



# Annual Report 2019-2020

The Episcopal Church  
Of  
Saints Andrew and Matthew

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# Rector's Annual Report

June 14, 2020

*In liminal space we sometimes need to not-do and not-perform according to our usual successful patterns. We actually need to fail abruptly and deliberately falter to understand other dimensions of life. We need to be silent instead of speaking, experience emptiness instead of fullness, anonymity instead of persona, and pennilessness instead of plenty. In liminal space, we descend and intentionally do not come back out or up immediately. It takes time but this experience can help us reenter the world with freedom and new, creative approaches to life. (Richard Rohr, Daily Meditation, Sunday April 26, 2020)*

In late April, Fr. Richard Rohr spent a week in his daily meditations on the topic of liminal space. Liminal space simply defined is that thin place between heaven and earth, where God and humanity touch one another. As I write this annual address I am painfully aware that we have not seen one another in three months and sadly this will be our reality for the foreseeable future. It does not feel at all like a thin place, but I want to spend time in this report why I feel that we are indeed in a thin place as we live with COVID-19. Before I do that let me spend a few moments reviewing the past year.

Before we began this time of separation I felt a renewed energy in the parish. We have welcomed new families with children and young adults, and we began a new Sunday education program called Children's Chapel. Rabbi Douglas Krantz accepted my invitation to be our Rabbi in Residence and our stewardship theme, SsAM I AM was a wonderful expression of this parish. In early 2020 confirmation classes for youth and adults began to prepare for the Bishop's visitation in early October 2020 (this might be delayed due to COVID-19).

In 2019 we experienced major transitions in the staff as Dana Robertson and Janice Teemer retired (along with our part time accountant) and D-L Casson became the Parish Administrator and Brenda Demby was hired to be the Financial Assistant. I wish to thank D-L Casson, David Christopher, Marlon Rochester and Mary Cooper for their hard work and faithfulness on behalf of us all. I wish to give a special thank you to Brenda Demby who left her position last month and we wish her all the best.

I also wish to thank the hard work of the vestry during this difficult time. We have learned a lot the last year about parish governance as well as developed a working relationship between Rector and vestry. A big thank you to the vestry members who are rotating off the vestry as of this year's annual meeting: Linda Whitehead, Nana Soto, Norwood Coleman and Jenna Christy. I look forward to the new class of the vestry that will be announced at the annual meeting on June 14, 2020 via Zoom. Please keep in your prayers this year's vestry slate: Michelle Smith, Sharon Leyhow, Mary Meese Swain, John Goodill, Wanda Smith and Pat Hampton.

Let me conclude my report with a reflection as to where we are today. The last time we all were together on Sunday morning was March 8<sup>th</sup>. As I write this report we have now not been in church on a Sunday morning for eleven Sundays. Last week Governor Carney issued guidelines outlining what faith communities would have to do in order to resume in person worship. Some of these guidelines include continue social/physical distancing, wearing of face masks, and limiting the number of people who attend (30% of fire code, discourage anyone

over 65 from attending). Communion would be distributed in individual disposable containers and no gatherings after church. Congregational and choral singing will be limited. The Episcopal Church in Delaware will provide parishes with guidelines as well, but I do not have them as I write this report.

To say the least all this is unsettling, and we, like other churches, have much to think about before we make any decisions as to when we gather again. And yet this is a time where we are invited into a deeper relationship with God through prayer and study. We are trying to embrace all this by offering Morning Prayer on Facebook Live, and meetings including Evening Prayer, vestry, finance, member development meetings and meditation via Zoom. We are staying connected by phone and emails. This is a time to step back and rest and draw closer to God. This is the thin place I mentioned at the beginning of this report.

If we can embrace the mystery of this thin place, I believe the difficulties we experience now might be transformed into moments of grace. That is during times like these we practice kindness and generosity toward one another and that we are all in this together. I believe that we will emerge from this time being very different from where we began three months ago.

Friends be safe and healthy and know that you are in my prayers as I hope I am in yours.

The Rev. David T. Andrews, Jr.  
Rector

2019 Parochial Statistics:

Average Sunday Attendance (2019) 178

Number of Baptisms: 0

Number of Confirmations/Receptions: 0

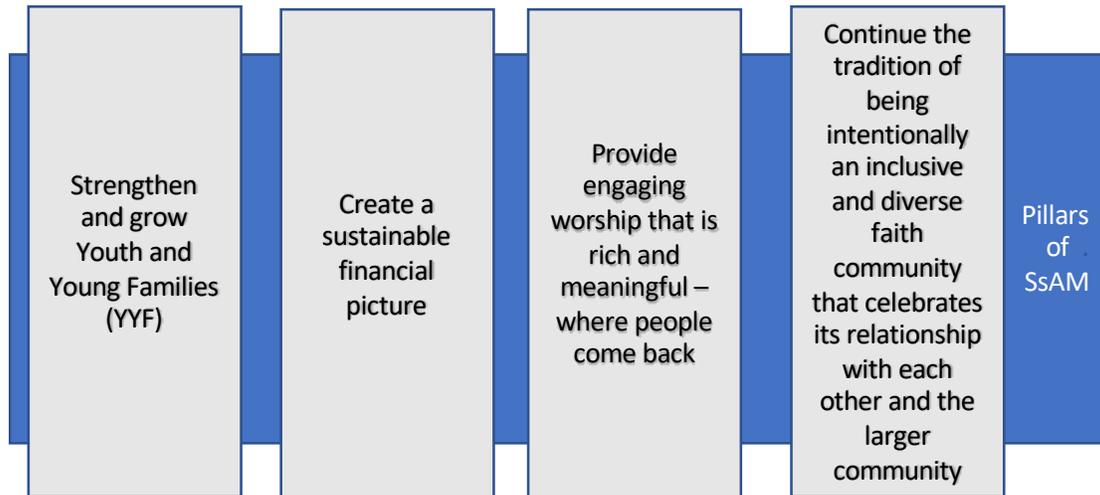
Enrolled in Children's Chapel: 16

# Report of the Wardens

## Annual Report June 14, 2020

It has been an honor to serve as your Wardens of SsAM this past year. This being our first year in the roles and without the benefit of history, we have truly appreciated the cooperation and support received by the Vestry, staff and congregation.

We have continued to build upon the work started by our past vestry leadership, particularly around the 4 pillars. These pillars reflect our mission and core values.



As presented at last year's annual meeting, our continued reliance on the endowment for operating costs and increasing expenses have drawn attention to the longer-term implications. It was for that reason the vestry has focused on Pillar #2: to create a sustainable financial picture. This focus has framed our budget deliberations and development in meaningful ways.

We already faced a challenge in 2019, with the higher than expected rate of turnover in staff members over a 6 month period of time, who held roles in the oversight our fiscal activities. To gain a better insight into our financial processes and systems, we engaged an auditor for an account and system reconciliation. This work proved to be valuable, as it also enabled us to begin drafting procedures to ensure we appropriately follow the Diocese's Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs and good accounting practices.

In late March, the COVID-19 action team was commissioned to help advise the Vestry and on new risks impacting SsAM, and how to begin mitigating them. It was through this team, we were able to assess the fiscal landscape and create a new budget in response to this environment. As a result, we were able to reduce our need to withdraw from the endowment for operating expenses, protecting it and allowing it to recover with the market over time. As we came to appreciate, this was difficult but not unexpected under the circumstances. The Report of the Wardens in 2019 in fact touched on the very risk of a loss of income from pledges, a decrease in our investment income and a loss of rental income.

For our other pillars, we remain committed. Pillar #1: to strengthen and grown Youth and Young Families is still a challenge. The development of the Children's Chapel is promising. As many as 20 children have participated in this Sunday worship and shared their gifts with the congregation. We began to explore investing in a youth minister at the start of the year as part of the strategic growth initiative, however it became clear in mid-March this needed to be postponed.

Pillar #3: to provide engaging worship that is rich and meaningful, has allowed SsAM to enhance our online presence through the SsAM website and Facebook streaming of Sunday services. We are grateful to David Christopher for taking on new digital skills, and playing a key role in bringing our services to life, even when we are not together. Photo prayers from Danny Schweers and our continuing gratitude to Christine Brennan Lee for Prayers of the People expand our reach into our community far and wide.

Pillar #4: to continue the tradition of being intentionally inclusive and diverse faith community that celebrates its relationship with each other and the larger community. Reports from The Episcopal Church Women Ministry, ArtSlam, Community Advocacy Scholarship program, and others demonstrates our continuing commitment to each other and the larger community. We continue to financially support Friendship House, Faith Center, Lutheran Community Services, St. Michaels as part of our community outreach.

Now, today we are confronted with the magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic. What we face collectively, is something none of us have dealt with before — the threat of contagion, the challenges of a quarantine, and the possibility (or reality) of major losses, both in human terms and economically. It is now more than ever we need to lean into the power of prayer and the strength of this community. And for us, this pandemic and our response will continue to impact our organization design, development and business practices. We can, of course, meet these challenges with your help, support and prayers.

Our deepest appreciation goes to the outgoing Vestry members for their time, skills and passion. This time together has been a gift. And we welcome our four new members.

Thank you again for your support, contributions and love.

Rachel Gaskell, Senior Warden  
Peggy Shane, Junior Warden

## NOTES FROM THE 2019 ANNUAL MEETING – June 16, 2019

### Group on Finance

The Finance Committee is charged with budget preparation for 2020. We are in the beginning stages of that process. Looking at the 2019 budget, we are concerned that the budgeted draw down of endowment principle of \$87,000 is not a prudent investment strategy. So far this year we have withdrawn \$70,000 of the budgeted \$87,000, leaving only \$17,000 for the balance of the year. We will probably exceed this number. This \$87,000 figure does not include the \$114,000 for the replacement of the roof. We agree that this capital expenditure of replacing the roof is a legitimate use of the endowment.

For the 2020 budgeting process we will inform all committees with budget responsibilities of their progress in meeting their 2019 goals. In the case of the two largest committees with budget responsibilities (Personnel and Property), we will ask to meet with them in person over the month. We are asking all committees to attempt to reduce their expenditures for 2020. We are also committed to holding financial town hall meetings in order to include the congregation in the budgeting process. And, with their recommendations, we will submit the draft budget to the Vestry for their suggestions and final approval. Our goal is to have the 2020 budget approved by year end.

### Group on Property

- Does the Vestry or Property Ministry have a plan to pay off the endowment for the roof?
  - No, not a comprehensive plan yet, but we will need to develop a planned giving program and define other ways to repay the endowment. And we'll need help from all of you with your ideas.
- Have we considered solar for the roof and other heating needs?
  - Solar panels are only effective if there are extended periods of direct sunlight. Given that tall buildings are being built around SsAM as we speak, which shade our roof it was deemed inappropriate for us to use solar.
- What is the problem with the roof?
  - It is leaking in multiple places. We can't have it leak over the organ or anywhere. We've been patching it but can't continue that way.
  -

### General Interest Group

Summary of Discussion and Suggestions from group members

- There was high participation by persons in the group.
- How to reach out to current members who may miss services was expressed as a concern and as a need for action.
  - We do stream the service through Facebook for those with that access (and it can be seen later in the week)
- More budgetary attention needs to be paid to increasing our work among young people and bringing them into the church as congregants.
- More contact between members, both in church and outside of church needs to take place and be encouraged.
- An anniversary card could be sent to each person baptized until they reach confirmation. Some follow up if the family does not attend services after a baptism.
  - Adele Meredith, who made this suggestion, is working with the church staff and Fr. David on what to do.
- Some door-to-door notices for events at SsAM in the neighborhood around the church.

- Better communication between members of congregation There were several comments on this topic.
- D-L explained the communication follow-through with those who are sick, shut-in, etc. as well as for birthdays.
  - All SsAM members (whom we know about) who are unable to attend church either permanently or due to temporary illness are sent the Weekly Vision and prayers of the people on Monday; also Forward Day-by-Day and other seasonal materials. A team of four SsAM members send a birthday or anniversary card to those whose information we have on file.
- The process when a visitor fills in a card was also discussed.
  - Everyone is sent a letter from Fr. David; added to the database and, where appropriate to the Friday e-blast; Pat Hampton and Anita Young (Ambassadors) are given names and contact information.

### **Stewardship Group Notes**

This year's Annual Meeting logistics were a concern:

- Having the Annual meeting on Fathers' Day was not a popular choice with out of town company and families attending the service.
- Meeting in the sanctuary for group discussion was not good. Too distracting and hard to hear anyone speaking.
- Time for input was too short. Too much time was used on front end reports leaving not enough time to share and ask questions.

Questions were raised about the music budget and deficit mentioned in Financial Report. Music was used as an example.

- How much of budget is for the Sunday Morning service and how much is for other music events?
  - a. About 3/4s of the money in the budget for music is devoted to the Sunday morning services including Carnival. The other ¼ goes to special liturgical events (i.e. jazz vespers). This latter amount is offset a bit by donations during the services. Note that the organ concerts are sponsored and funded by FOKEO (Friends of the Katherine Esterly Organ).
- Related to music budget deficit was a suggestion that we should have more SsAM parishioners participate in the service vs paid musicians to save money.
  - Part of SsAM's mission of being a "dynamic spiritual center" includes consistently providing a wide range of high quality music in support of our diverse liturgy. Since its inception, it was decided that a small core of paid professional singers would be used. This can be reconsidered if a strong, consistent core of non-paid singers (who can perform the music that SsAM is known for) are identified.
- Parishioners want more input with the overall budget and budget decisions including the music budget.
  - a. Parishioners will be involved in providing input to all budget items, as appropriate, not just music. In the finance report, it was mentioned that Town Hall Meetings could be offered to do this.

The topic of youth at SsAM was raised:

- SsAM needs to do more to connect with the children and youth who need a voice in the life of the parish. The annual meeting format is not a good way to capture their voice.

- Need to continue investment of funds for youth programming to attract and retain young families and new members. Cuts to YF budget were discouraging.
- How do the ministries interconnect between youth, elders, and others?
  - YF members are involved as acolytes and Eucharistic Ministers. Several of the older YF members work in the nursery and several are ushers. Jude has been the only YF member who has volunteered to be a lector.

### **The Vestry for 2019 – 2020**

#### **Class of 2020**

Jenna Christy  
Norwood Coleman  
Nana Soto  
Linda Whitehead

#### **Class of 2021**

Tom Angell  
Rachel Gaskell  
Patty Greene  
Sam Lamptey (replaced by Gary Jolly)

#### **Class of 2022**

Mary Morgan  
Danny Schweers  
Peggy Shane  
Dan Young

# **Finance Report**

## **January 1 to December 31 2019**

### **Finance Committee/Treasurer's report**

The Finance Committee is charged with monitoring the financial activities of the Church, providing financial advice to the Vestry, and drafting the annual budget for Vestry review and approval. Each month the Treasurer presents the financial statements by consent to the Vestry.

The following pages and pie charts provide you with information and insights about SsAM's finances. The numbers are unaudited but are the best available at the time of publication. We faced many challenges in 2019 – personnel changes, system updates, and budgetary concerns. Using endowment funds, a new roof was installed.

We are currently facing a far greater challenge than the depletion of the endowment principal with Covid 19. To assist in successfully facing this pandemic, the Vestry created a Covid-19 Task Force to work with the Vestry and the Finance Committee on the church's financial stability during the upcoming year. This new collaborative process between the Vestry and the Finance Committee will ensure compliance with the budget.

The Finance Committee is also developing a capital budget that would distinguish long-term, non-recurring expenditures from annual expenses.

We invite the congregation to a Financial Town Hall to address church finances in more detail (date to be determined).

#### **Submitted by**

##### **The Finance Committee**

Bernard Fisher -- Treasurer  
Janice Teemer  
Sharon Leyhow  
Tom Angell  
Gary Jolly  
Danny Schweers

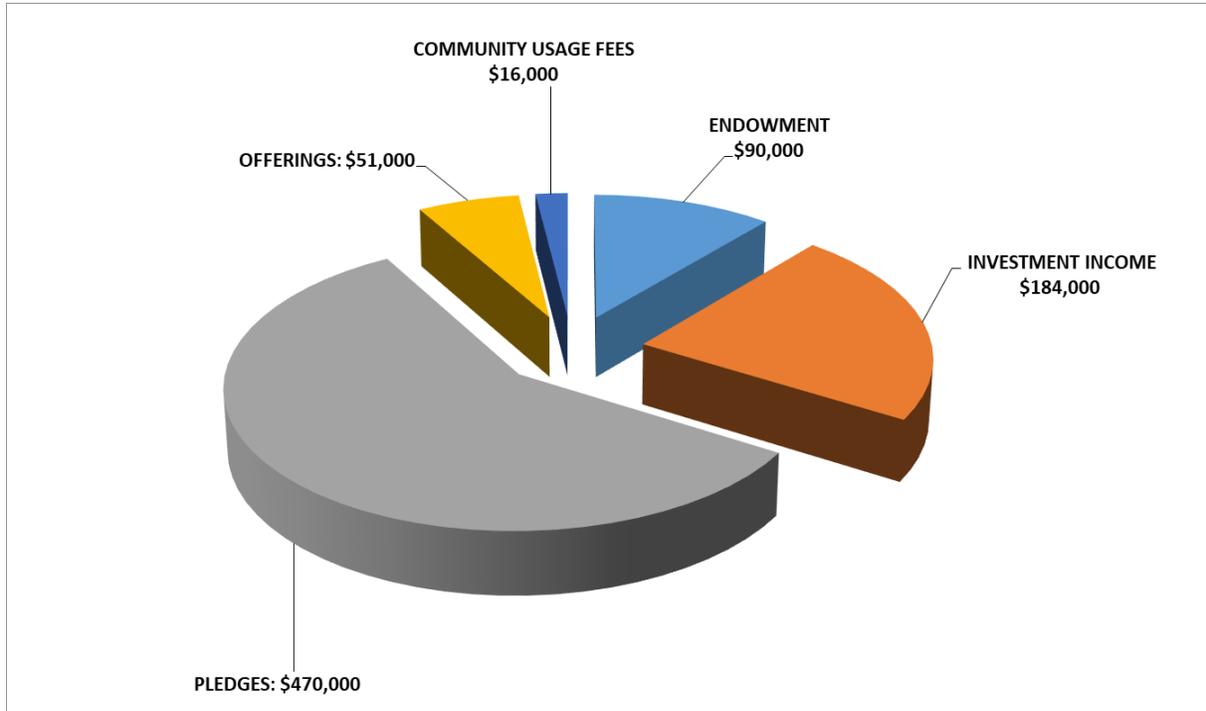
William Kauffman – Chair  
Rachel Gaskell  
Steven Jones  
Yvonne Gordon  
Charisse Rodgers

**SAINTS ANDREW & MATTHEW  
SUMMARY INCOME AND EXPENSE STATEMENT  
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2019 - UNAUDITED**

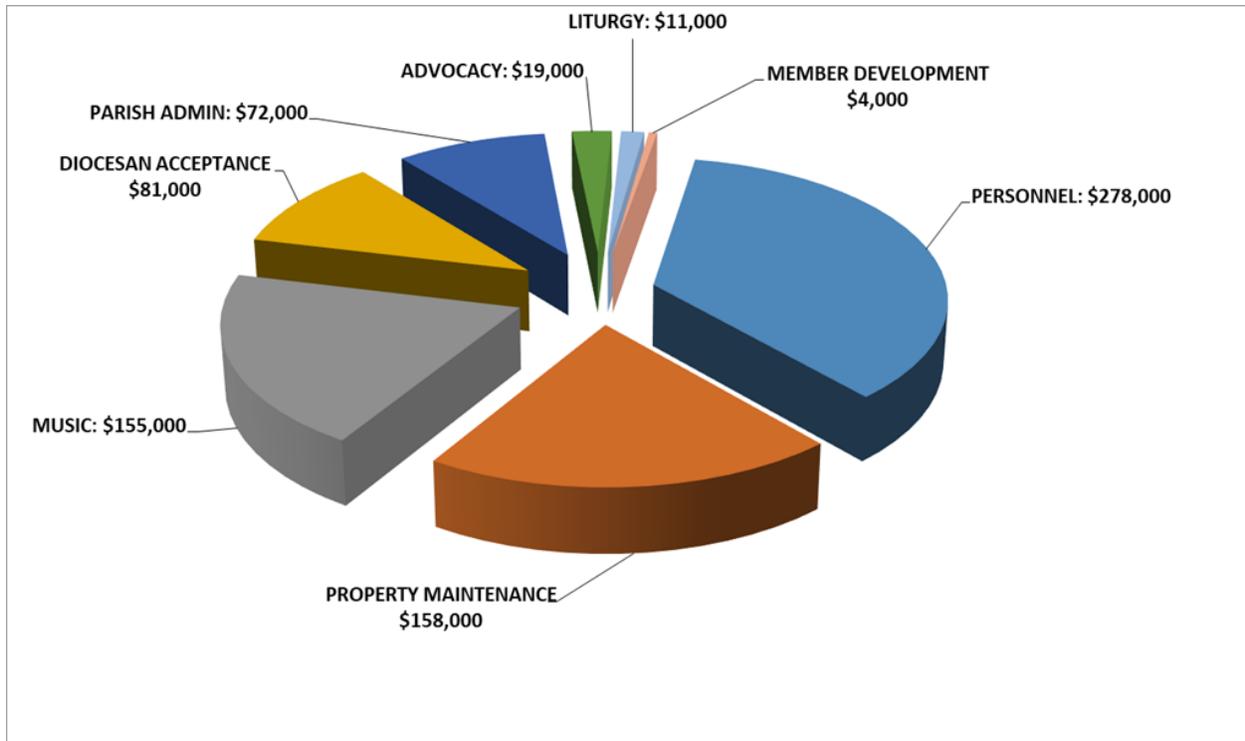
	2019	
<u>INCOME</u>		%
ENDOWMENT DRAW* for Operating	\$ 90,000	11
INVESTMENT INCOME	184,000	23
PLEDGES	470,000	58
OFFERINGS	51,000	6
COMMUNITY USAGE FEES/PARKING LOT	<u>16,000</u>	2
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b><u>811,000</u></b>	<b>100</b>
 <u>EXPENSES</u>		
PERSONNEL	278,000	36
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE - 8th & Shipley & Rectory. Includes Maintenance Staff	158,000	20
MUSIC - Includes Choir Staff & Director	155,000	20
DIOCESAN ACCEPTANCE	81,000	10
PARISH ADMIN OPERATIONS	72,000	9
ADVOCACY SERVICE, PASTORAL	19,000	2
LITURGY, CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	11,000	2
MEMBER-PARISH DEVELOPMENT	<u>4,000</u>	1
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b><u>778,000</u></b>	<b>100</b>
 <b>*NET INCOME/UNUSED ENDOWMENT - CARRYOVER INTO 2020 for Operating</b>	 <b><u>33,000</u></b>	

Note: Additional Endowment Funds, totaling \$115,000, were drawn in 2019 to replace the church roof.

## SsAM - 2019 Income (Unaudited)



## SsAM - 2019 Expenses (Unaudited)



<b>SAINTS ANDREW &amp; MATTHEW          ADJUSTED ANNUAL BUDGET **          FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2020</b>
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2020

<u>INCOME</u>		%	-
ENDOWMENT DRAW* Carryforward from 2019	\$ 30,000	5	
INVESTMENT INCOME	175,713	27	
PLEDGES	423,000	64	
OFFERINGS	20,000	3	
COMMUNITY USAGE FEES/PARKING LOT	<u>9,300</u>	1	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b><u>\$ 658,013</u></b>	<b>100</b>	
<u>EXPENSES</u>		%	-
PERSONNEL	284,975	43	
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE - 8th & Shipley & Rectory. Includes Maintenance Staff	97,142	15	
MUSIC - Includes Staff Choir & Director	126,363	19	
DIOCESAN ACCEPTANCE	62,892	10	
PARISH ADMIN OPERATIONS	58,490	9	
ADVOCACY SERVICE, PASTORAL	18,360	3	
LITURGY, CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	6,841	1	
MEMBER-PARISH DEVELOPMENT	<u>2,950</u>	0	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b><u>\$ 658,013</u></b>	<b>100</b>	

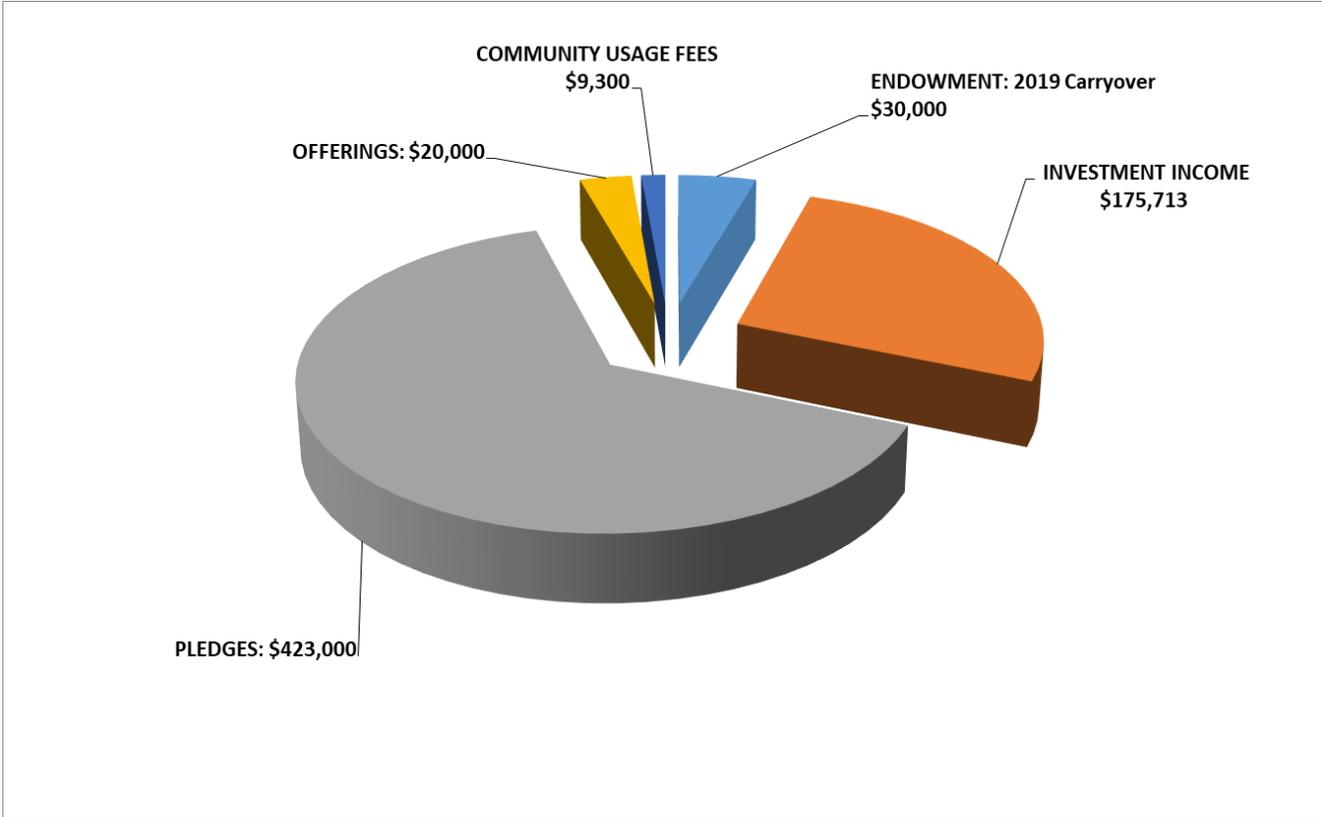
\*POLICY: NO new Endowment Draws in 2020 for SsAM's Op Operating Expenses

\*\*VESTRY APPROVED THIS ADJUSTED BUDGET TO REFLECT THE INITIAL IMPACT OF COVID-19.

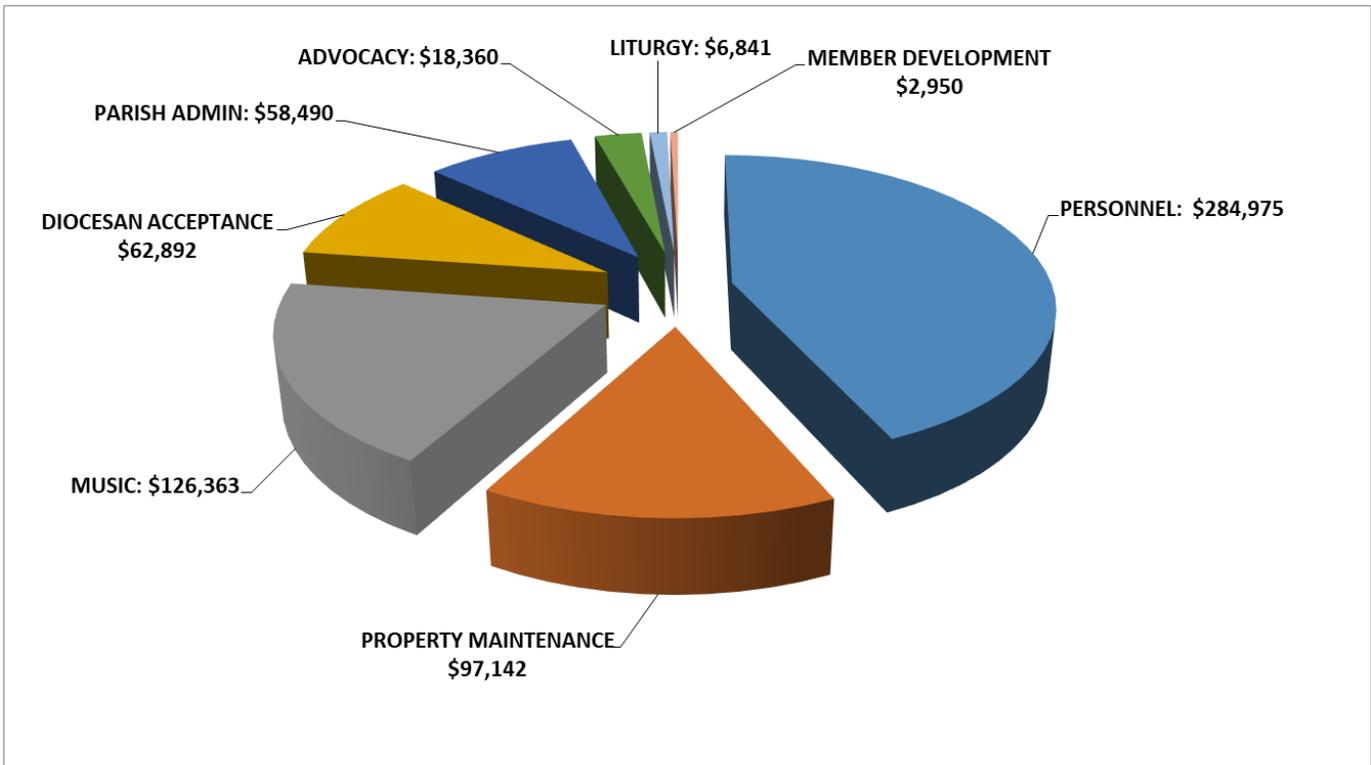
\*\*ADDITIONAL ADJUSTMENTS WILL BE MADE TO REFLECT FISCAL ACTIVITIES SINCE THE BUDGET APPROVAL

- Investment Income reductions based on current economic impact
- Diocesan Acceptance 1st-quarter - a Deferment only - \$20,964 (must add back)
- Payroll Protection Program Loan Received - Staff and Choir Salaries, Benefits & Church/Rectory Utilities
- Personnel Staff Reductions & Addition of Bookkeeping Contract Services
- Capital Budget Development for non-Operating Property-related Activities

### SsAM - 2020 Income (Budget)



### SsAM - 2020 Expenses (Budget)



## **Property Committee Report**

In the year 2019-2020, the really big improvement to the structure of SsAM was the new roof. It took Jon Reinhardt and his crew of P. Cooper Roofing from August through October 2019 to complete the project of replacing all 9 roofs of SsAM. We were thankful for the patience and diligence of this roofing company during this process. There were numerous leaks, primarily because of the many seams in the roof and the rainy weather during the replacement period. When damage occurred, the expense for repair was absorbed by the roofing company.

The ice machine was replaced. When the kitchen was renovated in 2013, we purchased a used ice machine, which lasted 6 years. We were able to use the frame of the used machine and have the machinery inside replaced.

A firm was hired to simplify and replace the plants in the flower beds of the cemetery. The three faithful people Cyndi Dombrowski, Anne Gibson and Sandy Hines, who did such a wonderful job, can no longer physically do the work. We are grateful for their years of service.

A gutter and downspout were replaced on the 8<sup>th</sup> and Shipley corner of the building. The company of BSafe (formerly Securitec) installed a striker on the office door to provide additional security to the people who are in the office.

Work was done to update the boiler system at the church.

The chancel platform was repaired in the sanctuary.

On three separate occasions, Mitsdarfer Brothers did tree removal work at the rectory.

We organized and participated in successful clean up days, including one to aid in getting ready for the Fall Fun Fest.

Members:

Ernest Barnes, David Clouser, Cyndi Dombrowski, Cynthia Martin, Pat Saunders, Peggy Shane, Orlen Washington

## **Report of the Director of Music 2019-2020**

One of the most exciting, yet challenging aspects of being the Organist and Director of Music at SsAM is the ever-evolving nature of the parish and community we serve. In the midst of its 24th year as a parish, the church has changed greatly since I began in April of 2001. In the area of music and liturgy, we have tried many different programs and experimented with a variety of approaches to liturgy. Now, as we are amidst a global pandemic, we have entered the virtual world of online liturgies and are learning techniques for recording and producing videos as well as live streaming services and events. Thanks to those who have participated in our virtual services as readers and singers, and to those who have participated at home!

Until March of this past year I had the joy of leading our newly formed CHILDREN'S CHAPEL along with Tina Betz and assisted by Adele Meredith, a host of dedicated parents, volunteers and staff members. Not only has this been a popular Christian education program with the children and families of the parish, but we have all been delighted to hear the children sing in church on a monthly basis as the Children's Chapel Choir! This has achieved two important goals. First it has breathed life into our Sunday School time in a way that has captured the interest and imagination of a significant number of children from the parish; and second, it has served as a way to introduce children to the idea of singing as a group (choir!). Our hope is that this may inspire some of these young people to go on to become choristers in our treble choir program. Thanks to all who helped with Children's Chapel.

One of the most increasingly popular aspects of our music program has been the DRUMMING CIRCLE led by Jonathan Whitney. The SsAM Drumming Circle is an enthusiastic group made up of members of our parish as well as members of the broader community. The Drumming Circle played in church periodically this season, especially during the Season of Creation.

We are so grateful to have Jonathan as an ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE to lead our Drumming Circle and to serve as musical director for our Jazz Vespers. Jonathan is a recent recipient of a Fellowship Grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, and currently serves as the Manager of Performance Programs & Community Engagement at the Delaware Art Museum.

This season we held two of three planned JAZZ VESPERS. Jazz Vespers for the Season of Creation was held on October 27, and a Jazz Vespers commemorating The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King was held on January 19. The Jazz Vespers scheduled for June 7 has been canceled as have all special events this spring due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Jazz Vespers draw a diverse audience of folks, mostly from the community. The cost for Jazz Vespers at SsAM is covered in part by a free will offering.

The MESSIAH SING-ALONG at SsAM is always a huge hit, and this year was no exception. With over 250 people from the broader community in attendance, the offering from this event completely paid for the event ... and great fun was had by all!

Michelle Johnson was our guest artist for this year's SPIRITUALS CONCERT. This annual event is hosted by SsAM, and members of Delaware ChoralArts are invited to participate alongside

members of the SsAM Adult Choir and Treble Choristers. DCA not only contributes singers to the event, but they use their publicity tools to attract audience members. A freewill offering with a suggested donation of \$10 was taken to help defray costs of the event.

After it became apparent this spring that live liturgies were no longer possible because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we began taking an online, pre-recorded approach to liturgy beginning on Easter Sunday 2020. These have been created by filming the individual components of the liturgy on my iPad Pro and assembling them into a video produced in iMovie on my MacBook Air. Each week we have experimented with different techniques that enhance the virtual worship experience, and it soon became clear that video production is too strenuous for my little MacBook Air. Luckily, we received an anonymous donation for a new MacBook Pro that is suitably powerful and will be perfect for continuing to produce our virtual liturgies until such a time as we can gather in person again.

One final word about the idea of paid staff singers as part of the SsAM Choir - Shortly after the formation of the parish in April of 1996, the SsAM Choir was established. Our founding Rector and the original church leaders had an exciting vision for a new liturgical style at SsAM that would eventually set us apart from almost every other parish. That vision relied heavily on the leadership of a choir that was not only excellent at traditional Anglican music such as Anglican Chant and the great anthems of Tallis, Stanford, Howells and Britten, but also capable of performing music from other cultures and faith traditions. This new choir would help incorporate diverse musical styles such as Jazz and World Music, as well as traditional African American styles such as spirituals and gospel music. This is a tall order for any choir, and one that no average volunteer choir could undertake. Because of this, the SsAM Choir was founded as an ensemble of talented volunteer singers led by a core of professional staff singers. Coming to the parish only 5 years after it was formed, it has been my great honor and privilege to be involved in the formation of SsAM's unique liturgies, and to serve for over 19 years as the director of this amazing ensemble that has been a source of inspiration for so many who have passed through our doors. Not only has the SsAM Adult Choir along with the SsAM Treble Choristers been an essential component of our worship, but it has become known throughout the Greater Wilmington area as a shining hallmark of our parish.

In response to the current pandemic, and because of the strain that it poses on the church budget, the Vestry has made the decision to de-fund the music program for the remainder of 2020. It is our sincere hope that this is a temporary measure and that funding will be restored, at least in part, in the near future. In the meantime, if members of the parish would like to support the music program, a fund has been established by a member of the Vestry so that donations may be made to a restricted fund. Donations may be made on the SsAM website by including MUSIC FUND in the memo field, or by sending a check with "music fund" indicated on the check.

It is unclear when we will have the opportunity to worship together again and to lift our voices in song to the accompaniment of our beloved Katherine Esterly Organ, but in the meantime, let us continue to seek ways to sing and make a joyful music in our hearts!

David Christopher

## Community Advocacy and Service

The purpose of the Community Advocacy and Service Committee is to provide a central organizing body and clearinghouse for all of SsAM's efforts in advocacy, service, and outreach, as well as to help the congregation be informed and involved in the opportunities for Christian service in the community. As part of the parish's strategic plan, the committee's goal is to sharpen members' awareness of current and emerging community issues and to develop ministries that address those issues.

**Outreach at Christmas.** Thanks to all who participated in providing Christmas gifts for our Friendship House Sunday breakfast guests, as well as for the Angel Tree program. This year, 26 children and young adults and their 11 mothers, who are clients of Friendship House, were the recipients of your generosity for Angel Tree. The children each received four gifts, and their mothers received gift cards. We were even able to provide a baby stroller.

We received the following note from Patty Gross on behalf of the families, *"We are almost done distributing the gifts that SsAM so generously supplied to our clients. The reactions have been amazing. Some were in tears. Every mother that picked up bags/boxes of wrapped presents were overwhelmed by the huge showing of love, support and generosity by your congregation. I know that each one of them will have a Christmas that would have been impossible without ALL of YOU!!! I know that it will be even more amazing to them come Christmas morning! May the grace of God and the love of Jesus Christ abide in you and with you ALWAYS!!"*

Geoff and Alice Sawyer also coordinated the collection of over 150 gifts, donated by members at SsAM for our Sunday breakfast guests. These were distributed just before Christmas to all of our breakfast friends.

**AIM Fund.** Twice monthly a special collection is taken on Sunday mornings to go toward this fund, which allows our church to make contributions toward special projects in the community and for needs within our church family. The Community Outreach Committee would like to thank the members of SsAM for your generous contributions. In 2019, the AIM fund received about \$14,288.23 from donations, which helped to fund special outreach projects: summer camp scholarships, eight college scholarships, and support of Episcopal Relief and Development. The first AIM collection in January was designated for Code Purple. The Episcopal Church Women and Art Slam also contribute to the programs of Friendship House. Finally, we held a special "pass the hat" for Habitat for Humanity for months that have five Sundays. Our first effort brought in \$550.77.

The closing of the church during the COVID-19 pandemic has brought in church collections for AIM to a halt. However, many members continue to contribute by mail.

**Scholarship Program.** In 2019, the scholarship program entered its 19th year with eight \$1000 scholarships awarded to members of our parish. The "Reverend Canon Lloyd S. Casson" Scholarship Program is funded through the AIM Fund and individual contributions. This year,

the committee designated the AIM offering in June to bolster the fund. In addition, an anonymous donor gave each student an additional \$200 to make the scholarship value \$1,000.

The following students were awarded scholarships for the fall semester: Cameron Dixon [University of Delaware], Forrest C. Fistzgiles [Wilmington College], Richard Hernandez [Albright College], Collins Jones [Morgan State University], George Jones [Virginia Tech], Veronica Oates [Tennessee State University], Alana Walker [Wilmington University], and Gloria Williams [Walden University]. This year, we lost two strong supporters of the scholarship program: Juanita Gibbs and Joe Johnson. However, the scholarship fund has received \$2150 to date through memorial contributions.

**Code Purple Assistance.** As we have done for several years, SsAM offers its auditorium space to accommodate the homeless community on nights the city declares a Code Purple Alert. Code Purple is declared anytime the actual or wind-chill temperature is 20° or below. We open our space up at 4 p.m. and close at 9 p.m. at which time the Salvation Army opens and provides sleeping accommodations for the remainder of the night. SsAM also provides one of several volunteer teams to serve soup and sandwiches to the people coming in on Code Purple nights. Volunteering consists of helping prepare and serve the soup and sandwiches to feed the hungry and cold on very short notice. Special thanks to Phil and Susan Murphree and Alice and Geoff Sawyer who coordinated the volunteers, with assistance from D-L Casson.

**Souper Bowl Sunday.** This fellowship/outreach activity in February has become an annual event. Parish soup makers donated different soups that were purchased by members of the parish. Proceeds of over \$200 from this activity went to purchase supplies for Code Purple.

**Undee Sunday.** Phil and Susan Murphree reported that UNDEE SUNDAY was another success this year. Twenty-four complete sets were donated, and generous cash contributions were used to purchase an additional 84 pair of thermal underwear for our needy friends! In addition a number of heavy socks and other warm items were donated, and all were given to the Friendship House Clothing Bank to be distributed to those in need.

**Sunday Breakfast Ministry.** On Sunday mornings from 5:30 to 8:00 a.m., the Episcopal Church of Sts. Andrew & Matthew makes available its auditorium for Friendship House to serve the homeless a hot breakfast. On a rotating basis, seventeen different faith communities prepare and serve this meal to an average of 130 individuals and families per week. After each Sunday breakfast, guests and volunteers are invited to participate in an ecumenical chapel service hosted by parishioners of SsAM. When the church closed in March, Friendship House continued to offer hospitality to the homeless by providing coffee and donuts at the entrance to the parish house each morning from 7:30-9 a.m. They have been averaging about 100 people. The AIM Fund provided \$500 toward this effort, as well as individual member contributions.

**Individual Member Initiatives.** The Community Advocacy Committee is only a coordinating body for outreach at SsAM. Individual church members are encouraged to come up with avenues of outreach, which several did this year.

- 1) In June, Sharon Bryant, D-L Casson, and others led a SsAM team at the Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community which benefitted Friendship House. In 2019 the walk brought in \$60,000. There will be a virtual walk in 2020.
- 2) Our youth participated in Rise Against Hunger with other Wilmington parishes. This effort provides pre-packaged rice and nutrients which are distributed around the world to help combat hunger. The AIM fund gave a contribution to this activity.
- 3) Members of the parish donated clothing to Friendship House's Clothing Bank.
- 4) Mary Anne Edwards serves as the treasurer of Network Delaware which has an office at SsAM.

### **Support of Other Organizations.**

1) **FAITH Center.** FAITH Center's primary purpose is to involve the greater Wilmington religious community in efforts to serve fellow human beings in crisis by way of counseling, referrals, and financial assistance for various human needs. For over 19 years, FAITH Center has served the working poor who are facing a one-time financial difficulty. The center is prepared to provide modest crisis alleviation grants for basic needs such as help with housing costs to avoid eviction and homelessness; help with utility costs to avoid disconnection of services; help with unexpected and/or uninsured medical costs; help with expenses to obtain or keep employment; and help finding assistance for special needs. The Community Advocacy Committee's budget of \$4,000 also reflects our parish's continued financial support for the FAITH Center. Parish member Rob Gurnee now serves as the executive director of Lutheran Community Services who administers Faith Center, and Emily Gibson and Tracy Lea-Dorsey serve on the board.

2) **Friendship House Ministries.** SsAM supports the efforts of Friendship House in many ways: volunteer support; Sunday breakfast ministry; Sunday chapel service; and Code Purple. In addition, Friendship House runs two programs out of the basement of SsAM: the Wilmington Empowerment Center Day Program and the Men's Transitional Housing Program [Andrew's Place]. Individual church members also make contributions of personal items, paper goods, food items, and Christmas gifts for those who utilize Friendship House's services. Friendship House has provided outreach to the community for 33 years. We would like to recognize D-L Casson as our representative to the Board.

3) **Financial Support of Traditional Agencies.** The Community Advocacy Committee continues to administer funding to agencies that have a historical tie to our parish. Due to reductions in the church budget, the amount we are giving to the four traditional agencies supported by our parish in the past has been reduced. The distribution included:

- St. Michael's School and Nursery \$3,000 (scholarships for children – the school gives out \$30,000 per month in scholarship aid)
- Friendship House \$4,000 (for support of the many programs for the homeless administered by Kim Eppehimer and her staff)
- Delaware Futures \$3,000 (this educational program, which was started in 1993, is helping to prepare disadvantaged students for college)
- Sojourners' Place \$3,000 (transitional program to help those recovering from drug or alcohol abuse).

4) **Providing Space for Meetings of Other Advocacy Organizations.** Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) has a separate meeting room in the lower level of our building, which is used seven days a

week. Other organizations that periodically use our facility for meals, meetings, rehearsals and workshops include Delaware Chorale Arts (DCA), the Wilmington Children’s Chorus, Faith Victory Christian Center, Friendship House, Delaware Concerned Residents 4 Environmental Justice, Network Delaware, Pacem in Terris, STIR and the Shipley Development Corporation. Many of these organizations make use of the James Thomas Memorial Kitchen – it is indeed living out its mission of being a kitchen for the community. For example, Faith Victory Christian Center in Claymont prepares the food for its annual Thanksgiving dinner for 300 people at SsAM. It also holds one-a-month hot meal and clothing give away during the winter months at SsAM. The Walking the Word Ministry holds its services on Sunday in our Chapel.

5) **Regal Heights Ministry.** The fourth Sunday of each month, SsAM parishioners and ministers share their faith and love by assisting residents of this skilled nursing center at a Holy Communion service.

6) **World Wide Efforts.** Our parish supports the worldwide outreach efforts of the Episcopal Church through the Episcopal Relief and Development Fund. In addition, in 2020 the Good Friday offering was sent to support essential ministries throughout the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East. Many of these outreach efforts are highlighted on SsAM’s website, [www.ssam.org](http://www.ssam.org). In addition to listing opportunities to volunteer, the site gives links to provide more information on many of the agencies that our parish supports.

The committee welcomes input from all members of the parish. Please contact any committee member if you would be would like to be a part of community advocacy at SsAM.

Sylvia Banks  
Joyce Bembry  
Shirley Bynoe  
Leslie Clouser  
Eudel Drain  
Mary Anne Edwards  
Laura Eisenman  
Retha Fisher  
John Goodill  
Kelly Holt

Sandy Holt  
Dariel Janerette  
Karen Johnson  
Athena and Gary Jolly  
Nancy Miller  
Phil Murphree  
Susan Murphree  
Lore Noyes  
Alice Sawyer  
Alice Smith, Chair

Orlen Washington  
  
in support of essential  
ministries throughout the  
Province of Jerusalem and the  
Middle East.

## **The SsAM Drumming Circle**

The SsAM Drumming circle was lead by Jonathan Whitney. This group is inter-generational and has participation from members of the community as well as the parish. It meets at SsAM during the Winter/Spring and at the Rock Lot on 8th Street in the Summer and early Fall. Jonathan Whitney has shared the following: The drum circle's membership is a mix of generations, backgrounds, parishioners and community members, musicians and non-musicians.

Each week we come together for an hour and play, but we also support each other, laugh together, blow off steam together, and learn from each other. This time spent together each week is what I believe is most important about the drum circle. The knowledge that is shared and the community that has grown out of the drum circle is the biggest benefit it brings to the church.

This year we saw steady with the addition of several new community members attend consistent. The Wilmington Alliance has pledged money to purchase more drums, which are needed because we have been consistently running out of drums at each session. The demand for introspective, cross-demographic activities continues to grow. Everyone comes for their own reason, but the rhythm becomes our common bond.

## **Environmental Justice Ministry at SsAM**

The Environmental Justice Ministry at SsAM is unique in that its members interface inside and outside of SsAM with others interested in Environmental Justice issues. Delaware Concerned Residents 4 Environmental Justice (DCR4EJ) is an affiliate of the Environmental Justice Health Alliance (EJHA).

Meetings are typically held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. by ZOOM or in person at SsAM.

DCR4EJ focuses on project work such as attending the YES (Youth Environmental Summit); presenting a table with children's activities at SsAM's Annual Fun Fest; advocating for clean water and air in Delaware; and sponsoring a two-day conference on the intersection of women's, children's and EJ issues in faith-based programs.

Consider attending a meeting or volunteering at an event to help you learn more about EJ at SsAM. You would be very welcome.

Linda Whitehead, Paulyne Webster