



St. Mark's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH FORT BEND

**Report to the Annual Parish Meeting
January 26, 2025**

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

1. Opening Prayer & Call to Order
2. Appreciation and presentation of Gifts to Vestry class of 2024
 3. Rector Report - Rev. Jeremy Bradley
 4. Senior Wardens Report - Alysoun Marks
 5. Junior Warden's Report - Mary Anne Helms
 6. Finance and Stewardship Report - Rock Moen
 7. A Brief Summary of Ministries in 2024
 8. Closing Prayer

Rector Report— Rev. Jeremy Bradley

I have been reflecting on baptism lately, and the verse from Romans 6:4 continues to come to mind. It says, *"Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life"* (NRSV). I give thanks to God for that good news! Each day, we are allowed to live into our baptisms, dying to our old selves and walking in the newness of life. Over the past year at St. Mark's, we have certainly walked in a newness of life as our congregation has experienced renewed energy, revitalization, growth, and community engagement.

Our pancake supper filled the parish hall with members of St. Mark's and families from Kintess, the school that is renting space from us. On March 10, I was installed as your eighth rector! A day I will forever remember. During the season of Lent, we partnered with Calvary Episcopal to create an evening program and dinner with local Richmond artist Sarah Beth Bacas, who led a weekly discussion on women in the bible. The gathering reminded us that we are all members of the body of Christ, and together, we can better serve the community around us. We also hosted two fish fry events during Lent, bringing community members to St. Mark's for Fort Bend County's best fish fry while raising funds for youth scholarships!

The church was gracious to me and my family as we welcomed our daughter into this world at the end of April. You all loved us with your generosity and delicious food, a reminder to me of the love received through hospitality. Over the summer, I represented St. Mark's as one of the summer camp directors at Camp Allen during Hurricane Beryl. We also reinvigorated our Rally Day, showcasing the plethora of ministries we have here at St. Mark's.

In October, I challenged the parish to reimagine what St. Francis Day - Blessing the Animals could look like and how to better invite the community to join us. Responding to the challenge, you asked local animal businesses and non-profits to partner with us at the event and publicized it at local dog parks, coffee shops, and on social media. We tripled the attendees and formed beautiful relationships with our partners and those who joined us for worship in our community. Later that month, in partnership with Kintess, we hosted a wonderful truck-or-treat, bringing hundreds of individuals to our campus and showcasing our love for our community.

We had a wildly successful stewardship season, encouraging us to Walk in Love and Respond in Faith. The church increased its budget by just over 8%, enabling us to continue the good work God has called us to do in our community and at St. Mark's. We joined in the Christmas spirit for one of my favorite events, Miracle on Morton Street, where we handed out free water with St. Mark's logo and treats and toys for kids—engaging with our community and showering them with love. Back by popular demand, our Christmas in your Pajamas service was a joyous festival as we welcomed the newborn King.

One of the many things we are examining for this new year is our security protocols, along with many of our other policies and procedures, to ensure the safety of our members and the community around us. Moving forward, we are asking each congregation member to reach out to Kimberly Hart, our Parish Administrator, to get your own personal code and/or security card so that you can access the building when needed. In the past, we had a church-wide code, which we will discontinue **by February 15**. Please get in touch with Kimberly by phone (281-545-1661) or email (office@stmarksfortbend.org).

I want to thank each of you for trusting me and joining me in the work of the Lord this past year. I especially thank the Vestry for their tireless effort in ensuring the church runs smoothly. A special thanks to the fantastic staff at St. Mark's, Kim, Tom, and Reuben; I do not know what we would do without you all. Lastly, I would be remiss if I did not give a special shout-out, high praise, and extreme thanks to Alysoun Marks for her tireless leadership over the past three years as your Senior Warden. Amid the transition in church leadership, COVID-19, cancer, and many other aspects of life, Alysoun has been gracious and loving in this leadership role. I invite you to join me in giving her special thanks for her good and faithful service.

St. Mark's, you are living into our mission to know Jesus Christ and to make him known, walking in the newness of life as our baptism calls us to do. I am proud to be your rector and look forward to continuing to walk in the newness of life with you all over this next year.

Senior Warden Report— Mrs. Alysoun Marks

“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart...” ~ Jeremiah 29:11-13

As I close out my three years as Senior Warden, navigating a transition in our congregation, as well as my personal life, the words in Jeremiah remind me that God is always working for us, whether we can readily see it or not. We don't have perfect knowledge, as He does, to always know what is best and what lies ahead. But we can comfort ourselves in the faith that if we are seeking Him with all of our heart, we will find Him with a gift of hope for our future. This past year has been a wonderful year of getting to know our new Rector, and him getting to know our congregation. As in all new relationships, there is excitement, surprise, anticipation, hopes, expectations, etc. We have seen a new energy and excitement with our new leadership. Our church is growing every week. With this growth is new opportunities for sharing the love of God with our larger community.

I am very proud of how we have responded to this call of leadership and growth over the past year. We are stronger as a church and as a corporate member of our community. I have witnessed our bonds with one another, as well as with our Lord and Savior, strengthen throughout the year. It gives me great joy to be among you all during worship and fellowship, knowing that we are seeking and listening together for the plans that God has for us. As I move out of the Senior Warden role, I know that my work isn't finished, I am just moving on to the next thing that God has planned for me. And as Jeremiah reminds us, when we search for Him, with all or our heart, when we call upon Him and pray to Him, He provides us a future filled with hope. Please pray and seek with me for God's plan for our future at St. Mark's.

Junior Warden Report — Mrs. Mary Anne Helms

2024 was a busy year! Thank you to all church members to provided their time and talent for all the various building and grounds needs over the year. A Building Committee was started this year to help support the Junior Warden in keeping up with the ongoing needs of the church building and grounds. This committee meets on a quarterly basis. We also reached out to the Diocese to request a (free!) full church assessment. The assessment has been completed and we are just waiting for the full report. Excitingly, we passed the Fire Pump inspection as well as the Fire Marshall inspection!

Interior Maintenance

Ceiling tiles were replaced upstairs due to leak damage after Hurricane Beryl. Windows in the back of the sanctuary were replaced. Panic doors have been installed and security has been updated to eliminate the need for keys to access the building through the side door. If you need a code to get in the building please contact Kimberly Hart. All downstairs carpeting was shampooed. A new computer was purchased for security cameras. Due to a power surge associated with Hurricane Beryl, several electronics – including this computer and the large copier – had to be replaced. This was covered by insurance. A surge protector for the building was also approved and installed. Ceiling fans were installed in the parish hall. Batteries were replaced in the motion sensors alarms. Annual A/C maintenance was completed and two air conditioner units were replaced. Maintenance was completed on the piscina sink as well as the urinal in the men’s bathroom and a toilet in the women’s restroom. Lastly, baby changing stations installed in downstairs bathrooms in the parish hall

Exterior Maintenance

Church work days on March 23 and September 28 had great attendance and were very productive. Bushes and trees were trimmed, dead plants were removed, new plants added, and flower beds were cleaned out and mulched. The sanctuary was reorganized and the side flower bed was filled with beautiful flowers. The gaga pit was cleaned out and mulched. Outside of work days, both hot water heaters were drained. Holes in the roof post Hurricane Beryl were patched and insurance approved and paid for our roof to be replaced. Additional handicapped parking spots were added. Needed repairs were made to the playground equipment. Ongoing maintenance and repairs were done on the sprinkler system and heads. The Fire Suppression System continues to be a challenge and ongoing maintenance and repairs was completed throughout the year.

Special appreciation to everyone who assisted at the church work days. We had a lot of high school volunteers, but we could not have done it without the church members who spent a beautiful Saturday morning helping direct these volunteers. In addition, the Men’s Group plays a significant role in keeping our church in grounds in excellent condition. We are greatly appreciative of everyone who spends their free time getting dirty to make sure our church is beautiful and running smoothly. I am humbled by the faith that St. Mark’s put in me to spend 2024 as it’s Junior Warden and I look forward to the next leadership journey in front of me.

Finance Report – Mr. Rock Moen

Financial Report Summary

2024 was a year of financial restructuring and reinvestment into our facilities of St. Mark’s Episcopal Church - Fort Bend and we will continue with this process into 2025. We received the final payment from sale of our land for the construction of the Reading Road Extension tying Del Webb & Royal Lakes Estates housing developments behind us to Bridlewood Estates, placing our Church at the Crossroads of two major roadways for our future. We also received insurance monies for the replacement of our Church Roof and other needs. Although we had planned to replace one Air Conditioning/Heating Unit, we ended our year replacing two of our six units and will replace another in 2025. In 2023, our Vestry completed our search and committed to St. Mark’s a new Rector Father Jeremy Bradley/Lauren and family, furthering our commitment to Evangelism and Growth as we build our Church Membership approved by our Diocese. This investment included operating our Church Budget at a planned loss for both 2024 and 2025 and a goal to breakeven by 2026, setting us up for our Future to serve our Fort Bend Community. Our Diocese of Texas has also provided a grant to help us with our need for growth, outreach, and evangelism.

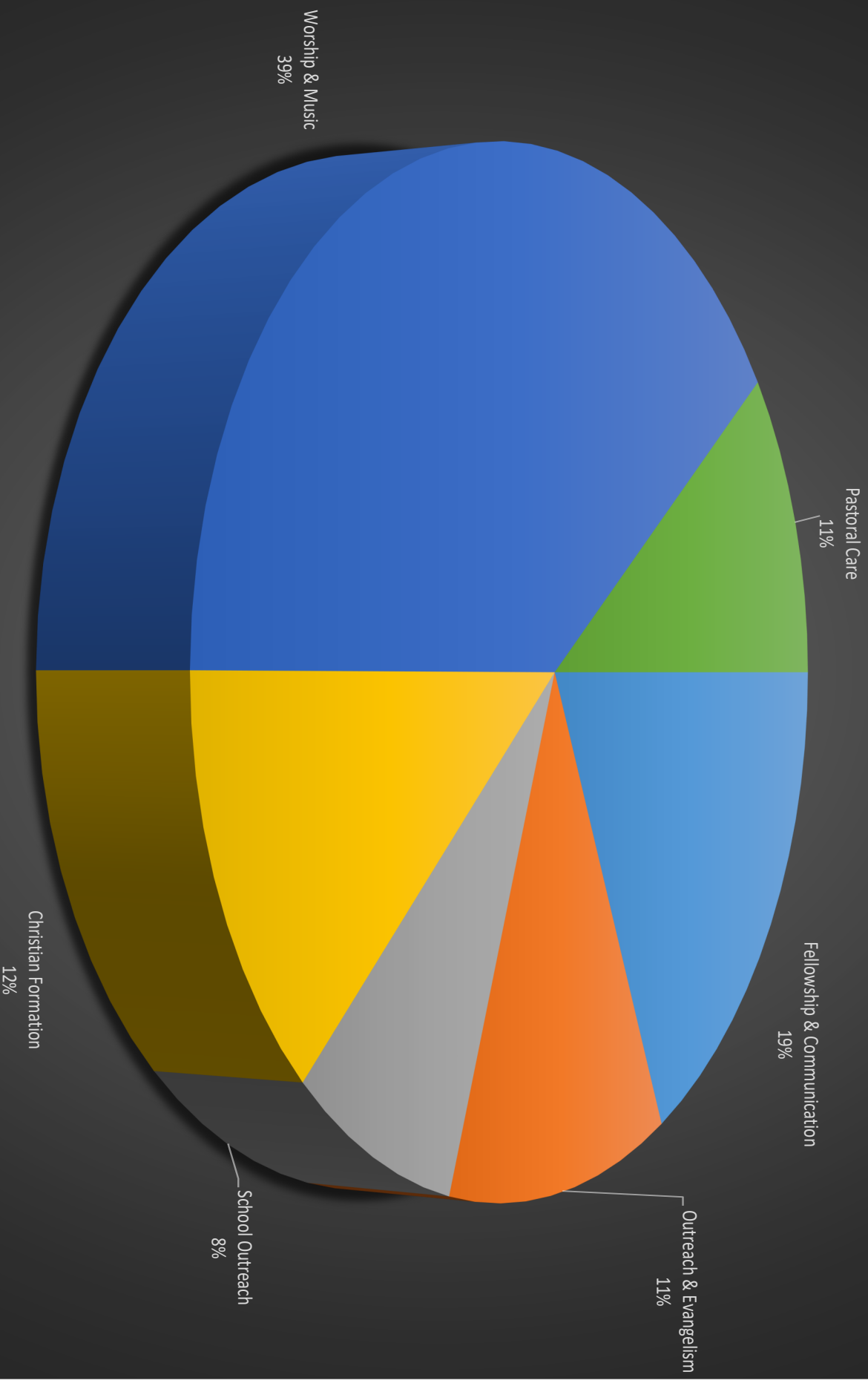
In 2024, we operated St. Mark’s at a loss of \$44,177.47 against a planned budget loss of \$48,386.57. With every Church Member’s commitment, we received all our income as planned and more in 2024 and increased our pledge income for 2025 by over 8 percent for a total of \$287,000. We have increased our Operational Budget for FY2025 by \$10,000 over 2024 with a planned loss of half of 2024, for a total planned loss of \$24,071.28. Providing us with the achievable goal of having a Breakeven Operational Budget by 2026, as detailed in our Vestry’s 3-year plan, while updating and improving our Church Facility and Land for the growth of our Church, with God’s help.

Please review our Ministry Focused Budget on the following page of \$424,871.28. Please notice that we have continued to provide 40% of our budget based on Outreach Ministry of Fellowship/Communication, Outreach/Evangelism, and School and 60% is Worship/Music, Christian Formation, and Pastoral Care – In Reach.

St. Mark’s is blessed with “No Debt”. Thank you all for your continued Commitment and Generous support of our Church Family. Special Thanks to our Finance and Audit Committees Chaired by Frank D’Antuono and Curtis Boyd respectively and members Kathy Barzilla, Lee Leaman, Melissa Hamon, and Hal Baumbach. Also, appreciate the dedication of Alysoun Marks, Scott Marks, Michelle D’Antuono, Kimberly Hart, Mary Anne Helms, Father Jeremy Bradley, and our wonderful Vestry past and present.

Total Revenue FY2025 Comparison			
		FY2024	FY2025
General Fund 01 (Less Prepaid Pledges)		\$ 104,235.45	\$ 124,702.74
Investment Fund (Participating/Endowment (\$40k+))		\$ 131,472.78	\$ 158,219.59
Petty Cash		\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Capital Fund 50		\$ 284,386.07	\$ 418,649.19
Total		\$ 520,194.30	\$ 701,671.52

St. Mark's Episcopal Church - Ministry Focused Budget - \$424,000



School Report — Mrs. Michelle D’Antuono

Head of Kintess School - Mrs. Karine Pousset

Admissions

School year 2023-2024 admission - PK3-1st grade - They moved into the education space at St. Mark’s at the beginning of 2024, and they started with 7 students.

School year 2024-2025 admission - PK3- 4th grade (IB PYP) - Currently they are at 24 students and continue to increase enrollment.

School year 2025-2026 Final admission goals - PK3-6th grade (IB PYP confirmed) - 55 to 60 students. Admission campaign started well, plan to use probably 1 or 2 rooms upstairs if possible.

Accreditations Emotional Intelligence: Emotional Intelligence center accredited by Yale University last September. Kintess is the only School in Texas to have this accreditation.

TAAPS: Texas Alliance of Accredited Private Schools - (file sent November 2024, they are waiting for the inspection)

International Baccalaureate: IB PYP application in progress. Kintess will be the only school in Sugar Land/Richmond with IB accreditation with French and Spanish program

Achievements Neuro-pedagogy laboratory: Kintess hold sessions every day, and currently, there is a two-month waiting list.

Interns from Paris University: Kintess is pleased to welcome five interns from Paris University who are pursuing their master's degrees. Mrs. Karine is professor of neuroscience and pedagogy for graduate students at the university, she is hosting these interns to mentor them in teaching methods and evaluate their progress as they work toward completing their Master's degree.

Upcoming Events

Kintess School welcomes the St. Mark’s community to join them for the following events:

January 31st: starting 1:15pm Science fair (in the church)

February 7th: Starting 1:15pm Crepe day

More events to follow – will be announced.

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 trained 4 new youth acolytes/gospel bearers in 2024! 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 several people, both youth and adults 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 2025. 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 Kathy Barzilla at kat102193@windstream.net.

Adult Christian Formation – Rev. Jeremy Bradley, Mr. Rob Hamon, Mr. Jim Duke & Mrs. Alysoun Marks

Personal Styles Assessment (PSA): In October 2024, we followed up the Spring Personal Styles Assessment class with four weeks around the corporate implications of personalities as given and created by God. We averaged 5 students each week, though several others took the instrument and their information was included in the corporate picture of the church. Over 50 adult members of the congregation have taken the instrument to this point.

St. Mark's is a solid organization with a wide diversity of persons, gifts, and talents. Primarily, we are a Logical Thinking church with Strong leaders and many very Friendly Helpful people supporting our work. If the PSA showed any weakness, it could be around the welcome and integration of new persons into the congregation, particularly those not from an Anglican background. Even this one weakness is very light in implication as overall we are a well-balanced and thriving group. Fr. Jeremy says we are small yet powerful.

The Creeds: After Christmas, the Adult Christian Formation group spent six weeks in a review of the foundations of our personal theology and our faith. We asked two questions; what we believe, and why we believe it. Further, since our beliefs are important to us and our sense of self, we discussed what steps we could take to help us remember what we believe. A simple statement of one's faith is much more important for modern Christians than it was for the historical faithful; after all, we have so many more messages coming at us from many different sources and at all times. Like those that have gone before us, we embrace the creeds to help us stay on our path.

But which creed? How many do we know? There are many faith-statements that each of the many church groups within the Christian religion regard as essential to their faith. The class settled on four creeds considered most important to Christianity today. They are the Apostle's, the Nicene, the Chalcedonian and the Athanasian Creeds. We reviewed the wording of each creed, the historical context which required the need for an updated creed, and what truths these creeds provide us in our contemplation of God in three persons.

Lenten series: Living Well Through Lent 2024: Practicing Forgiveness with All Your Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind. This is a formal publication from the Living Compass Organization and covered seven lessons over as many weeks. The topics included: Grounding Forgiveness in Our Faith; Forgiveness and Letting Go; Forgiveness as a Choice; Forgiving Ourselves; Forgiving Family and Friends; Holy Week: Forgiving with All Your Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind; then Easter Sunday!

Each session covered the daily readings, relevant scripture review and offered questions for further consideration. Table discussions amplified the personal journeys to look for, and find, common ground to pursue forgiveness.

Thematic Study: This was a short bible study to take a closer look into two questions regarding discipleship. What are the characteristics of a disciple? And what are the results of being a disciple? Specifically, we asked what scripture told us Jesus said about each question.

A Christian disciple is a believer who follows Christ and then offers their own imitation of Christ as a model for others to follow (1 Corinthians 11:1). A disciple is first a believer who has exercised faith, having experienced conversion and put Jesus at the center of their life. A fully developed disciple is also a leader to others who attempts to pass on this faith to their followers, with the goal of spreading the word; 'disciples making disciples'.

Jesus summarized it nicely during The Last Supper in John 13.34-35 when he directed us to love another as he loved us. We then read how Paul pointed out (Romans 12.1-2) the need for a total transformation of the would-be disciple, urging them to be imitators of Jesus Christ. Christian theology teaches that discipleship entails transformation from some other worldview and practice of life into that of Jesus Christ, and so, by way of Trinitarian theology, of God himself.

Thus, a disciple is not simply an accumulator of information or one who merely changes moral behavior in conformity with the teachings of Jesus Christ but seeks a fundamental shift toward the ethics of Jesus Christ in every way, including complete devotion to God.

Bible 101: An old favorite at St. Mark's was once again presented in the Fall to review various methods that can be used to study the Bible. We began with the basic study model of 'Pray, Read, Think and Apply', going over each aspect as it relates to a personal Bible study. Over a dozen more specific methods were reviewed, with four that were exercised to put the lessons into practice: Verse, Thematic, Chapter and Book. Time permitting, we will pick up this methodology again in 2025 with additional examples.

Advent Series: Living Well Through Advent 2024: Practicing Peace with All Your Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind. This was another publication from the Living Compass Organization and covered four lessons during each Advent Sunday. The topics included: Deepening Our Understanding of Peace; Making Peace with Ourselves; Becoming Instruments of God's Peace; and Practicing Peace as a "Holy Yes".

We followed the same process we used during the Lenten series: discussed the daily readings, reviewed scripture and posed questions for further consideration. Table chats examined what is meant by God's peace and not that of humanity and ended with a deep discussion about our saying 'yes' to God's call for us to be His hands and feet.

Brown Bag Bible Study - We began 2024 by finishing up our study of Romans, which we began the previous fall. After, we dove into scripture using Henri Nouwen's book "The Return of the Prodigal Son" as reference. In the spring, we read "Reflections on the Psalms" by C. S. Lewis. We kicked the summer off with a study of Ruth, and have concluded the remainder of the year reading Samuel 1 and 2. Samuel 2 has taken us into the new year. We have remained a consistent group of 5 to 7 folks present each week.

Altar Guild – Ms. Isobel Gotschall & Mrs. Michelle D'Antuono

Altar Guild is a special lay organization of men and women, charged with the maintenance and preparation of the altar and its furnishings in a church. The altar guild may also supervise church decorations and flowers. The church rector or vicar appoints a leader and invites members to participate in the altar guild.

Altar Guild is a ministry that is a privilege to serve on, to set the Lord's table; work with a great team who loves what they do. To work hand in hand with the Rector in order to make each worship service one that each and every person who receives the sacraments a very special time spent with our Lord and Savior. The seasons throughout the year such as Advent and Lent give a whole new meaning to those who serve on Altar Guild and all the blessings that you receive from serving on this ministry.

We are currently three teams, but we all work together as one. This year was a busy year, we had wonderful seasons of Advent and Lent – along with Rev. Jeremy's Installation Service, which was

beautiful and a blessing to be a part of. From washing of the feet and stripping of the Altar on Good Friday, to an amazing Easter Service. We continue to be lifted up by numerous celebrations throughout the year. We look forward to the upcoming celebrations of our Church and continue doing the Lord's work.

In Memory - We lost one of our founding members of St. Mark's Altar Guild this year, Mrs. Dorothy Dawlearn was a leader and pillar to the Altar Guild of St. Mark's for many years. Dorothy was so loved by many at St. Mark's and will be missed dearly by us all.

Altar Guild Prayer - Almighty God, grant, we beseech thee, that we may handle holy things with reverence, and perform our work with such faithfulness and devotion that it may rise with acceptance before thee and obtain thy blessing: through Christ our Lord. Amen

Mission Statement—The mission of the Altar Guild is to bring men and women together for sharing gifts of fellowship, service, and to aid to clergy, deacons and bishops within the Diocese of Texas.

Christian Formation Grades 6-12 – Mrs. Chris Abbott

Secondary Christian Formation served students in grades 6-12. The lessons are adapted by Chris Abbott from the *Real and Relevant* lectionary based curriculum endorsed by the Diocese of Texas. 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 lessons provide the youth with an opportunity to dig deeper into the scripture reading, God, Jesus and their faith. Movie clips as designated in the curriculum were often used to emphasize a point and bring current day issues to light following the scripture reading. Each week's class is concluded with a challenge for the students in their daily lives based on the lesson for the week ahead.

Spring 2024

In the spring of 2024 the focus of the lessons included Epiphany, free will, trust, qualities of a leader, baptism, Lent, temptations, faith, doubt, and belief. The spring term also gave the class the opportunity to follow the Lent Madness competition produced by the Forward Movement. Lent Madness gives everyone the opportunity to expand their knowledge of those individuals who have contributed so much to our faith.

Lent Madness 2024 – St. Mark's again followed Lent Madness as promoted by The Forward Movement. A chart of the current nominees was updated in the parish hall each week. On Palm Sunday, a church wide vote was taken using the Final Four nominees. Lent Madness gives everyone the opportunity to expand their knowledge of those individuals who have contributed so much to our faith.

Episcopal Relief and Development – At the end of the youth Christian Formation year in May, a cow was purchased as a thank you to all those who had helped satisfy the requirements of Safeguarding God's Children.

Fall 2024

The focus of the fall term included dealing with anger, following directions, popularity/cliques, marriage, fear, giving up, leadership, authority, saints, giving, and the persecution of Christians 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, Stacy Krajinovic and Frank D'Antuono 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. Kathy Barzilla

Although we remain thankful for the technology of Zoom, there is nothing better than spending time together discussing service projects, having fellowship and praying together. Our meetings are held on the first Sunday of each month after worship.

Please contact Kathy Barzilla at kat102193@windstream.net if you are interested in more information. A new class is in the early stages of formation to begin training soon.

Here are some of the projects that were completed in 2024:

1. Taylor Ray Elementary - One of the projects completed in 2024 is the back-to-school supply drive for Taylor Ray Elementary in Rosenberg. Our congregation donation was a combination of school supplies and money to purchase other needed items.

2. Souper Bowl of Caring - The St. Mark's Daughters of the King again coordinated the St. Mark's participation 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.

Episcopal Church Women (ECW) – Ms. Isobel Gotschall, Nancy Boyd & Mrs. Rhonda Yamauchi

The Episcopal Church Woman (ECW) Committee of St. Mark's planned many events in 2024.

The first of these events was S'mores and More which was held on February 2, 2024. After Lee Leaman graciously offered to start the fire in the fireplace for us, we had a great time chatting and making s'mores on the patio.

On April 26th an outdoor spring social took place on the church porte-cochere. About ten women attended and we had a wonderful evening of chit-chat and snacking on various treats brought by the attendees.

The Parish Hall was the site of a Halloween party for the women of the church on October 19th. The attendees brought snacks and ate popcorn from Alysoun's popcorn machine as we watched the movie, "Practical Magic". This year we collected Halloween costumes for the children at the Women's Shelter which were delivered by Nancy Boyd.

The end of 2024 was concluded with the annual Christmas Brunch & Gift Exchange on December 1st with about 18 people in attendance. ECW funds provided a honey-baked ham while the potluck side dishes and deserts were provided by the attendees. After a great meal and plenty of conversation, everyone had a good time selecting and "stealing" gifts. This year we collected about 85 pounds of non-perishable food items which were donated to Helping Hands and delivered by Nancy Boyd & Isobel Gotschall.

Kids' Kingdom – Mrs. Chris Abbott

Kids' Kingdom provided Christian Formation for students in the first through fifth grades during 2024. 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 plans are adapted and written by Chris Abbott from the Workshop

Rotation Model website. Weekly communications via email and texts were sent to the students and their families.

Kids' Kingdom –Spring 2024

During the spring term lessons were completed on John the Baptist and Baptism. Activities included making locusts and honey bug snacks and paper doves. Preparing for Lent the students made "Alleluia Banners" to be stored away until Easter. Following Easter, the students worked on a Pep Rally for Jesus, made prayer beads and completed a reader's theater titled, "The Good Spatula" to better understand the parable of the Good Samaritan

Kids' Kingdom – Fall 2024

Classes resumed in the fall with a unit on the Old Testament including a focus on Adam and Eve, God's call to Abram, Abraham's sons, Isaac and Rebekah, Esau and Jacob. Activities in the Adam and Eve unit included making stick puppets, torn paper illustrations, paper bag Cain and Abel dolls, notes to God, sand stars and a family tree. Kathy Barzilla, Ruthie Hurta, Helen Tanner, Mary Anne Helms and Melissa Hamon directed the classes on a weekly basis. Without their help to direct and satisfy the requirements of Safeguarding God's Children, the Kids' Kingdom program could not exist.

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

During the 2024 calendar year the Men's group met monthly - 10 times. Average attendance at each meeting was 11 men. Attendance has increased 50% this year.

Points of discussion during the year were:

1. Fellowship.
2. Welcoming our new priest, Reverend Jeremy, to St. Mark's
3. Assisting the Senior Warden and Junior Warden with small building maintenance projects.
4. Successfully organized two fish fries for the congregation and bring in \$3,791.50.
5. Successfully organized a pancake supper for the congregation and bring in \$650.00.
6. Discussed / initial planning for upgrading the church restrooms to be more wheel chair accessible.
7. Assisted with the annual re-certification of the building fire suppression system.

Music & Choir – Mr. Tom Thompson

It has been such a wonderful experience to be a part of the Music Ministry at St. Mark's! We are so blessed to have the wonderful members of St. Mark's Ensemble and St. Mark's Handbells who have been faithful in helping to lead in worship on Sundays. The vocal ensemble continues to rehearse during the week on days and at times when most members are available, as well as on Sundays, at 8:45 a.m. The handbell ensemble rehearses on Sundays, at 8:00 a.m.

We were so blessed to have some really beautiful worship experiences in 2024. The Music Ministry participated in a number of events throughout the year such as Shrove Tuesday and St. Mark's Day; we had a magnificent celebration on Easter Sunday with brass. One of the highlights of the year was getting to present *A Coffeeshouse Christmas* in December with musical friends joining us along with an instrumental combo. We also enjoyed a lovely Christmas Eve concert with Dr. Dominique McCormick after the service.

We are looking forward to using our time, talents, and resources to further enhance our worshipping life at St. Mark's in 2025. We greatly appreciate your love, encouragement, and support, and we covet your prayers as we strive to grow and do wonderful work for God's kingdom.

Sewing Guild – Mrs. Jeanne Reaves

In 2024 the Sewing Sisters of St. Mark's Episcopal Church made 22 book pillows with books to the Fort Bend Women's Shelter. Two of the Sisters were given a tour of Thrift Wise, a county-wide outlet that serves children and women in crisis situations. The books were donated by the Sisters and by the parishioners and Sewing Sisters from the community. The Sisters also donated 11 toddler sized quilts to the Fort Bend Women's Shelter. The Sewing Sisters also delivered 16 dog or cat pillows to the Fort Bend Animal Shelter.

Outreach Ministry – Mrs. Mary Anne Helms

St. Mark's, during the year was able to do the following for 2024:

St. Mark's Giving Tree - This year, St. Mark's Episcopal Church sponsored 15 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, and the Kintess School, we were able to provide three requested gifts per child totaling 45 gifts in just 6 weeks and nine 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 also to Isobel Gotschall, Nancy Boyd, Alysoun Mark's and Bob Yamauchi for their help with sorting and delivering these gifts.

Miracle on Morton Street - Our second year participating in Miracle on Morton Street was a wonderful way to engage with our community. Once again, we passed out free bottles of water, Christmas ornament crafts for the children and had a gift basket giveaway to those who stopped by the booth to register. Rev. Bradley stayed all day interacting with folks and passing out information about St. Mark's and our upcoming Advent and Christmas services. The Vestry and other members of the congregation signed up to take turns manning the booth, but more participation would always be welcome. Thanks to all who made this happen!

Blessing of the Pets – Blessing of the Animals, 2024

On October 6, 2024, St. Mark's Episcopal Church hosted a Blessing of the Animals event on the front lawn beginning at 4:00 p.m. Rev. Jeremy and Tori Gilliland led a beautiful blessing service, including music led by Jim Duke. The service ended with each attending pet receiving a personal blessing by one of the priests.

A total of seven exhibitors provided a variety of pet care items and information, including free nail cutting, sample pet food and treats, pet nutrition education, pet adoptions, pet rescue support, and other information on pet care. St. Mark's also hosted a welcome table including church event information, and a Kid's Kraft table for making animal puppets and masks, as well as St. Francis coloring sheets.

St. Mark's Church members collected 9 bags of dog food and 16 bags of cat food to be delivered to the Rosenberg Animal Shelter. In addition, our Sewing Sisters sewed and donated twelve napping mats to the shelter. One lucky puppy was adopted by a visiting family.

Exhibitors included: Richmond Fire Department, Richmond Police Department, Brazos Bend State Park, Rosenberg Animal Shelter, Pet Evolution Pet Store, Hollywood Feed Pet Store and Woof Gang Pet Store.

Twenty church members and community volunteers led the event. We had a total of 82 humans and 31 pets and animals were in attendance. Pets: Dogs – 26, Cats – 2, Alligator hatchling – 1, Speckled King snake – 1 & Pig – 1

Trunk-Or-Treat - Trunk or Treat was a great outreach event held for our community on October 26, 2024. This was a great collaboration between our Church and The Kintess School. The successful event brought nearly 400 people to enjoy the amazing trunks with great candy, and were so creatively decorated by many of our parishioners as well as The Kintess School. We had over 25 trunks this year, which was a tremendous turn out. There were prizes given out for best costumes for all age groups. The families that visited our event also enjoyed hotdogs, chips, and desserts, as well as popcorn and cotton candy. The kids also had fun with a moonwalk and lots of games, including a cake walk and face painting. We also had “Priest Man” appear as our host for the event. The 2024 Trunk or Treat was a big success thanks in part to many volunteers. The committee did capture a number of improvement opportunity for next year. So, please consider helping out with our 2025 Trunk or Treat! You don’t want to miss the fun!!

Calendar/Planners/Date Book Collection—Again in 2024 the members of St. Mark’s donated calendars, planners and date books that were then given to a local senior living facility.

St. Mark’s Saints for a Cure - 2024 was the thirteenth year that St. Mark’s has fielded a team for the annual Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation walk under the direction of Chris Abbott. JDRF recently underwent a name change to Breakthrough T1D, but the goal remains the same. This year’s walk took place on Saturday, November 2 at the Houston Sports Park. Thirty-nine individuals and families contributed \$4,263 this year and in the thirteen years the St. Mark’s total contribution has been close to \$40,000. These funds go to Breakthrough T1D for their ongoing research into a cure and development of better ways to deal with Type One Diabetes on a daily basis.

Sunday Food Ministry - Ms. Isobel Gotschall

The Sunday morning food ministry provides a variety of snacks in order to facilitate socializing after church. We have 11 teams that we rotate on Sunday mornings and we could always use more. The teams bring light snacks like small sandwiches, cookies, fruit, chips, nuts, etc. It is an important ministry at St. Mark’s. If you are interested in hosting a Sunday morning or to get more information, please contact Isobel Gotschall. Many thanks to those who volunteered for a team.

Welcome/Evangelism - Mrs. Melissa Hamon

2024 was a wonderful year of growth for St. Mark’s! We have had many additions to our church family this year. By participating in area events such as, Miracle on Morton Street and having a large Trunk or Treat, we have made Richmond and surrounding communities aware of our little church in the country. With the help of our church members on social media, word about St. Mark’s events appear much more often on Facebook and Instagram. Many newcomers let me know that they found us by our social media presence. But our best form of evangelism has been our own church members spreading the word about St. Mark’s by bringing their friends to church. Many of our newest members have joined because they were invited to attend church. God has truly blessed St. Mark’s in 2024, and I can’t wait to see what is ahead for us in 2025. We had a Newcomer Class on September 15 and 22 including a dinner with newcomers and vestry on October 4. The Hamon’s graciously hosted the dinner for our 12 newcomers.

Give thanks for the many members of our body

Vestry (2024)

Alysoun Marks (Sr Warden)
Mary Anne Helms (Jr Warden)
Chris Abbott
Kathy Barzilla
Sue Lane McCulley
Christine Powell
Rock Moen
Nancy Brown

Executive Admin. Assistant

Kimberly Hart

Organist

Tom Thompson

Treasurer

Rock Moen

Sexton

Reuben Luna

Kintess School Liaison

Michelle D'Antuono
Sue Lane McCulley

Stewardship Team

Michelle/Frank D'Antuono - Co
Chairs
Alysoun Marks - Vestry/Senior
Warden
Rock Moen - Vestry/Treasurer
Faith Fidelis-Ojah
Nancy Boyd

Audit Committee

Curtis Boyd - Chair
Melissa Hamon
Hal Baumbach

Finance Committee

Frank D'Antuono - Chair
Rock Moen - Vestry/Treasurer
Kathy Barzilla - Vestry
Melissa Hamon
Lee Leaman

Choir

Kemi Ani
Roger Barkerding
Sandy Barkerding
Kirk Dixon
Faith Fidelis-Ojah
Diane McCreery
Kathleen Mensing
Jeanne Reaves
Julie Stuckey
Brent Thompson

Handbells

Jim Duke
Mary Anne Helms
Diane McCreery
Sue Lane McCulley
Suzanne Mottin
LJ Simicek
Julie Stuckey
Brent Thompson

Chalice Bearers

Kathy Barzilla
Sady Barkerding
Melissa Hamon
Alysoun Marks
Christine Powell

Altar Guild

Isobel Gotschall
Michelle D'Antuono
Cathy Baumbach
Anne Brock
Ruthie Hurta
Sue Lane McCulley
Helen Tanner
Tom Thompson
Kathleen Mensing

Wedding Guild

TBD

Funeral Guild

Alysoun Marks
Michelle D'Antuono
Vickie Darsey
Sue Lane McCulley
Isobel Gotschall

Lay Readers

Kathy Barzilla
Sandra Barkerding
Nancy Boyd
Jim Duke
Rob Hamon
Mary Anne Helms
Adriana Krajinovic
Stacy Krajinovic
Jim Osoba

Ushers

Nancy Boyd
Curtis Boyd
Kyle Helms
Charlie Phillips
Don Jozwiak
Marion Jozwiak
Marko Krajinovic
Rock Moen
Jim Osoba
LJ Simicek
Alysoun Marks
Scott Marks
Thomas McCloud

Tellers

Alysoun Marks
Chris Abbott
Kathy Barzilla
Sue Lane McCulley
Christine Powell
Mary Anne Helms

The Sewing Guild

Jeannie Reaves
Rhonda Yamauchi
Betty Von Maszewski
Isabel Gotschall
Gail Scholer
Phoebe Rogers
Helen Tanner
Anne Brock
Mary Anne Helms
Lou Cloninger
Cathy Baumbach
Thu Phillips
Vickie Darsey

Give thanks for the many members of our body

Daughters of the King

Chris Abbott
Kathy Barzilla
Anne Brock
Nancy Brown
Nancy Boyd
Joni Duke
Faith Fidelis-Ojah
Isobel Gotschall
Melissa Hamon
Alysoun Marks
Jeanne Reaves
Barbara Scheibner
Deborah Burns
Marion Jozwiak

Adult Formation

Rev. Jeremy Bradley
Alysoun Marks
Rob Hamon
Jim Duke

Youth Formation

Chris Abbott
Dr. Charlie Yates
Isobel Gotschall
Frank D'Antuono
Stacy Krajnovic

Kids' Kingdom

Chris Abbott
Mary Anne Helms
Kathy Barzilla
Melissa Hamon
Helen Tanner
Ruthie Hurta

Outreach Ministry

Mary Anne Helms

ECW Chairs

Nancy Boyd
Isobel Gotschall
Rhonda Yamauchi

Men's Ministry

Scott Marks
Jim Duke

Hosting Ministry

Anne Brock
Nancy Brown
Kay Cangolosi
Shan Harris
Isobel Gotschall
Sue Lane McCulley
Alysoun Marks
Chris Abbott
Don Jozwiak
Marion Jozwiak
Kathy Barzilla
Debbie Haley
Michelle D'Antuono
Grey Baldwin
Delores Baldwin
Helen Tanner
Cathy Baumbach
Elisa Hughes
Joni Duke
Vickie Darsey
Sandra Barkerding
Ruthie Hurta
Jeanne Reaves

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

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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.