



65th

**ANNUAL
PARISH
REPORT**

2022

65th Annual Parish Meeting

January 30, 2022

AGENDA

- I. Invocation
- II. Introduction of Current Vestry
2019 - 2022: Shade Badejo, Andrew Marshall, Allen Myers
2020 - 2023: Julie Baker, Jonathan March, Laura Warner Gilmer
2021 - 2024: Andrew Bolt, Harry Breda, Ashley Rector
- III. Presentation of Candidates and Voting Procedures

Standing for election to the vestry:
Tom Dwyer, Marsha Gadsden, Joan Romanosky

Standing for election for delegates to the Diocesan Convention:
Aaron Husman, Robert Orton, Robin Stansel
- IV. Election of Vestry and Convention Delegates
- V. Report on 2021 Income and Expenses
- VI. Presentation of 2022 Adopted Budget
- VII. Reports
 - a. Junior Warden
 - b. Senior Warden
 - c. Rector

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Doxology	Necrology
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;	<i>Remembering those we have lost in 2021</i>
Praise God, all creatures here below;	<i>Jim Clark, Judy "Elaine" Burton, Paul Henry,</i>
Praise God above, ye heavenly host:	<i>Lestra Corey, Eleanor Bolding, Carol Gilles</i>
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost	<i>Brickell</i>

Minutes of the Vestry

Episcopal Church of the Ascension

Annual Meeting | January 31, 2021

The Annual Meeting of Episcopal Church of the Ascension for 2021 was called to order at 9:02 am on Sunday, January 31, 2021, by Father Paul Klitzke, who chaired the meeting. Due to ongoing concerns about the Covid-19 pandemic, the meeting was held using Zoom conferencing with Ascension's password-protected room. Based on screenshots, there were at least 75 separate attendees in the conference; each attendee could have more than one person.

Members of the Vestry in attendance included Senior Warden Randy Nelson, Junior Warden Scott King, Jonathan March, Jane Burruss, Laura Warner Gilmer, Shade Badejo, Andrew Marshall, Allen Myers, and Julie Baker. Continuing to serve as Clerk of the Vestry was Harry Breda.

Father Paul called the meeting to order at 9:04 am, with an invocation. His opening remarks noted that he was happy to have everyone gathered, even if it was in a virtual setting. He provided instructions on how to access the bulletin and the agenda through the pane on the side of the screen.

Introduction of Vestry

Father Paul introduced the Members of the Vestry, by year:

- 2018-2021 – Jane Burruss, Scott King, Randy Nelson
- 2019-2022 – Shade Badejo, Andrew Marshall, Allen Myers
- 2020-2023 – Julie Baker, Jonathan March, Laura Warner Gilmer

Father Paul thanked the Vestry for their service, especially the outgoing members whose term is up this month: Jane Burruss (also Treasurer), Junior Warden Scott King, and Senior Warden Randy Nelson.

Candidates for Vestry and Convention Delegate

Father Paul next introduced candidates for Vestry and delegates to the Diocesan Convention.

- Standing for election to Vestry:
 - Andrew Bolt, Harry Breda, Ashley Rector
- Standing for election to be delegates to the Diocesan Convention:
 - John Dexter and Laura Schmidt
 - Continuing to serve as delegates: Bobby Raine and Ron Chalk

Father Paul reminded us that the delegates are elected for staggered two-year terms. Ashley Rector was previously elected as a delegate; she has agreed to serve as an alternate if she is elected to Vestry. Randy Nelson then spoke briefly about the process to select and recruit candidates for Vestry, a particularly challenging task in this pandemic year.

Father Paul noted that there are three candidates for three Vestry spots, and two candidates for two delegate spots. Jane Burruss moved that the slate of Vestry candidates and the slate of delegate candidates be approved by acclamation – one vote for all the candidates as presented. Randy Nelson seconded the motion.

Father Paul then explained the voting procedure for those in the Zoom conference. A Zoom poll was used, with everyone on the call being given a set amount of time to vote.

The vote passed; all candidates were approved as presented.

Report on 2020 Income and Expenses (Jane Burruss, Treasurer)

Jane presented a summary of our income and expenses for the calendar year 2020, a year like no other. Despite pandemic conditions that caused us to shut down in-person gatherings for much of the year, we had a strong year. She thanked the staff for flexibility and thanked all parishioners for their support as well. Thanks to faithful parishioners, grant money, changes in spending by staff and ADS, and a loan from the federal government, we finished with a net positive figure for the year.

Turning to the 2021 budget, there is no way to prepare a budget based on the past year, given the uncertainty surrounding pandemic response. That being said, a budget has been produced and the Vestry has approved it, using our best efforts and a prayerful process.

The 2021 approved budget was included in the document shared with all parishioners.

Reports

Junior Warden, Scott King

Scott reported that there were a great many things accomplished with the physical plant of the church during 2020, including updating the sound and lighting, building the welcome desk and updating the floor in the parish hall. When we are able to get together again, we will be delighted at the progress.

An ongoing project for the Property Plant & Equipment committee has been compiling a thorough and complete church inventory, primarily for insurance purposes. The project will be continued by his successor, something that has to be done given all the changes in the assets of the church over the past five years.

Senior Warden, Randy Nelson

Randy noted that 2020 has been a most challenging year, a year in which we were not able to be together, but we were still able to be a church, and serve as stewards for the area and the city. Many people have been involved in our missions, despite the challenges of the pandemic.

He was very proud of all that we were able to accomplish in 2020, despite the conditions. We added a new associate rector, expanded our video capabilities, and enhanced the interior of the church itself. We have also expanded our offerings online and our outreach into the community – he cited the Anti-Racism Task Force specifically as a powerful force for change.

Finally, Randy took a moment to express thanks to Father Paul, for always having a positive attitude and a can-do spirit. The cacophony of downbeat news can be troubling, but Father Paul never wavers in his positivity and support, always seeking new ways to gather and share our ministry.

Associate Rector, Mother Teresa Terry

Her first annual meeting, Mother Teresa expressed her excitement at being part of Ascension and said that she's truly glad to be here. She has had to learn much this year about how to be present without being in person – a particular challenge when she's at a new parish.

She's very eager to meet everyone and has been actively reaching out scheduling coffee time and simply making connections.

Rector, Father Paul Klitzke

First, Father Paul wanted to express his deep gratitude for everyone showing up to the meeting via Zoom, and for attending services via YouTube. He is grateful for the imagination and creativity that we've been able to share with the parish to use these tools for outreach and gathering. He urged us to read the report in its entirety; his words here only augment what's been written.

Capital Campaign: What started three years ago is now largely complete, with only a few loose ends to clean up. Our initial goal was ambitious; we managed to scale it appropriately and achieve many of our top priorities. We were faithful stewards of capital, using the contributions to the campaign along with unexpected insurance proceeds to take on more than we had originally expected.

Missionary Work: The Anti-Racism Task Force was created this year and has been a great joy to watch it grow and succeed.

People: Father Ernie has been a continuing source of support, and he's grateful for his help. We were excited to add Mother Teresa to the team. And Jordan Hammond has been a fantastic addition, who continues to take on new duties. His original title was "Magic Man," his new title will be "Children and Youth Leader."

Office Updates: Our missionary efforts were aided by an effective marketing campaign, led by Catherine Miller, which included updating our website. And we installed a new database and digital directory.

Additional Thanks: Father Paul wanted to express thanks to Todd and Winifred Rutenbar, who continue to provide help with streaming worship on YouTube. Jane Taber helped with closing out the capital campaign and with the evangelism efforts. And much thanks goes to the outgoing Vestry members Jane Burruss, Scott King and Randy Nelson.

Following all reporting, the gathered parishioners sang the Doxology.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Harry Breda, Clerk of the Vestry

Rector's Report

Fr. Paul Klitzke

“I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” - Isaiah 43:19

This verse from Isaiah is a long-time personal favorite. It comes to mind regularly and reminds me to seek God in all things, particularly as I face changes and challenges. So, it is no surprise that it came to mind once again as I reflected on our life and ministry at Ascension in 2021. It was a year where new ways of being emerged, coupled with moments that felt like we were stranded in the wilderness.

Our first-ever virtual Annual Parish Meeting was last year. While we began the year with our principal service online only, we made a significant transition to a hybrid model, expanding from our worship to the rest of our parish life. All of which paved the way for where we are today, our inaugural hybrid Annual Parish Meeting.

Other new ways of being were not entirely new to each of us. If we had been meeting in person, it would have been a first for me to cancel worship due to inclement weather! Yes, you read correctly, even after serving in Alaska for five years. Instead, it was a first for me to lead our worship from my home. It was also new for me to preach from someone else's manuscript. Thank you, Laura Warner Gilmer, for trusting me to offer your words on Ash Wednesday.

Times of renovation or construction have a wilderness-type quality to them. As the “Let Your Light Shine” capital campaign came to its conclusion, I was once again impressed and delighted by the parish response. Your additional giving allowed for the tile work in the narthex, hallways, and kitchen as well as the upgrades to our Livestream setup. These upgrades have helped our common life and created opportunities for welcoming those who continue to join us.

While there were a lot of new things in 2021, I would also like to note some of what we were able to return to as well. The absence of large group gatherings for most of 2020 and part of 2021 left us unable to fully share in one another's joys and sorrows; something I think is central to the Christian life. I am grateful we were able to gather for a wedding and several baptisms. And while painful, I am also deeply grateful to have been able to gather for memorial services as well. These gatherings are essential for our grieving and growing.

Throughout the pandemic, there have been moments that felt like ‘wilderness’. I don’t believe God is the cause of our hardships, but believe that God can work through them. I hope we can continue to seek God in all we do. I pray Ascension will continue to be a place where all are welcome, the love of God is known and shared and our community trusts as a sacred space full of mercy and grace.

Blessings,

Fr. Paul

Rector's Report on Parish Statistics				
	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>	
Number of Services Held	137	72	190	
Average Sunday Attendance	68	63	175	
Number of persons in good standing at beginning of year	300	297	335	
Number of Persons Baptized	4	0	2	
Number of Person Confirmed and Received	0	0	0	
Added by transfers in	7	3	12	
Restored from inactive	0	2	2	
Members that have died	-6	-2	-4	
Transfers Out	-5	-3	-6	
Records made inactive	0	-3	-44	
Number of persons in good standing at end of year	300	300	297	

**Ministry I Fund
Profit & Loss
January through December 2021**

	Jan - Dec 21
Income	
Contributions	15,450.00
Total Income	15,450.00
Expense	
Bike Ministry	-1,581.69
Charitable Contributions	4,603.43
Direct Assistance-Others	7,090.67
Direct Assistance-Parishioners	343.15
Orphan Support	0.00
Travel Expenses	80.00
Bank Charges	174.00
Total Expense	10,709.56
Net Income	4,740.44

Associate Rector's Report - 2021

The Rev. Teresa F. Terry

The year 2021 has been a bit of a roller coaster ride. The continuing effects of the pandemic have made this past year's journey interesting, joyful, and challenging. At the beginning of the year, we were hopeful that vaccines would allow us to get back to life in some sort of familiar or normal rhythm. Over this past year, we confirmed there really is no - *getting back to anything*. Time will not allow us to return to the past, and the same is true of our shared life and ministry here at Ascension.

As Associate Rector for Formation and Pastoral Care, I supervised and worked collaboratively with Jordan Hammons, the Minister for Children and Youth. I also provided oversight and collaboration with Joan Romanosky and LaBau Bryan, the Committee Chairs for Formation and Pastoral Care. These valuable ministries and highlights of their accomplishments are spelled out in more detail in their individual reports. Therefore, I will not repeat the details of the accomplishments and instead express my deepest gratitude for the opportunity to serve, support, and collaborate with these amazing people of God.

Key offerings that I planned and led within my call to formation for this community included a Lenten Study using the book *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor and an Advent Study using the book *Honest Advent* by Scott Erickson. Both books presented new ways to engage in Christian formation and received a great deal of positive feedback, affirming the need to continue to be open to new ways of learning and new ways to engage and be formed in our faith journey.

Another investment I made in our younger families this past year included my participation in the planning around the curriculum *These are Our Bodies*. Written for middle school and high school students and their parents, the curriculum was written in a beautiful format that allowed us to dive deeper into what it means to be a Christian family and face the real and present challenges in our world today. Helping plan the evenings and supporting Jordan Hammons and the amazing volunteer facilitators, left me feeling blessed by the experience. I faithfully met with our youth parents for twelve weeks on Sunday evenings and led the parent portion of this curriculum. I was able to not only get to know them better but also provide a safe space for them to get to know each other better. This opportunity was a new way of engaging in formation.

The Longest Night - I planned and officiated an evening prayer service in December focused on providing space and comfort for all who were grieving or struggling in a season more traditionally known for joy and celebration. This was the second annual offering of this liturgy and the first time we were able to offer it in a hybrid format. Last year it was held virtually so it was a blessing to also hold it in-person, in the Nave this year, and fully participate with those in attendance. The contemplative evening included prayers, healing music, and lighting of candles in honor of loved ones.

I continued to support Fr. Paul and the church staff in a variety of ways including: planning, leading, and assisting with liturgical offerings (bulletins, preaching, and celebrating). I look forward to serving this community in the coming year and I ask for your continued prayers.

Yours in Christ,
Mtr Teresa+

Senior Warden's Report - 2021

Allen Myers

This past year was quite the journey for Ascension. Remember the early days of 2021, when the first vaccines became available? We had no in-person worship, although several brave souls would venture into the nave on Sunday to read or sing, along with our Clergy and staff—who have been in the building daily this whole time. While the pandemic persists, our strides in 2021 give me great optimism for 2022.

We began the year planning for “hybrid church”: to bring back in-person worship and fellowship to the extent we could do so safely, while preserving the virtual offerings that allowed all to participate, regardless of health or location. At-home worship, formation, and enrichment opportunities (many through the continued important work of our Anti-Racism Task Force) have enhanced the Ascension community, and will likely continue after pandemic-driven gathering restrictions end (whenever that may be).

While continuing our virtual offerings, we have also resumed gathering in the flesh. Unlike the early months of 2021, Sunday worship is available in person, with choir and full communion, along with formation offerings. While I miss those of you who have not been able to join us in person, the ability to gather on the Ascension grounds with so many of you has been greatly rewarding. We are clearly not out of the woods yet, but the Church is well-positioned to navigate the continuing bumps along the road we can expect in 2022.

This positioning is in large part due to the tireless leadership of Father Paul, whose energy, consistency, and equanimity have been a great inspiration to me as I've worked closely with him over the past year. And it has been wonderful to experience Mother Teresa's infectious enthusiasm and invaluable perspective at Ascension every Sunday, as well as through special service, youth, and pastoral care offerings.

I would also like to call out the contributions of our amazing Ascension staff. We have been blessed to add Suzanne Sweazy as Operations Manager; she's a quick study and now plays a critical role in keeping the Parish running smoothly. Our website and stewardship materials (such as the pew cards) are looking better than ever, thanks largely to the work of Catherine Pryor Miller. Jordan Hammons has continued to lead youth formation forward while using his remarkable talents to fill in wherever he is needed. Mark Unkenholz has led our worship music as only he can, orchestrating the return of choir and arranging guest appearances from some of the Metroplex's most talented musicians. And Mary Lou Howell has made many valuable behind-the-scenes contributions; we wish her all the best in retirement while giving thanks for her continued presence in worship on Sundays.

I conclude by reflecting on our Christmas Eve service. The marks of the pandemic remained—we remained masked, and we awaited the return of those who have not been able to join us in person. But looking around the sanctuary, “Silent Night” in the air, seeing old friends and new faces, light shining forth from our candles and from our eyes, I felt the Lord’s Peace and a renewed hope for the coming year.

I want to thank all of the members of Ascension—particularly my vestry mates and the committee leaders and members—for the opportunity to serve as your Senior Warden over the past year. Your contributions of time, talent, and treasure have made this community so special.

Junior Warden’s Report - 2021

Andrew Marshall

The Junior Warden's principal responsibility is to coordinate the building and grounds maintenance. This coordination would be impossible without many staff, especially Suzanne Sweazy and John Johnson. Of vital importance is the effort of the Property, Plant, and Equipment (PPE) ministry members, namely Todd Rutenbar, Herb Kadane, and Dan Cotton, who arranged and coordinated four work and mini-work days. A big thank-you to them and others who committed their time, energy, and talent to the continued maintenance of the property. I'm also grateful to those who have pointed out issues that needed attention!

It would be easy to assume that less would need to be done with fewer people on our campus due to Covid. Nothing is further from the truth. Plants still have a habit of growing. Weather still happens. The school is still in session and has grown, so much of the campus sees as much activity as pre-pandemic. Work still needs to be done to maintain the grounds and buildings. In addition to that, we have actively aimed to do as much maintenance work as we can while the campus is somewhat less crowded.

The following are the major PPE projects accomplished this year:

- Continued repairs to the grounds from the tornado in 2020.
- Planting of approximately eight trees of various sizes and numerous shrubs in the garden, courtyard, and bell tower.
- Thinning the Crepe Myrtles and other trees in the courtyard/memorial garden. Some of the campus hackberries are over forty years old and are rotting. These trees are in the process of being cut down. Additional work on the older trees will be an ongoing necessity.
- Augmenting regular cleaning with dusting cabinets and shelves in the vesting sacristies, the parlor/bride's room, and other areas.

- Cleaning out upper building gutters to remove fallen leaves. It has been suggested that adding a gutter guard would remove this need for annual cleaning.
- Areas in need of deep cleaning have been power-washed. These include the barbeque and courtyard. Moving forward, the gaps between the sanctuary's stained glass and plate glass will also need cleaning.

In addition, we thoroughly reviewed the valuation and values of the fixed assets updated to reflect current best estimates of fixture and fitting replacement costs.

Treasurer's Report - 2021

Janey Burruss

We want to express our ongoing gratitude for your faithful support as members during this second challenging pandemic year in which our parish thrived because of the leadership from staff combined with your continued support. As Treasurer, I work with the finance committee, a small but solid team that meets monthly to review financial statements, assists the office, and, with the help of others, audits Ascension's books and back office, reporting our findings to the Vestry and the Diocese. We have worked virtually generally and provided oversight in person for the audit and to support the office staff between Office Managers. The payroll expense loan applied for, received, and used in 2020 gratefully was forgiven in 2021.

Your gifts of time & treasure, combined with excellent expense stewardship by our staff, and supplemented by a wonderful year for the Ascension Day School ["ADS"] meant income exceeded our expenses for 2021. Even with ongoing Covid issues, ADS managed its expenses so well that it shared with the church more than projected a year ago, and found, applied for, and received a new grant, thus ending the year with reserves for future needs.

The Ascension 2022 Budget has been amended, revised, and ultimately approved based on Parishioners' estimated 2022 gifting indications as well as the actual 2020-21 experience. As we continue to deal with a global pandemic, we invite your ideas and support for our church's important work in the community.

You are our Church, and your generous gifts and service, as well as your insights, make Ascension the welcoming environment that we are. Let us remember whose we are, who we are called to serve, and from whom we receive all that we have, and may we be guided to be all that we can become in 2022. Blessings, grace, and gratitude.

Budget

Income and Expense Statement for 2021 and Approved Budget for 2022

*Income from loan forgiveness \$157,900; no cash impact in 2022

CATEGORY	2021 BUDGET	2021 ACTUAL	2022 BUDGET
INCOME			
Parishoner's Estimated Gifts	\$647,000.00	\$656,199.48	\$675,000.00
Plate & Other Gifts	\$20,000.00	\$29,164.90	\$20,000.00
Investment Income	\$750.00	\$35.87	\$50.00
Other Income	\$4,000.00	\$2,586.21	\$2,500.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$671,750.00	\$687,986.46	\$697,550.00
EXPENSES			
Total Compensation	\$307,100.00	\$305,857.09	\$332,070.00
Total Benefits	\$109,490.00	\$99,634.51	\$118,075.30
Total Office Expenses	\$24,300.00	\$28,888.41	\$26,600.00
Total General Expenses	\$34,850.00	\$33,255.75	\$40,000.00
Diocesan Support	\$67,744.42	\$67,744.38	\$65,718.67
Seminary Support	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
ADS Unbudgeted Allocations	-\$40,066.00	-\$47,904.00	-\$45,000.00
St. Philip's	<u>-\$7,500.00</u>	<u>-\$7,500.00</u>	<u>-\$9,600.00</u>
Total Commitments	\$21,178.42	\$13,340.38	\$12,118.67
TOTAL ADMINISTRATION	\$496,918.42	\$480,976.14	\$528,863.97
Total Building Expenses	\$61,400.00	\$60,077.22	\$63,450.00
Total Utilities	\$39,200.00	\$40,394.63	\$40,950.00
TOTAL PROPERTY & EQUIPMENT	\$100,600.00	\$100,471.85	\$104,400.00
Programs & Liturgy			
TOTAL LITURGY & MUSIC	\$20,000.00	\$15,768.96	\$20,330.00
TOTAL CHRISTIAN FORMATION	\$8,350.00	\$5,766.40	\$16,530.00
TOTAL ASCENSION OUTBOUND	\$1,457.54	\$441.13	\$900.00
TOTAL EVANGELISM	\$2,000.00	\$1,202.01	\$2,000.00
TOTAL PASTORAL CARE	\$1,200.00	\$692.45	\$1,200.00
TOTAL KITCHEN & RECEPTION	\$350.00	\$424.64	\$250.00
TOTAL STEWARDSHIP	\$500.00	\$348.54	\$400.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$671,749.66	\$598,052.67	\$696,373.97
NET INCOME	\$0.34	\$247,833.79	\$1,176.03

1:15 PM

01/25/22

Episcopal Church of the Ascension
Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2021

	Dec 31, 21
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1002 · Operating CK-Comerica 2011	359,639.67
1052 · Outbound MM-Comerica 2012	20,497.61
Total Checking/Savings	380,137.28
Other Current Assets	
1091 · Ministry Accounts - Comerica	7,620.55
1200 · Investments - Undesignated	30,937.66
1201 · Mark to Market	1,432.20
1299 · Petty Cash	300.00
Total Other Current Assets	40,290.41
Total Current Assets	420,427.69
Fixed Assets	
1600 · Property and Equipment	5,353,314.34
Total Fixed Assets	5,353,314.34
TOTAL ASSETS	5,773,742.03
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Credit Cards	
2100 · Credit Cards	3,421.99
Total Credit Cards	3,421.99
Other Current Liabilities	
2300 · Pass-Through Contributions	2,958.69
2305 · Prepaid Pledges	4,762.00
2306 · Prepaid Day School Tuition	388.00
2310 · Prepaid Other Fees	124.94
2450 · Payroll Liabilities	-0.02
2460 · Laity Pension Payable	1,990.80
2461 · HSA Payable	300.00
2462 · 403B Payable	300.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	10,824.41
Total Current Liabilities	14,246.40
Total Liabilities	14,246.40
Equity	
3000 · Unrestricted Assets	5,445,776.71
3200 · Restricted Assets	65,885.13
Net Income	247,833.79
Total Equity	5,759,495.63
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	5,773,742.03

REPORTS ON MINISTRY BY COMMITTEE - 2021

Ascension Day School

Brett Rector, Board President

Like the rest of our Ascension church community, Ascension Day School (“ADS”) continued to embrace the challenges of COVID-19 in 2021 with collective energy and good spirit. The school remains at full capacity, with ~90 students and 18 teachers and staff members.

Following guidance from the Diocese and local, state, and federal health authorities, the school successfully managed in-person instruction for our students in Spring 2021 and Fall 2021 and hosted a widely popular summer camp in June, July, and August. Throughout it all, the ADS staff served as a source of consistent warmth and joy for students, many of whom have seen their lives upended by the ongoing pandemic.

The ADS Board has remained particularly focused on the school’s financial health this year. Through a combination of vigilant budgeting, responsible tuition increases, and the aggressive pursuit of state grant funding, we are happy to report that ADS ended 2021 in a strong financial position. Notable successes this year include: (1) providing special bonuses to recognize our staff’s wonderful work in the face of the many challenges of COVID-19; (2) contributing over \$45,000 to the church to offset the school’s operation costs; and (3) funding several capital projects to improve the school facility and outdoor space. For the first time in the school’s history, we have also created a small reserve fund to ensure the stability of our operations in the years to come. Such successes reflect the commitment of our wonderful ADS Board and the tireless work of ADS Director Kate Baer, Father Paul, and the entire church community to support the important mission of ADS.

ADS continues to be well-served by its committed Board, including Chris Bolding (church member), John Owen (church member), Kathy Wendling (church member/ADS teacher), Allison Heath (church member), Brett Rector (church member/ADS parent), Jeremy Graves (ADS parent), Mary Beth Gizinski (ADS parent), as well as new board members Janie McDermott (church member) and Patrick Tam (ADS parent). Nancy Callaway left the board in 2021 after years of service, and we thank her for her many contributions to the school. Goals for 2022 include ongoing efforts to adapt to the challenges of COVID-19, continuing the stable stewardship of ADS’ financials, and pursuing our path to become accredited by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools.

Evangelism

Jane Taber, Chair

The Evangelism Committee was busy at work throughout 2021. We started the year reviewing survey results from our 2020 Advent speaker series to guide us in planning for the next scheduled *Truth and Reconciliation* speaker series during Lent. We planned and sponsored a virtual Wednesday evening Lenten Speaker Series entitled, *Empowering Beloved Community*. Due to the fact the five-week series was virtual, we were able to invite not only parishioners but the public at large to join us, regardless of their geographic location. Attendance was from 35 to 40 participants for each session. Our speakers were diverse in background: a podcaster and Missioner for Missional Communities for the Diocese Texas; a VP with the Anti-Defamation League; the Director of the Center for Social Justice & Reconciliation at Union Presbyterian Seminary; and a historian and Director of Education with the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum. Each presenter provided historical information and creative ideas to consider and assist those attending in embracing and becoming a beloved community.

In April and into May, the committee assisted in planning the PR and activities surrounding the culmination of the *Let Your Light Shine* campaign. This included expanding the capital campaign renovations and further funding for replacing the tile in the narthex and kitchen. It also included funding for adding another camera and AV cabinet to the nave for better and more flexible online production. The culmination campaign included weekly ministry-focused testimonials showcasing how the new facility renovations and upgrades have positively affected each of the ten ministries' work to expand its reach and effectiveness.

During the summer, members of the committee served as ushers and greeters and, in other capacities as needed, to assist with the weekly services. Two other initiatives came to fruition during this time. The first initiative was based on an international artist's origami dove exhibit at the National Cathedral in Washington. We planned an origami dove exhibit of our own, installed on the first week of September when in-building services and in-person formation opportunities were re-instituted. Several summer work sessions occurred, allowing over 30 members to engage in the project. With an abundance of thanks to the selfless work of Nancy Johnson and Catherine Pryor Miller, the doves were installed in the narthex leading to the new Welcome Center where the committee planned a dedication of the Welcome Center to Perry Lyons, the ultimate welcomer.

The second initiative was entitled, *Reflections of Love*, a series of 14 reflections written over 14 weeks by 14 different parishioners on that week's gospel reading. The reflections were the lead-up to the Stewardship Committee's upcoming annual giving campaign. What a blessing it

was to read each week's reflection and be encouraged with the depth and spirituality of those who authored.

We worked with our communications administrator to provide feedback to update and replace our existing pew cards with individual Give, Pray, Serve and Connect cards. We also added a children's rack at the Welcome Desk designed rack cards tailored to children in worship and formation. And new welcome gifts of miniature pots of seeds, ready to plant and topped with a custom Ascension logo, were designed and are given out to guests and newcomers.

Four new ushers and one greeter have joined the usher/greeter team to help on Sunday mornings. In conjunction with the head usher, George Rutherford (shout out to George for his decades of dedicated service) the usher and greeter rotation has had some tweaks made to it due to pandemic absences of some long-time team members.

The committee planned and attended our first in-person Newcomer's brunch and campus tour since the church building closed for in-person activities in March 2019 due to the pandemic. Clergy and church leaders attended along with eight newcomers or guests. It was a welcoming brunch that was informative and lots of fun for all in attendance.

Committee members were active and worked tirelessly throughout the year with thoughtful ideas and discussions and countless hours of dedicated work for the committee and Ascension community. It is a blessing to work alongside my fellow committee members, Julie Baker, Steve Baker, Catherine Pryor Miller, and Sally Lewis.

Formation

Joan Romanosky, Chair

The Christian Formation Committee continued its work to provide parishioners of all ages with meaningful opportunities to engage with scripture and grow their faith. Groups met for most of the year via Zoom, and we were pleased to return to in-person offerings in September.

Godly Play remained the foundation of children's formation fostering exploration of faith through sacred stories and wonder. We completed a pilot year of *Celebrate Wonder* for older children. A re-imagined, in-person Bible Camp this summer focused on the Church and our roles as members of it. Each day a different ministry team at Ascension (the Anti-Racism Task Force, the Elaine Kadane Food Pantry, PP&E, acolyte, and Pastoral Care) provided an opportunity for all 34 participants to actively **be** the Church. Each day included Bible stories, Episcopal hymns, crafts, games, food, and friendship with the support of 20+ volunteers.

Youth Group (Middle & High School) saw new growth with the addition of the Youth Council—which empowers our youth to take leadership in their faith. The fall offering of *These Are Our Bodies* fostered family ministry and prompted important conversations at church and at home.

Additional family ministry offerings included Lent: A Contemplative Journey and Advent Fest both of which helped us to connect with these sacred seasons in new and tangible ways.

The Anti-Racism Task Force (ARTF) included parishioners of all ages with a reading and discussion of the children’s book *For Beautiful Black Boys Who Believe in a Better World* with its author Rev. Dr. Michael Waters. ARTF also hosted conversations with the Dallas Police Department and Lake Highlands Area Moms Against Racism (LHAMAR) and led a clothing drive benefiting Another Man’s Treasure. A partnership with St. Michael and All Angels and LHAMAR, allowed us to welcome Rev. Dr. Waters back for a 5-week seminar on Racism in America.

Our Sunday morning Adult Bible Group offered several series throughout the year, including the Gospel of Mark, a summer series on the Episcopal Church (*Walk in Love*), and *Honest Advent*. The Men’s Bible Fellowship continued to meet as well, discussing two books: *Conversations with Scripture: The Gospel of Mark* by Marcus Borg and are currently finishing up *Winning the War in Your Mind* by Craig Groeschel.

Many thanks also go to the amazing volunteers and leaders of all formation offerings, including our committee members Marsha Gadsden, Randy Nelson, Ashley Rector, Winifred Rutenbar, Chris Schmidt, Robin Stansel, and Peggy Wise. Because of you all, 2021 was an amazing year.

Music and Liturgy

The Rev. Paul Klitzke

Each year the Music and Liturgy committee endeavors to create meaningful changes in worship that honor the various sacred seasons and the feast days of the church year. The committee’s work may also extend to considering what changes from past practices or new things may be implemented. This work continued in 2021, as well as a lot of adaptation in light of the pandemic.

In the first part of the year, our online offerings were our principal expression of worship. We offered worship outside most Sundays for those desiring an in-person option. Our capacity to do things virtually served us well when the winter storm hit.

As vaccinations became more widely available, we were glad to return to more in-person offerings. We have incorporated more and more of our former practices, choir, acolytes, and lay eucharistic ministers. Offering worship in a hybrid model (in-person and online) has its challenges but will remain extremely important to us.

Outbound

Audry Lee, Chair

Members: Audry Lee (chair), Hope Harbeck, Brian Kasper, Diane Haack, Beth and John Dexter, Kathy Wendling, Martha Wach, Allen Myers (Vestry Liaison)

Contributors: All of our efforts are made possible by the tireless volunteers who help us, and the generous donations of the parish. Many thanks to everyone who helps, supports, and prays for us.

Food Pantry -The Elaine Kadane Food Pantry was open 24 times this year on the first and third Tuesday of every month. We served 248 families/individuals in 2021. These ranged from people who came once to those that come to every pantry. The numbers ranged from 35-75 coming to any given pantry. This year we have expanded the pantry in several ways: more food for every family, typically a full grocery bag of food plus produce and other extras; we are buying and keeping in stock shelf-stable milk to provide at each pantry; we are providing Lysol wipes & Lysol disinfecting spray to clients; we are buying produce to distribute to clients in addition to what we get from Sharing Life/North Texas Food Bank, the Ascension Community Garden and Lake Highlands Community Garden (the Ascension Community Garden provided 1,335 pounds of food to our pantry in 2021); and we are providing bags of condiments which we include in our bags, donated by residents at Presbyterian Village North. We purchased many extra items for our holiday bags for Thanksgiving and Christmas, and we gave out Walmart gift cards to clients at the Thanksgiving and Christmas pantries.

Ascension's Elaine Kadane Food Pantry received 47,504 lbs of food (39,586 meals) from Sharing Life. In all during 2021, Ascension members made 22 pick-ups at Sharing Life, including fresh produce.

Tasby Middle School - We delivered 8,338 lbs of food (6,948 meals) from Sharing Life to Tasby Middle School. We underwrote and coordinated a Teacher Appreciation Lunch for 100 teachers and staff members. We purchased small denomination gift cards for Teacher Appreciation.

Austin Street -Ascension continued its long association with Austin Street Center, providing dinner on 4 Saturdays in 2021, although we are still not serving. In addition, Ascension sponsored 2 breakfasts at Austin Street, prepared and served by Chef Patrick Smith of Tejano Brothers catering. We had a successful needs drive with Ascension Day School for shower clogs and personal hygiene products.

Kid's U - we raised \$1,175 to provide backpacks to kids returning to in-person learning, and we also provided 20 gift cards for turkeys for Kids U families at Thanksgiving.

All Things Books -In February we held another successful Book Drive, thanks to the parishioners of Ascension. We personalized and donated books to Kids-U and the new Lil Kids-U for preschoolers. Students and staff greatly appreciated our efforts. With the help of several committees, we created the Little Diversity Lending Library, located in the parking lot near the Upper Building. Users may borrow from a selection of kids, youth, and adult books that highlight diverse communities. The Outbound Committee is assuming the conservatorship of the library and will maintain the cataloging and upkeep of the collection. Periodic parish announcements are made to keep the Episcopal Relief and Development campaign on people's minds.

Community Garden -The garden contributed 1,335 pounds in 2021 to the Food Pantry. All plots are in use. We purchased 2 cameras to monitor the garden.

Pastoral Care

LaBau Bryan, Chair

Pastoral Care is a ministry of active encouragement and compassion offered by laypeople and clergy to celebrate, sustain, heal, and reconcile members of our parish.

In addition to the current Pastoral Care Committee (Ann Gant, Carle Howell, Emily Killinger, Ray Oxenrider, and Laura Warner Gilmer), the pastoral care team is made up of additional members that serve our community at large. Pastoral care activities include the Lay Eucharistic Visitors, Stephen Ministers, Food for Souls, Grief Ministry, and the Birthday Card Ministry. In addition, Mother Teresa Terry collects prayer requests and pastoral concerns from a variety of places each week. These requests and concerns are placed on a prayer list and distributed to the prayer team weekly.

Because of Covid, the Lay Eucharistic Visitors were not active until Advent. As that ministry becomes more active, we hope to attract more volunteers.

Food for Souls, which provides meals for the sick, homebound, recovering, or parishioners with new babies, has been on hiatus since the beginning of the Covid pandemic. During 2021, we have assessed interest in continuing this ministry, and based on the response of volunteers, we hope to begin again once the pandemic is under control. This ministry still needs to identify a coordinator in order to go forward.

Birthday Card Ministry. In June 2021, we lost Lestra Corey, an active member of the Pastoral Care Committee for many years and the person who diligently sent birthday cards to all of our parishioners. I picked up that ministry for a few months to ensure continuity. My thanks to Julie Waller, who volunteered to take over this much-enjoyed ministry.

The Grief Ministry recorded 10 deaths of either parishioners or relatives of parishioners during 2021. Sympathy cards are sent to families after the death and to mark the one-year anniversary of the death. The "Journeying Through Grief" series of booklets and Pastoral Care Boxes are offered to families who have experienced loss.

In 2021, Mother Teresa headed a new effort to honor our veterans. Cards to our veterans thanking them for their service were mailed and a dinner was given in their honor. We plan to make this an annual event.

Stephen Ministry Report - Stephen Ministry leadership meetings recommenced in February 2021, following Mother Teresa's online Bridge training as our clergy Stephen Leader. Todd Rutenbar and Laura Warner Gilmer continue as lay leaders. Those meetings continue. A renewal gathering dinner for all active and interested former Stephen Ministers was held in May. Two half-day refresher workshops were presented during the summer including current Stephen Ministers and those interested in training to become Stephen Ministers. Ascension's Stephen Ministry partnered with St. Michael and All Angel's Stephen Ministry on continuing education. St. Michael's has also expressed a desire to include a few of their prospective Stephen Ministry trainees to join the Ascension training course that is targeted to begin in Fall 2022. Through this time of transition and pandemic, ongoing Stephen Ministry caring relationships have been maintained and new ones have been established.

Radical Hospitality

Suzan Fenner, Chair

The Radical Hospitality Committee has as its mission: to provide radical hospitality to everyone who comes to Ascension, to help newcomers get connected, and to plan and implement opportunities and systems to help deepen relationships within Ascension. During 2021, the Radical Hospitality Committee continued to accomplish its mission, just like the rest of the parish, sometimes virtually and sometimes in person.

During the year, the Radical Hospitality Committee hosted the following events:

- Weekly virtual Coffee Time after the morning service each week while there were no in-person services
- Virtual Adult Progressive Happy Hour in January
- Virtual Shrove Tuesday Trivia and Talent Show in February
- Virtual Easter Season Happy Hour in April
- In-Person Pentecost Picnic after the afternoon service in May
- In-Person Catered Welcome Back Lunch after the 10:15 service in September
- In-Person Game Night in October
- Receptions or lunches for a few memorial services.
- Coordination of food for the Newcomers Lunch hosted by the Evangelism Committee

Members of the Radical Hospitality Committee were: Suzan Fenner (chair), Harry Breda (Vestry Liaison), Mary Lou Howell, Jimmy Fowler, and Winifred Rutenbar. In December, we added John, Avery, and Wesleigh Hoenig as committee members, and Winifred Rutenbar retired. Thanks to the volunteers who provided food for various functions.

Stewardship

Jonathan Dunfee, Chair

The Stewardship Committee includes Jonathan Dunfee, Jonathan March, Robert Orton, and Polly Hix, with assistance from Fr. Paul and Catherine Pryor Miller.

The Love in Action campaign this year was developed and executed by Catherine Pryor Miller and Fr. Paul. Catherine Pryor Miller also introduced and coordinated the “Reflections of Love” pieces, a series of 14 weekly reflections from our parishioners based on the Sunday gospel reading. These offerings also included thoughtful and reflective questions related to stewardship.

Our committee is finding its way back from the COVID-induced pause in meetings and activities. To date, the committee has primarily been focused on thank you notes for donors to the Love in Action campaign, as well as follow-up calls provided by the following volunteers: LaBau Bryan, Ashley Rector, Audry Lee, Allen Myers, Laura Warner Gilmer, Julie Baker, Tom Dwyer, and Fr. Paul. The committee will be working on a Stewardship Fair later in the year.