. To our knowledge, no one has contracted COVID at any of our worship services or in our building.

Dealing with COVID has caused a big learning curve, caused us to become competent at having Online services, it has forced us to become creative, finding new ways to worship and be safe. Some of the events we tried didn't work like we hoped, and to all the ministry heads who tried something and were disappointed, you were courageous and dared to try. And that is very important. Some events did succeed beautifully. The outdoor Christmas Eve service at sunset, with youth leading us in the story of the nativity, is a wonderful example.

I am grateful to all of the vestry this past year for their hard work, to Lee, our Senior warden, and Jon, our junior warden, who put up with Zoom meetings, some of which were terribly long, and who worked hard to solve brand new challenges that this year brought.

I am particularly grateful this year to Melissa Hamon and Chris Abbott and the rest of the DOK during this pandemic, whose continual prayers have meant so much to so many. They have had a challenging year, coping with and praying for so many in difficult situations and illnesses.

I am grateful to Kimberly Hart, who has managed to juggle managing financials, PPP loans, all inclusive bulletins, fiercely tracking down cleaning supplies in many locations and rising to the occasion countless times.

I'm grateful to Tom and Brent Thompson, Julie Stuckey and other brave choir members, for figuring out how to provide music for worship within such constraints, as playing outdoors, practicing outdoors, wearing masks to sing, with yearning to sing, and yet knowing that singing, of all things, can be dangerous.

I am grateful to Reuben Luna, who had a very challenging cleaning protocol to learn, schedule to follow, and to implement, at a potential risk to himself.

I am grateful to Jerri Carington, who planned, planned and planned some more. She juggled financials and creating a safety protocol for her school that has been the best the Inspector has seen in all the schools they cover. I am grateful for the school board who has advised her through this difficult time.

I am grateful for Chris Abbott and Jeanne Reave's thoughtful efforts to provide online classes for Kid's Kingdom and Godly Play kids, with kits of supplies taken to each of their homes. I am grateful for the church members who zoomed with me for Brown Bag Bible Study and Adult Formation classes. All across our church in all the ministries creativity was necessary and changes had to be made From Altar guild to Welcoming. Each committee head will speak to the things they did and I am grateful. Not

everything we tried worked like we hoped but daring to try was brave and necessary. With each effort we learned more about what to do next.

We have work ahead of us. We need to not let our guard down for a few more months. We must get through the next few months safely.

We now have a youth program starting under the lead of our new youth minister, Hannah Smith. We are beginning our fiscal year in the black for the first time in a few years.

We now are able to stream worship online consistently for those who are at home or at a distance.

As we shift from Spring into Summer we will be able increasingly to return to familiar events together. It is hard to predict yet, what Easter will look like. So much depends on how widely vaccination has been done.

We have weathered most of this storm together,. We understand the challenges much better than we did back last March.

Many of us have coped with the challenges of loneliness and isolation. Some among us have become ill and have recovered, thanks be to God.

I have learned the importance of hope this year, of trying, even when efforts seem foolishly unlikely to work. Praying and putting one foot in front of the other and moving forward, even if it is just a tiny step.

In the early days, sometimes the only thing left to do was to trust, trust and wait.

I am deeply grateful for the quiet prayers and support of many of you who have remained safely at home. I have felt your prayers this year.

I am hoping that along May into June, is a time when we might begin to feel normal once again. We need to remain aware of those who must remain at home, even when we start to gather. Many of us share the same dream; to have the best most glorious worship service in person with everyone there and a wonderful spread of a lunch afterward. When we can soak each other up to our hearts' content.

A little bit of the kingdom of God breaking in around us!

Senior Warden Report — Mr. Lee Leaman

The year started as many years in the past have started. Attendance was good. Finances were on a good path. Committees were being formed to do the work of the church. My wife and I went to New York to see our granddaughters and both came back with COVID and did not realize it. That was the start of the very hard times for St. Mark's. Worship was shut down, fellowship gone. Surprisingly our members continued to make the pledge payments and we had some prepaid pledges and no debt, St. Mark's was OK financially.

Finally worship in person started again but it wasn't the same as the beginning of the year. Very few people, no singing and no fellowship. During this period of time our vestry had a meeting with Bishop Ryan. She advised us that worship as we knew it would probably take a long time to be back as we once knew it. Also, to brace for a significant drop in future pledge income.

Here is the good news at St. Mark's. Our stewardship team worked hard and had a 20% increase in pledge income. We had an anonymous donation of \$50,000. We received a forgivable PPP Loan of \$38,000. And just as we were announcing to the teachers of the Preschool we needed to close for the spring semester, one of the teachers and her husband donated \$30,000 to keep the school open for the spring semester.

All and all a pretty amazing year. All at St. Mark's are looking forward to the recovery and normalcy. God has blessed our church in many ways.

Junior Warden Report — Mr. Jon Eiche

Church Beautification

I am sure that all will agree that this has been a momentous year for our parish family. At the beginning of the year, I drew upon several talented members of our Parish family and formed the St. Mark's Beautification Committee. Members include Lisa Arnold, Rev. Susie, Dwayne Dawlearn, Lee and Jan Leaman, Jeanne Reaves, Ron Wyatt and Judy Hirst. Several members met at the church in August to look over our grounds and discussed ideas for beautification of the grounds of the church. And we have had two good work sessions. The prize after the one where we cleared the trees and cleaned the flower beds was a lunch of hot dogs and chili. But COVID-19 has certainly had a major impact on the activities we had planned. I was able to have the sprinkler system repaired and completely checked out in the Spring.

Our goals for redoing the landscaping which I outlined to the Vestry in my report to them at the July 21st Vestry meeting have, as yet not been completed. The first phase of the beautification project began with a clearing of dead vegetation, overgrown landscaping, and pruning and removal of some of the trees. Some new gardening topsoil was worked into the flower beds. However, only part of the work was completed before the gardening supply centers sold out of the flowers and shrubs we wanted to plant. In response to my appeal, the Vestry agreed to match dollar for dollar any donations from the parish family up to a max of \$5,000. To date, we are very close to our goal of \$5,000 in donations, but a little more is still needed to reach our combined goal of \$10,000 to defray the cost of new plants. Most of the work will be done by parish volunteers when Spring breaks in mid-February.

Fire Suppression System

At the end of November, we had an incident in our fire suppression system that nearly resulted in a major fire. Fortunately, the alarm system notified us about the incident before flames broke out, and we called the fire department, who arrived quickly to get the incident under control. The result was that the diesel engine and some related equipment that supplies power to our system was virtually destroyed and will have to be replaced. Estimates for replacement are in the \$50,000 range. The good news is that the damages are covered by our church insurance. In discussions with Senior Warden Lee Leaman and Reverend Susie, we are considering updating our system with a more modern and simpler system—possibly electrical rather than diesel power. I have sent the names of several companies that install, maintain and repair these type systems and will invite them in for a site visit and request that any that are interested should provide me with a proposal for replacement. Hopefully, we can get proposals from all of them or at least three.

Other Activities

I am thankful for many volunteers who have given so much of their time and talent in helping to complete repairs on the plumbing problems (Jim Osoba and Dwayne Dawlearn) and to our Sexton Rueben Luna for his tremendous work in keeping the church safe with the disinfectant solutions during Covid-19. Members of the Beautification Committee were wonderful in helping to work on our landscaping. And thanks to Dwayne Dawlearn for refinishing the doors leading into the Card Room. A special thanks to Senior Warden Lee Leaman for bringing in the special earth moving equipment when our parish work day needed help removing stumps, moving topsoil and trimming and removal of some trees.

Future Plans

Next year we will continue to focus on the ground's improvement and minor repairs on the interior of the church. Also, I want to have the parking lot restriped on the half closest to the church, since we will probably lose the back half of the parking lot when the new road through our property is done.

I have a note of concern for the future. As the construction activities in our area continue to grow, the

traffic is also growing. As the Covid-19 gets brought under control our church and grounds will come into greater prominence by passersby. Recently on a few occasions, I have been informed and noticed myself that the front door to the church was left unlocked. If you are at the church by yourself or the last person to leave, please check all doors to make sure the church is securely locked.

Finance Report – Mr. Lee Leaman

We began 2020 with a budget approved by the vestry that was a basically a break even budget that included no frills. It also had a revenue component of a \$30,000 matching grant. The grant was paid in but the matching funds needed to be raised. COVID hit and the world turned upside down.

The members contributed to make their pledge payments and we were blessed with some prepaid pledge and no debt. We were warned that we might expect a 30% fall in revenue for 2021.

When there is a need, God will provide. Our stewardship team worked hard and took the need to our members and they responded with a 20% increase in pledge income. Out of the blue, we received a \$50,000 anonymous donation to be used as the church saw fit. We received a forgivable PPP loan of \$38,000. Because we were not worshipping in person for a long time and good expense control, our expenses were below budget and we ended the year with almost a \$105,000 surplus. A very good year financially for St. Mark's.

2021 St. Mark's Operating Budget

Approved Budget January 20, 2021

INCOME

Pledge Payments	274,870
Non Pledge	9,000
Plate Offering	2,000
Misc. Income	1,000
Sunday Hospitality	500
Special Events	2,000
TOTAL INCOME	<u>289,370</u>

EXPENSES

Rector	83,149
Staff	81,436
Supply Staff	2,000
Benefits	26,381
Diocese Assessment	24,213
Admin	11,630
Insurance	27,000
Utilities	30,000
Building & Grounds	28,500
Outreach	500
Christian Formation	2,010
Ministries	8,550
Music	4,900
Other	3,450
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>334,069</u>

EXCESS EXPENSE OVER REVENUE	<u>-44,699</u>
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St. Mark's Episcopal School Report — Mrs. Jeri Carington, School Director

This past year, 2020, was an unprecedented year for our school. We operated under normal conditions through March 6, 2020, when we closed for spring break. During the break, the coronavirus outbreak and subsequent COVID-19 pandemic caused a community wide shut down precluding our reopening for the remainder of the school year. We were able to provide some online support for our students in the form of videos and document downloads which enabled our students to continue with the remainder of the school year. We had a drive through graduation to end the school year.

In June, following strict guidelines from the state of Texas and CDC, we were able to reopen. We ran one classroom for an average of seven students throughout the summer months. This fall our ministry had 13 students, plus one who began in January. We are running two classrooms, plus morning and afternoon BAC. Our current capacity is 16, as we are limited by COVID-19 restrictions requiring social distancing, daily screenings and enhanced cleaning. We continue to advertise through Facebook, word of mouth and our sign.

Rev. Susie is acting as our Chaplain for the school year. We are blessed to have seven dedicated employees. We are looking to hire two afternoon workers and expand our substitute list.

We received a PPP loan and it has been forgiven! These funds allowed us to continue operate through the spring and into the summer. This December, we received a very generous donation from the husband of a staff member that will allow us to complete this school year, and continue to offer scholarship to students who otherwise would not be able to afford to attend.

We are now able to repay the outstanding balance of the loan received from the Church. This will be done in February. We are eternally grateful for the loan extended to us by St. Mark's Episcopal Church. This financial support has allowed us to continue our combined mission to bring children up in the way of the Lord.

*Train up a child in the way he should go,
And when he is old he will not depart from it.*
Proverbs 22:6

God bless you,
Jerri Carington

Acolytes/Chalice Bearers – Mrs. Kathy Barzilla

Being an acolyte is a great way to learn about the importance of the liturgy in the Episcopal Church. You get the opportunity to grow in faith by serving others during the service. We have several Crucifers and sometimes Gospel Bearers scheduled at services.

We are so thankful for the consistent involvement of our youth and adult acolytes who are all very dedicated to serving in this capacity. We continue to have growth in both our adult and youth acolyte ministries and are excited about training more adults to serve as Crucifer and the possibilities for more youth Gospel Bearers and Torch Bearers in 2021. Kathy Barzilla serves as the acolyte trainer and we can train acolytes at any time. If anyone is interested in serving as an acolyte at St. Mark's, please contact Reverend Susie Comer at scomer@stmarksfortbend.org or Kathy Barzilla at kat102193@windstream.net.

Adult Christian Formation – Rev. Susie Comer

Tuesday Brown Bag Bible Study - In the Spring of 2020, we continued studying the miracles of Jesus, and then shifted to include Jesus encounters with nature. We then turned to a study of Ecclesiastes, and have been finishing up 2020, by studying the book of Isaiah. We've been zooming together throughout COVID.

Sunday Adult Formation - We shifted during COVID, to a zoom, scheduled on Wednesday afternoons. We Studied N.T. Wright's book, *Surprised by Hope*. Then we studied Bishop Michael Curry's book, *The Way of Love*.

EfM – Education for Ministry, is led by the very capable Rob Hamon. EfM is a 4 year program of intensive study, the Bible, Church history and Christian Ethics. We have a shared program with Calvary Episcopal Church and the group meetings alternates between the churches. Every fall term a new class starts.

Confirmation Retreat was canceled this year, due to COVID, and the obstacles to meeting together.

Lenten Wednesday Series was canceled this year, due to COVID, and the obstacles to meeting together.

Altar Guild – Ms. Bettye Newberry

First I want to thank the members of the Altar Guild Elisa Hughes, Ruthie Hurta, Isobel Gotschall, Lisa Arnold, Sandy Barkerding, Susan Hylton, Suzanne Mottin, Delores Baldwin and Sally & Charlie Yates, our oil angles. During the pandemic we did have 1 Baptism & a Christmas wedding that we adorned a beautiful altar & flowers. Thanks to Chris Abbott for suggesting to donate to the ERS instead of purchasing poinsettias. Thanks to all the participants.

Episcopal Relief and Development – It was decided in 2020 that instead of decorating with an abundance of altar flowers and poinsettias at Christmas that a St. Mark's team would be formed for donations to ERD for their One Thousand Days of Love campaign to help needy children around the world. Chris Abbott organized the donations and is happy to report that St. Mark's raised over \$700 for ERD.

Christian Formation Grades 6-12 – Mrs. Chris Abbott

Secondary Christian Formation served students in grades 6-12. The goal of the secondary Christian Formation class is to provide the youth with a study of scripture that has direct applications to their daily lives. The 6-12 grade class used the *Real and Relevant* curriculum in the early spring of 2020. The lessons provided the youth with an opportunity to dig deeper into the scripture reading, God, Jesus and their faith. Movie clips were often used to emphasize a point and bring current day issues to light following the scripture reading. Lessons during the early part of the year included Epiphany, baptism of Jesus, temptations of Jesus, the disciples of Jesus and faith.

Chris Abbott teaches the class and communicates with both the parents and youth via email and text to give everyone a preview of what to expect in that week's lesson. Additional thanks go to Dr. Charlie Yates, Isobel Gotschall, Charlie Yates, Gray Baldwin and Frank D'Antuono for their participation to satisfy the requirements of Safeguarding God's Children. Their dedication to this program make it possible.

Daughters of the King (DOK) – Mrs. Melissa Hamon

2020 started off wonderfully with Daughter's of the King meetings in January and February and then everything changed. We spent the rest of the year praying fervently about Covid-19. We have kept in touch through emails, prayer lists and text messages. We have a special section on our prayer list for Covid prayers.

Moving forward into 2021, we hope to be able to meet in some way either in person or get enough interested in meeting via Zoom. If the vaccine works and we are able to get back to some semblance of normalcy, we would like to have a new class of members.

At the end of 2020 we lost a sweet member of the St. Mark's DOK, Ann Chrisman. I believe it is the first loss of a daughter that our chapter has suffered in the time that we have been active in our Richmond location.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our secretary, Chris Abbott. Chris works tirelessly on our prayer list, and lets everyone know when there is an addition or prayer needed. She is truly a devoted Daughter of the King and I try to follow her example.

Episcopal Church Women (ECW) – Mrs. Delores Baldwin, Mrs. Elisa Hughes, Mrs. Alysoun Marks, Ms. Christine Powell & Mrs. Rhonda Yamauchi

The Episcopal Church Woman (ECW) Board of St. Mark's met on March 10th to discuss activities for 2020. Unfortunately, because of the Covid 19 virus, we were not able to follow through on these activities. In January 2020 there was an ECW retreat at the Leaman Ranch and twice during 2020, we sent out an email to ECW members to catch up with them and see how everyone was coping with the pandemic so that we could at least stay connected through electronic communication. The ECW Board will be meeting soon to discuss possible activities for the coming year.

Episcopal Youth Community – Rev. Susie Hebert & Mrs. Chris Abbott

On Sunday, January 26, the EYC from St. Mark's joined forces with the EYC from Calvary to complete a mission trip to The Beacon in downtown Houston. The youth worked very hard to prepare and serve meals or do laundry to help service the homeless population. It was a very rewarding project for all. Those youth from St. Mark's who participated include Adriana Krajnovic, Precious Ani, Juliet Ani, Charlie Powell, Jonathan Powell, Nefe Fidelis-Ojah, Princess Fidelis-Ojah, Iruoghene Fidelis-Ojah and Philip Byerly. Adults supervising the trip included Isobel Gotschall, Alysoun Marks and Chris Abbott.

In mid-September the St. Mark's EYC group participated in a Zoom/pizza party. It was fun to see so many and connect with friends. The group played several games online and had a good time. St. Mark's paid for and had pizza delivered to the homes of the participating youth.

Water Bottles – In July, St. Mark's water bottles were ordered for all youth in grades 1-12 at St. Mark's. The water bottles were intended as a way to stay connected with all youth. Thirty-three water bottles were then driven to the homes of the youth. Chris and Bill Abbott oversaw this project.

Godly Play for Children – Mrs. Jeanne Reaves

In the first few months of 2020 some of the core lessons of Godly Play were presented and the children demonstrated their understanding of the story by completing an art project. After Covid entered our

lives, our format of the Bible stories changed to on-line learning. Art materials and a printed copy of the stories were delivered to the children's home. The on-line lessons were based on the ABC Bible story book. The lessons can be accessed at any time by the parents. Please call the church if you want your child to join the class.

Kids' Kingdom – Mrs. Chris Abbott

Kids' Kingdom provided Christian Formation for students in the first through fifth grades during 2020. The goal of Kids' Kingdom is to provide the youth with a Bible background presented in a unit format. A unit consists of several weeks of a single Bible story that is reinforced with activities that the students find fun and interesting. The majority of the lessons are adapted from the *Workshop Rotation Model* website. The weekly lesson plans are developed and written by Chris Abbott. Kids' Kingdom started out in January and February following its usual format with Chris Abbott overseeing the program which includes writing lesson plans, coordinating the teacher assignments, sharing pictures of the group activities via e-mail, printing pictures for the youth bulletin board in the parish hall, communicating weekly via email with the students and their families, maintaining the classroom environment and having all supplies for the various activities on hand and ready to use each week.

Spring 2020

During January and February the units included Epiphany with activities to construct sachet packets to coincide with a study of John the Baptist and the baptism of Jesus, making honey/bug snacks and origami doves. Other study included the temptations of Jesus making a Bible/temptations fan, a Jeopardy game and an Alleluia banner to prepare for Lent.

Kids' Kingdom teachers during January and February included Stacy Krajinovic and Mary Anne Simicek. Rhonda Yamauchi, Ruthie Hurta and Helen Tanner served as assistants. Each week one adult is responsible for teaching and the other adult assists in order to satisfy the requirements of Safe Guarding God's Children. Kids' Kingdom would not be possible without these dedicated individuals.

By mid-March it was not possible for Kids' Kingdom to meet in person so Chris Abbott adapted eight lessons to be put online. Those lessons included ones for Easter, Ascension and Pentecost.

Fall 2020

It was important to continue the Kids' Kingdom curriculum in the fall despite the fact that it was impossible to meet in person. Ten YouTube lessons were recorded by Chris Abbott for families to use at home on their own schedule. The lesson plans were posted online along with the lesson. Bags of supplies and materials were delivered to the homes of the children so that they could continue with the activities described in the lesson. The first five YouTube lessons were on Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel with activities to complete stick puppets of Adam and Eve, a tree with the "yes" and "no" things in their lives, torn paper illustrations of the Garden of Eden, prayer cards and the construction of Cain and Abel dolls. The second five lessons were a continuation of a study of the Old Testament including God's call to Abram, Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac and the study of Esau and Jacob. Activities included sand stars, a cotton ball ram, a pretzel bundle, a family tree and clothespin puppets.

Multiple parents and grandparents responded with pictures of the various activities. It was heartwarming to see that Kids' Kingdom was still reaching the youth and that learning was continuing despite the change in format.

The Men of St. Mark's – Mr. Scott Marks

The Men of the Church had a new leader, Scott Marks, at the beginning of 2020, having grudgingly accepted that Benno Scheibner was handing on the torch. However, Scott had to leave for foreign shores for work, and the Men of the Church have been on hiatus. This coincided with the distancing necessary because of the pandemic. The Men did meet on a Monday night, early in 2020, and also sent out a group email late in the Spring, so the men could let each other know how they were doing. The MOC will meet again in safer times, hopefully soon!

Music & Choir – Mr. Tom Thompson

It has been such a blessing to be a part of the Music Ministry at St. Mark's, although this has been a difficult year. There have been several wonderful members of St. Mark's Choir who have been faithful in helping to lead in worship on Sundays. We continue to rehearse on Wednesdays, at 6:00 p.m., masked and socially distanced. The handbell choir is trying to decide on a time when everyone is available to rehearse.

Unfortunately, we were unable to premiere Mass for Easter, a new major work being composed especially for the Music Ministry and congregation of St. Mark's due to the Covid-19 virus. This special multicultural worship experience will be presented when we are able to worship more freely.

I still would love to be able to develop a children's and youth choir programs, so please direct any interested persons to me (281.748.4746 or tthompson@stmarksfortbend.org).

We greatly appreciate your love, encouragement, and support, and we covet your prayers as we strive to grow and do wonderful things for God's kingdom.

Nursery Ministry – Rev. Susie Hebert

Our nursery during the Formation hour and during the 10 o'clock Sunday service continued as usual on Sunday mornings until COVID made it unsafe to gather indoors, in mid March. We kept our nursery workers on our payroll until it was clear that we would not be returning anytime soon, and then let them go with regrets. The Sunday morning nursery will return once again as soon it is safe.

Sewing Guild – Mrs. Jeanne Reaves

The first few months of 2020 the Sisters worked categorizing and organizing our various fabrics, threads, trims, and tools. We checked our machines to make sure they were in good condition and ordered manuals if needed. We got to work on making sewing kits to facilitate sewing pillowcases, baby quilts, pet pillows and scarf hoodies. After Covid entered our lives, some of us continued sewing at home. To the Fort Bend Women's shelter went 34 pillowcases, 20 frog soft pillows, 13 children's masks, 7 adult masks. To the Beacon shelter in Houston went 62 scarf-hoodies. Some of the Sisters made masks and gave them to anyone that needed them. We are looking forward to our group getting together again.

Social Outreach Ministry – Mr. James Osoba, Mrs. Rhonda Yamauchi & Ms. Isobel Gotschall

What can one say about the year we have just experienced. In the words of the Robert Burns poem "*the best laid schemes o' mice an men gang aft agley ab lea'e us nought but grief an pain for promis'd joy*". The outreach program was severely impacted by the ongoing pandemic. The women of St Marks were able to continue their programs but the remainder of the outreach program essentially crippled by the

quarantine mandates. It is the hope that this coming year we can all get back on track in the latter half of the year.

For 2021, the plans of 2020 hopefully can be implemented:

- Liaison with Common Threads on the needs of the Lamar Consolidated School District pupils needs
- Assembly and donation to the Montrose Homeless shelter of Manna Bags
- Assemble volunteers for programs of Attack Poverty (Friends of North Richmond)
- Continue the quarterly food service for Fort Bend Family Promise; investigate the possibility of sheltering a group of homeless families for one week on a quarterly basis. St. Marks has the facilities but needs to combine with another local church for volunteer personnel and funds.

The congregation of St. Marks has always been generous in its' outreach to the community. To accomplish the list above will require an increase in volunteerism from current levels. The goal is not your treasure but your time and talent.

St. Mark's, during the year was able to do the following for 2020:

St. Mark's Giving Tree - This year, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, sponsored 25 children were referred through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services as children in need. They service foster children from infants to age 18. For most of these children, the gifts from the Rainbow Room Christmas Giving Tree Project are the only ones they receive all year. Because of the generosity of the members of St. Mark's, we were able to provide three requested gifts per child totaling seventy five gifts in just 3 weeks. So....A huge "Thank You" to all of you who put a smile on the face of these children on Christmas morning.

Seniors At Greatwood Retirement Community - A ministry dedicated to sharing surplus calendars with the seniors residing in this community.

Fort Bend Family Promise - is an organization that provides shelter, meals and comprehensive support to families without homes. Each family is helped to develop a plan to attain safe, affordable housing and develop the confidence and skills they need to achieve long-term independence.

During 2020, St. Mark's Episcopal Church members provided meals for one week in August. Members had the option to cook a meal for four families and/or pick up and deliver the meals to Fort Bend Promise located in Rosenberg, Texas. St. Mark's is continuing to provide meals to these families throughout 2021 for one week every 3 months. Thank you to all of you who provided and delivered these meals.

Vacation Bible School – Rev. Susie Hebert

This Summer was a challenging time to have a VBS, and gather children together, so we worked to develop a simple online version of VBS. Justin Bond recorded Bible stories, Tom Thompson recorded music, and Susie Hebert recorded science projects. Melissa Hamon put together art projects for the kids. Then we put together kits for children to pick up outside the church to take home.

Sunday Food Ministry - Ms. Isobel Gotschall

The Sunday Morning Food Ministry had been providing a variety of snacks in order to encourage folks to gather between the two Sunday services and visit with each other at the beginning of 2020. In order to improve consistency and to bring in more volunteers, more teams were recruited in January and Feb-

ruary. Many thanks to those who volunteered for a team. Unfortunately, with COVID making gathering in person no longer safe, this ministry has not been active since mid March, 2020. But we look forward to returning to spending time together when it is safe again.

St. Mark's Saints for a Cure – Mrs. Chris Abbott

2020 was the ninth year that St. Mark's has fielded a team for the annual Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation walk under the direction of Chris Abbott. Of course, this year the walk was virtual, but that didn't stop the 33 individuals and families from contributing over \$3,500 to JDRF for their ongoing research into a cure and development of better ways to deal with type one diabetes on a daily basis.

Welcome Committee - Mr. Charles Phillips

Rev Susie made a video for people visiting the web site. I put together welcome bags for visitors with the information cards on the outside. COVID prevented us from meeting as a committee, but several people made use of the online visitor's card that was developed in the church office and others visited us when we returned to worship in the late Summer and Fall.

Give thanks for the many members of our body

Vestry (2020)

Lee Leaman (Sr Warden)
Jon Eiche (Jr Warden)
Chris Abbott
Brandon Fletcher
Isobel Gotschall
Susan Hylton
Bettye Newberry
Charles Phillips
Jeanne Reeves

Executive Admin. Assistant

Kimberly Hart

Financial Secretary

Sandy Barkerding

Organist

Tom Thompson

School Director

Jerri Carington

School Board of Directors

Rev. Susie Comer
Michelle Tripulas (President)
Susan Hylton
Jan Leaman

Treasurer

Vince Arnold

Nursery Attendants

Shakira Patni
LaDawn Fryer

Sexton

Reuben Luna
Andrew Vasquez

Stewardship Team

Bill Abbott
Lee Leaman
Melissa Hamon
Michelle D'Antuono

Finance Committee

Lee Leaman
Vince Arnold

Brad Knecht
Frank D'Antuono
Rock Moen

Audit Committee

Vince Arnold
Ruthie Hurta
Gray Baldwin
Frank D'Antuono

Vergers

Kathy Barzilla
Phyllis Janke
Benno Scheibner
Jon Eiche

Choir

Sandy Barkerding
Roger Barkerding
Bob Carington
Jerri Carington
Jennifer Griffiths
Kemi Ani
Jeanne Reeves
Faith Fidelis-Ojah
Bettegene Coyle
Debbie Thomas
Julie Stuckey
Brent Lee
Bill Brawn
John Barzilla

Handbells

Brad Knecht
Cameron Knecht
Brent Lee
Precious Ani
Suzanne Mottin
Samuel Hylton
Debbie Thomas
Sue Lane McCulley
Juliette Ani
Julie Stuckey
Iruo Fidelis-Ojah
Nefe Fidelis-Ojah

Chalice Bearers

Kevin Cranston
Jon Eiche

Melissa Hamon
Kim Janke
Brad Knecht
Kathy Barzilla
Charles Powell

Gospel Bearers

Ashton Knecht
Tim Cranston
Alice Hylton
Samuel Hylton
Mellie Simicek
Addison Powell
Iruo Fidelis-Ojah
Nefe Fidelis-Ojah
Princess Fidelis-Ojah

Lay Readers

Lisa Arnold
Sandra Barkerding
Kathy Barzilla
Bob Carington
Rob Hamon
Phyllis Janke
Peggy Wyatt
Mary Anne Simicek
Adriana Krajinovic
Jim Osoba
Rhonda Yamauchi

Altar Guild

Lisa Arnold
Delores Baldwin
Sandy Barkerding
Isobel Gotschall
Ruthie Hurta
Susan Hylton
Suzanne Mottin
Bettye Newberry
Sally Yates
Charles Yates
Caroline Moen
Ann Knauth
Helen Tanner
Elisa Hughes

Wedding Guild

Dorothy Dawlearn
Bettye Newberry

Give thanks for the many members of our body

Ruthie Hurta

Ushers

Vince Arnold
Dwayne Dawlearn
Kim Janke
Brad Knecht
Cole Mottin
Suzanne Mottin
Charlie Phillips
Don Jozwiak
Marion Jozwiak
Ron Wyatt
Precious Ani
Juliet Ani
Sarah Cranston
Will Cranston
Emma Cranston
Susan Hylton
Alice Hylton
Samuel Hylton
Thomas Hylton
Iruo Fidelis-Ojah
Nefe Fidelis-Ojah
Princess Fidelis-Ojah

Tellers

Kathy Barzilla
Alysoun Marks
Brad Knecht
Roger Barkerding
Kim Janke
Rhonda Yamauchi
Bettye Newberry
Lee Leaman
Chris Abbott
Brandon Fletcher
Isobel Gotschall
Faith Fidelis-Ojah
Susan Hylton
Charles Phillips
Jon Eiche
Jeanne Reaves

Daughters of the King

Chris Abbott
Sandra Barkerding
Kathy Barzilla
Nancy Brown

Jerri Carington
Ann Chrisman
Dorothy Dawlearn
Isobel Gotschall
Melissa Hamon
Alysoun Marks
Jeanne Reaves
Barbara Ricklin
Barbara Scheibner
Deborah Burns
Marion Jozwiak
Peggy Wyatt
Ann Yager

**Christian Formation
for Adults**

The Rev. Susie Hebert
Rob Hamon

**Christian Formation
for Youth**

Chris Abbott
Charles Yates
Frank D'Antuono
Isobel Gotschall
Gray Baldwin

Kids' Kingdom

Chris Abbott
Mary Anne Simicek
Shan Harris
Rhonda Yamauchi
Helen Tanner
Amy Wacker
Stacy Krajcinovic
Ruthie Hurta

EYC

The Rev. Susie Hebert
Chris Abbott
Isobel Gotschall
Alysoun Marks
Melissa Hamon
Bill Abbott

Godly Play

Jeanne Reaves
Justin Bond
Crystal McCelvey

Christine Powell

Outreach Ministry

Rev Susie Hebert
Jim Osoba
Isobel Gotschal
Rhonda Yamauchi
Jeanne Reaves

The Sewing Guild

Lou Cloninger
Sally Yates
Marilyn Turner
Jeannie Reaves
Bettegene Coyle
Joan Little
Rhonda Yamauchi
Betty Von-Maszewski
Isabel Gotschall
Ann Chrisman
Dorothy Dawlearn
Kemi Ani
Gail Scholer
Mas Nash

ECW Chairs

Bettye Newberry
Barbara Scheibner
Christine Powell
Delores Baldwin
Elisa Hughes
Alysoun Scotts
Rhonda Yamauchi

**Men's Group
Ministry Leaders**

Scott Marks

VBS Volunteers

Rev. Susie Comer
Kimberly Hart
Melissa Hamon
Tom Thompson
Brent Thompson
Justin Bond

Hosting Ministry

Sarah Cranston
Christine Powell

Give thanks for the many members of our body

Hosting Ministry

Alysoun Marks
Marion Jozwiak
Kathy Barzilla
Nancy Brown
Stacy Krajinovic
Susan Hylton
Peggy Wyatt
Tricia Hinson
Sue Lane McCulley
Helen Tanner
Ann Knauth
Cathy Baumbach
Isobel Gotschall
Rhonda Yamauchi
Ann Chrisman
Bettye Newberry
Ruthie Hurta
Lou Cloninger
Melissa Hamon
Lee Leaman
Jan Leaman

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

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Richmond, TX 77469

(281) 545-1661

www.stmarksfortbend.org

Mission Statement

Our mission is to know Jesus Christ and to make him known.

Vision Statement

We at St. Mark's Episcopal Church have a vision for our future. We will nurture strong caring relationships within our church family and work together to meet the needs of our neighbors through outreach. We will commit to meaningful worship experiences with a vibrant music component. We will prepare for growth by developing a campus plan which utilizes our unique, beautiful campus space. We will devote ourselves to Christian formation at all ages and will create a thriving youth ministry. And we will implement an effective overall strategy for achieving our mission of knowing Christ and making him known.

Core Values

Gracious. In our relationship with Christ, God welcomes us home, and we, in turn, offer gracious hospitality to all those whom God leads to our church.

Rooted. Our worship and liturgy are rooted in the rich tradition of the Episcopal Church, drawing on the wellspring of customs from the ancient church through those of today.

Authentic. We are an authentic people, true to our Christian identity, and genuinely thankful for the gift of our gathering and for the sacred space of our church.

Christ-centered. We are the church, the Body of Christ, and we therefore have Jesus Christ at the center of our life; for in the risen Christ we live and move and have our being.

Empowered. Jesus commissions us to go to all nations with his good news, and we, the people of St. Mark's, are empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim by word and example the Gospel in Fort Bend County and beyond.