



*Grace Memorial
Episcopal Church*

Annual Report

2022

Leadership

Officers

Senior Warden:	Lessy Nixon
Junior Warden:	Sharon Davis
Treasurer:	Joe Carroll
Assistant Treasurer:	Betsy Hovda
Delegates to Convention:	Marsha Cooper, Martin Tolhoek

Trustees

Pat Clough
George Klacynski
Rick Read

Vestry

Barbara Carter (2022), Barbara Sherburne (2022), Katey Greaney (2022)
Marsha Cooper (2023), Lessy Nixon (2023)
Gloria Cardwell (2024), Sharon Davis (2024)

Clergy & Staff

The Rev. Alan B. Cowart, *Rector*
Elizabeth Wilkinson, *Organist & Choir Director*
Elysia Lyday, *Administrator*
Robin Woolfolk, *Cleaning*



Outgoing Vestry Members

Thank you to those completing a term on the Vestry.

Barbara Carter
Katey Greaney
Barbara Sherburne

This cohort of servant leaders were elected prior to the pandemic — just before it began. None of us knew what was in store. But each of these individuals modeled flexibility, adaptability, and the desire to make the “right” choice as we prayed and discerned together.

Election of New Vestry Members

Thank you to those standing for
election to the vestry

Linda Carroll
&
Ronda Spinner

Vestry is the governing board of the parish, responsible for financial oversight and calling clergy to serve with us. Currently, members are elected to three-year terms.



Barbara Carter

I continually see Grace moving forward to faithfully do the work it has been entrusted to do. Even with the difficult times of the past few years the people of this congregation come together to fulfill the tasks at hand and care for one another prayerfully and spiritually. One thing that sticks out in my mind is the Sunday Kathy Maddox did the sermon, and listening to updates about her progress. It has been wonderful to watch this congregation support her in this endeavor and see her flourish in this time of discernment.

I am also happy to see that Grace continues to reach out through online services and options. This is a very valuable offering and provides a spiritual connection for those unable to be in attendance for varying reasons. Our spiritual journeys are all unique and take a multitude of paths. My time at Grace and on vestry has allowed me to take my spiritual journey down some new roads and has helped to point me in some new directions that God may be calling me to.
Barbara Carter

NEW STARTS FOR...

- **Acolytes**
- **Lay Eucharistic Visitors**
- **Faith Forum**

Pastoral Care—Barbara Sherburne

The pastoral care committee has been pretty active this year. People have volunteered to keep food in the freezer. They sign up for a month at a time. We also deliver meals and stay for a visit. One of our shut ins

loves Chinese food so we took her a meal from Kings Island and we shared lunch with her. We have a card ministry. Once or twice a month the committee sends card to several people who might need to be uplifted. I try to help on other outreach projects in addition to these things. We always need volunteers to help us and it is a very rewarding committee.

Barbara Sherburne



Junior Warden Report

Buildings and Grounds: Items Completed Since Annual Meeting

1. Two HVAC units were completely replaced in the nave (chancel) and office/sacristy.
2. A new HVAC locator map was created for our facilities showing units and thermostats with vital information to make it easier to locate problems and communicate with contractors.
3. Rear wall of the nave has been repaired and re-plastered.
4. Old narthex door has been refinished, primed, and painted red.
5. Replacement of broken tiles in the parish hall floor has begun (bids received; scheduling contractor)
6. (Bids have been received to clean and resurface entire parish hall floor after repairs.)
7. Couch in parlor has been donated and removed. (Parlor is ready to be renovated in the new year.)
8. Leaks in the Education Wing and Nave have been addressed and repaired
9. Slate roof tiles were repaired or replaced and specific leaks were addressed with special attention to where the bell tower joins the nave.
10. Asphalt shingle roof over the Education Wing was completely replaced.
11. Undercroft kitchen sink was repaired and faucet and hose replaced.
12. Parish Hall kitchen sink leaks were repaired
13. Window wells have been cleaned out including invasive tree.
14. Interior work and cleaning day was completed.
15. Exterior work day was rained out. Items were taken care of over time.
16. Painting the hall way in the Education Wing has been scheduled and should be completed by the end of the year.
17. Hole in sidewalk in front of narthex has been filled and repaired.
18. Fluorescent lights throughout building have been replaced.
19. Safety light on the bell tower (photo cell) has been repaired.
20. Lower-level fire doors repaired.



Senior Warden Report

For many of us, as we begin to assess the year of 2022, we would like a “do-over.” Despite what we set out to hope for in the New Year, it hasn’t quite turned out the way we had planned. Challenges within our society at large continue to be present; health concerns continue to be an ongoing concern for many; financial strains are looming and cannot be ignored. It feels like there is a lot of turmoil and angst that afflicts us all, to a degree.

It would be easy to give in to all of this negativity, but we don’t. At Grace Memorial, we continue to worship, to welcome all to the Table, to carry each other’s loads, and to plan for our future. Why? What keeps us moving forward?

Because God is in the midst of it all. God doesn’t give up.

When we are challenged the most by whatever circumstance, our common beliefs are what provide us with Hope, Energy, and Joy. Grace Memorial is entering a time in our history that will challenge Us the most. Our collective prayers and worship coupled with our actions will be integral in this parish continuing to move forward with energy and purpose as we live into God’s purpose for us here, on the corner of Fort and New Hampshire Avenue.

We have much to celebrate as well as the year draws to an end. A new roof will keep us dry for many years to come. We continue to participate in mission works throughout the community which are impactful in ways that we may never know about. There are new faces in the congregation. Cuppa Grace has been well received and become a regular amongst us. Daughters of the King has grown by three new members. We have a Red Front Door!! I am grateful to the members of our Vestry for their loving oversight of everything and to Father Alan who shepherds us all with gentleness and love. I am most grateful to all of you for your enduring love of Grace Memorial as we move forward into 2023.

You remain in my prayers, Always,
~Lessy

DID YOU ATTEND...

- **Burning of Last Year’s Palms**
- **All Souls Vigil**
- **Alternative Easter Vigil**
- **Burning of Sacred Items**
- **Compline in the Park**
- **Holy Smoke**

Marsha Cooper

This past year I have been part of the vestry here at Grace Memorial. I have served as the coordinator for fellowship in regards to Cuppa Grace (formally known as Coffee Hour). We have begun to have a regular schedule for those individuals and families who are willing to participate as hosts (there is always a place for new hosts to be included!). It has been great having this opportunity for parishioners to catch up after services whether they are on the way out the door to get ready for the week ahead or as they head to tasks or events around the church. I always feel welcomed and cared for when coming to church whether it be regular attendance and after times of being away. I always enjoy sharing what Bradley has been up to or catching up with others over a quick snack. It is the caring and supportive individuals that make Grace a home away from home for me and when you do not have any family in the area, it is great to know that family is just a step away at church.



In the past year, in addition to disaster relief and meeting emergency needs, we have provided direct support and participation assistance to . . .

Salvation Army

Boys Home of Virginia

Free Clinic

Miriam's House

Society of St. Andrew

Jubilee Development Center

Lynchburg Daily Bread

Interfaith Outreach

Fort Hill Community School

Gleaning for the World

Johnson Health Care

Meals on Wheels

Freedom School

Habitat for Humanity

Madison House of the Arts

Parkview Community Mission

Outreach—Gloria Cardwell

While the effects of COVID-19 still linger in our church community, the generosity of our church family has not waned. We have continued to reach out to those in need or to other organizations that support community needs as their main goal. We are deeply grateful to our members and friends who have made special contributions to our commission that have enabled us to continue this important work of helping and loving our neighbors as ourselves.

Our partnership with Lynchburg City Schools by way of Fort Hill Community School continues to be our main community project. We were able to have an angel tree for the students for which our church family provided some of the students wishes. Last year's Thanksgiving dinner boxes were a big success, and we are collecting food items for that again this year. We were also able to host the angel tree to supplement the holidays for students. An end-of-the school year cookout was held for the faculty and staff in June. In September during teacher work week, we held a faculty/staff luncheon and presented each teacher a small gift bag with a gift card to Givens Book Store and other small items, such as stickers, pens, markers. The staff members received a Target gift card in place of the Givens gift card.

The Lynchburg Regional Food Bank continues to be well supported by our members. The third Sunday of each month has been designated as the Sunday Fr. Alan blesses the food collected and prays for those who will receive it. We also continue to send cards of support and blessing to our Prayer Cycle organizations for the work that they do to help our neighbors in their time of need. Included in these cards is a small token to help them continue their service to others. With the help of the congregation, we assembled Blessing Bags to be given out to the homeless we might meet on the street. We also collected and delivered clothing for flood victims in Appalachia.

Once again, we worked with Habitat for Humanity this summer by supplying lunches for the work crew of 20-25 people. The Men's Group and Outreach committee assembled lunches for two work days. We also worked with The Listening to provide lunches for 8 adults at the Freedom School at Randolph College during the week of June 27, 2022, and a dinner for approximately 50 parents, children, and staff on Wednesday of that week. We sponsored a table at the Hill City PrideFest at Riverfront Park. Prayer strips that visitors to our table put up as they prayed for someone dear to them were brought back and placed on the altar for blessing and are now in the back of the church.

We lost one of our partner organizations, Gateway, because it closed the residential arm of its program. However, we have learned of a relatively new group to Lynchburg called the Madison House of the Arts. We invited its director to come to our meeting recently to tell us about the project, its purpose, and needs. The October food collection was for this organization.

The Outreach Commission is opened to any ideas our church members might have that will help us to help others. Please share your ideas with Fr. Alan or any member of the outreach committee. We appreciate all of your support.

Gloria Cardwell, Chairman
Outreach Committee



Finance & Budget

GRACE MEMORIAL EPISCOPAL CHURCH			
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS			
THROUGH OCTOBER 31, 2022			
	<u>Year to Date</u> <u>Current</u>	<u>2022</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>Remaining</u> <u>Budget</u>
RECEIPTS:			
Loose Plate Offering	1,582	1,000	(582)
Non-Pledge Offering	16,702	11,000	(5,702)
Pledged Offering	104,031	130,462	26,431
Prepaid Pledge	10,000	10,000	-
Memorials	5,875	-	(5,875)
Carryover from Operating Fund	-	-	-
Donations/Outside Groups	500	600	100
Gifts/Other Receipts (a)	39,378	1,500	(37,878)
Building & Grounds Improvement Fund	21,741	13,345	(8,396)
TOTAL RECEIPTS:	199,809	167,907	(31,902)
DISBURSEMENTS:			
Mission/Outreach	12,566	15,000	2,434
Rector Expenses	86,285	104,941	18,655
Salaries & Taxes	22,424	30,953	8,530
Supplies	4,359	5,400	1,041
Building/Grounds/Equipment	31,480	32,500	1,020
Parish Programs	82	600	518
Diocesan Conference Expenses	1,529	1,000	(529)
Disburse. Gifts/Other Receipts (b)	2,169	-	(2,169)
Building & Grounds Improvement Fund	36,965	13,345	(23,620)
Special Purchases	-	-	-
	197,858	203,739	5,881
Withholding Tax to be paid (c)	(652)	-	652
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS:	197,206	203,739	6,533
NET RECEIPTS/DISBURSEMENTS	2,603	(35,832)	(38,435)

Please note the highlights which draw attention to current pledging, gifts to the endowment, and expenses for the roof repair.

ENDOWMENT FUND:

Vanguard - Endowment ***Fin Stmt Updated Annually	\$ 47,930.20
Fidelity - Endowment ***Fin Stmt Updated Annually	\$ 49,911.51
	<u>\$ 97,841.71</u>

Parish Conversations

This year we have paused and reflected on the sustainable future of this community. We looked at the larger picture of our financial foundation, and wondered what ministry might look like in the future.

We listened to the great hope that many have found in a smaller footprint. We sat for a time with the podcast *Small Church, Big Impact*, which had been so impactful to many of the conversations we had been having at the vestry level. And we began to talk about the gains and losses of intentionally living into that right-sized description of Grace Memorial

The vestry called for a committee to reflect on these changes, to research possibilities, and to be able to listen to the stories of where God is moving in other places that might have something to say to us here.

But we had moved a little ahead of ourselves. Due to other needs in the parish community at this time, we had to slow the launch of this committee. We still hope to gather people for reflection and to interview clergy and laity at other small churches about their hopes, challenges, trials, and successes. We hope to begin to convene this group this month.

From the Rector

Many times we turn to this community for comfort, safety, and security. As the world continues to shift, we shift and change right along with it, but feel that instead of being “transformed” into something beautiful, we are being compressed. Into what, we don’t know! It is as if in the process of our becoming, we are exactly at that stage where we are being shoved into a chrysalis and told that “change is beautiful.” That doesn’t always feel good and it’s definitely not reassuring. This year has been one of in-between.

We have seen new and familiar faces (face to face, hallelujah!) We have returned to a few of the familiar patterns even if some of the familiar friends remain absent. We are making new friends but unsure how long these relationships might last.

At the beginning of the year we were truly in between. We happily made accommodations for the pandemic with altered Easter Vigil and Pancakes to Go. We had to cancel our first potluck because of a new viral surge in our area. We have had several set backs indeed. We have buried good friends and had to cancel events because of lack of interest. And yet . . .

And yet, we have groups working and serving. We have new acolytes and Lay Eucharistic Visitors. We continue to revitalize and reorganize our pastoral care network in the parish. We are tackling deferred maintenance in our facilities. We try to be honest about doing what we can do.

But we wonder what will happen tomorrow. We worry about who will show up at the next event. And here’s the thing — there is a next . . . whatever. There is a tomorrow.

Whatever tomorrow looks like, God’s Gospel will be proclaimed. . . won’t it? (will you?) Will the ministers of this parish be here? Maybe. But they will be somewhere. At home or at work or on the road. And God will be there. God is still moving at Grace and here in Lynchburg. God is transforming us into something we can’t yet name. And we are right in the middle of it.

— Alan+

