

The Annual Meeting
of
Saint Bernard's
Episcopal Church



BERNARDSVILLE, NEW JERSEY
Sunday, January 31, 2021, via Zoom

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Agenda for 2021 Annual Meeting of St. Bernard's Episcopal Church

- **11:30 am Call to Order – Opening Prayer >**

Reports, part 1

- **11:32 am (3 min.) Rector's Report**
The Rev. Beth Rauén Sciaino
- **11:35 am (4 min) Wardens' Report,**
Jeri Minter and Julia Somers, Wardens

O Holy One, *Daily Prayer for All Seasons p. 3*
thank you for coming to us anew this day.
Prepare our hearts and reawaken our love for you
as we discern your call within us.
May we join with you in making level
the path for all people. Amen.

11:39 am Opening of Polls (Zoom poll) (open for 30 min.)

- Last year's Annual Meeting **Minutes for Approval** (see p. 4)
- **Nominations**
 - a. Warden and Vestry

For Warden – vote for one

Chris Thomas (*1st 1 year term*)

For Vestry Members – vote for four

Beth Gustafson (*2nd 3 year term*)

Jenny Moss (*1st 3 year term*)

Mary Kempen (*2nd 3 year term*)

Sue Smith (*2nd 3 year term*)

- b. Deputies to 2021 Diocesan Convention

For the Office of Deputy to Convention – vote for three

Julia Somers

Chris Thomas

Linda Engleby

- c. Delegates to 2021 Watchung Convocation

For the Office of Delegate to the Watchung Convocation – vote for three

Greg Canose

Mary Jane Canose

Al Hudgins

Reports, part 2

- **11:43 am (5 min.) Finance Presentation,** *Mindy Kirby, Treasurer*
- **11:48 am (2 min.) Stewardship Report,** *Julia Somers, Stewardship Chair*
- **11:50 am (5 min.) General Question and Answer opportunity**

11:55 am-12:08 pm Breakout groups (Take turns sharing briefly for 12 minutes.)

Tell a story about your best experience over the past year of being a parishioner of St. Bernard's. A time when you felt alive and glad to be a member. What made the experience memorable?

OR

Tell a story of a time in the past year at St. Bernard's when you really grew in your understanding of being a follower of Jesus. What happened? Who else was involved? What did you do as a result of the experience?

- **12:09 pm (8 min.) Opportunity to share an insight you learned from listening in your breakout group.**
- **12:17 pm (7 min.) Pastor Dan Fenco,** Camino de Fe Lutheran Church, **Bernardsville Pop-Up Food Pantry**
- **12:24 pm (2 min.) Declaration of Election and Introductions**
 - a. Vestry and Warden elected
 - b. Continuing Vestry and Warden
- **12:27 pm (3 min.) New Business**
- **12:30 pm Closing Prayer & Adjournment,**
Danielle Baker, Seminarian

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. **Amen.** *Book of Common Prayer p. 101*

ST. BERNARD'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES, JANUARY 26, 2020

1. Call to Order – Opening Prayer by Rev. Beth Rauen Sciaino
2. Approval of last year's Annual Meeting Minutes
3. Introduction of Candidates and Opening of Polls
Nominations (see attached Ballot)
 - d. Wardens and Vestry
 - e. Deputies to 2020 Diocesan Convention
 - f. Delegates to 2020 Watchung Convocation
4. Ballot – slate approved
5. Reports
 - a. Wardens' Report (*Mary Jane Canose and Jeri Minter, Wardens*)
 - b. Finance Presentation (*Mindy Kirby, Treasurer*)
 - c. Stewardship (*Julia Somers, Stewardship Chair*)
 - d. Priest-in-Charge Report (*The Rev. Beth Rauen Sciaino*)
 - e. General Question and Answer opportunity
 - Q1. Status of Basking Ridge property (wooded lot)?
 - A1. Review was performed; no action to be taken at this time. Property belongs to Cemetery.
 - Q2. Status of Heritage at Claremont construction? Is it on schedule?
 - A2. Five units complete; landscaping & exterior expected to be complete this spring. Some delays, not considered significant. NGC is covering cost of snow & ice removal, pending start of HOA fees.
 - Q3. Ability to visit Parish Hall units?
 - A3. Cannot view yet due to construction safety restrictions
6. Table exercise – St. Bernard's Quilts
7. Declaration of Election – all candidates elected
8. Introductions
 - c. Newly elected Vestry and Wardens
 - d. Continuing Vestry members
9. Closing Prayer

Respectfully submitted,
Taylor Hwong

Attachment: Annual Meeting Ballot

Annual Meeting Election Ballot – January 26, 2020

[Voice nominations added during the meeting]

For Wardens – vote for two

- Jeri Minter (*2nd 1 year term*) Julia Somers (*1st 2 year term*)

For Vestry Members – vote for two

- Michael Myers (*2nd 3 year term*) Tom Brooks (*2nd 3 year term*)

For the Office of Deputy to Convention – vote for three

- Julia Somers Leslie Curialle (*voice nomination*) Debi Kurisko (*voice nomination*)

For the Office of Delegate to the Watchung Convocation – vote for four

- Gregory Canose Mary Jane Canose Denise Thomas Chris Thomas

Saint Bernard's Church

Annual Report

Leadership Reports

RECTOR'S REPORT – *The Rev. Beth Rauen Sciaino*

On a Sunday morning in January 2018, St. Bernard's held a Day of Discovery in the nave of the church because we were in between Parish Halls at the time. During this Appreciative Inquiry exercise, the Spirit of God was present in the enthusiasm and energy of people sharing in pairs and then small groups all over the church. Parishioners shared their best experience of St. Bernard's, what they love to do, what they value about being a part of St. Bernard's and the Episcopal Church, core values of St. Bernard's, and their dreams for the parish. This was an opportunity to affirm rather than reinvent our identity. An identity that was forged by the 2004 fire, the hard work and visioning of St. Bernard's lay leadership, and an increased dedication to caring for our local community. In the Day of Discovery, our parish affirmed a shared understanding of St. Bernard's identity and core values, as a welcoming community that gathers weekly to worship God, delight in the beauty of our Anglican liturgy and music, and live out God's love through hands on helping with people in need. Our dream was to keep finding ways to live into this identity in Bernardsville, and welcome others to join in our efforts.

With the COVID-19 pandemic and shutdown beginning in mid-March 2020, individual and communal life throughout the world turned topsy-turvy. And yet, because we as a Christian community know who we are and God's purpose for us, we have found creative ways to live as a community at worship helping people in need. Through a bit of luck, shared commitment to keeping up the habit of interactive worship on Zoom, and trusting our own identity in Christ, we are renewed each Sunday in worship to live out God's love throughout the week. We have kept the three pillars of our identity active and engaged this year. We are a **community, gathered to worship God** through Anglican music and liturgy, with an outward orientation to **help people in need**, trusting that each person is a child of God. Knowing who we are and our purpose as a community of faith guided key decisions, including prioritizing participatory worship and familiar hymns over production values and recording or streaming Sunday worship. The simple choice to keep up the habit of our weekly gathering to thank and praise God, connect with each other, and sing hymns on mute, has made a major difference for our shared life this year. Our community has expanded because Zoom allowed us to welcome to worship people who live far away. Even when we moved to combined worship twice a month from October to December 2022, ensuring the Zoom worship experience was communal and participatory was a priority.

And what about hands on helping? Many parishioners who usually give of their time through the church and other volunteer organizations needed to stay home to protect themselves or family members. We are grateful for the precautions you are continuing to take to stay healthy. And yet, if our new Parish House had sat empty for the past year with our local outreach fully stifled, an essential pillar of our shared life in Christ would have been diminished. Trusting in God's mission for us, as our new Parish House was being built, we offered to Bernardsville's Office of Emergency Management that this space could be available to help in an emergency. We built the Parish House with the hope that it would continue our original Parish House's role of serving the people of Bernardsville. It turns out that our new one-way parking lot has been just as helpful for our collaborative effort of the Bernardsville Pop-Up Food Pantry, as we sought to keep our neighbors fed during the economic crisis (please read more about this effort on p. 15). Even though we have abstained and fasted from Holy Eucharist since the shutdown began, Jesus has been present alongside the Food Pantry's creative and ongoing efforts to meet the needs of our neighbors, members of our one community in the Somerset Hills. This effort exemplifies the benefits and blessings of small-town life. Our partners in service and ministry are similarly committed to building on this holy collaboration. Our posture of looking outward with our hands open, trusting in God's hope that we will share what we have—a building, a parking lot, a location, the Community Fund—provided a home base for the generosity of the people of the Somerset Hills to take off through donations of time, food, gift cards, and money.

I am so grateful to all of you for your continued support of the Food Pantry. My deep thanks to Pastor Dan Fenco of Camino de Fe Lutheran Church, whose ministry has been foundational to this effort and has become like a co-pastor in our shared commitment to serve the community. The Holy Spirit brought Pastor Dan to St. Bernard's on Sept. 11, 2019, looking for meeting space for his bilingual church. I am grateful for all God is doing in our mutual ministry.

I celebrate the leadership and ministry of St. Bernard's Wardens, Jeri Minter and Julia Somers, and St. Bernard's Vestry, Tom Brooks, Paul Edwards, Linda Engleby (Clerk), Libby Galpin, Beth Gustafson, Taylor Hwong, Mary Kempen, Mindy Kirby (Treasurer), Valerie McEntee, Michael Myers, Sue Smith, and Chris Thomas. Jeri has dedicated two years as Warden and six years on Vestry to leading St. Bernard's with strong commitment to our parish life and our value of hands on service. Jeri, Julia, and the Vestry have been vital in helping St. Bernard's increase our contribution and commitment to the Diocese of New Jersey, through the generous financial response of all our parishioners, which allowed St. Bernard's to call me as rector after four and a half years as Priest-in-Charge. This transition for the parish celebrates our mutual commitment to serve God through St. Bernard's Episcopal Church and increases our sense of stability.

We are so grateful to our outgoing Treasurer, Mindy Kirby, who has served six years on Vestry, three of them as Treasurer, for her dedication and leadership, as she moved us to a new era of working with financial advisors. God has blessed us with Danielle Baker, Seminarian, since her arrival on September 2, 2019, as she grows alongside us during her journey to ordained ministry. Danielle's faith, creativity, wisdom, and many talents have enlightened us all over the past year. We thank Parish Administrator, Alison Davidson, for her ability to maintain our ongoing administration during this unusual year, and for handling increased work with the Community Fund. Our parish's and my thanks go to our Music Director, David Dockery, who has gifted us with the Episcopal/Anglican hymns and music that bring us close to God, aided by the wonderful voices of Samantha Ferrara, Brett Grey, Debi Kurisko, and Devin McGuire. Thank you very much to Chris Thomas who guided our Reopening Team to safely implement reopening following diocesan protocols.

Steve Galpin has overseen our buildings and grounds for many years, and we offer our utmost thanks to him for all of his efforts as Libby and Steve move to Connecticut this year. We're grateful that Libby is willing to continue her Vestry service this year since we are meeting on Zoom. St. Bernard's is also indebted to the volunteer cemetery management of John Smith who has not only managed St. Bernard's Cemetery but also continued to organize its data. This year, John capitalized on the shutdown's diminishment of his other usual volunteer commitments to spend four months full time inputting the cemetery card catalog into new cemetery software to secure the information and make it more accessible. Thank you very much, John!

Thank you all for being a part of St. Bernard's. Please continue to share in this blessing of knowing who you are and whose you are, that is, that you belong to God!

God the Creator grant you grace to see yourself as God made you.

God of Love grant you grace to value yourself as God values you.

God of Life grant you grace to dream God's purpose for you and the courage to live it from the depths of your being.

And the Blessing of God Almighty, Creator, Lover, and Giver of Life be with you now and forever. **Amen.**¹

In Christ's love,



The Rev. Beth Rauen Sciaino, Rector
St. Bernard's Episcopal Church

¹ The Rev. Rob Voyle, *The Appreciative Way resources*, p. 215.

WARDENS' REPORT – *Jeri Minter, Julia Somers, Wardens*

For St. Bernard's Church, 2020 has been an extraordinary year. Arguably, the most important thing to take place was our calling the Reverend Beth Rauen Sciano to become our Rector, and – oh, happy day – she accepted! We were thrilled that Bishop Stokes supported our request, and know that the congregation is looking forward to this new, exciting phase in St. Bernard's life of worship and praise.

The second thing for us, as for every other church in the diocese, has been the impact on the parish of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are pleased and immensely proud of how beautifully our staff and parishioners have risen to meet the challenges presented by difficult times. Thanks to the extraordinary work of Pastor Beth, assisted by many volunteers from the congregation, she coordinated many places of worship, restaurants and groceries in Bernardsville to run a new Food Pantry from St. Bernard's Church. Our Community Fund, which began the year with approximately \$411 as we write has more than \$80,000, reflecting the confidence the greater community has placed in the leadership being shown and work going on at St. Bernard's. At this time, those monies are being used to purchase meals from local restaurants at deep discounts for distribution to families in need, as well as groceries for families with COVID-19 and help with rent.

Another milestone achieved during 2020 was the completion of the condominiums being built by Nat Conti behind our new Parish House. No longer needed to host construction equipment or building materials, our parking lot has instead become a site for sharing of food each week with Bernardsville households seeking food support and relief. The "triangle" has finally become the overflow parking lot for bigger worship events and other special happenings it was planned to be. As we adjust to fully utilizing our beautiful new Parish House, once the pandemic is behind us, it will become a new center for community use.

Despite the challenges, outreach has continued as a top priority for parishioners who gave much of their time and talent to serving the needs of our community. Cathy Ferrara's enthusiasm and guidance are a beautiful thing, and God's Giving Garden's produced over 2459 pounds of food for the Food Bank. St. Bernard's parishioners collected food and clothing and served lunch once a month at Grace's Kitchen in Plainfield earlier in the year, until closed by the pandemic. Unfortunately, the tutoring lab could not continue at this time. However, Cindy McWilliams made her 8th Faith in Practice mission trip to Guatemala, bringing warm hats knitted with love by our Knitting Group. Under Mindy Kirby's leadership, we continued to support the Food Bank Network of Somerset County and semi-annual ham and turkey collection. Thank you to the Hwong family who generously shared their freezer with us to store hams and turkeys until Mindy could get them to the Food Bank!

Please take the time to read each outreach group's report to see how much good is still being done and if you don't already participate, as they become available, we hope you will take advantage of opportunities to be of service to the community.

We continue to struggle with a financial deficit – our 2021 budget will be no different – but thanks to the strong management of our investments by RegentAtlantic, we ended the year about where we began, despite withdrawals from our accounts to support the parish's work. In 2021 we will meet our goal of pledging 10% of our budget to the Diocese of New Jersey. We are most grateful to Mindy Kirby for the excellent job she has done as Treasurer of the parish, now ably supported by a Finance Committee.

Our committed and talented staff members, David Dockery and Alison Davidson, have truly risen to the challenge of this difficult year. They served and helped the congregation continue to worship together virtually by Zoom in spiritually rewarding and meaningful ways, at times also from the church. In addition to offering praise and thanksgiving for Pastor Beth's leadership, we must reflect on how extraordinarily fortunate and blessed we have been to have enjoyed the support of our seminarian, Danielle Baker, and that of all the devoted people at St. Bernard's who continue to support and bless this wonderful parish community. We are again extremely grateful to John Smith, our voluntary Cemetery Manager, who

spent many 40-hour weeks cataloguing, computerizing and mapping the cemetery, and to Steve Galpin who, despite preparing to move to Connecticut, oversaw the maintenance of our buildings and grounds.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your wardens in 2020. It is our hope and prayer that 2021 will bring all of you, your loved ones, and the communities you serve good health, great blessings and many opportunities.

BEYOND ST. BERNARD'S

Conover Parishes, Watchung Convocation, and the Diocese of New Jersey:

Pastor Beth continued her involvement as a **Coach** in the Diocese of New Jersey's Coaching Network which works individuals and teams in congregations, with a focus on coaching for disciple-making.

In 2020, Pastor Beth began serving as the clergy representative from the Watchung Convocation on the **Board of Missions** of the Diocese of New Jersey. Each convocation has one lay and one clergy representative to the Board, each of whom have multiples mission congregations to which they serve as a liaison. Forty of the 138 congregations in the Diocese of New Jersey are missions, the rest are parishes and university chaplaincies. The Board also makes Mission Grant recommendations to Diocesan Council. This is a primary way in which the resources we share with the Diocese are redistributed to those mission congregations with fewer resources. These congregations are very engaged in God's mission and ministry in their local communities. Fourteen mission congregations received a total of \$425,000 for 2021.

On Saturday, Feb. 22, 2020, Pastor Beth, Fr. Rick Morley of St. Mark's, Basking Ridge, and other guests gathered with the parish of **St. John on the Mountain to celebrate the mutual ministry** of the people of St. John and Fr. Dave Jones, Priest-in-Charge. This service, led by Bishop Chip Stokes, included Confirmation and Reception, during which Jane Rauen, parishioner of St. Bernard's (and mother of Pastor Beth) was Received into the Episcopal Church.

On **Ash Wednesday**, our local parishes offered Ashes to Go at the Bernardsville Train Station. The noon service of Imposition of Ashes and Holy Eucharist was held at St. Bernard's and the evening service at St. John on the Mountain.

On Sunday, June 28, 2020, St. Bernard's held a **Celebratory Morning Prayer** service on Zoom to celebrate the parish's transition to having a rector, a role Pastor Beth began on June 1, 2020. The Bishop shared a congratulatory video message with the parish and Fr. Angelo Wildgoose, dean of the Watchung Convocation and rector of St. Mark's, Plainfield, participated in the service. We also celebrated 8th grade, high school, and college graduates by name, with a wonderful slide show Danielle Baker put together. In the fall at our first combined service, the parish generously gifted Pastor Beth with a silver pendant of the St. Bernard's Episcopal Church shield, and her initials and the date on the other side.

On Thursday, Dec. 17, 2020, St. Bernard's held a joint **Blue Christmas service** with St. Mark's, Basking Ridge, and St. John on the Mountain over Zoom. This service provided space to acknowledge the losses and stresses of this year before God, during a typically festive season. The service felt particularly appropriate to offer in 2020. We were grateful to have Samantha Ferrara lead us in adapted lyrics to Advent and Christmas carols, with accompaniment by David Dockery.

Anti-Racism training in the Diocese of New Jersey is now occurring in an online format over Zoom; a number of parishioners took part in 2020, and Pastor Beth will renew her training too. Please keep an eye out for 2021 opportunities.

Episcopal Community Services of the Diocese of New Jersey was launched with a Summit on Building and Equipping the Beloved Community on Dec. 12, 2020 (to view online: www.youtube.com/c/EpiscopalDioceseofNewJersey/videos). This diocesan-wide effort raises funds for congregational efforts to alleviate human need throughout NJ and related advocacy and justice work. Donations are welcome from individuals and congregations. St. Bernard's Vestry contributed a good will offering of \$750 from the 2020 budgeted funds for Outreach. ECS-NJ will learn from dioceses with strong ECS and help network congregations involved in outreach and advocacy. All current donations are being granted out.

Pastor Beth was appointed by Bishop Stokes to serve on the **Reparations Task Force**, a one year working committee whose work will be handed off to a Reparations Commission next year. At present the Task Force has teams working on

Diocesan Education/ Engagement, Funding/Finance, Research/History, and Advocacy. In 2006, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church urged dioceses “to collect and document...detailed information in its community on (a) the complicity of The Episcopal Church in the institution of slavery and in the subsequent history of segregation and discrimination and (b) the economic benefits The Episcopal Church derived from the institution of slavery” (Resolution A-123). A reparations resolution at the diocesan level was withdrawn six to eight years ago due to the opposition it faced. However, at the Diocese of New Jersey’s most recent convention in November 2020, clergy and lay delegates of the Diocese of New Jersey overwhelmingly passed Resolution 2020-3 which stated:

Be it resolved, That the 236th Convention of the Diocese of New Jersey reaffirm the will of The Episcopal Church General Convention to take action toward racial justice, healing, and reconciliation;

and be it Further resolved, That the Diocese of New Jersey establish a Task Force to initiate and oversee a multi-year process to examine our sins, complicity, and financial benefits through the history of slavery and its legacy continuing to contemporary practices, and to recommend appropriate actions for the Diocese.

In Bernardsville: Pastor Beth and Pastor Dan Fenco of Camino de Fe Lutheran Church were recommended by Police Chief Kevin Valentine for the position of **Police Chaplains** in December 2020. This position has been vacant since the departure of the Rev. Fred Baldwin, former rector of St. Bernard’s. Chief Valentine wrote in his appointment recommendation that the department’s internal focus group is engaged in an “ongoing review of our internal operations with respect to issues surrounding diversity, social justice, underserved populations, and our minority populations.” Filling the police chaplain position with an outward orientation toward the community was recommended by this focus group. Pastor Dan and Pastor Beth have worked extensively with police officers who staff the Bernardsville Office of Emergency through their work on the Bernardsville Pop-up Food Pantry. The intention is for the Police Chaplains to “continue to build a bridge and foster positive relations between the Police and members of our underserved community,” as well as be a resource for department members and the community in times of crisis. The appointments were made by resolution of the Bernardsville Borough Council during its Dec. 28, 2020, meeting on Zoom and a presentation of a plaque and badge by Chief Valentine to the new chaplains was made at the Jan. 25, 2021, council meeting on Zoom.

SEMINARIAN REPORT – Danielle Baker, Seminarian

525,600 minutes. What a difference a year makes and what a year it has been as Seminarian at St. Bernard’s 😊. Who would have thought it was possible. I certainly did not see it coming - I was not planning for it; however, I have been truly blessed, humbled, and thankful for joining you for a second year.

My time here at Saint Bernard’s continues to be an amazing journey. One that has been enriching and filled with a wealth of learning opportunities. And during this time, you allowed me to share



my experiences, knowledge, and many passions in the Episcopal Church. It all began shortly after last year’s Annual Meeting. I remember teaming up with Julia Somers and Pastor Beth, decorating our bulletin board, preparing for our **Lenten Discipline 2020**, Reducing our Carbon Footprint. I appreciated the congregation’s engagement in committing to improving our beautiful planet.



Together we journeyed with the **Book of Common Prayer** and shared experiences during the **Advent Education Series**. And I pray those Series have enriched you as we worship during Morning and Evening Prayer. You also allowed some of my hidden talents to come alive by using **Zoom for our worship services and pre-recording our Christmas service**.



My gratitude starts with our leader and wonderful Rector. **Beth**, thank you for the invitation to *follow you*. Words cannot express the level of appreciation I have for you and all you have done for this Parish and me during an unprecedented time. You have been an outstanding mentor who has provided limitless

teaching moments, inspiration, support, and the opportunity to teach and share my gifts. And let's not forget countless moments of joy and laughter.

To the **Wardens and Vestry**: thank you for supporting my second internship requirement as part of the ordination process to the priesthood. And to the members of my **Teaching Committee**: Greg Canose, Linda Engleby, Valerie McEntee, and Michael Myers, thank you for your continued time, energy, pearls of wisdom, and encouragement.

And finally, to the **congregation, David, the choir, and Alison**, thank you for your welcoming arms and engaging spirits. I have had the unique opportunity to witness the Gospel of Christ come alive in this space and look forward to continuing to grow with you.

Blessings and peace,



Danielle D. Baker
Seminarian
St. Bernard's Episcopal Church

nothing can separate us from the love of God



MUSIC MINISTRY – *David Dockery, Music Director*

This year's annual report is remarkably different from a year ago as we would never have imagined worshiping together virtually. The concept would have been foreign to us, yet here we are a year later under new rubrics - "Please mute...."

While most of us never heard of "Zoom" a year ago, I speculate that it will remain a household word even after the pandemic has over. As a classical musician, as have others, I have had to think on my feet to develop new ways of presenting music in our worship that maintains our tradition of high musical standards in a virtual platform hostile to live performance. Many churches, and understandably those with larger congregations, took to high quality live streams and downloads outside of an interactive platform.

However, I commend Beth for her leadership in keeping our worship interactive. While the technology initially did not perhaps offer what other churches were doing, we adapted. We learned how to push that square peg through the round hole and our weekly worship services over Zoom now feel like it is something we have always done. After many months, I think we started to see the unique advantages to worshiping together in a new way. I suspect that when we are all back together in church, we will continue to offer some type of virtual worship experience for our newly-adopted members in other states and time zones, and for those who maybe cannot make it to church every Sunday.

A unique experience this past year was the St. Bernard's "Virtual Choir" which sang two anthems for our service this summer installing Beth as our rector. (Yay Beth!) I would like to thank those who participated in the immense undertaking and to those members who gave it their best shot! I am grateful for each and every choir member. It is an understatement that I cannot wait until we are all rehearsing together again at a much too early hour in the choir room.

Much of our musical work this year could not be accomplished without our amazing section leaders, Debi Kurisko, Sam Ferrara, Brett Gray, and Devin McGuire who continue to demonstrate their flexibility and "roll with it" attitude. I particularly thank Sam Ferrara who was instrumental in the first 7 months of musical leadership. I also thank Beth and the Vestry for their commitment to keep our section leaders employed at the same level as they would have been pre-pandemic. We have all enjoyed the rotation of singers each Sunday and their hard work in recording the Christmas Eve

service. This level of support would not be possible without the generous and gracious benefactors of our music program. Thank you!

In February, we will be initiating our annual music appeal. Our fundraising goal is \$10,000.00 for the program year. Any shortfall will come from the general fund. Donations are always welcome and in expectation of the 2021-2022 season. Thank you to everyone for your support in this important ministry!

REOPENING TEAM

Chris Thomas adeptly led St. Bernard's Reopening Team in the summer/fall 2020. The Reopening Team surveyed the parish regarding parishioners' ability, interest, and willingness to return to in person worship. Chris submitted our Reopening plan for diocesan approval and the Vestry helped pilot reopening for combined services with in person and Zoom engagement following diocesan protocols. As many people needed or wanted to stay on Zoom, we opted to hold combined services twice a month, using a screen and projector to continue Zoom participation, including lectors. From October to December, on the 1st and 3rd Sundays, an average of 10 parishioners attended in person, along with two officiants and two musicians, and the majority of attendees on Zoom. St. Bernard's continued Morning Prayer rather than Holy Eucharist. Households were seated three pews apart, with the two pews between taped off. Due to the increase in COVID locally and out of concern for those leading the service, St. Bernard's returned to all Zoom worship in January.

SAINT BERNARD'S CEMETERY – *John Smith*

For 2020 the cemetery had 8 lot sales, 17 burials and 7 foundation installations. The average for the past 5 years is 6 lot sales, 13 burials, and 8 foundations per year.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS – *Steve Galpin Jr.*

The past year brought dramatic changes to the use of our buildings as the COVID crisis drastically curbed worship service in the church while the Parish House was used extensively as a hub to distribute food and other necessities.

As described separately in this Annual Report, our now 2-year-old Parish House became the site of the Bernardsville Pop-Up Food Pantry, launched in April 2020 and running through the end of October, when donations were limited to diapers, wipes and ShopRite gift cards. This meant that the first floor of the Parish House was in active use much of the time, resembling a mini-grocery store. From a maintenance standpoint, it also meant that we saw little reduction in heating/cooling costs and significant cleaning/disinfectant costs.

Although church services were primarily via Zoom during most of the year, the building did host some in-person services for St. Bernard's and Camino de Fe, with strict adherence to safe protocols and distancing. These were also followed by cleaning/disinfecting.

Overall, maintenance and repair costs were well contained during the year. NGC Development, which built our Parish House and nearby Heritage condominiums, assumed responsibility for grounds maintenance and snow removal, thus saving us significant costs. We continued with our annual HVAC contract with A.J. Celiano and used them to rebuild one of the two church boiler pumps. We also engaged Keltom Gutter Services for what will be an annual cleaning service. Finally, to try and offer alternative housing for the bats that had been a nuisance in the church, we installed a bat box on an exterior church wall.

STEWARDSHIP – *Julia Somers*

Just as St. Bernard’s Church’s congregation is made up of many wonderful people with diverse interests and skills, so too is our Church joined by generous people who hear God’s call to us to share our wealth, wisdom and talents. Thanks to you, our combined stewardship this year continued to reach many people and support so much.

Despite the pandemic, and perhaps because of the pandemic, due to Pastor Beth’s extraordinary leadership, our outreach during 2020 served many more families in the community than we have in the past, particularly through our food programs. Our Parish House saw as much use as was possible while observing requirements for social distancing, and our parishioners adapted and continued to offer much needed and appreciated programs.

These include God’s Giving Garden, programs at Grace’s Kitchen, the knitting ministry, the food drive and food collections, the Feeding America Backpack Program, the Community Fund, and more.

Thank you yet again to those who participated in this year’s stewardship program, and also to those who during Stewardship Month shared their St. Bernard’s stories about what St. Bernard’s Church means to them, including those who participated in our culminating Storytelling event on Nov. 1. I am gratified that, despite challenging times, your generosity continued. While we did not see growth in support and pledging numbers, we did not lose ground either. We welcomed new parishioners while we wished God Speed to others, whose lives took them on to new congregations and other parts of the United States.

Please know how glad we are to be in this partnership of ministry together with you through your pledge.

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
# of Pledges	50	49	44	42	40
Amt. Pledged	157,141	145,485	132,780	117,354	109,942
Total Pledge/plate	159,000* *Estimate	152,441	144,000	143,312	137,767

If you haven’t yet pledged for 2021, know that it is never too late! Please join us as we strive to serve God and our neighbors in the Somerset Hills. I liken a successful stewardship program to being part of a team – we are only as successful as every one of our team members help us to be, and we count on the whole team to get us over the finishing line! Everyone has a role to play! We are deeply grateful and thank you for everything you do for this beloved community. We couldn’t do it without you!

FUN-RAISING, FELLOWSHIP & BREAKING BREAD

We met for **Breaking Bread** fellowship meals in the months of January, February, and March 2020, enjoying each other’s company on the first Wednesday of the month in our Parish Hall. Following our 2020 Annual meeting on Sunday, January 26, we hosted a well-attended free concert of the **US Coast Guard Academy Chorale**. This wonderful concert was thanks to parishioner Abby Ferrara, a senior at the USGCA and a member of the Chorale. The Chorale is composed of two singing groups, the Idlers (the male select choir) and the Fairwinds (the female select choir), and specializes in patriotic music and songs about the sea. Parishioners, community members, and singers’ family and friends enjoyed this excellent concert and the singers appreciated the enthusiastic audience.

Unfortunately, in-person fellowship at St. Bernard’s was otherwise restricted during 2020 due to the shut down and the need to keep each other safe by not gathering in person. However, our choice to worship on Zoom rather than in a prerecorded or streaming format has allowed us to keep up the habit of gathering for worship each Sunday at 10 am and

checking in with each other informally before and after the service. Similarly, our collective decision to continue Evening Prayer every other Wednesday evening at 5:45 pm has allowed parishioners to have a mid-week opportunity for prayer and connection with each other.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION – *The Rev. Beth Rauen Sciaino*

An adult formation series on **the Book of Common Prayer** led by Danielle Baker, seminarian, was held in person on March 1 and 8, then postponed due to the shutdown. The series continued on Zoom in late May and early June. This offering was well-attended in-person and online. Danielle's enthusiasm for and knowledge of the BCP is inspiring!

During **Lent**, parishioners were encouraged to take on a personal or family discipline to reduce their carbon footprint and share the discipline on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. Parishioners participated in Lent Madness online or via email, learning about saints as they competed for the Golden Halo, won by Harriet Tubman in 2020. (Harriet Tubman's feast day is July 20 and shared with Sojourner Truth, Amelia Bloomer, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.) Additional Lenten prayer and reflection resources were made available.

A **Bible study** on the theme of **Unraveled** using resources from A Sanctified Art collective began April 2 and was held midday on Thursdays for 10 weeks on Zoom. The weekly resource included a Scripture passage, artwork, artist's reflection, and discussion questions. Discussion was led by Pastor Beth.

Our monthly **JOY! service for families with young children** was held in January and February in person before needing to be canceled due to the shutdown and our move to online worship. In September, Danielle and Pastor Beth began recording a brief version of the JOY! service on a monthly basis which can be found online: stbernardsnj.org/joy-services.

Advent bags with resources for families, individuals, and couples to enter into the season of Advent were put together and included candles and pinecones to build an Advent wreath, Advent wreath prayers, poetry prayers from the Rev. Sarah Are of A Sanctified Art collective, the Daily Office for Advent from *Daily Prayer for All Seasons*, and muffin mix and prayer for Christmas morning. Bags for families with children included the book *Faithful Families for Advent & Christmas* by Traci Smith as well as resources for weekly Advent practices including a Paper Chain Advent Calendar, Hot Chocolate Gratitude Party, Prayers and Blessing for Decorating, and a Silent Night Star Walk to help families incorporate faith into daily life in preparation for our celebration of the birth of Jesus at Christmas. The reusable St. Bernard's bags were ordered by Danielle in the spring for our Lenten creation care discipline effort which was somewhat truncated by the shutdown. Danielle graciously offered the bags' use for our Advent initiative. We had a very positive response to the Advent resources, particularly from people whom we don't see often on Sunday morning.

During the four Sundays of Advent an **Advent discussion forum** was led by Danielle Baker and Michael Myers over Zoom. Parishioners enjoyed sharing Advent traditions and themes. The Zoom format worked well, encouraging us to consider additional adult formation offerings.

On January 17, 2021, a new discussion series, **Bible 101**, began. Al Hudgins is leading this four-week orientation to the Bible, a book that's both wonderful and sometimes overwhelming. This engaging and participatory series will continue in February, on Sundays, February 7 and 14, from 11:30 am-12:15 pm on Zoom. All are welcome.

Evening Prayer was initially scheduled for Wednesday in Lent, and continued weekly on Zoom in the spring and then every other week starting in the summer. At each service, we learn about the saint(s) of the day in the Episcopal Church's calendar. The readings in the service reflect the saint's ministry as well. Evening Prayer provides a midweek opportunity to gather online for prayer and connection.

We chose to purchase and utilize **A Sanctified Art collective's** formation and worship resources for Stewardship season in October 2020 and Advent/Christmas 2020. Learn more about them online at sanctifiedart.org. The Rev. Sarah Are's poetry prayers inspired by Scripture as seen through her lens of ordinary life were particularly well received.

In February 2020, we began a Christian formation program for elementary schoolers and their parents called **Growing with God**, scheduled to meet twice a month. We stopped after two meetings due to the shutdown. We received feedback that it was best to postpone this offering rather than move online at a time when school and work was moving online. In the fall of 2020, we learned of the opportunity to participate in Christian formation online with kids and adults from other Episcopal and Lutheran congregations, offered by our own camp, Cross Roads, and Luther Crest Camp in Minnesota. We decided to partner with Cross Roads Camp to engage in **Bold Transformational Faith** Sunday School on Zoom for elementary and middle school students. Five to seven of our children participate. Pastor Beth leads one of the small groups, for the youngest kids, made up of pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students. For each congregation, at least one faith leader helps lead a 30-minute small group during the 50-minute session, which begins at 11:15 am on Sunday mornings. The curriculum is provided by Cross Roads and Luther Crest. This program will continue through May 2021.

CROSS ROADS CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER – *The Rev. Beth Rauen Sciaino*

Cross Roads is our Episcopal/Lutheran camp and retreat center in New Jersey. It is co-owned by the Episcopal Diocese of Newark and the New Jersey Synod of the ELCA and located 35 minutes west of Bernardsville in northern Hunterdon County (29 Pleasant Grove Road, Port Murray, NJ 07865). Cross Roads offers programs for all ages, providing a chance to connect with God and oneself in nature. Learn more at www.crossroadsretreat.com.

Pastor Beth is the Chair of the Cross Roads Development Council. Many programs and retreat groups were canceled in 2020 due to the shutdown, restricting income significantly. Cross Roads worked to stay in relationship with congregations offering programs online, such as Zoom youth camps over the summer and retreats this winter. Cross Roads began **Bold Transformational Faith Zoom Sunday School** for elementary schoolers in the 2020-2021 program year, working with Luther Crest Camp in Minnesota, to support congregations seeking to continue Christian formation.

St. Bernard's observed **Camp Sunday** on Sunday, July 12, during our Sunday Morning Prayer. The service included a recorded sermon from Anthony Briggs, Executive Director of Cross Roads, and prayers for Cross Roads and Camp Arcadia, the girls' camp in Maine owned by Anne Fritts' family for four generations.

St. Bernard's parishioners supported two **fundraisers for Cross Roads** in 2020. Many parishioners generously donated to Pastor Beth's participation in the Rally for Cross Roads Virtual Run/Walk 5K on Oct. 3, helping Beth to be a top individual fundraiser raising: \$1,309.22. Jane Rauen provided company on the walk. Parishioners also participated in a fun Zoom Afternoon Tea sponsored by St. John's Lutheran Church in Summit, complete with delivered boxes with homemade scones, tea biscuits, lemon curd, jam, and tea. Thank you for your generosity of time and financial support!

Cross Roads is a wonderful resource for Christian formation and renewal, available to all. Currently Cross Roads is making plans to hold youth camp and family camp in summer 2021 observing all health and safety protocols.

Outreach Reports

OUTREACH COMMITTEE – Sue Smith

St. Bernard's was busy this past year providing help to the community in the form of the Bernardsville Pop-Up Food Pantry. We are still collecting diapers for children outside of the Pariah House. If you have a new idea or want to participate in this Outreach Program, please speak to Pastor Beth, 908-766-0602.

Month	Outreach
September	Mindy will contact Somerset Food Bank and see if families are in need of food and/or toys for Thanksgiving or Christmas.
October and November	***Coat Drive for Grace's Kitchen

November and December	Announce when ShopRite advertises Free Turkeys. Thanksgiving and Christmas - Turkeys and Hams to Food Bank – Mindy
December	***Food Collection at ShopRite - Greg
January	Sock It to Me Sunday - new socks, hats and gloves for Grace’s Kitchen
April	Easter - Turkeys and Hams to Food Bank - Mindy
Sept – June	***YMCA/St. Bernard’s Homework Help Program
Sept – June	***Collect items for Food Bank and Feeding America Backpack Program
Mar – Oct	Conover Outreach Task Force – God’s Giving Garden – Cathy
All Year:	
Last Saturday of the month	***Grace’s Kitchen
Last Thursday of the month	Prayer Shaw & Hat meeting – Jeri

*** These programs have been negatively affected by the Coronavirus and will recommence after we are vaccinated.

BERNARDSVILLE POP-UP FOOD PANTRY – *The Rev. Beth Rauen Sciaino*

Once the shutdown began in mid-March 2020, the economic impact on people whose jobs disappeared (many of whom were not eligible for unemployment) or who could not work remotely, was swift, particularly among our Latino neighbors. The Somerset Hills Regional School District was concerned about the spring break food insecurity of its students who qualify for free and reduced lunch, as federally funded food is not provided during breaks. Sama Habibi, co-president of Bernardsville Middle School’s Home and School Association, connected with Pastor Dan Fenco, who helps with Spanish language HSA meetings, and they looked for a place to coordinate a food collection. Camino de Fe Lutheran Church, the bilingual congregation Pastor Dan serves, met for worship and Bible study in St. Bernard’s Parish Hall since October 2019, and he anticipated that St. Bernard’s would be amenable to providing space for a nonperishable food collection. St. Bernard’s agreed for the Parish Hall serve as a temporary food pantry for the Bernardsville community. We had previously offered this space to the Bernardsville Office of Emergency Management in the hope that it could be of use for the community during a time of crisis, as the original Parish House had been so many times in the past.

With the organizational and start up support of the Bernardsville Office of Emergency Management, coordinated by Police Chief Kevin Valentine; experienced and new OEM volunteers; generous nonperishable and financial donations from the Somerset Hills community; and nonperishable food provided by the Food Bank Network of Somerset County, the Bernardsville Pop-Up Food Pantry was underway. Another Pop-Up Food Pantry was set up at Peapack Reformed Church in Gladstone.

Throughout the spring, the Food Pantry volunteers collected and organized bags of nonperishable food to distribute on Friday mornings, expanding to a second distribution site during the height of distribution when 325 families were being helped per week. This site, Sacred Heart Chapel, was provided thanks to the support of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, our neighboring Roman Catholic parish. In order to meet this level of need for assistance, the Food Bank Network of Somerset County provided 100 food boxes per week, picked up by OEM volunteers and Bernardsville Department of Public Works trucks and employees. St. Bernard’s and other local congregations have supported the Food Bank with collections and donations for years and we are extremely grateful for their essential support during this time of great food insecurity in the Somerset Hills. The Food Bank also directed area people looking to help to support our local effort.

In the late spring, we added produce to our distribution, with volunteers picking up produce rotating off ShopRite’s shelves, donations from Priscilla’s Pantry and its customers, purchases through Priscilla’s, and donations from God’s Giving Garden. Produce was stored in local church fridges in Peapack Reformed Church, St. Mark’s, St. John on the Mountain, Somerset Hills Lutheran Church, and Sacred Heart Chapel. The Somerset Hills YMCA also shared some of

their federal produce boxes with us. In July, when the YMCA began holding youth programs, they asked if we could distribute the produce boxes from our site and also provided volunteers. Frozen chicken was distributed thanks to Sue Kennedy, the Law family, and Feed to Give. A grant for milk through the Food Bank became available in the summer, so that fridges at OLPH and some of the churches listed above were storing milk for weekly distribution. We distributed the YMCA's federal grant produce boxes from July through October, and in the fall meat, eggs, and dairy were included in these produce boxes. Cloth, paper, and plastic bags were provided by parish and local volunteers, ShopRite, Wegmans, Wawa, and Kings. Kings, ShopRite, the YMCA, the Bagel Bin, and the Coffee Shop also collected nonperishable donations for our effort. In November, St. Bernard's parishioners supported OLPH's annual Thanksgiving food collection, which was distributed from St. Bernard's due to our space availability and the convenience of our one-way parking lot.

This extremely collaborative effort received support from individuals, families, and volunteers in the community, and organizations including the Somerset Hills YMCA, the Food Bank Network of Somerset City, Salvation Army (Bound Brook), and Ridge Red Cross Club, and congregations including: Somerset Hills Lutheran Church (BR), Our Lady of Perpetual Help Roman Catholic Church, Episcopal Church of St. John on the Mountain, St. Mark's Episcopal Church (BR), Islamic Society of Basking Ridge (BR), Zion Lutheran Church (Clark), and St. James Roman Catholic Church (BR). Diaper collections have been contributed by St. Peter Lutheran Church in Hopewell, Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Ridgewood, the Somerset Hills YMCA Dance Team, and plenty of individuals. Local restaurants have supported this effort by providing family meals at reduced cost to the Food Pantry. We are so grateful to Anthony's Pizza and Catering, the Claremont Tavern, Plaza Tikal, and Nicoletta/Morini. In the spring, 50-75 family meals were distributed weekly for 10 weeks, then twice a month beginning in July, and once a month beginning in November. Donations to the Community Fund cover the cost of the family meals, and the parishes of St. John on the Mountain and St. Mark's in Basking Ridge also sponsored multiple family meal nights each. Each family meal serves 4 people.

Currently, the Food Pantry is collecting, purchasing, and delivering diapers and wipes to families on a bi-monthly basis. Weekly groceries are being purchased and delivered to families with COVID 19 for 4-6 weeks per family, and ShopRite gift card distributions and family meals are occurring on a monthly basis. Rental and utility assistance is available through the Community Fund on a one-time basis. Over the winter there has been an increase in need for rental assistance, particularly among families whose main employment is seasonal work. We continue to welcome financial donations to the Community Fund, ShopRite gift card donations (\$25 for distribution or \$50 for shoppers), and diapers and wipes.

Alison Davidson, Parish Administrator, has graciously provided key administrative support for this effort, including submitting grant applications. We received two grants in 2020, \$15,000 from the NJ Pandemic Relief Fund and \$25,000 from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation President's Grant Fund of the Princeton Area Community Foundation. We are very thankful for Alison's help. In the spring, Cheryl Ferrante coordinated volunteers for the Food Pantry through the OEM. Tina Lesnewich coordinated our ShopRite produce volunteers. Abbie Davidson and Rachel Richards took over the Volunteer coordination in the summer, and Rachel continues to serve as our Volunteer Coordinator. Throughout this effort, Pastor Dan Fenco has been a vital communicator with and resource for families in need.

The people of the Somerset Hills beyond our parish have provided great dedication to the Pop-Up Food Pantry effort, including multiple coordinators, regular bagging volunteers, distribution volunteers, drivers who picked up nonperishables and food boxes, bilingual volunteers, volunteers searching for Maseca corn flour essential to the meals of Central American families (Thank you, Cindy McWilliams and Chris Demetros!), and more. Pastor Beth and Pastor Dan have many examples of generosity extended by people who continued to have resources during the shutdown as well as the deep generosity of those in need of resources, willing to volunteer and support their neighbors, too. We are grateful for this collective effort to keep our community fed, and in their homes. We understand ourselves to be one community. Those involved in this effort intend to build on the collaborations established, knowing that there is still work to be done in 2021. Thank you for your generous support through donations of volunteer time, nonperishable food, produce, diapers, ShopRite gift cards, and financial contributions to the Community Fund and the Food Bank Network of Somerset County.

GRACE'S KITCHEN – *John Smith*

Grace's Kitchen has fed over 200,000 meals to the homeless and hungry in Plainfield since 1994. From the very beginning, volunteers from St. Bernard's church have helped prepare and serve those meals. Unfortunately, the pandemic has caused a temporary suspension in our participation. Since March 2020 it has been determined that no volunteers should participate. A limited kitchen staff prepares bag lunches and distributes them outside of Grace Church. We look forward to the time when those in need will once again be welcome to come inside the Parish Hall, sit down and enjoy a warm, nourishing noon meal prepared and served by volunteers, including many of us from St. Bernard's.

TOY DRIVE FOR KATY'S PLACE – *Greg and Mary Jane Canose*

Because of the pandemic, we didn't gather outside ShopRite in the cold this December to collect food for Grace's Kitchen. So instead, we reached out to the Center for Great Expectations in Somerset to see if there was a way St. Bernard's could provide assistance to their clients. CGE annually serves over 1,000 women, men and children in Somerset County who are homeless, economically marginalized, pregnant or parenting, or living with mental health or substance abuse problems. Katy's Place is an on-site licensed child development center that provides daily professional childcare for the children within the CGE community. The support and community provided in Katy's Place is instrumental in the healthy development of each of the children, many who have experienced trauma in their young lives.

The Director of Katy's Place provided us with a wish list of therapeutic toys for the Center and the generous parishioners of St. Bernard's checked off every item on the list and then some! Thank you to all who helped brighten Christmas for these little ones.

GOD'S GIVING GARDEN – *Cathy Ferrara*

As the garden season began, I was unable to help due to COVID. As the county had the gate locked, volunteers parked outside and carried in plants and supplies to get the garden growing. I joined in June after the gate was unlocked and COVID had a bit of a calm period.

While we were not able to have work sessions for a broad group of volunteers as in the past, we were still able to keep the garden thriving with a small team made up of our garden committee and a few senior gardeners from our church volunteers. We were able to grow, harvest and donate 2459 lbs. this year, far exceeding our annual goal of 2000 lbs. and beating last year's record-breaking harvest by almost 100 lbs., very welcome in this year of greater than normal need. Our harvest went to the Somerset County Food Bank, God's Pantry in Bernardsville, Community Hope at Lyons VA, and to our own Pop-Up Pantry at St. Bernard's. Thank you all for your continued support of this important outreach.

THE COMMUNITY FUND – *Sue Smith*

The Community Fund of St. Bernard's Church was active in the community again this year. The mission of the Community Fund is simply to provide emergency financial assistance to residents of the greater Somerset Hills area. The grants—up to \$3,000—are given on a one-time basis for a specific need. The Community Fund receives grant requests from credible sponsors such as clergy, schools, social workers, and police on behalf of an individual or family. All of the grant applications are confidential. The Fund expects its grants to be a component of a larger partnership of assistance.

This past year, the Fund provided emergency help to the Bernardsville Pop-Up Food Pantry, and served as the vehicle to which donations were made to help the needs of our community (see the Bernardsville Pop-Up Food Pantry entry on p. 15 for more details). The funds were used for food, rental assistance, and utility bills. The Community Fund helped many people and families who were impacted by the pandemic and the economic effects of the shutdown.

You can help this outreach program to our neighbors in need, by sending contributions to the Community Fund of St. Bernard's Church to the office, at 88 Claremont Road, Bernardsville, NJ, 07924.

As the Fund continues its work in the community, we look forward to receiving more grant applications and donations. If any parishioners know of situations where the Community Fund could help or if you have questions about the Community Fund of St. Bernard's Church, please contact the Fund Administrator, Sue Smith, at 908-953-0301, Treasurer, Mindy Kirby at 908-766-0084, or the Rev. Beth Rauen Sciaino at 908-766-0602.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY – *Jeri Minter*

Because of COVID-19, the knitting group did not meet in person after February 2020. Unfortunately, the Faith and Practice trip to Guatemala in February 2021 has been cancelled and no hats will be sent. The group plans to resume in person meetings as soon as that becomes feasible.

FAITH IN PRACTICE – *Cindy McWilliams*

Medical Mission Trip to Guatemala, Feb. 14-22, 2020: I happily returned to Guatemala as blogger for Faith In Practice Medical Mission Team 651 in February 2020. In our week there, 350 deserving, grateful patients were healed. Our St. Bernard's family supported this trip through prayer, donations, and purchases of hand beaded pen covers (\$500). Our Knitting Guild donated more than 75 hand knitted hats to our hospital patients and to the newest arrivals at a home for children. Each hat was as beautiful, unique, and warm as the Knitting Guild Member who stitched it with love. I thank every parishioner at St. Bernard's for the part they played in answering a prayer and sharing God's love with our brothers and sisters in Guatemala.

HOMEWORK HELP AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT – *Cindy McWilliams*

Our Homework Help and Academic Support Program has been closed since March of 2020 because of the pandemic. Prior to closing, we were helping 30 students in grades one through six. We hope to restart the program as adult and teen tutors receive a vaccination. We really look forward to seeing the children and working with them again. We will need many volunteers when we get started so that we can provide one on one tutoring.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

This year we held our celebration of the Feast of St. Francis with Blessing of the Animals over Zoom on Sunday, Oct. 11, during Sunday Morning Prayer. Parish Administrator Alison Davidson put together a wonderful slide show of pets belonging to parishioners. During the service we took time to enjoy each pet featured on the slides, and pets were blessed by Pastor Beth. We are grateful for the love and companionship provided by all God's creatures.

GREENFAITH CIRCLE

St. Bernard's joined a Somerset/Hunterdon GreenFaith Circle in 2018. This is a great opportunity for us to learn about environmental resources, opportunities, and advocacy from leaders from other faith communities. While we have GreenFaith Certification, we hope this collaborative approach will encourage our environmental stewardship at St. Bernard's. Contact Julia Somers for more information.

Guilds' Reports

ALTAR GUILD – *Sue Smith*

The Altar Guild at St. Bernard's is responsible for preparing the altar for services every Sunday and for all ceremonies performed in the church. The members are also responsible for the care and cleaning of the sacred articles used during the services. We are actively seeking additional members, developing a five-year budget to maintain and add to the churches' linens and sacred articles. We will celebrate with all members of the Guild at a luncheon in the spring.

Our meetings and luncheon were cancelled this past year because of COVID. Life will get back to somewhat normal after we all receive the vaccine!!!

Members of the guild meet two or three times during the year. We invite all parishioners to consider assisting once a month in this vital service to the Parish. Membership is open to all, male, female, old and young. The guild members are Mary Kempen, Betsy Klausung, Valerie McEntee, Carmen Paul, and Sue Smith. If interested, call Mary Kempen at 908-766-3632 or Sue Smith at 908-953-0301 for additional information.

FLOWER GUILD – *Beth Gustafson*

The Flower Guild at St. Bernard's arranges for flowers to be on the altar at Christmas, Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. Flowers are usually purchased for the altar from September through June and greens adorn the altar during Lent and the summer months. This year due to the pandemic we had flowers on the altar for our in-person services, and if a parishioner requested them for a specific date. The church was "greened" for Christmas with beautiful poinsettias and wreaths. If a parishioner wishes to donate flowers in honor of their family or friends or in memory of a deceased loved one, please contact our Parish Administrator. The suggested donation for flowers is \$75. A dedication will be included in the service bulletin for the chosen Sunday of your dedication.

Flower Guild members are: Anne Fritts, Beth Gustafson, Mary Kempen, Betsy Klausung, Valerie McEntee, Carol Anne Pagano, Sue Smith, John Smith, and Julia Somers. If interested in helping, call Beth Gustafson at 917-620-1865 for additional information.

CHALICIST GUILD – *Mary Kempen*

The Chalicist Guild consists of five women – Mary Kempen, Leslie Curialle, Mary Jane Canose, Jeri Minter, and Denise Thomas. In addition to the Chalicist duties of servings as a Lay Eucharistic Minister during Communion by sharing the chalice and assisting with the setting of the altar at the Eucharist, the Chalicist in our church also serves as an Acolyte. The duties of the Acolyte include lightening the candles on the alter before church services, carrying the cross into the church at the beginning and of the service.

Chalicists can serve at Baptisms, Weddings, Memorial Services and Funerals.

We welcome men, women, and teenagers to be a Chalicist. If you are interested please feel free to see me either after church service or you may call my home at 908-766-3632.

Due to COVID-19, none of the above took place once the shutdown began in mid-March 2020. There were not any Chalicists or acolytes for Zoom or combined services. What Baptisms, Weddings, Memorial Services and Funerals that we had were done in accordance with the State of New Jersey's guidelines for COVID-19. Only Pastor Beth officiated at these special events. Once the shutdown began, there was no Communion at any services and only a limited amount of people could be present. Hopefully and prayerfully, the year 2021 will be better.

TREASURER'S REPORT/BUDGETS – *Mindy Kirby*

Summary of 2020 results vs. 2020 Budget

Church: Net loss (Income-Expenses) is (\$53,198). Although this is still a loss, it is +\$13,000 favorable to the budgeted loss of (\$66K). The budget for 2020 was created before COVID-19 existed, and the shifts in income and expenses reflect that.

- Despite the pandemic, pledge income was \$147K, slightly higher than the budget of \$145K. This shows a remarkable commitment on the part of the congregation during a very challenging year.
- Plate income was understandably less than budget and prior years, as services were held online most of the year.
- Overall expenses were lower, with worship-related expenses reflecting the shift to having services online. It was also fortunate that no major equipment or property repairs were needed in 2020.
- \$30,000 was returned to Operating Expenses from the church's investment funds. In spite of the stock market losses in the spring, returns in the account rebounded and the results were positive for the year.

Cemetery: Net revenue (Income-Expenses) is \$19,926. This is +\$21K favorable to the budgeted loss of (\$1,771).

- Income was favorable by \$30K. This was due to lot sales and grave openings/closings exceeding the budget by \$20,000, and a \$10,000 memorial donation from the estate of Evelyn Pyne.
- Repairs to the cemetery cottage included replacing the water heater, repairs to the sump pump and shower, and asbestos removal. These repairs exceeded the budget by \$7,000. Planning for cottage maintenance will be a Vestry focus in 2021.

Summary of 2021 Budget vs. 2020 Actual

Church: Net loss is budgeted at (\$64,452); this is \$11K more than the actual loss in 2020.

- Pledge income for 2021 is forecasted to be \$155,000; this represents a 5.4% increase over actual pledges in 2020. An increase in pledge income is especially important this year, as plate income will likely not be collected until the church is used for worship on a regular basis,
- Worship-related expenses were budgeted as similar to the 2020 actual expenses, with the assumption that in-person worship may not resume before the fall.
- The 2021 Diocesan Fair Share pledge is \$23,200, 10% of St. Bernard's parochial income (based on a three-year rolling average). This is an increase of \$2,240 vs. 2020.
- The investment funds to be returned to Operating is budgeted at 4% of the value of the account on 12/31/20. The amount is \$26,143. Note that the investment value used for this calculation excludes the proceeds from the sale of the rectory which are also in the account.

Cemetery: Net loss is budgeted at (\$771).

- The main difference to 2020 actuals is income; the budget is – (\$27K) less than 2020.
- Income from sources other than the Cottage Rental (mainly Grave Openings and Closings) is based on prior year experience, as cemetery income is difficult to predict.
- There is a new expense in 2021, \$3,000 for survey work to map plots. There is also a recurring license expense for cemetery software, which was purchased in 2020.

The church's income trend in 2020 and 2021 is very positive. Many thanks to those who increased their pledges, or who pledged for the first time. 2020 was an unusual year in the life of the church, and because of the dedication of our clergy, staff, and congregation the church finances finished the year better than was expected. Thanks to everyone who supported this effort!

CHURCH BUDGET

Budget Worksheet - St. Bernard's Episcopal Church 2013 Actual - 2021 Annual Operating Plan - Summary

ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Preliminary Budget
REVENUE									
PLEDGES/PLATE OFF.	\$164,467	\$138,961	\$143,707	\$132,227	\$137,767	\$143,312	\$148,337	\$152,441	\$159,000
INVESTMENT INCOME	\$2,507	\$1,854	\$1,580	\$1,256	\$910	\$273	\$0	\$6	\$0
GIFTS AND DONATIONS	\$14,363	\$800	\$0	\$3,440	\$14,928	\$16,291	\$3,995	\$4,523	\$3,750
OTHER INCOME	\$51,284	\$71,563	\$70,661	\$59,999	\$58,035	\$41,406	\$37,679	\$13,566	\$14,750
Total Income from Operations	\$232,621	\$213,177	\$215,948	\$196,922	\$211,640	\$201,282	\$190,011	\$170,536	\$177,500
EXPENSE									
CLERGY	\$30,640	\$43,934	\$50,828	\$80,628	\$81,064	\$88,541	\$83,352	\$95,977	\$96,718
INSURANCE	\$40,810	\$40,564	\$44,356	\$33,349	\$31,791	\$27,598	\$24,600	\$25,736	\$24,260
CHRISTIAN EDUCATE	\$1,394	\$4,659	\$151	\$1,437	\$578	\$1,528	\$168	\$1,766	\$2,600
MUSIC	\$23,584	\$37,898	\$37,991	\$38,523	\$38,741	\$38,898	\$40,175	\$36,732	\$33,483
Less: Choir Exp Pd with Restricted Gift	\$0	(\$9,169)	(\$9,534)	(\$10,225)	(\$10,930)	(\$12,635)	(\$14,005)	(\$10,630)	(\$4,905)
NET COST TO SBC FOR MUSIC	\$23,584	\$28,729	\$28,457	\$28,298	\$27,811	\$26,263	\$26,170	\$26,102	\$28,578
ALTAR SUPPLIES	\$297	\$209	\$3,038	\$2,942	\$1,707	\$4,093	\$5,526	\$1,920	\$1,600
PARISH LIFE	\$557	\$409	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
MISSION	\$11,502	\$11,167	\$10,600	\$13,397	\$12,728	\$16,006	\$19,864	\$23,492	\$26,050
ADMINISTRATION	\$73,693	\$66,339	\$81,749	\$45,207	\$35,639	\$48,633	\$59,129	\$47,967	\$59,009
PROPERTY UPKEEP	\$83,016	\$114,977	\$91,080	\$63,786	\$69,756	\$53,077	\$62,285	\$30,774	\$29,280
Total Church Operating Expense	\$265,492	\$310,988	\$310,259	\$269,044	\$261,073	\$265,739	\$281,094	\$253,734	\$268,095
Investment Return to Operating						\$76,000	\$30,000		\$26,143
NET INCOME-(LOSS) Church	(\$32,871)	(\$97,810)	(\$94,311)	(\$72,122)	(\$49,434)	(\$64,457)	(\$15,083)	(\$53,198)	(\$64,452)
NET INCOME-(LOSS) Cemetery	(\$14,280)	(\$49,263)	(\$62,250)	\$10,944	\$7,819	\$2,628	\$12,505	\$19,926	(\$771)
CONSOLIDATED LOSS CH & CM	(\$47,151)	(\$147,073)	(\$156,561)	(\$61,178)	(\$41,615)	(\$61,829)	(\$2,578)	(\$33,272)	(\$65,223)

CEMETERY BUDGET

Budget Worksheet - St. Bernard's Episcopal Cemetery 2013 Act-2021 Budget Annual Operating Plan - Summary

ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Preliminary Budget
REVENUE									
INVESTMENT INCOME	\$30,522	\$13,234	\$1,608	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
RENTAL INCOME	\$18,300	\$18,350	\$18,300	\$18,300	\$16,775	\$18,050	\$16,000	\$19,200	\$19,200
MISC INCOME	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$292	\$300	\$1,905	\$80	\$10,900	\$0
CEMETERY SERVICE INCOME	\$28,070	\$13,672	\$25,976	\$40,222	\$36,070	\$37,078	\$50,796	\$51,894	\$36,000
Total Income from Operations	\$76,892	\$45,256	\$45,884	\$58,814	\$53,145	\$57,033	\$66,876	\$81,994	\$55,200
EXPENSE									
MAINTENANCE & PRESERVATION	\$2,645	\$1,152	\$1,800	\$0	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000
ADMINISTRATION	\$50,059	\$51,819	\$54,550	\$8,189	\$173	\$275	\$100	\$599	\$4,000
PROPERTY UPKEEP	\$32,768	\$36,823	\$33,537	\$24,421	\$29,802	\$37,578	\$34,910	\$40,894	\$34,271
CEMETERY SALE EXPENSES	\$0	\$0	\$13,850	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
CEMETERY SERVICES EXPENSE	\$5,700	\$4,725	\$4,397	\$15,259	\$3,351	\$4,552	\$7,361	\$8,575	\$5,700
Total Cemetery Operating Exp	\$91,172	\$94,519	\$108,134	\$47,869	\$45,326	\$54,405	\$54,371	\$62,068	\$55,971
NET OPERATING INC/LOSS	(\$14,280)	(\$49,263)	(\$62,250)	\$10,945	\$7,819	\$2,628	\$12,505	\$19,926	(\$771)

FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

The Parish Register of St. Bernard's Episcopal Church indicates 90 active households, as compared with 84 in the previous year. If you became a member of St. Bernard's Church and have not requested a letter of transfer from your previous congregation, please speak to our Parish Administrator, Alison Davidson, who can assist in officially transferring your membership to St. Bernard's. If you would like to be Received into the Episcopal Church, or Confirmed, please speak with Pastor Beth.

✦ 2020 Official Acts

Baptisms	3
Confirmed	0
Received	1
Marriages	6
Funerals/Committal Services	10

✦ 2020 Worship Services

Total Number of Services	115
Eucharistic Services	16
Daily Office:	
Sunday Morning Prayer	41
Evening Prayer	33
Compline	4
Private/Home Communion	0
Other	21

Included in the Other category this year are the Good Friday liturgy, Blue Christmas service, and Pastoral services (Funeral or Committal services, Marriages, or Baptisms) that were not a Eucharistic service or included in Sunday Morning Prayer.



Clergy and Staff	Wardens and Vestry
<p style="text-align: center;">The Rev. Beth Rauen Scaiano, <i>Rector</i> Danielle Baker, <i>Seminarian</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">David Dockery, <i>Music Director</i> Alison Davidson, <i>Parish Administrator</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Jeri Minter, Julia Somers, <i>Wardens</i> Mindy Kirby, <i>Treasurer</i>; Linda Engleby, <i>Clerk</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thomas Brooks, Paul Edwards, Linda Engleby, Libby Galpin, Beth Gustafson, Taylor Hwong, Mary Kempen, Mindy Kirby, Valerie McEntee, Michael Myers, Sue Smith, Chris Thomas</p>

ST. BERNARD'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

88 Claremont Road, Bernardsville, New Jersey 07924

908-766-0602

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