



**Annual Report 2022-2023**  
**The Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew**  
**719 N. Shipley Street, Wilmington DE 19801**  
**302-656-6628    [www.ssam.org](http://www.ssam.org)**

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## Report of the Interim Rector

When I began my association with the Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew on March 1, 2022, the expectation was that I would be a part of this faith community for six months, and possibly a few more. Well, as it turned out, that “a few more” turned into eleven more! My extended association with this parish was unexpected, and yet is something for which I am truly grateful. Our time together has had its share of highs and lows (what aspect of human life doesn't?) but I have sensed the presence of God through it all, and the blessings received through a shared faith in Jesus Christ.

My association with SsAM has been made easier by the dedication and efforts of your senior warden, Sandy Johnson, and the countless hours we have spent in conversation, debate, and collaborative decision making. Honest and direct communication, with an openness to hearing the thoughts and concerns of each other, has made all the difference.

Of course, little could have been done if it hadn't been for the professionalism of the staff. I am referring, of course, to David Christopher as the Director of Music and D-L Casson as the Parish Administrator. What I witnessed, and what many members and visitors to SsAM are probably not aware of, is not just how well they carry out their responsibilities and ministries but how they are always willing to give that something extra in all that they do. Our weekly staff meetings focus not only on what is needed to support the upcoming worship services or events, but now they might best represent the vision, values, and standards of SsAM.

Finally, over the past year It has been heartening to witness the ministry work had has been supported by members of this congregation. It hasn't always been easy to reengage some areas after several years of limited activity caused by that pesky virus COVID-19, or to begin new initiatives. The Children's Chapel has brought great joy to our young children, and the efforts by the leaders of YYF (Youth and Young Families) are inspiring. Just beginning is our involvement in the Sickle Cell support ministry, and an educational series on Racial Justice. These are just a few areas to mention, with the broader picture contained in the individual ministry reports contained in the full Annual Report.

I will soon be leaving you, and as I go, I will continue to give thanks for our time together as well as to pray for you all as you prepare to welcome your next Rector. May many godly blessings fall upon your lives and the witness of the Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew & Matthew for years to come.

In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

*The Rev. James Michael Bimbi*  
Interim Rector

## Report of the Senior Warden

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Wow! Another year has passed. We have accomplished a great deal and recognize that a lot more is left to do. “To whom much is given, much is expected.” Thanksgiving abounds for your prayers for *Growth and Vitality* on the other side of the pandemic. We celebrate the generous and faithful leadership of Interim Rector, Fr. James Bimbi, the gifts of members, all lay leadership vestry, staff and diocese. Our Rector Search Committee has been phenomenal. Lastly, I extend prayerful repose for members no longer with us. Thank you ever so much!

Please review the reports and think about how you would like to help.  
At all times, let us continue to pray knowing that through God, all things are possible.

In much love and gratitude,  
*Sandy Johnson, Senior Warden*

## Report of the Treasurer

### **2022 Operating Budget**

In 2022, with pledges, plate, other offerings and investment income, SsAM had total income/contributions of \$651,930. As authorized by Vestry, \$80,000 was used from the previous sale of the rectory in May of 2021 (held in liquidity) to balance the budget shortage.

The year-end balance in Master Fund A was \$3,699,909.79, with a net loss of \$1,014,326.86.

The bulk of our Operating Budget continued to be salaries, benefits, and related consulting costs making up over 53% of our 2022 budget. Our Diocesan Acceptance was roughly 12% of the 2022 budget.

### **SsAM – Operating Budgets**

	<b><u>Pledge Units</u></b>	<b><u>Contributions/Investment</u></b>	<b><u>Expenses/Disbursements</u></b>	<b><u>Deficiency</u></b>	
2022 – Actual	117	\$651,930	\$722,428	(\$70,498)	Shortfall covered by Master Fund A - Liq
2023 - Budget	117	\$578,000	\$713,600	(\$135,600)	Shortfall covered by Master Fund A – Liq & TBD

Cash Flow projections for 2023 show SsAM is trending in line with the budget and, if spending continues, will experience a 2023 operating deficit of over \$100,000. As a result, Vestry has taken action to ensure a balanced budget and has approved the remainder of the allotted liquidity funds from the sale of the rectory in the amount of \$30,000. Vestry, the Finance Committee, and the Treasurer along with the Financial Associate will continue to monitor the cash flow in order to address any concerns or deficits in a timely manner.

### **Health of Master Fund A**

As we are all acutely aware, the market continues to experience high volatility, however the current value of Master Fund A increased by \$72,960.44 as of the end of April.

In 2023, the bulk of our Operating Budget continues to be salaries, benefits, and related consulting costs representing over 60% of the budget expenses. Our Diocesan Acceptance represents about 12% of the budget.

### **Financial Upgrades**

As of April 1, 2022, Vestry engaged a Financial Consultant to develop a well-integrated financial function that operates in line with the Episcopal Church Canons and ensures the most efficient and sound stewardship process. A strong financial function provides SsAM staff, Treasurer, Finance Committee and Vestry with complete and accurate information-data necessary to make sound operational, outreach and capital decisions in support of the church's mission-vision. After the completion of the six-month financial transition/integration process, SsAM hired a Finance Associate, Darlington Cole, to operate all the fiscal functions of SsAM. The streamlining of the accounts and organization in Quickbooks assures transparency and accurate coding to the chart of accounts which assists in budgeting, the tracking process, the annual parochial report and the annual audit.

### **Financial Position Summary**

If SsAM wishes to focus on growing its endowment and continue its same level of budgetary spending, other revenue sources are necessary - increased membership and volunteering, increased pledges and pledge revenue, and grants. If these types of revenue sources are not generating the necessary revenue levels, then SsAM needs to begin to reduce its major overhead costs centers – salaries and benefits. A combination of these and other strategies will be necessary to overcome the on-going operational deficit spending and support the financial stability and growth we all seek in this, our church home.

*Scott Serota, Treasurer*

## **Report of the Director of Music and Associate for Liturgy**

For the past year, the music ministry has been slowly springing back from the issues encountered during the recent pandemic. The SsAM Choir is now partially funded, which has allowed us to bring choral music back to the SsAM liturgies, although not to the same degree as before. The choir's weekly rehearsal had to be reduced to a rehearsal once a month, and they frequently have a brief rehearsal following the Sunday service. Without a regular weekly rehearsal, we have had to stick with easier choral music and rely on selections we are familiar with and have done in the past. It also requires the singers in the choir to learn music on their own. The singers have done an amazing job of learning and preparing the music on their own with the assistance of a weekly e-mail containing that week's music along with recordings and learning resources. One challenge with this approach is that it is difficult for other congregation members to participate unless they are already good at reading music and experienced singing in a choir. A few members have tried to jump in but found it overwhelming and dropped out after a couple of weeks.

This year, the SsAM Choir began a collaborative relationship with the Adult Choir from Grace Methodist Church in Wilmington. On Dec. 20, 2022, the two choirs combined along with members of Delaware ChoralArts to present "A Feast of Carols" at Grace Church, and a reciprocal concert is planned to be held at SsAM on Dec. 19, 2023. The event was extremely well attended, and the plan is to alternate between the two churches in future years.

Jonathan Whitney, our Artist-In-Residence along with other instrumentalists joined us two Sundays this past season: The last Sunday of Season of Creation (Nov. 20, 2022) and Carnival Sunday (Feb. 19, 2023). These services with an instrumental ensemble are very popular with the congregation and we hope to have these types of services more frequently if funding allows.

Jonathan, who has directed the SsAM Drumming Circle in the past, has not been able to revive the SsAM Drumming Circle since the pandemic because of a poor response and reluctance of folks to participate. Jonathan has hopes of forming a more youth-focused drumming group that is modeled after more authentic African drumming, but we haven't found a way to gain the support and enthusiasm for this project yet.

There was one Jazz Vespers held on October 23, 2022 as a memorial tribute to Helen Thomas.

The SsAM Chorister Program was decimated by the pandemic and all of the former choristers have either graduated, or (in the case of the boys) their voices have changed. There is discussion among several families with children in grades two and above about a new approach to the chorister program that we hope to begin in the fall of 2023. Since we have such a successful Children's Chapel program, we are looking for ways to envision a chorister program that develops a synergy with, and compliments the chapel program.

We have continued to work on the live streaming of our services. William Landis, our livestream technician has done an excellent job of refining our techniques and enhancing the livestream with labels as well as a slide show at the beginning as folks are waiting for the service to begin. The livestream equipment is still only temporarily installed, however, a plan is in place to install everything permanently as soon as the funds become available. Some may have noticed that we now lock the balcony to protect the equipment. All members of the staff have keys, and the lock has been installed in a way that assures no one will accidentally be locked in the balcony.

In the past few years it has been challenging to get folks from both the parish and the community to attend events sponsored by the Friends of the Katherine Esterly Organ (FOKEO.) A meeting was held with the congregation after church on March 19, 2023 to get input from the congregation and conversations are ongoing with church members and FOKEO supporters to determine the type of events that best represent SsAM and will gain better support from the community. We hope to offer a new and improved series of events for the 2023-2024 season.

As the music ministry looks to the future, we are poised and ready to welcome our new Rector, and to look for new and creative ways to facilitate the mission and vision of the parish under their leadership.

*David Christopher*

## **Children's Chapel @ SsAM**

What a joy it has been to work with Children's Chapel this past year! The children at SsAM are so smart, inquisitive, and funny. They have wonderful singing voices and even though they can be active, they follow directions beautifully. They also help each other. As with several things, Children's Chapel at SsAM was on hiatus with all the changes taking place. So, we began again on October 9, 2022. Mary Lou Edgar, together with Carey Corbin, Noel Graves, Celia Corbin, and Moni Edgar, made the decision to try to get a program for our children back up and running. Since Mary Lou, being new to the parish, had no idea how Children's Chapel functioned in the past, we decided to try a new structure. We met with

Fr. Jim, D-L Casson, and David Christopher to consider the best format for the program. Since we had not had Children's Chapel in a while and because Moni is in a wheelchair and needed an accessible area, we decided to have it in the Crypt. Families were asked to bring their children to the Crypt a little before 10:30 and then go up to church. We decided it would be good to bring the children up when the congregation is sharing peace with one another, and the children could then share peace with their families. They would then be present – and with their parents -- for the Eucharistic prayer. We had an usher alert us a little bit before it was time for us to come up. Initially we came up to the back of the church, but people were asking to see the children, so we started coming in near the Sacristy so everyone can see.

Our plan for each week was basically the same (we did deviate for special days like Mother's Day.) At the beginning of October, we decided on a word that we would focus our attention on for the nine months we would work together. That word is connection. We talked about our parish being a community and we need to be connected. Then each month we had a word for that week, and we hope we get to talk about how word is part of being connected. Some of our words were hope, love, amazement, faith, and many more. Each week we had prayer, song, scripture reading and a craft. One week we had a movie about the Road to Emmaus. We try to vary what we do as best we can, but we never have more than 35-40 minutes. That is why the schedule and structure are so important. Carey always reads a scripture passage to match what is being read upstairs. We use a Children's Bible; Noel chooses a song the children can all sing (simple is best) that relates to the reading.

We do a great deal of communicating with the families during the weeks before Children's Chapel. We send out a reminder – since we meet every other week this makes it easier for families to remember. They get an email the week of Children's Chapel apprising them of what we will be doing and anything that might be important to remember for the future. We also communicate with the children. If they have been sick or missed a number of times, we send them a note telling them they were missed.

All this makes it sound like a formal experience, but it isn't. We are very flexible, and we have a great deal of fun. We laugh and listen together and when we are doing our craft, we work together. Lately the children have been coming up to be on the altar after leaving Children's Chapel. They are then able to experience the Eucharistic prayer by being there. It also makes them feel like part of the Church and we hope they will become acolytes and sing in the choir someday. We love the experience we are having with the children and we are learning from them as well. Thank you for helping us make this an important part of SsAM again!

*Mary Lou Edgar, Carey Corbin, Noel Graves, Celia Corbin, and Moni Edgar*

## **Report of the Communications Committee**

Every week this past year, our Parish Administrator, D-L Casson, sent out an eBlast on Fridays and published the Weekly Vision for Sunday worship. Frequently she sends special eBlasts out during the week, as does Danny Schweers and David Christopher. Those members without email receive paper updates via U.S. Mail. Mary Lou Edgar, Christina Brennan Lee, and Danny Schweers continued to write spiritual reflections for the Friday eBlast, adding a spiritual dimension to that publication while we continue to search for a new rector.

Danny Schweers updates the SsAM website weekly, with help from Carey Corbin. That site includes a link to the church calendar, which D-L Casson keeps updated. David Christopher and others contribute to our Facebook page, which is also used to share our church's ambitious schedule of 16 weekly prayer services led by Christina Brennan Lee, Rosie Castelli, Wanda Smith and Mary Morgan. The Sunday worship service

at 10:30 a.m. is streamed to the YouTube and Facebook platforms by Will Landis at the control panel. We estimate an average of 52 people watch our services via the Internet each Sunday. Those video services are available live and, afterwards, on demand.

Many meetings continue to be held via the Internet using the Zoom video app. This began with the pandemic in 2020 and has increased attendance at meetings significantly, as people no longer have to drive to church and back to attend meetings.

Central to the work of the Pastoral Care team, coordinated by Ernestine Brock Walker, are the cards and calls which go to members of SsAM. This includes four SsAM members who send out the monthly birthday and anniversary cards. Scores of phone calls and emails go in and out of the church each day. While our church tries to keep its members from being overwhelmed with communications going out, nothing is done to keep members from communicating in. We welcome your calls and emails!

—*Danny Schweers, Chair, SsAM Communications Committee*

## COMMUNITY ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

We rejoice in the continuous generosity of SsAM members through the many in-kind and monetary donations that are received each week. In order to better coordinate in-kind contributions at SsAM, the Episcopal Church Women (ECW) and the Community Advocacy Committee have joined together to promote a new ministry called “Meet the Need.” Both groups work very hard to sponsor collections that address the rising cost of living and how this impacts those in need for food and other life necessities. Although the collections of food, clothing, and other items have not changed, this is an attempt to better coordinate when an appeal for donations is made. Monetary donations continue to be accepted as well.

**Feed the Hungry.** Athena Jolly did a marvelous job in expanding and coordinating this effort to address the problem of food insecurity. In 2022 and early 2023, SsAM members brought in groceries, which were donated to five different food pantries – St. Mark’s, St. Stephens, Claymont Community Food Closet, Sunday Breakfast Mission, and Asbury UMC. The value of the donated food was \$1,896, which would provide food to 736 families, individuals, the elderly and the unemployed. More information can be found on SsAM’s website; click here <http://www.ssam.org/feed-the-hungry/> to find the local food pantry closest to you and learn how you can help. This is an important ministry at SsAM that continues throughout the year.

**Undee Sunday.** Thanks to SsAM’s affiliation with Friendship House (FH), we are able to provide support to those in Wilmington who have found transitional housing through FH and through its daytime centers. During November, the Community Advocacy Committee organized our annual Undee Sunday. Eudel Drain and Dariel Janerette worked with Foreman Mills to obtain over \$1,000 worth of long underwear and socks. These were given to the Delaware Clothing Bank, another FH project.

**Outreach at Christmas.** In preparation for Christmas, members of SsAM donated gift cards and monetary contributions so we were able to give the 24 women who live in the five FH transitional housing units with \$75 gift cards, along with a pair of cheery Christmas socks. In addition, individual church members adopted eight children, who each received 3-4 gifts.

According to Shawn Helmick, the coordinator of the women’s transitional housing, “Thank you from the bottom of my heart. There are a least two of my women who have never ever had a Christmas or a present. One lady’s mother was so abusive, she would wrap empty boxes and make her daughter open them to be cruel. This stops this year thanks to kind people like you and your Parish!!”

**Warm Hands, Warm Hearts Campaign.** We held a hat, gloves and scarf collection which covered the cold months of January and February. Some of the items are being stored at church when an individual comes in on a Saturday or Sunday. The remainder was donated to the FH Empowerment Center. This collection replaced the Christmas gifts collected in the past for the Sunday breakfast, which has been replaced by “to go” food bags and coffee.

**AIM Fund.** We continue to take a special collection on the first and third Sunday of each month, along with mail-in contributions. In 2022, donations to AIM, including scholarship donations, amounted to \$12,858.73. Expenditures were \$6,000 for six scholarships, and \$1000 to Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) for hurricane rescue funds. and earthquake relief to Syria and Turkey. Recently in 2023, we have also made another \$1,000 contribution to ERD for earthquake relief to Syria and Turkey. The Good Friday offering of \$1000 was sent to support the ministry in the Anglican Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East.

**Canon Casson Scholarship Program.** The Community Advocacy Committee awarded six \$1000 scholarships in 2022 to Mark Corbin, Cameron Dixon, Gianna Hernadez, Collins Jones, George Jones, and Priscilla Jones. SsAM received a special thank you from Cameron Easton who received the scholarship for several years while he was working towards his PhD in physical therapy, which he has now completed. “I truly cannot understate how helpful the scholarship has been! Each year, it has been such a blessing to know that I had support for the supplies I needed to succeed. I know without it, it would have been much more difficult to achieve all of this.”

**Sunday Breakfast Ministry.** Friendship House continues 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.

#### **Individual Member Initiatives.**

- **Friendship House Virtual Highmark Walk.** Sharon Bryant is leading the SsAM and Friends of SsAM Team for the Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community, which benefits Friendship House. The walk this year is again live on June 10. Sharon now represents SsAM on the board of Friendship House
- **Chuck Bean** delivered six boxes of coats, pants, gloves, sheets and pillows to Friendship House during the winter. In addition, he donated a tent, sleeping bags, and blankets to the Turkish embassy in Washington during the earthquake disaster.
- **ECW.** The ECW worked with Child Inc. and Home of the Brave. A list of opportunities to minister for those in need will be published by the ECW.

**Support of Other Organizations.** At the end of 2022, the following community partners received a financial gift from our church. All our partners have acknowledged SsAM’s continued support and partnership with their programs.

**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 20 years, FAITH Center has served the working poor who are facing a one-time financial difficulty, made worse by the pandemic. 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 serves as the executive director of Lutheran Community Services who administers Faith Center.

2) **Friendship House Ministries.** Friendship House addresses unmet basic human needs of the street homeless to close gaps by providing essential services at the Wilmington Empowerment Center housed in SsAM's basement. They provide morning "to go" food bags and coffee. Plans are currently in the works to provide a Code Orange at SsAM on Saturdays and Sundays when the summer becomes inordinately hot.

3) **Financial Support of Traditional Agencies.** The Community Advocacy Committee continues to administer funding to agencies that have a historical tie to our parish. These funds come from the church' outreach budget. 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 \$3,000 (for support of the many programs for the homeless administered by Kim Eppheimer 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).
- Faith Center (listed above) \$4,000

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 and meetings include Delaware Valley Chorale, the Wilmington Children's Chorus, Friendship House, Delaware Concerned Residents for Environmental Justice Reform, Network Delaware, and the Shipley Development Corporation. SsAM is also looking forward to hosting two residency programs for a jazz workshop and black storytellers.

5) **World Wide Efforts.** Our parish supports the worldwide outreach efforts of the Episcopal Church through the Episcopal Relief and Development Fund.

The Community Advocacy Committee is constantly astonished by the grace demonstrated in your giving. Thank you so much for everyone's participation.

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  
Shirley Bynoe  
Eudel Drain  
Mary Anne Edwards  
Laura Eisenman  
Retha Fisher  
John Goodill

Sandy Holt  
Dariel Janerette  
Athena Jolly  
Phil & Susan Murphree  
Alice Sawyer  
*Alice Smith, Chair*

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MINISTRY AT SsAM

Delaware Concerned Residents for Environmental Justice or DCR4EJ is a lesser known ministry at SsAM focused on Environmental Justice (EJ) work. DCR4EJ was created in the fall of 2011 in direct response to SsAM's observation of and commitment to the Season of Creation and the Rights of Mother Earth. Our mission is to inform and empower communities to take action to protect the fundamental rights to clean air, water, land and food with a particular focus on people with less access to resources and more access to toxins. Many people living at or close to the "fenceline" are over-burdened with not enough resources, or receive more pollution than wealthier communities.

The DCR4EJ is an affiliate member of the Environmental Justice Health Alliance for Chemical Policy Reform (EJHA). EJHA is a national collective of "fenceline" grassroots groups and advocates who serve them.

The group is currently facilitated by a two-person team including Linda Whitehead, a member of SsAM and Dora Williams, an Environmental Justice community activist. We have continued to have the dedicated work of an intern from the Charter School of Wilmington. She has had the opportunity to learn about EJ issues and has supported DCR4EJ in a variety of ways mainly focused on communication. She will be leaving in the fall to attend Tufts University outside of Boston.

Examples of some of our projects this past year have included:

- **Ongoing - Sign-on Letters:** Sign-On letters are one of the ways we can show our support for new policies. Two kinds of letters are available – signing on as an individual or as an organization. Dora and Linda are designated as signers who represent DCR4EJ as a group, typically after discussing the particular letter at a monthly meeting or circulating email messages with more detail. A sample of sign-on letters coming out this past year included one from the White House Council on Environmental Policy seeking input on a "score card", asking for information and comments. Another sign-on letter focused on Risk Management Plans or RMP.
- **Ongoing: Response to the Croda/FujiFilm Incident:** Croda and FujiFilm are chemical plants in Delaware close to the Delaware Memorial Bridge that have had chemical incidents in the recent past and now continue to be monitored by the community for safety. A number of members of DCR4EJ have been very attentive to Croda's response to chemical spills in follow-up meetings. Croda continues to work on fixing plant violations and reports to DNREC on a regular basis. FujiFilm is also in the same area and is being monitored as well. Members of DCR4EJ spent a significant amount of time requesting that DNREC reconsider approval of an expansion of the FujiFilm plant. Despite a significant effort to the contrary, an expansion to the FujiFilm plant is planned to move forward. FujiFilm supplies the need for ink for printers.

Recently virtual public hearings were held. FujiFilm has applied for approval from DNREC to expand their facility. DNREC and Fujifilm each had the opportunity to present their "case". This was followed by six presentations each no longer than three minutes either supporting or denying support of the expansion or asking questions. Following the written comment period through late May, a decision will be made by DNREC. Approximately four members of DCR4EJ made public comments for the community.

- **Environmental Justice Forum: Ongoing:** Linda and others have been drafting an agenda for an Environmental Justice Forum to possibly be held at SsAM in the fall of 2023 during the Season of Creation. Individuals from other EJ groups in the state would be invited along with leaders of the Episcopal Church in the northeast
- **July 2022:** New Castle County's Comprehensive Plan is updated every ten years. Members of DCR4EJ were asked what things they would like to change in their community. The process culminated into updating 2012's plan on issues such as land use and zoning.
- **August 2022:** The Mid-Atlantic Alliance for Climate and Health (which is a group mainly of physicians) held their first annual Climate and Health Conference in August 2022. Dora Williams presented on the Environmental Justice Panel.
- **September, 2022:** Environmental Champion Awards – Linda announced that the Sierra Club of DE acknowledged three environmental champions this year: Dora Williams, John Irwin and Peggy Schultz. Dora was recognized for the many years of work that she has done with the Rte. 9 corridor. She has also testified to the EPA at the national level and so much more. John has worked consistently in the background supporting and leading whatever projects needed time and attention including e-vehicles. Peggy is not part of DCR4EJ but has consistently supported volunteer work for the Sierra Club. Recently John has been focused on e-vehicles. They were honored at a dinner on Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> at the Rose Hill Community Center. DCR4EJ is proud to partner with the Sierra Club in recognizing these Environmental Champions.
- **March, 2023: The Yes Conference,** also known as the Youth Environmental Summit, was held on Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> this past year. John Irwin, LaVaida White Owens and Linda Whitehead represented SsAM and DCR4EJ there during the fair of organizations. We noticed that from year to year, there is more and more awareness of the concept of Environmental Justice. Another conference is planned for 2024. This event is largely student-led and implemented.

Environmental Justice advocacy is needed now more than ever. As we go into the world as followers of Christ, we'd like you to join us. Participation in this ministry is an excellent way to take SsAM beyond our walls and to get to know some of our neighbors. Please speak with Linda Whitehead ([lindaw302@verizon.net](mailto:lindaw302@verizon.net)) for more information or to get on the email list. Monthly meetings currently occur on the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm by ZOOM. New participants of all ages are welcome with a special welcome extended to youth in the area.

*Linda Whitehead*

## **Report of the Episcopal Church Women (ECW)**

The Episcopal Church Women of STS Andrew and Matthew has completed projects we began in September of 2022. These two projects include:

**YWCA Home Life Center:** We provided "Welcome Home Baskets" for clients transitioning to their own homes. Our goal was ten (10) Baskets which were delivered to the Center at the end of January, 2023. We are now trying to make arrangement with the Director, Ms. Royster, to see what advocacy and outreach we can help with. More to come in 2023.

**Child, Int.:** We were asked to provide cell phones and gift cards to help the

women in the program communicate with their family while they were in secure residences from their abusers. We also provided underwear (75 packs) and 25 Cell Phones with \$25 gift cards for minutes. We are also trying to discover ways to help with advocacy and outreach in this area to secure more funding for the agency.

These Projects were successful because our SsAM family was very gracious with their donations. Thank you and we are asking each agency for feedback on how their clients felt about receiving these gifts to better help our ministry access how we can be more helpful in the future.

ECW is currently sponsoring a "Clothing Drive" to help our community partners which are Friendship House Clothing Bank and Sojourner's Place. This project will last through December 31, 2023. We are asking that clothing items be delivered directly to each charity and that donators report to ECW with an idea of their donations so that a monetary amount can be accessed for our annual Parochial Report to the Diocese. A letter with flyer attached will be mailed out before the end of May, 2023 as a reminder of this project and its continued need in our community.

The Episcopal Church Women and the Advocacy Ministry have joined together under the umbrella of "Meet the Need". This moniker was developed by Athena Jolly, who spearheaded the Food Collections Ministry, in order to coordinate and give each Ministry a time to request donations from our parishioners in *order* that they are not overwhelmed as they give to sponsored charities. This has helped to meet the needs of each Ministries requests for giving.

State Episcopal Church Women Annual Meeting: We participated, as always, in our State ECW charity collection for the "Home of the Brave". This is a Veterans Housing Program to help homeless veterans. This year they needed and asked for household items such as, bedding (sheets, pillowcases, towels, and wash cloths); which our Parish Family came through for us and them. We also gave a monetary donation of \$185 as well. We were given a huge thank you from both the State ECW and the Home of the Brave director. Again our SsAM family helped enormously.

At this current time we are planning to host a "Women's Recognition Luncheon" for the month of September, 2023. This program is to recognize the women in our congregation for the great things they have done for SsAM and the wider community. More information will be given as the planning continues.

We are continuing to meet our ECW objective as our ECW prayer directs:

"Almighty God, bless we pray, our work I mission and ministry in the world. Make us so thankful for the precious gift of Your Beloved Son, that we pray fervently, labor diligently, and give liberally to make known throughout the world the redeeming love of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen"

ECW Active Members: June Knight, Vice-Pres., Mary Morgan, Treasurer, Anne Gibson, Patricia Hampton, Mary Lou Edgar, Gloria Conner-Bungy, Pamela Peters, Paulyne Webster, Judi Gregory and Athena Jolly.

As all women of the Episcopal are ECW, we are asking for more of you to become active with your ECW Ministry with great respect.

*Ernestine Brock-Walker, your ECW Ministry President*

## **REPORT OF THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS MINISTRY**

The health and wellness committee was revived by the efforts of Aretha Jolly. Since then it has been active in updating and ensuring the working order of the AED device to resuscitate people after a cardiac arrest, and to train many of the ushers and other church staff in CPR Techniques.

We have also embarked on a program of extra medical support for the sickle-cell community being treated at Nemours via an interfaith church community (**Congregational Health Network for managing sickle cell disease**) spearheaded by Rev. Pat Weikart, a retired Presbyterian priest and a volunteer pastoral counselor at the hematology department at Nemours. This initiative has two components that we are involved with presently. The first is Food Coaches to help families with sickle cell disease understand and effectively use healthy foods that benefit the children and their families who have this condition. The Delaware Food Farmacy (Lutheran Community Services) procures food for this project. The second is a mentoring program for the older children who are transitioning to adult care.

The Food Coaches aspect begins the week of June 5th. This program has the wonderful possibility of reaching out to a community and meets the needs of the 270 families who struggle with sickle cell disease. We also recognize our interfaith community can help develop a strong positive Christian presence.

Other community-oriented activities included:

- Publicizing a community AIDS program (no additional assistance was needed)
- Organizing a Covid testing and immunization clinic with the help of congregation nurses. This was a positive learning experience in coordinating community public health activity. Community participation was less than ideal but we learned a lot of lessons that will be helpful in the future.

Dr. Goodill is organizing an end-of-life seminar program to be initiated in the fall or winter of this year.

The members of the committee also strive to connect parishioners with physicians when they're having trouble knowing how to monitor the system. We're not always successful but often we can direct people to appropriate care and try to cut some of the red tape.

The health and wellness ministry is off to a decent start. We thank all the people from the congregation who have stepped up to help here. This is clearly one way to reach out to the community and add to the SsAM mission of love and concern for each other and the community.

Thank you,

*John Goodill and Chuck Bean. Co-chairs*

## Report of the SsAM Property Committee

**Members:** Sharon Leyhow, John Goodill, Cecil Gordon, D-L Casson (Parish Administrator), and Paul Crothamel (Property Management Consultant)

The mission of the Property Committee is to provide a visible presence and witness to Christ in our neighborhood. This includes an energy efficient safe environment where our members and guests can pray, learn, and grow in faith. This committee assures the care and appearance of the physical property at SsAM by keeping the facility in good working order from the grounds to roof, valuing SsAM's historic structure while also recognizing the need to reflect our mission.

The work of former committee co-chairs, Cynthia Martin and Pat Saunders, and members provide a review of the property infrastructure needs for the next 3 years. Given a change in leadership, the committee was reconstituted. The strategy is to complete the budget recommendations and to accomplish change for a strategy that addresses property issues which uplift ministries, communications (streaming/media), safe infrastructure and protection of the church's assets. Completed work includes the following: **SANCTUARY:** New carpet for center aisle was installed. Assessment for repairs of ceiling and light replacement, while protecting the organ is underway. **AUDITORIUM:** An energy grant was received for the replacement of lighting. **CLEANING:** The vestry approved a contract with a cleaning firm for routine, special events and deep cleaning rather than having dedicated Sextons on the SsAM staff.

**Convenor:** *Sandy Johnson (Senior Warden)*

## Necrology

Karen Denton  
Johnson  
Beverly Lane  
Marge McElwee,  
Debra Mitchell,  
Vern Oates  
Dennis Porter  
Margie Pumphrey  
Les Roberts, Sr.  
Peggy Shane  
Elliott Smith  
Helen Thomas

## Other SsAM Ministries

For information about the Racial and Social Justice Ministry, visit

<https://www.ssam.org/steps-to-peace-and-justice/>

<https://www.ssam.org/monthly-walks-for-justice-and-peace/>

Watch for Youth & Young Families (YYF) Updates:

<https://www.ssam.org/who-we-are/youth-young-families/>

## Candidates for Vestry



*Mary Lou Edgar*

My husband, Dan, our daughter, Moni, and I began attending SsAM in 2019. We had been Roman Catholics and were very unnerved by the things that were happening in the church. We discussed this for years before we decided to move on. We were welcomed into SsAM on November 7, 2021. It was a wonderful experience and I have said many times I feel like I am home.

Dan and I have been married for 53 years and we have five children – two were born to us and three came to us through adoption. I am a licensed clinical social worker, and my undergraduate degree in psychology is from Neumann University; my master's degree in social work is from Bryn Mawr College. My entire career has been focused in some way on adoption and foster care. I have worked as a caseworker, agency director, family therapist and school counselor. In 2006, I became the Fulfillment Director for the Collaboration to Adopt US Kids, a federal program, providing training for adoption agencies throughout the country. In 2011, I founded my own adoption program, A Better Chance for Our Children. I found we needed more people working with children with special needs — that meant physical, emotional, cognitive, and all types of abuse and neglect. So, I started one! A Better Chance for Our Children is a non-profit organization that places children with special needs in permanent homes and we do a great job!

My most important job is that of mom. I got most of my education for that from my kids. They were great teachers! They were active in school and loved sports. Their dad and I were involved and

supportive parents. I enjoy reading when I have down time and also love to do cross stitch. Mostly I like working with people, particularly kids. At SsAM, I have participated in the Peace and Justice walk, Children's Chapel, the Pastoral Care Committee, and ECW. Every third week, I write a reflection for the E-Blast.

Part of what I love about SsAM is the diversity of the community as well as the commitment to racial and social justice. My husband and I have two children of color. As a child advocate, I believe that no matter who adopts a child, we must make a concerted effort to connect that child to their race and ethnicity. I also believe in working with birth families whenever that is possible. It is very important for children to understand their history no matter how difficult or minimal it might be.

Our daughter, Moni, came from Mother Teresa's orphanage in Calcutta, India. We worked hard to get to meet Mother Teresa (and we did) and we also took her to India for three weeks to see the places where she had lived. In 1985 I was asked by the State of Delaware to develop a support group for Black Adoptive and Foster Families. I did so and led that group as they met regularly for over 30 years. I made lasting friends, and I learned more than I ever thought possible. I continue to learn from them, and I believe I will for the rest of my life.

Our children are all grown, and we have six grandchildren. Currently, I'm more involved in the community in which I live. Now I have some time and I would like to do more for SsAM. I am very moved by the use of the word "love." It is everywhere! I find that to be welcoming and hopeful. I have felt very welcome here. I have a sincere commitment to prayer and believe I am being led to be more involved at SsAM. Hopefully, I will be able to contribute to the vestry and also learn from them.



*Scott Serota*

My name is Scott Serota. I have been a member of The Episcopal Church of SsAM for over a decade, ever since the Cathedral Church of St. John was closed in 2012. I was a member of the Vestry toward the end of the life of that location and thus was able to really be an active part of difficult decisions which had to be made, strategizing outreach and how to grow the congregation, and creative problem solving to prioritize and address myriad issues.

I grew up in the Methodist church and have been a part of church life for as long as I can remember from choirs to camps to youth groups and everywhere in between. As with many, I grew away from the



church to seek out life and my own answers but, gratefully, found my way back and a home in the Cathedral and now SsAM and also in the Episcopal faith writ large after moving to Delaware from Texas.

I would appreciate your consideration for Vestry as I feel I have many talents and gifts that would be assets to both the Vestry and the congregation. I have over twenty years of experience in management, most recently piloting an education program for Sephora and training educators in the district as well as my employees and those in other locations from onboarding to continuing education including management. I also have fifteen years of experience in bookkeeping as well as sales projections and goals and profit and loss reports, forecasting and planning through running multiple locations with Sephora and have been the Treasurer for SsAM for the past two years.

With a focus on people and a strong background in finance, I feel that it is the right place and the right time to take on a more active role within the congregation and the church and, with your trust, to make myself available to steer this church toward a brighter future as we welcome a new rector and a new chapter for the life of the Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew.



*Mary O'Connell Sparco*

I joined SSAM five years ago with my family, John and Nicholas. During my time at SsAM, I have helped with the Children's Chapel. I was a Mathematics teacher in the Brandywine School District at Mount Pleasant and Concord High Schools for 30 years, and also coached Cross Country for 20 years. In addition to teaching and coaching, I was active in the Delaware State Education Association to support the teachers in the classroom and legislature. Currently, I am a part time Mathematics teacher at The Tatnall School. I have been a member of the board of the Gateway Charter School for two years, the treasurer for my local neighborhood civic association, and the treasurer of our club swimming pool, Graylyn Crest Gators! When I get time, my passion is cooking and working in my gardens.



## WHOM WE SEEK

We are seeking a rector who:

- is visionary, and is a community collaborator and leader especially in the areas of social justice, with an understanding of urban settings and the inner city.
- is committed to diversity and inclusion. SsAM was created as an intentionally diverse parish, and parishioners place a high value on the inclusion of all people.
- is welcoming, with the gift of inviting and incorporating new members, who has excellent pastoral care skills and is a caring listener.
- is creative, a motivator, an inspirational and knowledgeable preacher, spiritually nurturing, and who has a sense of humor.
- is a strong administrator, who works collaboratively and innovatively to understand and expand ways to fully live into [SsAM's Mission and Vision and our Guiding Principles](#).

## PARISH PROFILE

[Click here to download a copy of our Parish Profile in PDF format.](#)

## ABOUT OUR RECTOR SEARCH PROCESS

### *A Partnership.*

We encourage each other to trust in the Holy Spirit, and trust in those responsible for the process of calling a new rector — a partnership with the SsAM congregation, Bishop Brown, the Diocese of Delaware staff, and the Standing Committee of the Episcopal Church in Delaware. The Rev. Canon Martha Kirkpatrick serves as our diocesan Transition Officer.



*Consultant For Transition: Diane B. Pollard*

Diane B. Pollard has joined our transition work as consultant, in partnership with Bishop Brown. Diane is an experienced consultant from New York City who serves on the Finance Committee of the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church. She brings a great deal of work experience at the national church level and with parishes in transition.

## SsAM RECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE



Those appointed are shown in the photo above, taken when they were commissioned and mask mandates were still in place. Left to right are: **Sherry Goodill** (Chair), **Joshua Martin**, **Ernestine Brock-Walker**, **Carey Corbin** (Vestry member), **Tom Angell**, **Christina Brennan Lee** (Vestry member), and **William Young** (Vice Chair).

## **Most recent report (May 30, 2023)**

### ***Update from the Rector Search Committee:***

*Throughout the month of June we will be welcoming our semi-finalists to visit SsAM. In those visits, they will get to know SsAM better and toward this goal they will engage in meetings with our Sr. Warden, Treasurer, Director of Music, Parish Administrator, our Interim Rector, the search committee, and Canon Martha Kirkpatrick at the Diocesan offices. We expect to have completed the visits by the end of June and will then enter our final phase of discernment. Thank you again for entrusting us with the process and for your continued prayers that we may be (as we pray weekly) “imaginative about our future, open in our search and, in all things, knit together in one body through Jesus Christ.”*

*Yours, Sherry Goodill (Chair) and Bill Young (Vice Chair)*