Annual Report 2024-2025

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Rector	2
Sr. Warden	3
Finance & Treasurer	4
Music Director & Associate for Liturgy	5
Acolytes	7
Children's Chapel	7
Communications Committee	8
Community Advocacy	9
Episcopal Church Women (ECW)	11
Health & Wellness Ministry	12
Housing Ministry Working Group	13
Property	15
Stewardship	17
Necrology	19

Annual Report of the Rector

This past year has been full. It has been full of joys, challenges, and experiences with the Holy Spirit as our community has responded to the needs of our neighbors and to the rapid changes we have seen in our country. God has been present with us through it all with care and love for the journey.

I want to begin with reporting that our move to Wilmington is finally complete. We have settled into our new home and our daughter is settled at college. We are so grateful for all the ways that the SsAM community has loved and supported us during our transition and are excited to set down our roots here in Wilmington.

Many have worked tirelessly to meet the needs of our neighbors. We give thanks to all the individuals who volunteer in the office who support a variety of ministries and serve those who seek shelter and a safe space at SsAM. They serve coffee and soup, count donations, proofread leaflets, pray with those in need, and a variety of other activities that serve others and ensure the parish runs smoothly. We give thanks to all those who served during Code Purple, Code Orange, and when SsAM opened as an emergency warming shelter. Jesus said whatever you did to the least of these you did it to me, and our ministry to the most vulnerable among us would not be possible without these individuals and their ministries which continue to grow as the needs around us increase. I especially want to thank D-L Casson for her tireless work as our Parish Administrator both for all the "official" duties in our community, but also for all the ways that she gives of herself in service to the community. Her work not only makes it possible for our community to thrive, but she also personally cares for our most vulnerable neighbors in times of crisis and need in ways that are truly extraordinary. Her love and care for those around her is truly admirable and an embodiment of SsAM's mission in our community.

We are blessed with amazing disciples who lead and support our prayer and worship services, both online and in person. Our worship services feed and nurture us to be sent into the world and it takes both skill and dedication from this amazing group. I especially want to thank David Christopher for his leadership, his skills as a musician, and all the other ways that his talents and generous spirit support our community. We have one of the best, and most diverse worship and music programs in The Episcopal Church, and we give thanks for all who make that possible from our acolytes, our Eucharistic Ministers, the altar guild, our lectors, our ushers and greeters, and all the members of our choir and other musicians who bless us every week. We also give thanks to those who lead us in online services on Sunday and throughout the week. Worship helps us to connect with God more deeply, and we give thanks for all those who make that possible at SsAM.

Another area of focus has been building new formation and fellowship offerings to nurture and build relationships. With special thanks to Linda Jackson, Christina Lee, Sister Rosie Castelli, Pat Hampton, and Bob Young for leading in person and online formation classes. To ECW and their leadership team for bringing back coffee hour and hosting a variety of celebrations over the last year. And to all those who led and participated in our Coffee and Conversation events which helped us to listen and learn from a variety of ministry partners and each other. We have more to do to provide space for all members of our community to grow in their relationship with Jesus and each other, and we will continue to explore formation and fellowship options in the coming year.

Over the last year we have begun exploring how God is calling us in a rapidly changing world. In order for the Vestry and myself to engage in this wide ranging work, we have called three groups-the Housing Task Force, to discern how God is calling SsAM to respond to the deepening housing crisis in Wilmington and strengthen our existing ministries of care; a Strategic Planning Group, to explore how we can position SsAM to better connect with our community, be

sustainable in a rapidly changing environment, and continue to live into our mission for generations to come. You will hear more from these groups in our annual meeting and in the coming months as they continue to hold listening sessions in the parish and the wider community. We give thanks to the talented and dedicated members of both groups who have done incredible work. We have also called a small group to explore creating an intentional Curacy program at SsAM to offer a place where new clergy can learn and gain practical experience in a ministry like ours. This would allow us to share all that we have learned about living in intentionally diverse community and support our growth as a parish. We give thanks to this team that will soon embark on fundraising for this program. Conversations continue with other ministry partners, such as DCR4EJ and Network Delaware on how we can explore new calls into the work of justice and rekindle existing relationships to participate in the work of justice in our world.

I would be remiss if I did not name that, as a community, we have faced significant challenges in the past year. In the fall officers from the WPD came to SsAM and removed benches that had served our neighbors for almost 40 years, leading to a very public dispute with city leadership over the incident and the broader crisis of housing and poverty in our city. We have born witness to rapid changes, led by the federal government, that have stripped money and resources from many of our ministry partners and other organizations that directly care and support our vulnerable neighbors and instilled fear in the hearts of others. These are but a few of the many challenges that we have faced over the last year, but through it all our community has responded with courage and grace as witnesses to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Our ability to respond with courage and grace, especially in moments of disagreement and stress, would not be possible without the leadership of our Vestry and other leaders. I want to thank our Wardens, Steven Jones (Sr. Warden) and David Clouser (Jr. Warden) for their courageous and steady leadership. Outgoing members of the Vestry-Nana Soto, Anthony Jones, Cecil Gordon, and Christina Brennan Lee for their service and leadership over the last three years. Our remaining members of the Vestry with thanksgiving for their devoted service. Scott Serota our Treasurer, our Finance Committee and their new chairman Dan Edgar for stewarding our finances faithfully. Property Committee and David Clouser their chair. Stewardship Committee and John Goodill their chair for leading another successful stewardship campaign and leading us to a life of yearlong stewardship. Alice Smith and all members of AIM, Jim Dunn and Adele Meredith and our new Sewing Ministry for caring for the vulnerable in our midst.

During the next year we will continue to discern how God is calling us to be bold witnesses to the love of Christ in our rapidly changing world and find ways to strengthen our spirits for this work. As I mentioned last year, I am so grateful for the sacred charge of serving with all of you in this faithful community. There is so much to be excited about in our common life and many challenges before us as well. I look forward to what the next year will bring and give thanks to all the ways that we care for each other and bear the light of Christ into our world.

Faithfully,

Patrick+

Report of the Sr. Warden

Given the challenges facing our families, neighbors, city; nation and the world, our parish's great strength is that we know *God created a good world* (Genisis. 1:31). Through our ministries, we openly demonstrate, as witnesses in Christ, our purpose as we care for our community. Since the pandemic we have become nimble. Once again, we are witnessing levels of uncertainty, threats and suffering yet know how to maneuver better. I remember, not too long ago, when the notion of convening Vestry meetings via Zoom was not an option. Now the platform is openly embraced as it enables us to meet at a moment's notice on any topic concerning our church's wellbeing. This is a good thing. The technology has not diminished us from being in relationship, it has improved our impact as servant-leaders. I am honored to serve you all again as Senior Warden with Fr. Patrick.

I want to recognize the service of those rotating of the Vestry, I want to thank: Tee-isha Lynch Campbell, Cecil Gordon, Nana Soto, Christina Brennan Lee and Anthony Jones for their steadfast service. Serving on the Vestry is a rewarding opportunity that requires ample amounts of time, talents and faith. We serve balancing family commitments, and work. Because Tee could not finish her term, we welcome Carynn Kelley-Katz who will be serving out Tee's term until June 2026.

Vestry members also serve on vital committees which manage the resources guide the ministries of this church such as: Finance, Stewardship, Property, Communications; Music, Children's Chapel, Episcopal Church Women, Environmental Justice, Heath & Wellness, and Community Advocacy. All have reports which I urge everyone to read.

"What good is it if someone says they have faith but does not have works? ...faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." James 2:14-17. As you will see in this report, we have works that have impact driven by faithful stewards This why we are recognized as community leaders. As we plan to commemorate our 30th Anniversary, let us appreciate our lived-experienced as witnesses of Christ while preparing for the future we want to have as a parish family. With prayer and *works*, all things are possible.

Faithfully yours,

Steven Jones, Senior Warden

Finance & Treasurer

The Finance Committee provided oversight for the changes necessary in order to streamline our financial processes and to provide better financial reports and information. This allowed both the Finance Committee and Vestry to be able to make informed recommendations and decisions with the most accurate and updated information. Dan Edgar, Yvonne Gordon, Sandy Johnson, Steven Jones, Sharon Leyhow, Mary O'Connell, Charisse Rodgers, and Scott Serota contributed their time and expertise to these efforts and we are deeply appreciative and thankful for their support.

2024 Audit

The audit is in the process of being completed but we anticipate no remarkable findings within our financial operations.

2024 & 2025 Finance Administrative Changes

We implemented changes to the budgeting process for 2025. We used the 2024 actuals as a starting point and identified items that were known changes. As an example, the installation of a new rector in 2024 was a one-time expense that would not be recurring in 2025. There were multiple reviews of the budget drafts by the Finance Committee, the Vestry, and with the congregation. We incorporated the suggestions received from the congregation and we thank you for your time, your willingness to assist, your thoughtfulness and careful discernment.

We have engaged Breakwater, an independent firm, to oversee our accounting. The firm also manages finances for the Diocese and three other parishes. There is one single point of contact for all accounts and thus their well of knowledge and church operations is deep. Breakwater has access to all systems and accounts and is ensuring proper coding to the chart of accounts which assists in budgeting, the tracking process, the annual parochial report and the annual audit. Breakwater is charged with creating standard operating procedures for SsAM's financial administration. It has integrated all systems to streamline operations. Additionally, Breakwater also is ensuring that consistency is maintained with its review of the past year and completing reconciliations. They work with both Finance and Vestry along with the Treasurer, Parish Administrator, and Rector to ensure everyone is getting the financial reporting they require. Breakwater has ensured that both the Finance Committee and Vestry get their reports in time to review prior

to their scheduled meetings. They have worked with both the Finance Committee and the Vestry to streamline reports so SsAM staff, the Treasurer, the Finance Committee and Vestry have complete and accurate information as well as actual real-time data for income and expenses against the budget – data necessary to make sound Operational, Outreach, and Capital decisions in support of the church's Mission-Vision. We are grateful for them and thank them for their hard work and dedication.

Highlights of 2024

Cash available for our operations was $67 thousand at the end of 2024 – this level allows us to pay our bills as they come due. Our Endowment reached nearly $5 million at year end – we have continued to use a portion of the Endowment earnings to support the nearly $880 thousand we spent in 2024. Of that, $320 thousand was funded by Endowment earnings. Even so, our Endowment has continued to grow in value, increasing by $300 thousand.

2025 (Current through May)

In December 2024, Vestry approved a balanced budget of $849 thousand. Included in that budget was one significant change in our cash management procedures. We are making recurring withdrawals of $25 thousand per month ($300 thousand for the year) from the endowment instead of the periodic withdrawals made in the past. This gives us more flexibility and allows us to better manage our cash position and be able to cover expenses in a timely fashion.

So far this year (through May) operating income was $376 thousand ($20 thousand over budget). For the same period, our $303 thousand of expenditures are $20 thousand over budget due primarily to the timing of utilities and repairs. Expenditures still are anticipated to be on budget for the entire year.

Vestry has asked the Finance Committee to assess our current investment arrangements for our endowment. Since being tasked with that exploratory endeavor, the Finance Committee has developed criteria for the assessment and potential financial service providers. The assessment is expected to be completed over the summer in order to make a recommendation to Vestry so any potential changes can be implemented by year-end. The investment earnings expectations will be incorporated into the 2026 budget and the long-term Strategic Planning effort currently underway.

Organist, Director of Music and Associate for Liturgy

One of the most exciting, yet challenging aspects of being the Organist, Director of Music and Associate for Liturgy at SsAM is the ever-evolving nature of the job. When I began in April of 2001, some 24 years ago, the parish was only 5 years old and the world was a very different place. We have welcomed two new Rectors, and the growth and development of the downtown area has brought new faces and new energy to the parish, while at the same time presenting us with new challenges and opportunities.

In the area of music and liturgy, we have tried many different programs and experimented with a variety of approaches. Our intention has always been to reflect the diversity and unique mission and vision of the parish in our musical selections, and to perform them with as much sincerity and authenticity as possible. At the core of all of this is our top-notch, semi-professional parish choir. Over the years, the SsAM Choir has developed an extensive repertoire that includes Anglican, Gregorian and Taize Chant, traditional classical and Anglican choral music, Gospel Music, Jazz and World Music. I especially want to thank the singers of the SsAM Choir for their dedication and outstanding contribution. The ensemble, made up of 10 volunteer singers and 8 professional staff singers maintains a surprisingly consistent level of excellence considering that they now only rehearse once every 3 weeks as opposed to the weekly rehearsals they used to have pre-COVID. The standard that they are able to maintain is only possible because of the excellent work the singers do in learning the music on their own before coming to rehearsal. This year we especially thank Bernadette Holcomb who is retiring as choir librarian at the end of this season. Bernadette has been keeping

our music library in order for over a decade, and we are most grateful for her years of service! Thank you, Bernadette!

You'll notice that I use the term "we" above instead of "I" when talking about SsAM's music ministry. That's because, while I serve as the music director of the parish, there are many folks besides me who are responsible for guiding and leading our church's musical and liturgical experience. First and foremost, our new (and much-loved) rector, Fr. Patrick Burke, who was a professional musician in a previous life, has a strong vision of how our music ministry is an integral part of how we fulfill our mission and vision. Also, our parish administrator, D-L Casson, is a key partner in planning and executing everything from the design of the liturgy to the training and scheduling of the liturgical participants! I feel blessed to have the opportunity to collaborate with such an amazing and supportive staff! Thank you Fr. Patrick and D-L!

There are also a number of parish members who play key roles in the music at SsAM and deserve special recognition and thanks. Jackie Roberts frequently brings her impressive Gospel piano stylings to our liturgies, and Cynthia Primo Martin does a beautiful job of providing music for the 8:00 Sunday service. We have two talented trumpeters in the parish: Katie Soukup, who occasionally plays solos and accompanies hymns at the 10:30 service, and Norwood Coleman and his ensemble, who play for the annual Shrove Tuesday dinner. We also have an excellent organist in our midst, Cecilia Man, who periodically assists at the organ on Sundays.

A special tribute is due our Artist-In-Residence, Jonathan W. Whitney for his brilliant contributions in the area of jazz and all things jazz-related at SsAM. In addition to organizing, directing and playing drums for our outstanding Jazz Vespers services, Jonathan was a key partner in reviving and re-imagining the Service of Tenebrae this past Holy Week. He also organizes and plays in the instrumental ensembles on Carnival Sunday as well as other Sundays when we incorporate Jazz and Gospel music into Sunday liturgies. In the summers, Jonathan directs the Boysie Lowery Living Jazz Residency, a two-week artist residency for musicians age 17-25 held at SsAM and sponsored by the City of Wilmington "for the next generation of jazz artists who are both composers and performers." For more information on this exciting program, visit https://cityfestwilm.com/boysie-lowery-living-jazz-residency.

We are blessed at SsAM to have collaborative relationships with two of the area's finest choral ensembles. Delaware ChoralArts (DCA), a community-based choral ensemble is our Ensemble-In-Residence that rehearses and performs concerts at SsAM. Some of our SsAM Choir members sing with DCA, and many of our parish members attend and financially support the organization. The Wilmington Children's Chorus, which grew out of the first parish chorister program at SsAM, has grown into the largest and most influential musical organization for children in the region. They continue to maintain strong ties with SsAM and frequently perform concerts at the church. For more information about DCA, visit www.delawarechoralarts.org, and for more information about WCC, visit www.wilmingtonchildrenschorus.org.

In the fall of 2016, thanks to the efforts of Pat Saunders, Cynthia Primo Martin and the members of the Katherine Esterly Organ task force, we installed a world-class pipe organ which will celebrate its 10th anniversary in the fall of 2026. Special events at SsAM that feature our organ are largely organized and sponsored under the auspices of "Friends of the Katherine Esterly Organ" (FOKEO). These events are made financially possible thanks to special contributions from members of SsAM as well as folks from the community. This past year, those events included 1) a Concert for Violin, Cello and Organ in November, 2) a Messiah Sing-Along in December, 3) a concert featuring members of the American Guild of Organists performing works by Women Composers in March, 4) organ students from the Curtis institute in Philadelphia performing works by J. S. Bach in April, and 5) "Cooch's Bridge: The Battle" presented in June by The Friends of Cooch's Bridge Historic Site, and featuring a large-scale newly-composed work by Jonathan W. Whitney for pipe organ and percussion.

The annual Spirituals Concert, held at SsAM in February each year, has historically been a shared effort between SsAM, Delaware ChoralArts and the Wilmington Children's Chorus, with the organization and hosting of the event alternating between the three organizations. This past February, it was sponsored by SsAM with members of DCA and

WCC participating, and featuring our own Pat Malcom, Archdeacon of the Diocese of Delaware as the guest soprano soloist!

The SsAM Music Ministry is primarily funded through the church's budget which is made possible by your weekly contributions to the parish. Expenses such as staff singers, sheet music, licenses and permissions, maintenance of instruments, etc., are all covered by the budget. There is an additional restricted fund that is used to cover special things such as occasional guest soloists and instrumentalists, Jazz Vespers, and special events like the Spirituals Concert and Tenebrae.

Respectfully Submitted,
David Christopher
Organist, Director of Music and Associate for Liturgy

Acolyte Ministry

Number of Current Acolytes
2 Veteran acolytes
7 new acolytes this year – 5 children/2 adults
There are a total of 9 active acolytes currently.

Trainings
We've had one training this year in April 2025 that covered the following topics:
-history of being an acolyte
-proper ways of sitting/standing
-carrying the cross
-carrying the torches
-ringing the sacristy bell
-lighting and extinguishing altar candles

We are currently in the process of looking into attending the Annual Acolyte Convention in Washington, DC being held on October 11, 2025. Overall, all the acolytes when serving are focused and doing a fabulous job.

Les Roberts, Jr. Acolyte Ministry Leader

Children's Chapel

We began on September 15, 2024 this session. This was our third session, and we made many changes. We are fortunate to have a full-time volunteer, Paul Tanner, who is there each week. Since we ended the year last year with so many children participating, we thought we could move to an every-week hour format. In our last two sessions, we only met twice a month. We decided to utilize Godly Play, a program utilized with young children through adolescents in the Episcopal Church. We spent the summer learning as much as we could about the program and accessing the things available at SsAM that had been purchased some time ago. We also recruited adults in the parish to assist with this as it was new to almost everyone.

It was a struggle as our numbers dropped dramatically because people were not feeling that the hour format every week fit with their schedules. Additionally, Godly Play can be complex if there is no familiarity with it. It is Montessori based, and the children are very involved. There are several parts to each lesson and even doing it in an hour was challenging. As our numbers kept declining, we decided to move back to what we knew and think about expanding for next year.

Many of our children are also involved in being acolytes and Les Roberts, Fr. Patrick and I will meet after the annual meeting to determine how we can work together to make sure our children are acclimated to all parts of our church. This year we worked with our children to learn more of the parts of our Liturgy in addition to learning about people in the Old and New Testament. We taught them the prayers at the beginning of the Liturgy and began our classes the same way. We developed our own Creed and said it frequently. Our kids really liked having that. We also taught them the sign of the cross and the Lord's Prayer. Although they may not remember it completely, doing it over and over helps keep it in their memories.

We submitted a budget this year and purchased a television so the kids can watch Bible stories. We also read stories, produced plays, and did some awesome crafts. We generally had 4-6 children but as the year progressed, sometimes we had 1 or 2. We wished we had more, but we understood that for many of the children there were complications and that several of them were working on becoming acolytes.

The wonderful news if that our children are bright and very well behaved. They love a good snack and are firm about what they like and don't like. They ask wonderful questions. We realize that we hit a bit of a snag this session, but we developed a few excellent volunteers, and we worked with the children to learn some important prayers. The children have developed quite a community where they support one another. The most important thing – in our minds – is that they are learning with us that God loves them and that they are working on loving others, no matter what. So, stay tuned and let's see what next year brings! Thank you for your support!

Mary Lou Edgar Email: mledgar@abcfoc.org "Children are our hope for the future."

Communications Committee

Every Friday for the past year, our Parish Administrator, D-L Casson, emails a newsletter to our members listing upcoming events and publishes those same announcements in the Sunday bulletin. Sometimes she sends out special eBlasts 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 emails. In June of 2025, they were joined by Bob Young. These are also posted on the SsAM website, which Danny Schweers updates weekly, including the announcements D-L sends out on Fridays. Our website includes a link to the church calendar, which D-L Casson and volunteers keep updated.

David Christopher, D-L Casson, and others contribute to our two Facebook pages -- one page for official announcements and videos (1,347 followers) and one for our Friends (754 members). Our church's ambitious schedule of 15 weekday prayer services uses Facebook Live to broadcast their services. Sunday 10:30am worship services and special services are also shared via video using YouTube and Facebook with the help of Will Landis at the control panel. Those video broadcasts are available live and, afterwards, on demand. If you have a smart TV, you can probably use it to watch our services on YouTube in the comfort of your easy chair. In the past, we estimated that 75 people watch our live-streamed worship services, but a better estimate is 22.

SsAM's Social Media team -- Sharon Bryant, David Christopher, Ken Francis, Christina Brennan Lee, and Danny Schweers -- post on the Friends of SsAM Facebook account and on Instagram. If you use another social media outlet regularly, please let us know.

Scores of phone calls and emails go in and out of the church each day. While our church tries to limit communications going out, nothing is done to keep members from communicating in. We welcome your calls and emails!

Danny Schweers, Chair, Communications Committee

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY

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. The following information covers many of these areas of outreach.

AIM Fund. We continue to take a special collection on the first and third Sunday of each month, along with mail-in contributions. In 2024, donations to AIM, including scholarship donations, amounted to over $12,000. Expenditures were $7,000 for seven college scholarships, contributions to Lutheran Community Services for their food program, and a Camp Arrowhead camping scholarship to Karter Saterfield. The AIM fund also provides refreshments for our hospitality for the unhoused on Sunday mornings and during Code Purple. Members' contributions to Episcopal Relief and Development's Hurricane Fund also runs through AIM. On months with five Sundays, we take a special "yellow hat" collection on the fifth Sunday for Habitat for Humanity.

Feed the Hungry. The rise in food insecurity — lacking enough food to live a healthy, active life — is steadily increasing. Food valued at about $1000 was collected from SsAM member donations. This was donated to Friendship House's transitional housing units and to Bill Perkins' work with low-income folks and four Venezuelan families. In addition, in January we collected coffee, tea, sugar and creamer for Friendship House and Sojourner's Place to use in welcoming clients to their programs. Finally, members also donate coffee supplies and food for our homeless visitors. 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. In November, members of SsAM donated thermal underwear and monetary donations. This year, for the first time, we identified the names and sizes of our guests who come in for coffee and warmth on Sunday mornings. The committee put together bags with the correctly sized long underwear, a pair of warm socks and a package of crackers which our day porter Rob Coates helped to distribute.

Outreach at Christmas. SsAM members generously gave to the Angel Tree project in December. This year we were able to provide $50 gift cards to the 40 women participating in Friendship House's transitional housing program. In addition, several members of the parish purchased gifts for 16 children of these women. The giving spirit of SsAM helped to uplift the last few months in 2024, and we look forward to the future.

Canon Casson Scholarship Program. The Community Advocacy Committee awarded seven scholarships in 2024 to Alexis Burke, Jose Cruz, Gianna Hernandez-Smith, Priscilla Jones, Caiden Smith, Keziah Soto, and Kathryn Young. It was exciting to see so many young people being honored for the 2024-25 school year.

Code Purple and Code Orange. SsAM provides space for Friendship House to host Code Purple (when temperatures fall in the low digits) and Code Orange – a new outreach that began in 2023 and continued during the high heat days in June and July. In addition, SsAM's auditorium was used to house people overnight in extremely cold weather. SsAM hosted 16 Code Purple nights and 5 full warming center days (8 AM to 6 PM) this winter. Thanks to all the SsAM volunteers. We also collected clean blankets, sleeping bags or coats (men, women).

Laundry Assistance for the Homeless. Friendship House (FH) still offers laundry services at their empowerment center in the basement of SsAM. ITEMS NEEDED: laundry detergent, laundry bags, laundry sheets, commercial Oxi-Clean. SsAM also contributes to the cost of the program. FH had planned expanded the volunteer opportunity to be Monday-Friday 9am-12pm. However, FH is only able to offer the service if they have a volunteer scheduled for that day. Currently there is not enough volunteer support to offer the service 5 days a week. At most, it's happening 2-3 days a

week. SsAM volunteers include - Jennifer Christy, Susan Cycyk, Leslie Clouser, Judith Gregory, James Dunn, and Carynn Kelley-Katz. They are hoping to be able to offer shower services by the end of the year. If you would be interested in volunteering, please let Kristen Reisor at FH know by emailing kristen.reisor@friendshiphousede.org.
Individual Member Initiatives.

- **Friendship House Virtual Highmark Walk.** Sharon Bryant and Nana Soto led the SsAM and Friends of SsAM Team for the Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community, which benefits Friendship House. This year SsAM's team raised $5,575. Friendship House celebrated its 10th Annual Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community on May 3.
- **Epilepsy Walk.** Members of the Youth Fellowship and their families and friends participated for another year in the Epilepsy Foundation 5K run in June 01 at Glasgow Park in Newark, Delaware.
- On June 7, **Chuck Bean** paddled 8 miles on the Christina River finishing in Wilmington to raise money for summer jobs for teens as part Urban Promise's Paddle for Promise event. Urban Promise is the largest year-round employer of teens in Wilmington.
- **The Healing Tree Sickle Cell Disease** ministry helps families better manage living with sickle cell disease. Contact Chuck Bean for more information at 610-388-7235 or cbean216@verizon.net or contact Pat Weikart – pat@healingtreescd.org.
- SsAM has joined with **The Housing Alliance of Delaware and Friendship House** to support those living in poverty and who are unhoused. In addition, a two-part exploration by Cynde A. Bimbi and the Rev. Patrick Burke on the human and systemic sides of homelessness in Wilmington appeared in the Diocesan monthly newsletter; the article reflected our parish's contributions to this outreach.
- James Dunn has organized a **sewing club** which is responding to the needs of the homeless, as well as members of our parish.
- The **ECW** has written a separate report regarding their outreach efforts.

Support of Other Organizations. At the end of 2024, 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. The Community Advocacy Committee continues to administer funding to agencies that have a historical tie to our parish. These funds come from the church's 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 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)
- Lutheran Community Services $4,000 (The center provides 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 AIM fund sent $500 to the Absalom Jones Fund in support of the work of two historically Black institutions of higher education in cultivating and preparing leaders: Voorhees University and Saint Augustine's University. Many Episcopal congregations take dedicated offerings around February 13 in observance of the Feast Day of Absalom Jones, the first Black priest ordained by the church.

Providing Space for Meetings of Other Advocacy Organizations. 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 five days a week; this year a second meeting has been added at 10 a.m. Monday-Friday. Other organizations that periodically use our facility for meals, meetings, rehearsals and events include Delaware Choral Arts (DCA), the

Wilmington Children's Chorus, Friendship House, Delaware Concerned Residents for Environmental Justice (DCR4EJ), Network Delaware, and the Shipley Lofts – Chris White Development Corporation. The Boysie Lowery Living Jazz Residency was held at SsAM in June, 2025; Wilmington Black Storytellers Residency; Greater Experience Worship Center; Sneham Association (soup kitchen); Delaware Poor People's Campaign. Urban Promise students stayed in the education suite two weeks in May and will return June 22-August 7.

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**. In addition to listing opportunities to volunteer, the site gives links to provide more information on many of the agencies that our parish supports.

Special recognition goes to Chuck Bean and Mary Lou and Dan Edgar for transporting contributions of food and clothing to the Clothing Bank and Sojourners' Place.
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.

Renee Andrews-Delaine
Sylvia Banks
Shirley Bynoe
Eudel Drain
Laura Eisenman
John Goodill
Sandy Holt
Mary Ellen Knothe
Alice Sawyer
Alice Smith, Chair

Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

The Episcopal Church Women of STS Andrew and Matthew completed several fundraising projects during September 2024 through June 2025:

BAYLOR WOMEN'S PRISON: The annual meeting occurred on Saturday October 12 in Dover. All were encouraged to bring items that were included in a list that would benefit the women incarcerated at Baylor. The parish met this response by donating body lotion, bodywash, shampoo, conditioners, deodorant, and ChapStick. In addition, colored pencils, coloring books, journals and calendars were donated as well. We are looking at holding this collection quarterly to keep up with the need.

ST. MICHAEL 'S DAY SCHOOL AND NURSERY: According to the website for St. Michael's there are many ways to volunteer time. On June 14, Lucinda Ross, Executive Director, came to the monthly meeting so share information. In the fall of 2025, a tour will be arranged so that all our members, and others from SsAM can view the renovations, classrooms, gardens and so much more.

FAMILY GATHERINGS: Mary Lou Edgar is holding ECW accountable in implementing quarterly family gatherings. As such, Sts. Andrews & Matthew is participating in the Diocesan Blue Rocks game on Friday, June 20. Other parishes will be attending as well. We are looking forward to hosting a hayride and bonfire in the fall. More to come.
ECW has purchased two bins for our collections with the ECW logo. One bin will be at the top of the stairs at the sanctuary entrance and one outside the elevator. These collection bins will bring attention to the work that ECW does in supporting other not-for-profit organizations.

So that ECW becomes more visible among the members of Sts. Andrew & Matthew, the name tags provided by the church office will have an ECW logo pasted on it.

COFFEE HOUR: The members of ECW were asked to assist in re-starting the coffee hour following the 10:30 AM service. We began in May and by the beginning of June 2025, the new procedures were conveyed to the parish in an E-mail blast May 28. Thanks to all for the work on this project and to D-L Casson for putting together finishing touches and then sending it out to our membership.

PROJECTS TO COME:
Survey: We are currently in conversation with Holy Cow, a vendor who might be able to assist ECW in gathering information from our parish women that will assist us in determining other wants or needs as we continue our important work in Mission and Ministry. This survey will hopefully be available online and mailed.
Honoring those in our history: "Also, as the Ministry of Women in the Episcopal Church here in America, goes back for centuries, the history of the Women's movement within the Episcopal Church is fascinating and it behooves us to become more familiar with that history because all women and girls are members through their Baptism, Confirmation or Reception. Our goal for the future is to actively seek young girls, especially from our Youth Group, to indoctrinate them as to what we do. Therefore was are looking forward to a WOMEN'S RECOGNITION PROJECT AND LUNCHEON: This is very important to ECW at SsAM in order that we recognize those who came before and gave their time and talents to make our ECW as effective as it is in our Church and our Community and maybe get suggestions from them on what children may need us to do for and with them. So, as we continue the work that the Spirit leads us to do in serving others, we appreciate all the blessings that have helped us do that work.

And as our ECW prayer states:
"ALMIGHTY GOD we pray that you will bless our work in mission and ministry in our world to help us pray fervently, labor diligently, and give liberally to make known the power of love given through your Son, Jesus Christ. Let us not forget the lessons of the past and not fear the challenges of the future. Anoint us with your grace and shine in our hearts as we reflect your light throughout the world."

Our current active members and by "active ", we mean those who attend our monthly meetings, on the second Saturday of each month from September through June each year, are: Mary Lou Edgar (Vice-President) Mary Morgan, Treasurer, Secretary (currently vacant), Ernestine Brock-Walter (Corresponding Secretary) June Knight, Patricia Hampton, Anne Gibson, Pam Peters, Paulyne Webster, Gloria Conner-Bungy, Anita Young, Leslie Clouser, Sandy Holt, and Jackie Roberts.

I am asking the women of SsAM to prayerfully consider being ACTIVE in this Ministry. There is so much we can accomplish if we gather together. September 2025 we will be electing new officers in this very worthwhile Ministry. The requirement for serving as officers is you must attend at least one year of regular meetings. Just a reminder, all women of the Episcopal Church are ECW. It is just a matter of participating actively in the ministry.

Respectfully Submitted,
Judith Lane Gregory, President

HEALTH AND WELLNESS MINISTRY

The purpose of H &W Is to act as a conduit to help and support people from the congregation get appropriate direction for their health care services. Members of the committee tap their contacts and knowledge of the health care system for information that can be helpful. We take on projects to help the SsAM members and the community at large, and to present topics of interest regarding health.

We encourage anyone from the congregation to join us in these efforts.

Present projects include:
1) **maintain a defibrillator(ACD**) at the church (note previously we trained church staff and a number of congregants in CPR). **The present AED is next to the elevator on the first floor**. We support the purchase of another defibrillator to be permanently placed in the church as well as one on the first floor.

There is **Narcan** available in the cabinet for intranasal use in case of a drug overdose near or in the church. The equipment is monitored once a month.

2) support of **Healing Tree SCD- a** program initiated by Rev. Pat Weikert, with a coalition of Wilmington churches to help people and their families struggling with sickle cell disease . **Mentoring** program for those transitioning from teenage and pediatric care to adult care is being organized now and will provide a significant amount of support and education for those people interested.

Many members of SsAM have acted as food coaches or transporters of food for the **NOURISH** program. This provides healthy food which is needed for patients with sickle cell disease, and also mentors' cooking/ meal preparation, and even smart, effective shopping. This has been a successful program but still could use more volunteers. Lutheran Community Services is a prominent partner in this activity. SsAM also is acting as a place to hold funds for that nonprofit (The Healing Tree) in their own non mingled account. There is a website https://healingtreescd.org/ and now has 503c nonprofit certification. More volunteers are always needed and those interested can contact Pastor Pat Weikert, John Goodill or Chuck Bean http://healingtreescd.org

3} We hope to give more seminars/ educational forums like last year's on end-of-life planning and wellness.
Eudel Drain and a nurses group hope to do BP screening and discussed chronic disease especially renal disease as a wakeup call for self-awareness and self-help.

We have spent most time supporting the Healing Tree . We plan to have meeting in the fall to organize our activity moving forward. We are open to other ideas and the help of anyone who is interested in this ministry. The more you give of yourself the more is given to you. Please consider joining the Health and Wellness Committee.

Respectfully,
Chuck Bean and John Goodill

Housing Ministry Working Group

Overview
In August of 2024, the Rector and Vestry of SsAM jointly called a new Housing Ministry Working Group to explore how God is calling our parish community into a new ministry to support members of our wider community who are unhoused, housing insecure, and living in poverty.

The Housing Ministry Working Group was asked to explore how SsAM can continue to support internal and external ministries of direct and compassionate care and participate, in direct and indirect partnerships with existing and new community partners, in the work of advocacy and systemic change to dismantle the systems that create and enable poverty and housing insecurity.

While this is a new ministry, SsAM has a long and rich history of supporting people who experience hardship and developing practical approaches to improve the lives of our neighbors and our community. Friendship House and Shipley Street Lofts are among many examples. SsAM was able to build on that compassion and engagement in problem-solving to get the laundry ministry up and running, and to complete all the work described in this report.
The Working Group consists of Cecilia Hobbs, Susan Cycyk, Dora Williams, Cecil Gordon, Alice Sawyer and Cheryl Beth

Kuchler along with Father Patrick.

Meetings were held every few weeks and an update was provided to the Congregation on November 17th, 2024. We met with key partners in the community including Friendship House, the Housing Alliance, Network Delaware to gather information and help define the scope of the work.

We determined and have been working on 3 Key Focus Areas:

- Compassionate Care (in conjunction with Friendship House) – to help lesson the impact of homelessness. Have engaged volunteers for this work and connected with 1st and Central to learn more about their program which has about 15 regular volunteers.
  - Laundry Ministry (5 Days per week)
  - Code Purple/ Orange and Warming Center
  - Friendship House site: https://www.friendshiphousede.org/
- Middle Ground (2025)
  - Identified the Need to include in our Ministry Advocacy and determine Approach.
  - Pushed for the City of Wilmington to be proactive in its approach and when Mayor Carney came into office, were instrumental in the formation of the Wilmington Housing Task Force which we are now attending regularly.
  - Continuing to find the right Collaborators in Delaware including other agencies; churches and religious institutions.
  - Connected with 1st and Central Presbyterian, St. Andrew's School,
  - Members attended Housing Day in Dover, spoke with legislature reps, advocated for decriminalizing people being in public spaces and the need for affordable housing.
  - Father Patrick has met with the Mayor as well as Claire DeMatteis who is the Chair of the Wilmington Task Force.

ASSUMPTION: Without Advocacy we're living with the system and not changing it.

- Longer Term - Make a noticeable impact on the available Affordable Housing in our community, city, state.To be determined as part of our Strategic Planning process.
- Discerning what our long-term Vision is for SsAM, our role that we are being called to be in the community and how we're seeing/ noticing the Holy Spirit at work.

Additional items we have accomplished include:

- Various congregational listening sessions, congregational information sessions with our partners (FH, Housing Alliance, HOMES Campaign etc.), and the engagement with the city task force with the goal of showing what progress has been made towards fulfilling our charge from the Vestry to discern how God is calling SsAM to respond to the needs of our community regarding housing across the spectrum.

Respectfully submitted by Cheryl Kuchler for the Housing Ministry Group.

Property Committee

Dave Clouser (Chair)
John Goodill
Cecil Gordon
Sharon Leyhow
Bob Richmond
Katie Soukup
Jim Dunn

Activities

The committee meets every fourth Tuesday of the month using a Zoom link set up by Bob Richmond: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85206233815?pwd=WLUaQyNqOQ63hwbBll0hLdW73gtXQy.1 (Thanks, Bob.)

Any interested congregation member is welcome to listen in on the meetings. The meetings are also recorded. Contact Bob Richmond for more information.

The committee has a prioritized list of projects which will be used to inform development of the capital budget for the next three years.

Property Issues 2024-11-04 (Version 3)

Issue	Location	Description/Comments	Cost Estimate	Priority	Schedule
Audio Video	Sanctuary	Complete upgrade of audio-video system	$28,000	Top	Done
Elevator Controller	Elevator	Upgrade controller to new, supportable model	$20,000	Top	Done
IT System Upgrade	Offices, Server Room	Update the IT equipment to newer models to support into the future	$10,000	Top	Done
Replace Fire Alarm System	Building	Replace aging fire alarm system throughout building	$37,000	Top	Scheduled
Lift to Children's Wing	Second Floor	Add a lift (elevator) around the stairs to the Children's Wing to make it accessible	Lift $76,000 General $TBD	High	Architect's Drawings, contractor consult, Pending funding
Renovate Education Suite	Second + ½ Floor	Bring Education Suite areas up to date and to useful state	$TBD	High	After Lift or in parallel with that effort
Flooring	Choir Pews	Replace defective flooring	$2,500	Safety - top	2024
Replace Flooring	Chapel	Replace moldy flooring	$6,500	Safety-	2024
Railing	Sanctuary	Men's side railing		wobbly	
Plaster Repair	Sanctuary	Repair the plaster in 4 bays in sanctuary	$23,000	July 2024? Sharon to Check on past funding	2025
Lighting	Sanctuary/choir area	Replace light with LEDs	tbd		

HVAC	Sanctuary	Replace 4 aging units	tbd		
Lighting	Crypt Hall	Convert to LED	tbd		
Carpet	Crypt Hall	Replace or clean carpet on ramp	tbd	Can we get a quote to replace carpeting	
Ceiling Tiles	Crypt Hall	Replace broken tiles	$500	Easy to do	
Paint	Crypt Hall	Paint walls and woodwork	$1000		
New Windows	Crypt Hall	Replace windows	$10,000		
Lighting	Chapel	Replace lights with LED equivalents	tbd	In process	
Lighting	Demby	Replace lights with LED equivalents	tbd	In process	
Lighting	Second Floor Hallway	Replace lights with LED equivalents	tbd	In process	
Stucco	GOP	Replace or repair peeling stucco	$8,500		
Bench	GOP	Repair or replace bench			
Red door	Narthax	Add insulation			
Window Shades	Auditorium	Add Blind or shades to 12 auditorium windows	$6,700		
Room Divider	Auditorium	Add a sliding wall room divider or equivalent	$2,000		
Rebolt Pews	Chapel	Re-bolt pews to floor	tbd		
Paint	Chapel	Paint woodwork and walls	$500		
HVAC	Chapel	Improve ventilation	$3,000		
Signage	Outside	Replace outside signage with electronic, flexible…	$10,000		
Balcony Railing	Sanctuary Balcony	Add balcony Railing	$4,500		
HVAC	Narthex	New HVAC	$10,000		
Floor	Auditorium	Refinish wood floor	tbd		
Storage Area	Auditorium	Figure out how to make it presentable – Partitions Storage corral maybe move some to stage after clearing. Table and chair carts	tbd	Check storage room to see if items can be stored there	
Refrigerator	Kitchen	Get rid of white refrigerator	tbd	Defrost or dispose	
HVAC	Crypt Hall	Cut off heat feed to heaters in Crypt hall	tbd	Check w/DL to turn off radiators	

Exterior Trim	Chapel	Repair and paint exterior trim	tbd	Bob Oates carpentry repair	
Carpet	Children's Wing	Carpet is worn, replace?	tbd		
Entrance Way	Red Doors	Insulation vs new HVAC	tbd	Bob Oates	
Carillion	Balcony	Permanent Mount for Carillion			
Water	Chapel	Water comes in door			
Code	Children's second floor bathroom	Not up to code			2027
Kitchen Reno	Children's Wing	Need an uplift.			2027

While the list will be useful in developing a forward-looking plan and budget, the projects at the top, the highest priorities, were driven by immediate need.

The sound system and video streaming system installation was completed last fall. The elevator and computer systems upgrade were done over the winter. The funding was a combination of bequests and funds set aside from the sale of the rectory for urgent property projects.

The fire alarm system replacement is being funded through the Diocesan A&D program comprising a $7,500 grant, a $3,750 challenge grant with 1:1 match from the Diocese, and a $22,000 loan. The details of the challenge grant process are in progress with the Vestry.

The lift to the Children's Wing is a collaboration with Network Delaware to obtain a grant to fund installation of a lift the stairs to the Children's Wing to provide ADA access to the area. The project will only be undertaken if the funding is acquired.

The committee is also pursuing the auction or sale of the stained-glass window that stood in between the stage pocket doors in the auditorium. It was packaged by Atelier (professional art handlers) in archival-quality materials for storage until its potential sale.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Clouser, Property Chair

2024-2025 Stewardship Committee Report

Members: John Goodill, Sharon Leyhow, Danny Schweers, Dan Edgar, Patty Greene, Patrick Burke
SSAM continues to view the idea of stewardship through the lens of participation. We know that a community can thrive and grow only when it has full participation of its members. Our Stewardship theme this past year has been 'Walk in Love'. The results of our pledge campaigns over the past two seasons achieved our goal of 100% participation:

2024 125 pledges $409,932
2025 133 pledges $410,926

The goal of 100% participation is defined broadly and includes not only financial commitments made during our pledge campaign in the Fall but also those equally important (or more so) contributions of time and talent that are so

important year round to the smooth functioning of the church; its programs and ministries; and the community that we serve.

Some examples of those contributions include: liturgical and music programs (including the >100 volunteers who helped with Holy Week programs), volunteers for code purple this past winter and the housing justice initiative, extra help in the front office and with communications. There are also our more established ministries like Community Advocacy, Invite/Welcome/Connect, Pastoral Care, ECW, Children's Chapel, Health and Wellness and others. Participation on committees, Vestry, and Strategic Planning Group is also vital and appreciated. We are truly blessed and thank all who have participated.

As we look forward to our work of continuing to build a Beloved Community we will continue to emphasize participation as our stewardship touch point. Any who wish to join the stewardship committee are welcome to reach out to those members of the current committee. We welcome any questions and are open to new ideas in regard to stewardship especially in terms of year round related programs.

Respectfully submitted by John Goodill
On behalf of the Stewardship Committee

NECROLOGY

April	21	2024	Harvey, James (Rick)
April	28	2024	Rand, Emmett (Tony)
August	3	2024	Brown, Marion
January	4	2024	Conner, Gregory
July	5	2024	Love-Saunders, Sherlee
July	17	2024	Scott, Warren
March	5	2024	Ellison, Leona
March	10	2024	Fielding, Janet
May	31	2024	Ridout, Lois
October	1	2024	Burton, Randall
October	7	2024	Linderman, Jim
October	26	2024	Van Horne, Peter (The Rev.)
September	18	2024	Knothe, Charles (Chuck)
February	16	2025	Burnite, Barbara
May	23	2025	Haas, Warren

Our thanks to our "behind the scenes" folks:

Office volunteers: Carynn Kelley-Katz, Valerie Newman-Freeman, Bev Romain, Ernestine Brock-Walker, Bill Young, Barbara Henry, Jim Dunn, Anne Kauffman, Audrey Collins, Scott Serota

Sunday Counters: Alice & Buck Smith, Sylvia Banks, Nancy Hillyard, Ken Francis, Ruth Muller, Mary Ellen Knothe, Mary Morgan, Carolyn Lea, Christina Brennan Lee and Wanda Smith

Weekly Counters: Shirley Bynoe, Sylvia Banks, Bill Kauffman, Nancy Hillyard, Bernadette Holcomb, Carynn Kelley-Katz, Cheryl Thomas, Bill Young, Scott Serota.

Altar Guild: Jim Bimbi (leader), Kelly Holt, Sandy Holt, Katie Soukup, Leslie & Dave Clouser, Mary Morgan, Wanda Smith, Ana Washington, Anthony Jones, D-L Casson