

**St. Martha's Episcopal Church  
Annual Meeting  
November 19, 2023**



**ST. MARTHA'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
ANNUAL MEETING  
Sunday, November 19, 2023**

**AGENDA**

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Opening Prayer** **Rev. Ria**
3. **Establishment of Voting Quorum** **John Short**
4. **Approval of 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes** **John Short**
5. **Election of four new Vestry Members.  
Report of Nominating Committee and Conducting  
Of Election; and electing two delegates and two  
alternates to the Diocesan Convention** **Mary Davis**
6. **Rector's Report** **Rev. Ria**
7. **Senior Warden's Report** **Mary Davis**
8. **Treasurer's and Finance/2024 Budget** **Ron Kerchner/  
Dave Moore**
9. **Stewardship Report** **Bill Freund/  
Ron Kerchner**
10. **Old Business/Other**
11. **Parish Announcements (The Vestry will convene for a brief meeting  
immediately following the close of the Annual Meeting.)**
12. **Closing Prayer** **Rev. Ria**

**St. Martha's Episcopal Church  
Bethany Beach, Delaware  
Annual Meeting Draft Minutes  
November 20, 2022**

**Quorum.** Secretary John Short noted that 77 participants exceeded the needed quorum.

**Opening Prayer.** The Annual Meeting began with a prayer. Rev. Ria was ill at home with Covid and attended by Zoom. Senior Warden Mary Davis presided over the meeting.

**Call to Order.** Senior Warden Mary Davis called the meeting to order.

**Approval of the Minutes.** The Minutes from the 2021 Annual Meeting were approved.

**Election of New Vestry Members.** By acclamation, Tim Lush and Al Thomas were elected as new Vestry Members.

**Election of delegates and alternates to the 2023 Diocesan Convention.** Carl and Sue Mantegna were selected as delegates to the 2023 Diocesan Convention and Rick and Josie Legeer were selected as alternates.

**Rector's Report.** Rev. Ria was unable to attend but congregation members were referred to her written report.

**Senior Warden's Report.** Senior Warden Mary Davis referred the congregation members to her written report.

**Finance Committee, Treasurer's Report and Budget.**

The balances of the church's accounts were reviewed and are listed below:

**PNC Bank**

Operating Account	\$ 51,546
Rector's Discretionary Account	3,771
Restricted Account	65,068
Mission Account	80,008
Total	\$ 200,393

<b>Master Fund A</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Lighthipe Trust</b>
Beginning Balance 12/31/2021	772,044	4,968,195
Balance as of 9/30/2022	550,101	3,849,959

**Financial Reports and Budget.** Dave Moore reviewed the Finance Committee reports and explained a chart that showed the parish's income and expenses. He noted that substantial growth in available funds, especially for outreach, has been the result of growth in endowments and increases in pledges. We ended the year with sizeable balances in the restricted accounts, and all current bills have been paid.

**Church Budget for 2023.** Dave reviewed the 2023 church budget that had been approved by the Vestry. He distributed and reviewed pie charts that demonstrated the sources and amounts of income as well as the categories and amounts of anticipated expenditures for 2023. The 2023 sources of income include the following: congregation, 53%; forebears, 45%; and building use, 2%. The 2023 expenses include staff, 44%; outreach, 17%; administration, 13%; Diocese, 12%; reserve, 7%; property, 6%; and worship, 1%.

**Stewardship Report.** Bill Freund gave the Stewardship Report and provided an update on the number of pledges and the amount that had been pledged. As of the date of the Annual Meeting, the Stewardship Committee received 96 pledges for a total of \$198,804, with four more weeks to go. Twenty-one (21) new pledges had been received which is a record and is almost double the normal average of 12. He also noted the importance of the pledges to the operation of the church and to the ability of St. Martha's to provide good works in the community. He thanked the congregation for their pledges and their generosity.

**Special Vestry Meeting.** A special meeting of the new Vestry will be held immediately following the Annual Meeting. The Vestry will include new members Tim Lush and Al Thomas and continuing members Mary Davis, Carl Long, John Short, Mary Thompson, Rick Legeer, and Dave Moore.

**Adjournment and Concluding Prayer.** The meeting was adjourned and ended with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

John Short, Vestry Secretary

## List of the 2022 Annual Meeting Participants

Rebecca Nichols	Nancy Rojewski	Rick Legeer
Timothy Lush	Anna Mae Buhl	John Grannis
Fran Marta	Carolyn Smith	Frank Bell
Ken Marta	Louise Rief	Sandy Janowski
Mary Perkins	Michael Rief	Hank Rojewski
Ken Hooker	Ginny Jarratt	Bill Freund
Sharon Korody	Wincy Jackson	Edwina Martens
Paul Duggard	Tina Edgar	Carol Ann Ryan
Susan Callahan	Steve Hawald	Dianne Burlew
Debbie Bennitt	Florence Hawald	Mimi Dupont
George Bennitt	Deb Laite	Beth Maurer
Lorraine Thomas	Jim Laite	Martha Fields
Sandy Roberts	Sue Mantegna	Don Clarke
Helene Smith	Carl Mantegna	Alice Anne Freund
Keith Smith	Lanny Moore	Dave Kemper
John Short	Jackie Limroth	Barb Reardon
Fran Hasson	Rose Walker	Joe Reardon
Al Thomas	Frank Marchand	Carl Long
Diana Ziegler	Gail Marchand	Jack Smith
Bill Ziegler	Mary Ann Dunevant	Jim Karns
Jane Robbert	Michael Dunevant	Fran Karns
John Robbert	Mary Davis	Cindy Roberti
Dave Moore	Sandy Martin	Rev. Ria on Zoom
Josie Legeer	Ron Steen	
John McElvey	Tempe Steen	
Fran McElvey	Sue Katz	

*Just as you received Christ Jesus, so continue to live in Him.  
~ Colossians 2:6*

**Rector's Report to Annual Parish Meeting, November 2023**

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It is my joyful privilege to continue to serve as your Priest, Pastor, and Rector here at St. Martha's Episcopal Church in Bethany Beach Delaware. Our first year's main task was simply to become acquainted, and to begin exploring what God might do with, and in, and through, and as the unique combination of Priest and People of God that you and I are together. This past year of 2023, our main task has been to kick-off our ministry together in earnest and see what we can do. And I think we've done plenty, by the grace of God!

The parish continues to be blessed with modest sustained growth by the addition of many new members. We've begun celebrating New Member Sundays twice per year, once in the spring and once in the fall. We have been even more intentional about our welcome of visitors and our embrace of new members. One of the most important parts of my role is to work together with Parish Administrator Jaclyn Hickman, Music Director Dave Kemper, and members of the Worship Committee (chaired by Nancy Rojewski) to assure that our Sunday worship experience is all that we can possibly make it to be, with God's help. Sunday worship is the beginning, though certainly not the end, of our life and work together as a parish.

Our average Sunday attendance numbers this year continue to climb, and even to maintain going into some of our quieter seasons of the year. Though year-end numbers aren't in yet, we can say that average Sunday attendance has nearly doubled, and has been as follows:

2021	75
2022	122
2023	147

Once again, this year, we've celebrated several "special" services together, as follows:  
2 New Member Sundays: April 30<sup>th</sup> with 23 participants & November 19<sup>th</sup> with 15 participants

1 Quilts of Valor Sunday

2 Brick Blessing Sundays

Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday

Mother's Day and Father's Day, with special blessings and flowers

Pet Blessing Sunday: with 11 dogs, 4 cats, 3 plush pets and many pictures

All Saints/Remembrance Sunday

We welcomed Bishop Kevin Brown for his Annual Visitation on September 17<sup>th</sup>.

For the first time this year, Dianne Burlew will lead a service of Morning Prayer on Thanksgiving Day.

Also, for the first time this year, I will lead a “Blue Christmas” service in mid-December.

Sacramentally, we have celebrated the lives of five very dear souls: Pauline Wise, Noel Tuck, Jean Skinter, Jack Shubert, and Beverly Shirley.

We have joyfully blessed the marriage of: Alexandra Court and Jonathan Day.

And we have lovingly baptized five children: Michael Casale, Amelia Marganian, Theodore Betz, Emily Mahon, and Emma Reilly.

I led a Vestry Retreat in January and a Lenten Retreat in March.

I wish to express my gratitude to our Vestry, and especially to those whose terms are finishing: Senior Warden Mary Davis, Junior Warden Carl Long, Secretary John Short (who is nominated for a second term), and Member-at-large Mary Thompson.

Our local Ministerium (clergy association) continues to meet monthly and hold a series of special services throughout the year. Coming up are a Thanksgiving Service at Ocean View Presbyterian and “Meet Me At The Manger” at Bethany Beach Christian.

We should all be very grateful to the many people who work diligently to help us maintain stable finances at St. Martha’s. And we’re especially grateful to all of you for your ongoing financial support of this parish. It is a point of great joy and pride to me personally to know that a full 20% of our budget goes to outreach. 20%! This is an amazing reflection of the faithfulness of us all to live the gospel of Christ, just as we are called to do.

Our Sunday Book Studies, Tuesday Bible Studies, and Hybrid Book Club offer ongoing faith formation opportunities. All our various committees seek diligently to stay close to the mission of Christ. Here at St. Martha’s, we don’t just talk the talk ... we walk the walk!

I would like to express my gratitude to our very excellent staff. Jaclyn and Dave aren’t just very good at what they do, but they’re also very good people to work with. And very good people period. I’m also deeply grateful to all our faithful lay leaders. Together, all of us and all of you are living into God’s call to live and love like Jesus, and to BE Christ, for the life of the world.

Let us carry on, People of God!

Peace, love, and prayers,  
Ria+

The Reverend Victoria Pretti, Rector

## **Sr. Warden Report – Mary Davis**

It has been an honor to serve as senior warden over the past year and to witness the church continue to develop into a strong and vibrant faith community under the steady leadership of The Reverend Victoria Pretti. There is a vitality about the church these days and it is something that seems to "click" with those visiting St. Martha's for the first time. Over the past year I have talked to several folks visiting for the first time and who now are regular attendees. May we continue to grow in faith and numbers.

New attendees at St Martha's have been eager to get involved in the various committees as well as are many social events. As always, Outreach continues to receive significant funding from the church and to distribute those funds to various worthy programs within the community, including, but not limited to, four local food pantries, Family Promise to help folks remain in their homes, the Way Home to help those leaving prison transition back into the community, Habitat for Humanity, Delaware Hospice, veterans organizations, Bethany Beach fire and police departments, and the Ministerium.

Both the adult education and community events committees have provided interesting programs throughout the year including various speakers, a monthly book club, movie nights, as well as some wonderful musical events and visits to local gardens and organizations. Bible study with Dianne Burlew on Tuesday afternoon and Ria's book study on Sunday between the two services are both continuing on a regular basis.

St. Martha's folks are not a glum lot and participate in any number of church social events including game nights, birthday dinners, book and bake sales, summer picnics, Christmas luncheon, and other dinners for Madrid Gras, Maundy Thursday, and Fall Harvest, to name just a few. Also, small dinner groups meet in houses and local restaurants throughout the year.

The church continues to be involved in the program for international students who come to work at local businesses in the summer by hosting at least one picnic dinner. This past year over 100 students enjoyed food, games, fellowship, as well as gift bags from various business and civic organizations. Some parishioners also host the students for dinners in their homes.

I am very grateful to have served on vestry and as senior warden and will continue to be involved at St. Martha's as we grow and expand in the coming years.

## **Jr. Warden Report – Carl Long**

It has been an honor to be Junior Warden for the past year. There weren't many issues during the year and only minor if any.

I am supported by Jim Karns who as most of you know, maintains our beautiful property both inside and out. He provides detailed reports monthly to the vestry of work done in the month and of what needs to be considered for the future. He also monitors maintenance contracts.

Nancy Rojewski and I have done a video narrative of all properties owned by St. Martha's for insurance purposes.



## **Buildings & Grounds Report – Jim Karns (Nov. 2022 to Oct. 2023)**

Carl Long (Liaison to Vestry)

### **TEAM MEMBERS**

Jim Karns (Chair)	John McElvey (Co-chair)	
Jennifer Bush	Mike Dunevant	Meg Robertie
Jack Smith	Paul Thompson	Fran Karns

### **Future Capital Improvement Planning**

Reserve Study

Jim Karns and Ron Kerchner met with Bryan Adkins to discuss a new reserve study.

### **Ongoing Maintenance**

#### **HVAC**

Arctic Heating and Air performed semi-annual checks, replaced filters and repaired or replaced several bad components.

#### **CRAWL SPACE**

Brasure's performed semi-annual checks of humidity levels, inspected dehumidifiers and sump pumps, and replaced bad monitors.

#### **ELECTRICAL & KITCHEN APPLIANCES**

Jack Smith and Jim Karns replaced light bulbs and fixed various appliance problems throughout the year. Arctic's electrician moved 2 outlets to accommodate new cabinet in the parish hall, replaced all indoor CFL bulbs (78) with LED flood lightbulbs to help reduce energy costs. Light fixtures were redirected in the sanctuary. Jack and Jim labelled circuits in the kitchen.

Replaced outside CFL flood bulbs with LEDs. Replaced outside security pole light fixture and bad daylight sensors for night security lights. Installed new cover over outside receptacle.

#### **FIRE SYSTEMS AND EXTINGUISHERS**

B&G Fire Protection performed its annual check and certified all extinguishers. Security Instruments performed the annual inspection of the fire detection system. Security Instruments called after sensors went off and they replaced the panel in the mechanical room.

#### **PLUMBING**

Sherman Plumbing replaced front frost-free valve under warranty. The plumber responded to a sewer backup after a concert and routed out the drain to unclog. The plumber installed 3 new Moen faucets in the kitchen which were purchased at a discount. Disconnected the water cooler from refrigeration compressor.

## **BUILDING EXTERIOR**

Brasure's sprayed 3 times for pests around the church perimeter and performed an annual termite inspection.

Jim Karns and John McElvey continue to install new memorial bricks. Mat and stair treads on steps to choir loft. A carpenter was hired to replace the back door with frame and repair the front door latches by the foyer and added weather stripping. The back door was painted red.

Spicer was called back several times to investigate and repair roof leaks, with the last fix installing an ice and water shield around steeple area roof ridge.

## **LANDSCAPING**

Meg Robertie and Jennifer Bush signed up to take over weeding and light pruning duties. They also donated numerous annuals and plants resulting in a much more colorful and beautiful landscape.

Bethany Blooms continues to cut grass, fertilize, perform spring, and fall cleanups, mulch beds, and remove snow. Bethany Blooms added dinosaur eggs (round stones) to finish several bed edgings. They also dug up and divided two large grasses overtaking a corner bed which were then donated to Habitat for Humanity houses.

Rowe winterized the irrigation system in the fall and then activated it in the spring and repaired several issues.

## **BUILDING INTERIOR**

Florinda and Tabo continue to clean. Jim replaced the shop vac to replace the bad one.

Jim installed door stops on most doors. Jim and John assembled a new coat rack and installed it by the office, installed a broom holder in kitchen pantry and installed a new blind on the door by the choir loft. Jim decluttered the closet by the back door to foyer.

Clem and Jim measured Dave's office, altar platform and choir loft for new carpeting. Jim. A new carpet was installed in Dave's office. Clem and Mike assembled Dave's new desk.

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS**

Jim ordered 100 new chairs and 2 racks for parish hall. Jim, John and Mike unpacked chairs and racks and assembled racks. The McElveys arranged to donate the old chairs to Union Wesley, a church in the Ministerium that Outreach supports. Jim and John met with 2 men from Union Wesley to load the chairs onto their trailer. Jim and John also delivered items to Union Wesley that St. Martha no longer uses such as the large TV and electronic equipment.

Jim worked with Tina Edgar on her parish hall project. Schuyler Hannum installed cabinets and counter tops in parish hall. Mary Thompson and Pat Long made valances and Mary made seat cushions.

Jim replaced and installed a new church sign by Route 1 and Maplewood Avenue.

## **FURNITURE AND INTERIOR (TINA EDGAR AND PAT LONG)**

Continuing the Parish Hall project from 2022, over 30 feet of blue cabinets purchased from Cabinets Unlimited of Selbyville, were installed on the south wall. They will be used for needed storage. Schuyler Hannum installed the cabinets at a savings to the church of over \$1600. Clem Edgar and Carl Long helped with the installation. Mary Thompson made two bench cushions to match the valances.

The “old piano” from the church was moved into the Parish Hall after the new instrument was purchased for the Sanctuary. Bulletin boards were added for Outreach, information, and photos of parishioners. A large 40” x 60” framed sunrise and beach photo was placed on the east wall (taken by Maryfrances Berger, photographer).

Continuing the improvements to the west side of the church, a new desk for Dave Kemper, Director of Music, was purchased by Carolyn and Jack Smith. Clem Edgar and Mike Dunevant put it together. New wall to wall, blue tweed carpeting was furnished and installed in the office by “Interiors by Kim”, Ocean View. Most of the expenses came from Capital Reserve funds.

## **Finance Committee Report – Dave Moore**

### ***Committee Members:***

David Moore, Chairman; Bob Cardoni, Phil Fleming, Wincy Jackson, Ron Kerchner, Treasurer; Michael Dunevant, Beth Maurer and Lanny Moore, Deposit Coordinators; Tylander Asst. Treasurer

---

### ***Purpose:***

The Finance Committee prepares the Annual Operating, Mission, and Capital Expenditures (Cap Ex) Budget proposal to the Vestry for its approval. The Committee seeks input from the various committees/groups to meet the physical needs and the program requirements of St. Martha’s Mission Statement. In July, the Committee does an in-depth first half Operating, Mission, and Cap Ex Budget, making proposed changes to the Vestry.

Finance meets monthly during the year to review the Nilsson accounting firm St. Martha’s financial reports and make recommendations to the Vestry regarding the parishes Income & Expenses. Finance also reviews the Diocese Master Fund A investment monthly reports for all St. Martha’s Unrestricted and restricted accounts.

The Finance Committee prepares and reviews the Policies & Procedures for conducting St. Martha’s financial affairs. These documents are sent to the Vestry for approval or revision. Finance follows the procedures as found in the “Manual of Business Methods” as developed by the National Episcopal Church. The Annual Parochial Report Financial section is prepared by the Finance Committee for Vestry approval.

The Committee has the task of scheduling the annual review of the parishes’ financial records. The financial review for calendar year 2022 was conducted by an Internal Financial Review Team (IFRT) (Wincy Jackson, Carl Long, and Beth Maurer) per vestry

and diocese approval. The IFRT saves St. Martha’s approximately \$20,000 annually in external audits fees. When this internal financial review was completed in June, the Finance Committee reviewed the report from the IFRT and made recommendations to the Vestry as needed. As required by diocesan canon, the written financial review report with supporting documentation was submitted to the diocesan office and accepted.

**Accomplishments:**

- Two additional deposit coordinators were successfully added and trained.
- Ukraine/Turkey & Syria Lenten \$6,570, and Maui \$6,485 match to the parish donations.
- The 2023 Operating and Mission Budget was revised in July and approved by Vestry.
- A \$4,400 Reserve Study Contract was signed to be completed in 2023.
- Funds of \$5,000 for the Adult Education and Community Events Committee to support planned programming were proposed and approved by Vestry.
- \$100,000 Treasurer investment authority to Raymond James Money Market Fund given a 5% interest rate.
- A separate St. Martha’s laptop for the Treasurer and Asst. Treasurer to ensure cybersecurity to St. Martha’s Cloud.

**Treasurer’s Report – Ron Kerchner**

1. Balances in our accounts are healthy (as of October 31, 2023)

**PNC**

Operating Account \$	79,865
Rector's Discretionary Account	2,843
Restricted Account	55,439
Mission Account	97,216
Total	235,363

<b>Master Fund A</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Lighthipe Trust</b>
Balance (Sep 30, 2022)	550,101	3,849,959
Current balance (Aug 31, 2023)	592,438	4,008.674
Percent change	+7.7%	4.1%

Master Fund A increases consistent with the general stock market.

2. Comparison of Plate and Pledge (2022 vs 2023 as of end Oct)

	<u>Plate</u>	<u>Pledge</u>
2022	\$43,014	\$142,584
2023	\$46,043	\$207.658

68K ahead of last year

3. 2023 Actual v Operating Budget (end Oct 2023)

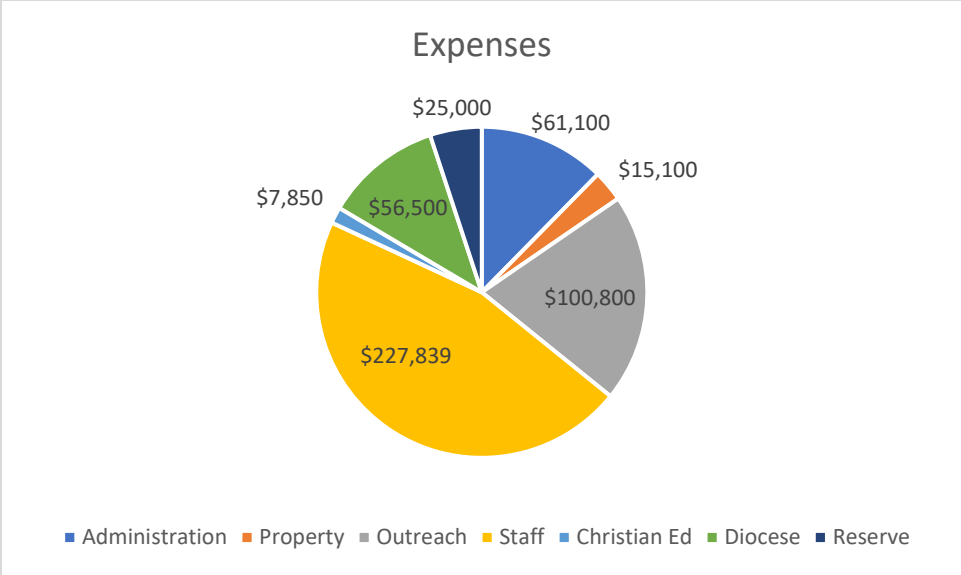
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Pro-rated Budget</u>
Plate	\$46,043	\$35,000
Pledge	\$207,658”	\$183.330
Total Income	21K ahead of budget	
Total Expenses	\$273,645	\$274,082
Expenses on track		

4. 16K balance in restricted / memorial account. Worship Committee considering several purchases.

Now using a St Martha’s computer and backing up to St Martha’s online storage.

The annual audit of expenses will be via digital records versus paper as in the past.

Have been working with several potential Assistant Treasurers to strengthen Treasurer function.

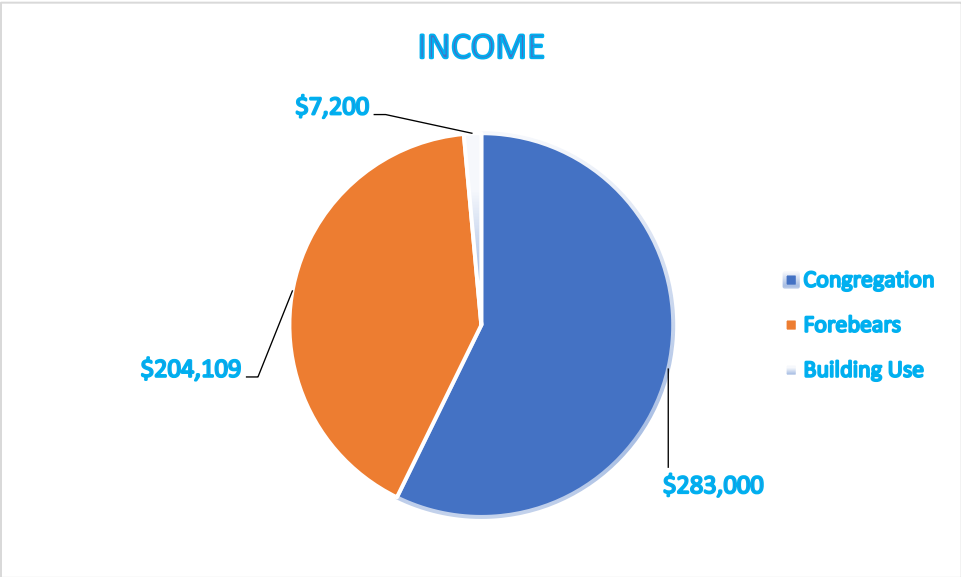


**Expense**

Administration	\$	61,100
Property	\$	15,100
Outreach	\$	100,800
Staff	\$	227,839
Christian Ed	\$	7,850
Diocese	\$	56,500
Reserve	\$	25,000
	\$	494,189

**Income**

Congregation	\$283,000
Forebears	\$204,109
Building Use	\$7,200
	\$494,309



## **Outreach Committee Report – Fran and John McElvey**

**MISSION:** The Outreach Committee of St. Martha's Church shall display the love of Christ by sharing our resources with others to help improve the quality of life for those in need in our community.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** Susan Callahan, Tom Catlin, Bill Gay, Fran Karns, Bob Katz, Pat Leskowitz, Jackie Limroth, Josie Legeer, Fran and John McElvey, Carol Miles, Caryn Cleveland-Short, and Mary Thompson, Dale Smith

**ANGEL TREE:** The Outreach Committee asks parishioners to buy gifts of clothing, art supplies, or a toy for a child from Phillip Showell, John Clayton, or Selbyville Middle School. Parishioners may choose an Angel or Snow buddy from our Christmas tree. School, gender, grade, and sizes will be on the cutout. Monetary donations are accepted if the parishioner would prefer an Outreach member to shop.

**BACKPACK AND SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE:** Parishioners donated \$4,082 for backpacks and school supplies. Outreach delivered 24 backpacks and school supplies, including headsets, tissues, and Clorox wipes, to Phillip Showell and John Clayton Elementary schools. We also delivered 10 backpacks and needed school supplies to Selbyville Middle School, as well as socks, sweatshirts, pants, shirts, and leggings for students in need at SMS.

**BETHANY BEACH VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT AND BETHANY BEACH POLICE DEPT:** St. Martha's church appreciates the services of our local police and fire departments. Outreach donated \$500 to each department in 2023.

**CAMP ARROWHEAD:** Outreach donated \$10,500 toward scholarships for students to go to camp this summer. Four scholarships related to St. Martha's, three with Lighthouse for Broken Wings, and four with the Boys and Girls Club. Two scholarships were local students recommended by counselors. \$690 of this money supported the Native American Nanticoke camp week.

**CLOTHING OUR KIDS:** \$2000 was donated to this local organization which provides clothing to children in need in Sussex County. The organization gives the clothes to school counselors and nurses to be distributed as needed.

**CODE-PURPLE SHELTER:** St. Martha's Outreach donated \$1500 to support the homeless shelter in Georgetown through Love Inc./Code Purple.

**CROP HUNGER WALK:** St. Martha's Episcopal Church is one of 15 churches in the Ministerium to participate yearly in the Crop Hunger Walk this year. St. Martha's Church donated \$1,426. \$1,000 came from the Outreach budget. Area food pantries receive 25% of the donations from the Crop Walk and the rest of the donations support just and sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, displacement, and disaster globally through Church World Service (CWS).

**DELAWARE HOSPICE:** A donation of \$1000 was made to Hospice of Delaware which provides comfort and care to the terminally ill and their families.

**DIAPER DRIVE:** St Martha's congregation donated \$450 toward diapers and personal items. Outreach purchased and delivered the diapers to IRSD Pantry and Union Wesley UM Pantry. Personal products (deodorant, tissues, and feminine products) were purchased with emergency funds and delivered to Selbyville Middle School.

#### **EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S NUTRITION:**

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** This donation goes into a fund controlled by the school cafeteria staff and is coordinated by the school counselor. All students can access the money if needed. It is also a way to provide healthy food to children who receive reduced or free lunch. Phillip Showell and John Clayton both received \$600 from Outreach in 2023 for their Food for Thought programs.

**WHITE BAG LUNCHESES:** Outreach donated \$750 for the food program at Community Lutheran Church. This program provides bag lunches to food insecure students during summer vacation. One weekday, food is packed at Community Lutheran Church and taken to the Frankford Library where parents and students pick up the food. Food is delivered every weekday by different organizations. St. Martha's Outreach provides white bags and St. Martha's sketchers decorate the bags with artwork that appeals to the students. \$115 was spent on bags and art supplies.

**FOOD PANTRIES:** Outreach donates to four food pantries each month: Indian River School District (IRSD) Pantry receives \$500 in \$25 Food Lion gift cards and St. Vincent de Paul at Guadeloupe receives \$300 in Food Lion gift cards. Community Lutheran Food Pantry (CLFP) and Union Wesley UM Church Pantry receive checks for \$400 to purchase food each month for their pantries. \$800 is built into the budget for emergency pantry needs. The total amount of money that St. Martha's church donates to food pantries is \$20,000 a year.

**WINTER MEAL PROGRAM:** St. Martha's Outreach participates with other churches in the Ministerium to provide meals for those in need from November until March. The meals are handed out at the Frankford Fire Department. St. Martha's Outreach takes water, snacks, and fruit to Mariners the second Tuesday of the month. The water, fruit, and snacks along with soup prepared at Mariners make a nourishing meal.

**FAMILY PROMISE OF SOUTHERN DELAWARE:** Family Promise prevents families from being evicted and entering homelessness by providing rental assistance, landlord mediation, assistance with utility shut offs and other expenses contributing to housing instability. They provide resources and community connections for families. A case manager works with the family to ensure they have what they need to avoid future homelessness. Dale Smith is the board president of Family Promise of Southern Delaware, and he keeps Outreach informed of their progress. Outreach donated \$5,000 to Family Promise in 2023.



**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY:** Habitat preserves homeownership and neighborhoods by building and repairing homes in partnership with people in need of decent, affordable housing in Sussex County. Outreach donated \$1500 to Habitat in 2023. Outreach also donates Welcome Baskets with cleaning supplies to new homeowners. Many of St. Martha's Parishioners have attended the Habitat Home Dedication Ceremonies and presented the baskets. The cost of each basket is about \$150.00.

**HOME OF THE BRAVE:** Outreach donated \$750 to The Home of the Brave Foundation, Inc. in 2023. This program provides targeted assistance regarding housing and counseling for homeless women veterans and their children.

#### **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT COMMITTEE – BILL GAY**

St. Martha's 16th Annual Picnic in June was attended by 110 International Students from 18 countries. It was a huge success thanks to the hard work of over 40 parishioners, some 40 businesses donating food or gifts, and over a dozen civic organizations. We welcomed the travel weary Students with gifts of local logo wear, lots of food to eat with us and also take home for friends who couldn't attend because they were working, and a "soft sell" of health, safety, and generally helpful information from First Responders, Lifeguards, the Chamber, Beebe Nurses, the Library, etc. Perhaps the best review of our Picnic came from a Bulgarian student quoted in the Coastal Point news "...his favorite memory from this summer was the J-1 visa student picnic held at St Martha's ... the passion and friendliness we were met with were all really incredible ... This is one of those memories I will never forget."

**MILFORD HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION:** Strives to provide decent, safe, and affordable housing solutions to people of modest means. Outreach donated \$1500 to MHDC.

**OPERATION SEAS THE DAY:** Outreach donated \$1000 in 2023. During this week, Bethany Beach hosts soldiers and their immediate families for a well-deserved week of rest and relaxation as they stay in homes/condos donated by local homeowners.

**QUILTS OF VALOR (QOV):** Many parishioners and others in the community have donated fabric and come together to create QOV quilts to present to veterans who have been touched by war. There were cutters, ironers, sewers, and quilters working together to complete these beautiful works. QOV are presented directly to a veteran and these priceless quilts are never sold or raffled. Materials and labor are estimated at \$600 per quilt.

St. Martha's Stitchers have also made several donation quilts and given them to State Police to give to domestic violence survivors, sent quilts to Maui after their fires, and sent one to the Love Quilt Project to be sent to South Africa for a child orphaned by AIDS or HIV. We started a new ministry in 2023 making baptism quilts for our newest parishioners.

**SOUTHEAST SUSSEX MINISTERIUM (SESM):** Outreach donated \$5000 in 2023 to the Ministerium to help people in Sussex Country who need assistance with their rent,

utilities, and/or medical needs. The Pyle Center meets with people in need and then refers to them to the Ministerium for their emergency needs.

**STOCKLEY CENTER-**The Episcopal Churchwomen of Delaware ministry is to provide birthday cards and Walmart gift cards to disabled residents at the Stockley Center. St. Martha's Outreach provides \$25 gift cards to Walmart and birthday cards for four residents with December and January birthdays. Outreach also contributed needed toiletries for residence.

**THANKSGIVING DINNERS:** Parishioners provided Thanksgiving meals of specific food items to 30 needy families from John M. Clayton Elementary, Phillip C. Showell Elementary, and Selbyville Middle School. Outreach also included a \$30 Food Lion gift card in each bag for turkeys.

**THE WAY HOME:** This facility in Millsboro provides inmates released from the Sussex County Detention Center a temporary residence, guidance, and support as they transition back into the local community. Outreach donates \$16,000 yearly in monetary donations to The Way Home. Additional donations of toiletries and clothing are also given.

**EMERGENCY FUNDS:** In collaboration with Mariner's Bethel and other churches from the Ministerium, St. Martha's Outreach donates snacks, water, and fruit for 50-60 people once a month from November to March for a Winter Meal Program. The meals are given out at the Frankford Fire Department on Tuesday evenings. Outreach also donated \$300 for a Behavior Incentive Program at Selbyville Middle School and \$250 for snacks at Selbyville Library summer program. Stockley Center donations were \$56.28. The Crop Walk donation of \$1,000 also came from emergency funds.

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

**COMMUNICATION:** Outreach informs the congregation in several ways. There is a section for Outreach news in the Wednesday Information emails and announcements are often made on Sunday at the church service. Outreach displays are also in the Narthex and on the walls in the Parish Hall.

**SCHOOL COUNSELORS:** Counselors have kept Outreach members informed when there is a special need at the schools. Counselors also provide Outreach with "names" of the families who need Thanksgiving Meals and Angel Tree gifts.

**MENTORS:** Several parishioners, including some Outreach volunteers, mentor in local schools.

The Outreach Committee thanks the people of St. Martha's who have given so generously of their time, money and donated goods in support of the above charities and thus truly reflect, "Love God, Love your Neighbor, Change the World".

## **Worship Committee Report – Nancy Rojewski**

Under the direction and guidance of The Reverend Victoria Pretti, Rector, the worship committee consisting of Nancy Rojewski (leader), Beth Maurer, Marianne Pena (greeters), Sandy Roberts, Diane Gay & Carolyn Smith (altar guild), Alice Ann Freund, Pat Long (flowers), and Dave Kemper (music), met in February, April, and September. The committee reviews the church calendar and discusses worship offerings based on the liturgical seasons. We look at the “nuts and bolts” of things. We review and discuss upcoming worship opportunities and share information to ensure that worship goes smoothly.

In 2022 we continued with a mid-eastern potluck meal and Maundy Thursday service of foot washing and communion in the parish hall, the blessing of the animals’ service and the candle lighting service for All Saints Day along with Sunday service at 8:00 and 10:00, Good Friday, Palm Sunday, Easter (8:00, 9:30, 11:30) and Christmas Eve (5:00). Liturgical dance (Gari Lewis) and red streamers were added to Pentecost Sunday. A Thanksgiving service, (Dianne Burlew), and a Blue Christmas service will be offered. The 10:00 Sunday service continues to be available through YouTube.

The committee continues to creatively look at ways to enhance our worship experience and help ensure that St. Martha’s is a welcoming, loving community in which to worship.

## **Music Report – Dave Kemper**

Greetings!

My 2022 annual report ended with, “I look forward to an exciting 2023!” and an exciting year it was! St. Martha’s was host to several wonderful concerts including:

- Capitol Ringers
  - Delaware Choir School
  - Baltimore Children’s Choir
  - Atwater and Donnely Folk Music and Dance
  - From Celtic to Classic
  - St. Thomas Gospel Choir
- Several guest soloists also enriched our worship experience.

I continue to be deeply grateful for the dedication of each choir member. They unselfishly give of their time and talents to enrich the worship service with beautiful music. The adult choir sings a weekly anthem 11 months out of the year, and the bell choir shares their music at 8 services throughout the year. The musicians include:

Frank Bell (choir)

Beth Maurer (choir, handbells)

Dianne Burlew (choir)

Fran McElvey (handbells)

Mimi Dupont (choir, handbells)

John McElvey (handbells)

Clem Edgar (choir, handbells)

Rebecca Nichols (handbells)

Alice Anne Fruend (handbells)

Cheryl Powell (handbells)

Cindy Kane (choir, handbells)

Hank Rojewski (choir)

Carl Long (choir)

Nancy Rojewski (choir)

Fran Marta (handbells)

Carol Ryan (choir, handbells)

Edwina Martens (choir, handbells)

Carolyn Smith (handbells)

Cynthia Theoharis (handbells)

I encourage you to “**Thank a Choir Member**” for their commitment to St. Martha’s music program. Please consider joining us!

And finally, I would like to thank each member of St. Martha’s. I am very blessed to be able to serve as your Director of Music. I am also very fortunate to have the support of Ria and the members of the church vestry. I look forward to an exciting 2024! Make a joyful noise!

### **Administrative Assistant Report – Jaclyn Hickman**

This September marked 6 years for me at St. Martha’s! I’m not sure where the time has gone. The fact that I truly enjoy each day here and my interactions with all the wonderful parishioners makes the time pass with great ease. Everyone is always so friendly, kind, and appreciative. I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve here. I enjoy being a witness and playing a small part in all the good that happens in this building and that is shared and spread throughout the community.

This year I added a few things to my list of responsibilities. Previously our Facebook page was managed by a volunteer. I have since taken that over and am in the process of adding an Instagram page as well. Stay tuned for an announcement regarding that. I’ve also begun managing our advertising efforts with Coastal Point. We run an ad every week regarding our Sunday services and then special ads for events open to the public. In addition, this year I was able to secure a free Pro account with Canva that is offered to non-profits which has greatly helped to improve the quality of our communication materials. I previously used the free version, but the Pro account has a lot more to offer. I look forward to continuing to learn how to better utilize this and other resources to assist me with improving and extending the reach of our communications.

As we continue to grow, so does our calendar of events! I just want to emphasize the importance of checking with the office prior to scheduling events. This prevents conflicts with the use of the building and helps me to accurately communicate what is happening. I prepare the weekly insert on either Monday or Tuesday of each week and then the Wednesday email either Tuesday or Wednesday. If there are any changes to events or information regarding things that are coming up or any other type of announcement that needs to be shared with the congregation, please make sure I am notified as soon as possible. I work hard to make sure the information provided to you is as thorough and accurate as possible, but I need your help to do that. Regular office hours are Monday-Thursday, 9 am to 1 pm and Friday from 9 am to noon. You can call

me during those times, or you can always email me or leave a voicemail after hours and I will get back to you the next day.

Thank you all once again for the opportunity to support and be a part of this wonderful church community. “Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much.” – Helen Keller

## **Hospitality Committee Report – Josie Legeer**

The Hospitality Committee hosts service and social events for our parish family and community throughout the year.

We try to have at least one event a month.

Some of our events are:

- Game Nights when all get together with some snacks for a fun evening with games in which all can participate.
- Birthday Dinners where all can get together with people who are celebrating their birthday in the same month, and we provide a killer cake.
- Bake sales for all. Members of the church show their best baking skills with wonderful cakes, cookies, brownies, etc.
- Picnics in the summer
- Christmas luncheon
- Mardi Gras dinner
- Themed dinners, receptions, and meals for visiting speakers and artists

## **Adult Education and Community Events Report – Rick Legeer**

The Adult Education/Community Event committee is engaged in providing informative and educational events for the Parish and for the greater community. Educational events focus on our faith and the church, while community functions are open to the public. A relatively new committee, we have had a variety of events, presentations, and meetings and look to expand our offerings in the future.

Over the past four years our efforts have included:

- a talk by DE state senator Sarah McBride on her legislative efforts as a trans person
- tours of the Delaware Botanic Gardens
- a presentation on Antisemitism
- safety presentation by the Bethany police
- informative meeting with the Greater Lewes Community Village
- a visit to the Harriet Tubman Center in Cambridge MD
- presentation on saving and expanding bay oysters
- monthly hybrid book club
- monthly movie night and discussion and a special Christmas movie event

- multiple musical events including a Philadelphia gospel chorus, a folk/bluegrass presentation, and a youth choral are just a few of the events hosted in the past year.

New events planned for 2024 include a “Religion for Dummies” series, a talk on the African American history of our region, a presentation on home energy savings, a trip to the African American Museum in Washington, D.C. We also plan to engage the greater community through involvement in the Chamber of Commerce. Many of our previous efforts will be repeated as well. The committee interfaces with other Parish committees on events of mutual interest and effort, including the Becoming Beloved committee, the men’s breakfast group and the music department.

As a new committee we are actively exploring new Parish and community wide efforts. We believe that resources are available internally and externally to enhance St. Martha’s Parish education efforts and provide events of interest to the community. The committee is an engaged and energetic group; we welcome participation, both event specific and general. To learn more about the committee contact Rick Legeer at 301-758-7539 or [rlegeer@gmail.com](mailto:rlegeer@gmail.com).

### **Altar Guild Report – Diane Gay and Carolyn Smith**

The Altar Guild at St. Martha’s is a silent ministry that falls under the auspices of the Worship Committee. Members serve the Church under the direction of the Rector. This year we welcomed three new members so at the present time there are 19 members on the Altar Guild who are each asked to volunteer for at least one service each month. Working in teams of two for every service, members are responsible for the following:

Preparing the Altar and the Credence Table for Sunday and for weddings, funerals and baptisms and other special services.

Ensuring that the altar, lectern, and banner hangings are dressed in the proper liturgical color.

Clearing and cleaning up after each service.

Washing and promptly returning linens that were used during the services.

Providing proper care of linens, candles and any other material used in the worship services.

Preparing travel kits for Eucharistic ministers who take the sacraments to parishioners who are unable to attend church.

Ordering new linens, wine, wafers, and other supplies as needed.

New members are always welcome!

## **Becoming Beloved Community Report – John Short**

The Becoming Beloved Community group began at St. Martha's as a recommendation from the Episcopal Diocese of Delaware's Racial Justice and Reconciliation Commission to all parishes in the state. The group was formed to foster (1) education, (2) appreciation and understanding, and (3) direct action, related to justice issues concerning race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and religion. This work supports the goals of the Commission and the Becoming Beloved Community initiative of the Episcopal Church to support all marginalized people.

Over the past year the group transformed from a study, discussion and idea generation group that worked closely with the Adult Education and Community Events Committee, to a full-fledged committee of the Vestry that continues to co-sponsor events and programming. Becoming a regular committee helped in securing greater recognition and in requesting budgetary support from the Vestry.

The accomplishments of the Becoming Beloved Community over the past year include the following:

- Three members of the BBC Committee, along with one member of the Adult Education and Community Events Committee, completed the ten-session multimedia course called "Sacred Ground." This course was developed by the national Episcopal Church to fill in historical to contemporary information that many congregation members agreed they had never learned about our multi-racial and ethnic background.
- In conjunction with the Adult Education and Contemporary Events Committee, the BBC group spearheaded the idea of a bus trip to the Harriet Tubman Visitors Center in February. Congregation members were able to travel together to the Visitor's Center where they met with Mr. Sylvester (Syl) Wolford, a successful professional turned African-American historian. Syl first met with interested members of the congregation through a Zoom talk, then provided commentary and answered questions at the Center. Dr. Sheridan Kingsberry, founding Co-Chair of the Diocese's Commission on Racial Justice and Reconciliation, also met with our group.
- Our sponsored program for April consisted of a talk and discussion on the very timely topic of Antisemitism. Mr. Andrew Goretzky, Regional Director of the ADL in Philadelphia, discussed the rise of antisemitism and the need for everyone to counter hate wherever it exists. Parishioners, community members and members of the Seaside Jewish Community in Rehoboth Beach filled the parish hall for this important program. A reception was also provided.
- After reviewing a proposal from the BBC group, the Vestry approved a request to transition the group to a regular Vestry committee with budgetary support.

- With so much misinformation and misunderstanding regarding sexual orientation and with so much hate directed at trans people, the BBC Committee co-sponsored “A Conversation with Sarah McBride” June 22nd in the parish hall. The first transgender state senator, Ms. McBride talked about her life and challenges as a transgender person, as well as her public policy commitments related to social justice.
- To promote greater cultural awareness, the BBC Committee worked with Music Director Dave Kemper to feature the Choir School of Delaware’s multi-cultural choral group and the St. Thomas Gospel Choir with performances as part of the church’s summer music series. We have found that musical events often bring people together for cultural awareness and understanding in ways that cannot be achieved through more didactic methods.
- BBC Committee member Fran Karns, with strong support from the Committee, led a Justice Quilt project in the church and in the diocese. St. Martha’s quilt, created by the church’s quilters, symbolized Truth, Justice, and Love. Other Episcopal churches joined the project as well, and the quilts will be displayed at the Diocese’s annual state convention.
- The Committee also worked with the Adult Education and Community Events Committee to sponsor movies and book discussions in support of the goals of the committee.

The BBC Committee is already planning programming for January through April 2024 and is very grateful for congregation and Vestry support. Any other ideas for possible programming and other projects will be most appreciated.

## **Flower Guild Report – Alice Anne Freund**

**Chairpersons:** Alice Anne Freund and Pat Long

**Purpose:** The Flower Guild seeks to praise God through the medium of flowers and other decorations each Sunday, at Easter and Christmas, and on special occasions

**Activities for 2023:** During this past year, the Flower Guild has enjoyed outstanding flower arrangements from Bethany Florist for our weekly Sunday services as well as for several extra services – weddings, funerals, and baptisms. Our Christmas arrangement incorporated some different plants, such as cyclamen, peace lilies, and some unusual poinsettias. At Easter, we created a spring garden with a great variety of plants - tulips, azaleas, daffodils, peace lilies, calla lilies, hyacinths, begonias, mums, and sunflowers. We used one subdued arrangement of dried plants and sea life for the Sundays of Lent. We will continue this practice this year, with a twist to be announced later. Flowers, and cookies, were given to honor congregants on Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, and on Sundays when we recognized Newcomers.



Soon we will have a new signup sheet for 2024. This enables congregants to designate a Sunday for remembering a loved one or for an event with flowers for the altar. The sign-up sheet is in the Parish Hall.

Plans for Advent and Christmas are underway. We will have a demonstration on the making of Advent wreaths at the Annual Meeting.

New members are always welcome. Contact Alice Anne Freund 301-229-0799 or [aafreund@verizon.net](mailto:aafreund@verizon.net).

## **Personnel Committee Report – Clem Edgar**

Chairperson – Clem Edgar

Participating Members – Barbara Goebel, Tempe Steen, Carl Long, Rev. Ria

Purpose or Goal of Ministry – To help ensure open communication between staff and Vestry; to avoid misunderstandings; to maintain fair and objective personnel procedures. To that end, the committee reviews and recommends policies and carries out its responsibilities under the policies as provided.

Changes: Todd Stevenson and Ron Kerchner have resigned from the Committee. Carl Long has been added. A regular annual meeting of the Committee has been established for mid-September to allow review of the Performance Appraisals.

Activities and Accomplishments – The Personnel Committee assisted the Rector with performance reviews of the staff (Director of Music and Parish Administrator) for 2023. The Personnel Committee continues to provide guidance to the Rector and Vestry as requested.

The committee also recommends staff salary adjustments to the Vestry as necessary. Compensation addendums for 2023 will be prepared by the Finance Committee, reviewed by the Personnel Committee, and forwarded to the Diocese at the appropriate time.

Plans/Visions for 2024 – Continue to oversee staff personnel and modify policies and procedures as necessary.

## **Technology Committee Report – Jaclyn Hickman**

Members: Jaclyn Hickman (chairperson), Dave Kemper, and Clem Edgar

Meetings are held on an as needed basis.

We met in June at the request of the Treasurer to discuss our projected needs over the next 5 years for the Long-Term Reserve Study. As discussed, we are in very good shape as far as our Audio/Video Equipment. In early 2021 we had a new system installed

which included: PTZ Camera Switcher/Controller with streaming, HD PTZ Cameras, Preview Screen, Headphones for monitoring audio, and a tripod for portable camera. Later in the year we had wall mounts and hanging mics installed. A back up lapel mic was also purchased in 2022. This year we replaced the power conditioner and amplifier which were both part of the original equipment. At this point the equipment in the sanctuary sufficiently meets our needs and we do not anticipate any upgrades nor replacements in the next 5 years.

Last year in the parish hall we purchased a battery powered speaker system with a stand as well as a microphone and stand. This year we added an 85" tv and stand along with a DVD player. We have discussed the possibility of purchasing a second microphone for question/answer sessions after presentations but decided to hold off at this time. Also discussed were acoustic tiles for the ceiling to improve sound. This is a much larger scale project along the lines of the A/V equipment purchase in the sanctuary, so although it was mentioned in the 5-year projection it was tabled for further discussion at this time.

For more immediate needs, we anticipated needing to replace all the current laptops in use. At the time of discussion, the total number was 5 laptops. Since our discussion, we started having issues with the laptop being used by the videographer. In August we had it worked on but within a few weeks it was having issues again, so we replaced it in September. We also added to our number of laptops with the recent purchase of one to be used by the Treasurer.

Another topic of discussion at our meeting was internet and phone service. We currently are contracted with Mediacom until February of 2024. At that time, we will research the possibility of transferring to Comcast. Our service is consistent this time of year, but we do encounter some slowness and unreliability in the summer season. If it is possible to improve our connections and reliability and decrease our costs, then we would certainly consider making the switch. We can always dream! Also, under the category of internet, we did lose our connection a few months ago but it was unrelated to our service provider. It was determined to be the port switch and we were lucky to have it replaced and the connection restored within a day or so.

The final topic discussed was the addition of some type of security system or doorbell/camera set up. This topic has come up several times in the past. We anticipate with the changing times this will likely become a reality in the next few years. The cost would largely depend on how extensive a system we selected. There would be an initial outlay for equipment and if we opted for monitoring, then an annual expense as well.

The Technology Committee gladly welcomes new members. We would be very grateful to be joined by anyone with professional experience in the IT field who would be willing to share their knowledge and expertise. However, it is not a requirement as the current members certainly are not at that level. Anyone interested in the subject and willing to give of their time and contribute their ideas is most certainly a welcome addition. If you are interested, please contact Jaclyn in the office.

## **Book Sales – Bill Ziegler**

Thanks to everyone who volunteered and provided the physical labor to set-up, work on the sale day, and take down this event.

Your continued support makes this event possible. We earn over \$5000 each year at no cost!

### **Sale results for 2023**

### **Projected for 2024**

<b>Sale</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Projected</b>
Christmas	12/10/22	\$642.00	12/9/23	\$600.00
Memorial	5/27/23	\$1620.00	5/25/24	\$1700.00
4 <sup>th</sup> of July	7/1/23	\$1921.00	7/6/24	\$1850.00
Labor Day	9/2/23	\$1420.00	8/31/24	\$1500.00
		<hr/>		
		\$5603.00		\$5650.00

### **Notes:**

1. Sales are for the fiscal year, December through September.
2. We should continue to run a color ad in the Coastal Point for all four sales.
3. There are no expenses anticipated for crates and additional tables.