

St. Mark's

EPISCOPAL CHURCH



**Report to the Annual Parish Meeting
January 30, 2022**

St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Annual Parish Meeting
January 30, 2022
Agenda

1. Opening Prayer & Call to Order
2. Election of delegates to Diocesan Council
3. Appreciation and presentation of Gifts to Vestry class of 2021
4. Senior Wardens Report - Lee Leaman
5. Alysoun Marks (Explanation of Transition)
6. Junior Warden's Report - Jon Eiche
7. Finance and Stewardship Report - Lee Leaman & Michelle D'Antuono
8. Head of School Report - Michelle D'Antuono (for Jerri Carington)
9. A Brief Summary of Ministries in 2021 - Melissa Hamon
10. Rector's Report - Rev. Susie Hebert
11. Closing Prayer and Doxology

Senior Warden Report — Mr. Lee Leaman

To say 2021 was a challenging year is an understatement. With God's help we made it through. Most people thought that with a vaccine in place, the Covid fight would have been over well before the end of the year. We were wrong about that.

At the end of 2020 we suffered what was thought to be a fire in the Men's Warehouse affecting our fire suppression system. Everyone thought our motor was burned up and we were staring at a \$50,000+ problem. Then in early 2021 we had the freeze and had major damage to the sprinkler system pipes. With God's help we would get qualified professional help in putting things back together. It was expensive, but not nearly the costs we were expecting.

The Reading Road project was mostly dormant through the year. However, at the end of the year, we were informed that the County was reneging on our deal to swap Right of Way in return for filling in the detention pond. The diocese has hired a new person to handle land issues and his name is Michael Hilfinger. We have met to review history and the path forward. He has engaged a Condemnation Attorney to represent the church and diocese. There should be a resolution to this he says, in 2022. I would like to thank the vestry for its hard work in 2021.

I am very pleased that we elected Alysoun Marks, Christine Powell and Kathy Barzilla to the Vestry for 2022 for 3 year terms.

Alysoun has agreed to be Senior Warden and Elisa Hughes has agreed to be Junior Warden. There was a recommendation that the Treasurer be a member of the Vestry and Michelle D'Antuono has offered to be the new Treasurer, replacing Vince Arnold, who did a great job.

I want to thank the congregation for their support over the last 2 years as your Senior Warden. 2022 has many changes and challenges ahead of us, but with God's help and the dedication of the members of St. Mark's, it will be a good year.

Junior Warden Report — Mr. Jon Eiche

Church Beautification

COVID-19 has had a major impact on the activities planned for the beautification of the grounds of the church. During the Spring and Summer months the flower beds were weeded, flowers were planted and the beds mulched on the west and north sides of the church which improved the appearance. Four planters were purchased and placed at the west and north entrances to the church.

The funds for beautification of the church were not spent due to the impact of Covid 19 and the several variants associated with the pandemic. Because of this, I have asked the Vestry Financial Committee to place the remaining approximate \$6000 in funds previously approved for the beautification of the grounds into the budget for 2022.

Fire Suppression System

Problems with the fire suppression system plagued us for a considerable part of the year, but in the October time frame the final repairs were completed and the system is now fully operational.

February 2021 Freeze

Severe weather in February caused a number of problems in the plumbing system of the church, and the extensive damage in the surrounding communities caused shortages in repair parts availability. By the summer everything was repaired and each of the sprinkler heads throughout the inside of the church were checked and faulty ones were repaired.

Other Activities

I am thankful for many volunteers who have given so much of their time and talent in helping to complete minor repairs on the plumbing problems and to our Sexton Rueben Luna for his tremendous work in keeping the church safe with the disinfectant solutions during Covid-19.

In the Fall a new dishwasher was replaced in the kitchen.

Future Plans

Hopefully next year will be a calmer year for the incoming Junior Warden.

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.

Finance Report – Mr. Lee Leaman

2021 was a very challenging year for the Church in many ways including finances. 2020 was an unexpected windfall year with Income exceeding Expenses in excess of 100,000. Because of that windfall, we boosted salaries by 5% and tried to keep expenses consistent with the previous year. We expected the problems of Covid to improve.

We did not expect the severe damage sustained from the freeze early in the year and the failure of our Fire Suppression System.

While Revenue exceeded budget by 14,000, because of the receipt of a PPP grant, expenses exceeded the budget by \$20,000, primarily due to maintenance costs. This resulted in a loss of \$53,000, about half of the surplus of the previous year.

The 2021 Stewardship Campaign was well organized like the 2020 campaign but the results were at best disappointing. We lost 16 pledging units and substantial revenue. We are still finalizing the 2022 budget because of many moving parts but expect to have a budget with only a small deficit.

With your prayers and commitment to the church I am convinced we will have an exciting Christ filled year at St. Marks.

St. Mark's Episcopal School Report — Mrs. Jerri Carington, School Director

This past year, 2021, was another unprecedented year for our school. We operated under COVID-19 restrictions requiring social distancing, daily screenings, reduced class sizes and enhanced cleaning throughout the entire year. We were able to offer a small in person graduation program for our four year old graduates and their parents in May.

During summer of 2021, we operated our summer camp with two classrooms with an average of 12 students between the two rooms for the summer months. For most of this fall our ministry had 13 students, with one leaving in December. We have been able to add three additional students who are starting in January 2022, bringing current enrollment to 15 students. We are set up to run three classrooms, plus morning and afternoon BAC. For a portion of the day, our two youngest classrooms, our 18-month and 2-year-old rooms combine. Our current capacity is 18 students for the three classrooms, as we are limited by not only the COVID-19 restrictions listed above, but, also by the limited number of staff we currently have available. 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 five dedicated employees. We consider ourselves very lucky to have these dedicated workers. Due to the lack of available qualified workers, we have had to use a specialized child care staffing service to fill out our workforce. We are looking to hire an additional morning worker, an additional afternoon worker and at least one substitute. If you know of someone who might be interested in part time or full time work in child care, please ask them to contact Jerri Carington at the school.

We were blessed to receive a second PPP loan and it has been forgiven, too! We also received a Child Care Relief Fund grant through the Texas Workforce Commission. A few parish members also made generous contributions in 2021. These combined funds, along with tuition collected, allowed us to continue operations throughout 2021, including offering scholarship to students who otherwise would not be able to afford to attend the school.

We are so grateful that through outside funding sources, the generous contributions of parishioners and the continued support of the Church we have been allowed 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

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 a few 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 would like a few more people trained in the rotation. We are excited about training more adults to serve as Crucifer and the possibilities for more youth Gospel Bearers and Torch Bearers in 2022. 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 Hebert at shebert@stmarksfortbend.org or Kathy Barzilla at kat102193@windstream.net.

Adult Christian Formation – Rev. Susie Hebert

Brown Bag Bible Study has met throughout the year on a weekly basis. We have studied the entire book of Isaiah, First Corinthians and Second Corinthians this year, one chapter a week. We are now in the book of Judith.

Adult Formation has continued safely on a weekly basis on Wednesdays at 1 p.m., via zoom, with a series of books. We've read *On the Road with Saint Augustine*, by James K.A. Smith,, *Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit*, growing in Christlikeness, by Christopher J.H. Wright, *Surprised by Paradox*, the Promise of AND in an Either-Or World, by Jen Pollock Michel. We are currently in the middle of *The Wisdom Pattern, Order/ Disorder/ Reorder*, by Richard Rohr.

During Lent, in 2021, we offered a Wednesday Webinar that we shared with All Saints Episcopal, in Stafford, for 5 Wednesday nights. We are grateful to St. Mark's members who led two of the programs. Justin Bond spoke of his experiences as a therapist during COVID and the particular stressors he was seeing in children and adolescents. Elizabeth Wolf and her husband, Andrew, shared their stories of being a medical professional with COVID, and for Andrew, what it was like to live through a very serious case of COVID. Both spoke how they felt God at work in their lives in that most difficult time.

Last Summer we also offered a Healthy Eating Series on Wednesday nights in our excellent church kitchen, led by Charlie and Christine Sadler, (Charlie is a former chef, and Christine is an MSN level nurse), on how to cook gluten free delicious meals. Many thanks for their creativity! We decided to stop after two sessions about concerns over the surge of the Delta variant.

Altar Guild – Ms. Bettye Newberry

My oil angels Charlie & Sally Yates. Filling the candles each week is a great help. Love y'all. Tom & Brent Thompson who set up for the 8 am service. Now a HUGE thanks to LC Floral for the beautiful arrangements. Big kudos to Ruthie Hurta, Isobel Gotchell Tom Thompson #1 placement King for our lilies & poinsettias. Also, the congregation who have honored loved ones by paying for the flowers on dedicated Sundays. Next, Kim Hart for her administrative skills for the bulletin & financials.

Episcopal Relief and Development – It was decided again in 2021 that in addition to altar flowers and poinsettias at Christmas that St. Mark's would continue to collect donations for 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 \$500 for ERD.

Christian Formation Grades 6-12 – Mrs. Chris Abbott

Spring 2021

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. A decision was made in the spring of 2021 to not conduct this class in person due to the excessive use of virtual learning at school it was decided that virtual learning would not be an effective technique for St. Mark's 6-12 Christian Formation at that time.

Fall 2021

After communicating with the parents of those youth in grades 6-12 during the late summer of 2021 it was decided that the class would meet outside from 9:15-9:45 each Sunday. Making use of the TV and portable DVD player made it possible for the class to continue using the *Real and Relevant* curriculum. As many as six youth would participate. The lessons provide the youth with an opportunity to dig deep-

er 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. The ten lessons in the fall term included dealing with anger, popularity and cliques, marriage, fear, giving up, leadership, wishes, life-changing events, saints, and giving.

Chris Abbott taught the class and communicated 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, Frank D'Antuono, Kathy Barzilla, Helen Tanner, Ruthie Hurta and Rhonda Yamauchi for their participation to satisfy the requirements of Safeguarding God's Children. Their dedication to this program continue to make it possible.

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

2021 was a busy year of praying, especially because of the continued Covid pandemic. As a group that meets, it was quiet. Our chapter has several home bound members and members that are ill or taking care of ill loved ones. We attempted to meet outside, but only a few could attend and the recommendation to meet via ZOOM was not well received.

We have two active officers, Chris Abbott and Melissa Hamon and they have done their best to keep things moving in the DOK in 2021. A very special thank you goes to Chris Abbott. She has done a wonderful job of keeping the ever-growing prayer list up to date and distributes new lists to the members several times a month. She also keeps everyone posted through faithful emails and her hard work is truly appreciated.

As we look toward 2022, in early 2022 we will have a class for new members. If you are interested in becoming a member of the St. Mark's Daughters of the King chapter, please contact Melissa Hamon, Chris Abbott or Kathy Barzilla. We hope to begin classes in February.

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 held a "Whine & Cheese" social on May 14th on the patio. Twelve women attended and brought various wine and cheeses along with other snacks. Along with catching up with each other, Alysoun Marks put together some questions related to the Episcopal Church for a fun trivia game.

A pancake breakfast was planned for August 15th to collect school supplies but this event was cancelled due to the Covid-19 virus. We did however continue to collect many bags of school supplies which were delivered to Cora Thomas Elementary at the end of August.

The annual Christmas Brunch & Gift Exchange was held in the Parish Hall on December 4th with about 20 people in attendance who brought potluck dishes and desserts. After a great meal and plenty of conversation, everyone had a good time selecting and "stealing" gifts.

Episcopal Youth Community – Rev. Susie Hebert & Ms. Hannah Smith

Although it looked to be a challenging year to gather as a youth group, St. Mark's vestry took a risk at the end of 2020 and voted to hire Hannah Smith for a one year contract, as our part-time youth minister. She also took a risk in the middle of a pandemic to work as our youth minister. Hannah brought energy and fresh ideas to our youth, they gathered and made plans for the year.

Some of the highlights of this year were the youth led worship service held in June, helping out in various roles at the Fish Fry, the movie nights held outside, and game afternoons when the youth brought their favorite board games to play.

Unfortunately, because of the effects of COVID and the busy schedules of the youth, numerous events that were planned for had to be canceled. The vestry has not continued Hannah Smith's position this year, and we are now in a rebuilding phase of our program. Chris Abbott is working on plans for EYC in 2022 and Melissa Hamon has offered to help her with this effort.

Godly Play for Children – Mrs. Jeanne Reaves

Teaching Bible stories for preschoolers took a virtual turn in 2021. We used the ABC Bible storybook as a tool for the basics--A is for Angel--B is for Baby Jesus--C is for Children. Each story is accompanied by a simple art project. Please call the church office for more information. As an alternative an essential core lesson from the Godly Play program will be taught in person or your child may join the Kid's Kingdom lesson with additional resources. No one participated in Godly Play for 2021. But we are hoping this year some will.

Kids' Kingdom – Mrs. Chris Abbott

Kids' Kingdom provided Christian Formation for students in the first through fifth grades during 2021. In order to continue to provide Kids' Kingdom lessons because it was not possible to meet in person, YouTube was selected as the manner in which the lessons were presented.

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 lessons are adapted from the *Workshop Rotation Model* website. Chris Abbott coordinated the program which included writing lesson plans, recording the twenty-five YouTube lessons, preparing supply bags with the necessary materials to complete the weekly activities, delivering the supply bags to the participating families, writing bulletin teasers for the weekly bulletin and communicating weekly via email with the students and their families.

Kids' Kingdom – Spring 2021

Fifteen 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 video. 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 the miracles of Jesus which included activities such as constructing a small scene with craft sticks, baking special bread to represent the feeding of the 5,000, a water color painting of the rescue of Peter by Jesus, and a clay mosaic to remember the raising of Lazarus from the dead. An alleluia banner was completed prior to Ash Wednesday. Additional activities in the spring unit on the miracles of Jesus included the creation of sock puppets used in acting out Jesus washing the feet of his disciples, baking unleavened bread, painting sun catchers to celebrate Easter, completing Shrinky Dink roosters to remember the rooster that spoke to Peter and a fabric square to represent the symbols of Christianity. The spring term was completed with a study of the disciples of Jesus. Activities in that unit included disciple "trading cards" similar to baseball cards, writing texts and tweets to God, designing "Wanted Posters" advertising for Jesus, constructing Holy Spirit Lanterns and finally a windsock to celebrate Pentecost.

Kids' Kingdom - Fall 2021

Ten YouTube lessons were recorded for the fall Kids' Kingdom term. The first five YouTube lessons were an Old Testament unit on Joseph. Activities to accompany the lessons included the use of "Yeah"

and “Boo” cards to focus on the good and bad points of the lesson, a reader’s theater titled “Joseph’s Cool Coat”, a hieroglyphic scroll spelling out their first names, cooking “dirt pudding” to remind us that God always has a plan for us and making a technicolor pillow case using tie dye to represent the colorful coat Joseph received from his father. The second five weeks of the fall term continued with our study of Joseph. The students created stepping stones to represent the phases of Joseph’s life, played a Jeopardy game to recall the important details of the Joseph story, constructed a “Psalm Tree”, watched *The Animated Kid’s Bible* DVD of Joseph and his brothers, completed a map of the twelve tribes of Israel and acted out the battle of Jericho with the walls tumbling down.

Multiple parents and grandparents coordinated these lessons at home. Three families participated in the program. Without the guidance from those adults the Kids’ Kingdom program would not have been possible during 2021. Seeing pictures of completed activities was heartwarming to know that Kids’ Kingdom was still reaching the youth and that learning was continuing despite the change in format.

The Men of St. Mark’s

The Men of St. Mark’s did not meet in 2021 because of COVID restrictions. The Men will meet again in 2022 when Scott Marks returns.

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 another 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 ensemble rehearses on Sundays, at 11:00 a.m.

We were so blessed to have friends join us for Easter Sunday, All Saints’ Sunday, and our Service of Lessons and Carols. We were also delighted to have Dr. Dominique McCormick present a lovely concert on Christmas Eve.

We have many wonderful plans for 2022, provided that we are able to continue with rehearsals and safely make our presentations.

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

We did not have nursery for 2021 because of COVID restrictions. We do plan to have nursery hopefully this year for 2022. The Sunday morning nursery will return once again as soon it is safe.

Sewing Guild – Mrs. Jeanne Reaves

The purpose of the St. Mark’s Sewing Guild is to touch those in need by using our sewing skills. We meet once a month at the church to work on projects. As we stitch, we have found friendship with one another, especially when we gather for the pot-luck lunch on sewing day! You may also donate cotton fabrics, money to buy fabric, and/or cotton clothes, bedsheets and pillow cases that can be repurposed. If you would like to join us and don’t sew, we would appreciate help in pinning, cutting, ironing, and putting

up a display of our finished work. Friends are welcome, too! Even non-sewers. They can pin and cut. 12 years old and up are also welcomed to join us too! The Sewing Sistahs meet once a month at 10am - 1:30pm!

In 2021, the Sewing Sistas provided 37 scarf-hoodies to be donated to the homeless at Lord of the Streets in Houston. The Sistas also enjoyed their annual Christmas party at the Church and made plans for projects they will complete in 2022. The Sistas also made 17 baby blankets that were given to Texas Children's Hospital. They also made cute stuffed froggies and blankets to be used as comfort toys when children are entering the Women's Shelter. The Sistas who continued to sew at home whenever we weren't able to meet --you deserve special recognition! For more information on joining, please call the church office.

Social Outreach Ministry – Mrs. Jeanne Reaves, Mrs. Rhonda Yamauchi & Ms. Isobel Gotschall

For 2022, the plans of 2021 hopefully can be implemented:

- Souper Bowl of Caring can collection
- Meals on Wheels donations –adult diapers and pet food
- Homeless population collection - wallets, eye glasses, socks and underwear
- Blood Drive
- Giving Tree

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 2021:

Love through Literacy - At the Fort Bend Women's Shelter there are always children arriving that do not have a single book of their own. A child's ability to read improves when they have their own books to read and reread. This is a practical and meaningful way to change a child's life. A bookplate was put in each book to let them know it came from St. Mark's, with love. St. Mark's donated 129 books to the Fort Bend Women's Shelter!

St. Mark's Giving Tree - This year, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, sponsored 20 children who were referred through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services as children in need. This department services 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 60 gifts in just 3 weeks and seven of those gifts were bicycles. So....A huge "Thank You" to all of you who put a smile on the face of these children on Christmas morning and to those of you who helped organize and transport these gifts.

School Supplies - St. Mark's ECW was supposed to meet for a "back to school" pancake breakfast on August 15, 2021 but the breakfast was cancelled due to high COVID cases. But St. Mark's still took up school supply donations for LAMAR CISD.

COVID Nurses - We gave out 75 goodie bags to COVID nurses. Each bag contained a few pieces of chocolate, a bandana, chap stick, Starbucks can drink, lavender in a small bag and a prayer card for nurses.

Lord of the Streets - St. Marks donated useful supplies such as backpacks to the Lord of the Streets in Houston.

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 2021, St. Mark's Episcopal Church members provided meals for four weeks in 2021, once a quarter. 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. Thank you to all of you who provided and delivered these meals.

Souper Bowl of Caring – Mrs. Chris Abbott

St. Mark's again participated in the Souper Bowl of Caring. Donations of canned and dried food were collected prior to Super Bowl Sunday. Monetary collections were also made. Contributions were delivered to the Helping Hands location in Richmond.

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

2021 was the tenth year that St. Mark's has fielded a team for the annual Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation walk under the direction of Chris Abbott. This year's walk was again virtual, but that didn't stop the 33 individuals and families from contributing \$3,580 to JDRF for their ongoing research into a cure and development of better ways to deal with type one diabetes on a daily basis.

Vacation Bible School – Rev. Susie Hebert

We did not have VBS in 2021 because of COVID restrictions.

Sunday Food Ministry - Ms. Isobel Gotschall

The Sunday Morning Food Ministry started again in November providing a variety of snacks in order to encourage folks to gather between the two Sunday services and visit with each other at the end of 2021. We have 9 teams that we are rotating on Sunday mornings and we would like a few more teams in the rotation. The teams bring light snacks like, cookies, fruit, chips, nuts, etc. If you are interested in hosting on Sunday mornings or to get more information please contact Isobel Gotschall. Many thanks to those who volunteered for a team.

Welcome Committee - Mr. Charles Phillips

I assembled and staged welcome bags and a big thanks to the people who are attending regularly and greeting any visitors. We have 3 new families!

Rector's Report — The Rev. Susie Hebert

2021 was a challenging year for us all at St. Mark's. Nevertheless, there are things for which we all can be grateful.

Last year has been a year in which when we came to church, we did it out of a genuine hunger for the Gospel, a hunger for the liturgy, for the music, and for fellowship. Coming to church became something we all did with greater intentionality. For those who weren't able to worship with us for a variety of reasons, our prayers for you, for your safety and well-being, were heartfelt. And for the precious and wonderful folks who chose to search us out and come to worship with us for the first time, seeking a new church home, I am so grateful for you, and I know that we all give thanks to God for you, and the members of. St. Mark's look forward to sharing ministries with you!

Last year was a year when good and precious things stood out, and I know you join me in giving thanks for Tom Thompson, and Brent and Julie, who provided us with music in thick and thin, and for the wonderful choir members who came to join them as vaccinations made that possible. Your musical offerings have gladdened our hearts, fed our souls, and glorified God when our words fell short.

Last year was a time to hang on to what was precious and important. It was a year to persist, when things were difficult and felt at times futile, particularly in Christian formation. I am extraordinarily grateful to Chris Abbott, for her will to work and for her faithfulness. Chris has formulated and implemented curriculums for our kids and youth, and has recorded lessons online, put together kits of resources, has taught outside in the heat and in the freezing cold. She has recruited folks to be present with her, and has kept everyone apprised through her thoughtful emails, which are a ministry in themselves.

Last year was a year to repair what was broken. In our buildings, between frost and fire, power outages and surges, plenty broke, and plenty needed to be fixed. I am extraordinarily grateful to Jon Eiche and Lee Leaman, our Junior and Senior Wardens, who, with the indubitable skills of Dwayne Dawlearn, accomplished numerous projects and repairs, giving of their time and energy to do so. And there are also other wonderful quiet people, who came and worked hard, cleaning, refinishing, painting, planting, mulching, weeding. You know who you are, and we are all grateful to you.

Last year was a year in which we sometimes had to double up and do more tasks than we expected. I am extraordinarily grateful for Kim Hart, whose work as Parish Administrator and Bookkeeper at St. Marks over the last year, involved many strange situations and skills, including, but not limited to reptile wrangling and installing a new internet phone system. Speaking of new skills handled with aplomb, thank you Brent Thompson, for manning the cameras on Sunday morning. Thank you, Bettye Newberry and Isobel Gottshall, for taking care of the altar guild duties, and for Charlie and Sally Yates, for filling the candles. Last year was a year for noticing what needed doing, and stepping up and doing it. Many thanks to those of you who stepped in as reader, or chalice bearer or usher at the last minute. We are so very grateful.

Last year was a year in which we had to find creative ways to reach out to those who are at home, for their safety, or because of illness. Many thanks to you who cooked meals and delivered them, for the prayers raised, for the messages of support sent, for the home communion given. It has been a particularly challenging year for the Daughters of the King, who, with Chris Abbott and Melissa Hamon's efforts, have carefully tracked and prayed for such a long list of constantly changing prayer needs. Most surely God has heard your prayers, and we are so grateful for your ongoing ministry.

Last year, we managed, heroically so, to get together over meals. At our safest, we gathered for our wonderful fourth of July celebration and hymn sing, and at more careful times of the year, we gathered outside, distanced at tables, under one porte cohere or the other.

We managed, by the skin of our teeth at times, I admit, to provide meals, for the Family Promise Families, and even gathered twice in the Summer, inside our church kitchen, to be taught gluten free cooking skills by Charlie and Christine Sadler.

And remember that glorious outdoor Lenten Fish Fry? I know that everyone who was involved that day, was thrilled for the chance to take part, from the hard-working guys at the fryers, to meal assemblers, to the folks directing traffic. Certainly, for me, the Lenten Fish Fry was a high point of our year together as a church.

There are so many names, so many situations that keep coming to mind, when loving gestures, and efforts of all of you have stood out, from the last year. You have helped to provide a meaning funeral in the middle of a noisy thunderstorm, a year ago, for Shirley Nordt. You have sweated at 8 a.m. worship, on Sunday morning, and endured the noise of the 18 wheelers and motorcyclists as they rode past. You all have put on masks, and waved at each other across the sanctuary as we have passed the Peace, and gotten accustomed to using gel alcohol on a regular basis. You have logged in to Facebook and watched and worshipped from Home. Through all of this you have been the church, the body of Christ.

I look forward to talking with you about whatever is on your heart, before I go. My door is open. I remain so grateful to God, for the opportunity to serve here, as your Rector, since October 1, 2019, and I am grateful to you for welcoming me. Thank you for sharing your lives with me. Thank you for your prayers and support. I take with me many, many precious memories of my time here.

God has most certainly been at work among us over this last year. God's gracious Holy Spirit will continue to weave St. Mark's together as the body of Christ. God will encourage and build up fresh leaders for the work of God among you and in the surrounding community. In all of our struggles and in all of our joys and celebrations, may the love of Christ continue to guide us.

Yours in Christ,
The Rev Susie Hebert+

Give thanks for the many members of our body

Vestry (2021)

Lee Leaman (Sr Warden)
Jon Eiche (Jr Warden)
Chris Abbott
Michelle D'Antuono
Dwayne Dawlearn
Melissa Hamon
Elisa Hughes
Charles Phillips
Jeanne Reaves

Executive Admin. Assistant

Kimberly Hart

Organist

Tom Thompson

School Director

Jerri Carington

School Board of Directors

Rev. Susie Hebert
Jerri Carington
Michelle D'Antuono
Jan Leaman
Ann Yager

Treasurer

Vince Arnold

Sexton

Reuben Luna
Andrew Vasquez

Stewardship Team

Michelle D'Antuono
Melissa Hamon
Lee Leaman
Stacy Krajinovic
Christine Powell

Finance Committee

Lee Leaman
Vince Arnold
Michelle D'Antuono
Frank D'Antuono
Melissa Hamon
Rock Moen

Audit Committee

Frank D'Antuono
Melissa Hamon
Lee Leaman
Stacy Krajinovic
Rock Moen

Vergers

Kathy Barzilla
Jon Eiche

Choir

Kemi Ani
Sandy Barkerding
Roger Barkerding
Bill Brawn
Faith Fidelis-Ojah
Melissa Hamon
Jeanne Reaves
Julie Stuckey
Brent Thompson

Handbells

Melissa Hamon
Sue Lane McCulley
Suzanne Mottin
Julie Stuckey
Brent Thompson

Chalice Bearers

Jon Eiche
Melissa Hamon
Kathy Barzilla
Charles Powell

Altar Guild

Isobel Gotschall
Ruthie Hurta
Elissa Hughes
Sally Yates
Charlie Yates
Tom & Brent Thompson
Bettye Newberry

Wedding Guild

Bettye Newberry
Ruthie Hurta

Ushers

Vince Arnold
Dwayne Dawlearn
Charlie Phillips
Don Jozwiak
Marion Jozwiak

Tellers

Lee Leaman
Jon Eiche
Michelle D'Antuono
Dwayne Dawlearn
Melissa Hamon
Elisa Hughes
Charles Phillips

Daughters of the King

Chris Abbott
Sandra Barkerding
Kathy Barzilla
Nancy Brown
Jerri Carington
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

**Christian Formation
for Youth**

Dr. Charlie Yates
Isobel Gotschall
Frank D'Antuono
Kathy Barzilla
Helen Tanner
Ruthie Hurta
Rhonda Yamauchi

Give thanks for the many members of our body

Kids' Kingdom

Chris Abbott

EYC

The Rev. Susie Hebert

Hannah Smith

Mary Ann Simicek

Chris Abbott

Godly Play

Jeanne Reaves

Outreach Ministry

Rev Susie Hebert

Isobel Gotschal

Rhonda Yamauchi

Jeanne Reaves

The Sewing Guild

Jeannie Reaves

Rhonda Yamauchi

Betty Von Maszewski

Isabel Gotschall

Gail Scholer

Phoebe Rogers

Jeanne Rogers

Helen Tanner

Anne Brock

ECW Chairs

Christine Powell

Delores Baldwin

Elisa Hughes

Alysoun Scotts

Rhonda Yamauchi

Men's Group

Ministry Leaders

Scott Marks

Hosting Ministry

Marion Jozwiak

Kathy Barzilla

Peggy Wyatt

Helen Tanner

Cathy Baumbach

Isobel Gotschall

Rhonda Yamauchi

Bettye Newberry

Ruthie Hurta

Dlores Baldwim

Gray Balwin

Michelle D'Antuono

Frank D'Antuono

Anne Brock

Chris Abbott

Bill Abbott

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.