Reporting on Year 2018

St. Thomas’ Episcopal Church

Annual Meeting

Annual General Meeting held February 10, 2019

Reports from 2018 on our Ministries, Programs, Activities and Finances

**AGENDA**

**February 10, 2019 9:30 A.M.**

Welcome, Opening Prayer and Review of Agenda ………………………………Herbert Jones

Recognition of Outgoing Vestry Members

Report of the Nominating Committee………………………………………………Betsy Scott

Election of New Vestry…………………………………………………………...Herbert Jones

Priest's Remarks

Senior Warden's Remarks…………………………………………………………....Jay Douglas

Endowment Board President's Remarks…………………………………………Jim Woodward

Announcement of Vestry Election of Treasurer…………………………………...Herbert Jones

Year 2018 Treasurer's Report / Review of Budget………………………………….Nathan Beck

Closing Prayer and Adjournment…………………………………………………..Herbert Jones

**STAFF REPORTS**

**Priest’s Report – The Reverend Herbert Jones**

As I write these few words for the 2018 annual report for St. Thomas’, I’m also in the process of packing to leave for a three-day silent retreat at the monastery of the Society of St. John the Evangelist in Cambridge, Mass. I’ve been to SSJE many times, the first being around 2005. For me it is a place of reflection, prayer and renewal and I’m looking forward to being there.

I’m grateful to have this time to reflect on the past year, my first full year at St. Thomas’, as well as the years to come for the church and for myself. I look back on the last year with a sense of profound gratitude for the opportunity to have served as your Priest-in-charge. I bring with me the freshness of the mutual ministry review that the vestry and I participated in recently. We took a good look at where we are, examining what has gone well. We also looked at what the potential areas for growth and improvement for the church are as we move forward. I believe we are in a very good place, and that we have an amazing potential to be God’s church in the world and in our community. St. Thomas’ is a gem. Our staff, our vestry, our leadership, our congregation are all filled with dedicated and energetic people who look to the future of our church with a realistic and optimistic view. I am especially thankful for the good work of the professional staff as we have worked toward building a team that will serve St. Thomas’ well as we move forward. And of course I would be remiss not to mention the vestry, and especially our wardens, Jay and Betsy, as they have been so giving of their time and excellent council during this my first year here.

And so as I head for this time of prayerful reflection on the year past and the years to come, not only do I take with me the gratitude for all of the gifts of St. Thomas’, I also take that same sense of realistic optimism for the future of our church. I encourage you to read the reports that follow. You will get a good sense of where we are and where we want to go. We have a marvelous future ahead of us. Let us proceed joyfully and purposefully to be the church we can be.

Blessings and peace,

Herbert+

**Music Program – Jimmy Hicks**

The choir membership has risen in the past year with returning and new members. The church has enjoyed special services such as the Jazz Mass and the service with Capital Brass, as well as guest singers and instrumentalists. This coming year, we need to develop a plan for filing music that we have used so that it doesn't stack up next to the choir folder cubbies.

Submitted by Jimmy Hicks, Organist & Choirmaster

**Youth Minister’s Report – Katie Cosby**

2018 was a great year for the St. Thomas youth group! A few of the things that we're proudest of are the establishment of our youth council, increased attendance at fellowship, and our continued strong presence at Shrine Mont camps and Diocesan events, specifically PYM. In 2019, we hope to have more youth serving in worship, and participation in Sunday school. Dave and I are so grateful to the vestry and parish who have supported our ministry over the years!

Submitted by Katie Cosby, Youth Minister

**Welcome to Professional Staff**

Barbara Tait joined us as a nursery worker this year. Additionally, we welcomed Abby Outlaw, our new Parish Administrator.

**Day School - Kelly Kane**

St. Thomas’ Day School continues to serve children ages 2-5, with many options for families to choose from between the hours of 8:30 am -2:00 pm. This year we were able to provide over $12,000 in scholarships for 9 children in our community. We were also able to make costly repairs to the playground which is used by all the groups of St. Thomas’ and the neighborhood. Next year, we hope to increase enrollment and have maximum capacity.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Kane, Director

**ST. THOMAS’ EPISCOPAL ENDOWMENT FUND**

**Board President - Jim Woodward**

The St. Thomas Church Endowment Fund was established in 1967 through the generous contributions of church members. The purpose of the Fund is to support the mission of the church primarily through the maintenance and development of the church facilities. Over the years the Endowment Fund has supported the mission of St. Thomas by funding a range of needs, including operating expenses such as salaries, utilities and worship services. In recent years the focus of the contributions has expanded to also support the general ministries of the church.

During 2018, the Endowment Fund contributed $70,000 to the church. This included Shrinemont activities, the Food Pantry and utilities. Building and grounds improvements included additional security for and sealing of the parking lot, and new flooring. The specific uses of the contributions are determined by mutual agreement between the Endowment Fund Board of Directors and the Vestry.

As of 12/31/18, assets of the Fund totaled approximately $2,717,269. The funds are invested in a variety of equities and fixed income assets that are professionally managed by UBS through their Access Eaton Vance Parametric program. As of 12/31/18 the Fund’s asset summary was approximately:

 79% Equities

 16% Fixed Income

 3% Non-Traditional

 2% Cash and Money Balances

The fund is a 501(c)(3) corporation registered in the state of Virginia. Contributions to the fund are generally tax-deductible. The long-term health and growth of the fund is dependent on gifts from Church members and investment income. Please contact any of the board members should you like to gain a better understanding of how to support the endowment. The fund is managed by a board of directors consisting of five members of St. Thomas Church. The board members are:

James F. Woodward/President

Kerry L. Grey/Vice President

Joseph R. Durrett III (Joey)/Secretary/Treasurer

Wayland W. Rennie

Liz Pearce

Signed: James F. Woodward

**VESTRY REPORTS**

**Senior Warden’s Report – Jay Douglas**

This has been the first full year with our Priest In Charge, Herbert Jones whose calm and supportive pastoral presence St Thomas' has benefited from. In serving as your Senior Warden I have worked closely with Reverend Jones and Betsy Scott , Junior warden during a time of transition , assessment and renewal .We have collectively focused on the care and keeping of the church business , professional staff and the congregation. Betsy and I have offered guidance, provided history and assisted with the development of new processes to enhance the functioning of the church and better meet the needs of our parish family.

Warden’s work has often been behind the scenes with activities undertaken towards improved structure, processes, organization and communication while responding to identified parishioner needs.

This year the Vestry was reorganized to provide for shared responsibility of Vestry members assigned to the Ministry Teams of Administration ,Education, Outreach , Inreach, Worship and Professional staff. Your Vestry has demonstrated great energy, flexibility and commitment to this important work. Unfortunately during the year we lost three Vestry members for various personal reasons. As often is the case in this wonderful parish family, parishioners saw the need, heard the call to leadership and stepped up to fill unexpired terms. I am very grateful to Roger Bowers, Lane Lenzi and Liz Pearce for their willingness to service on short notice.

We have been intentional this year about focusing energies on activities that provide for worship and fellowship opportunities to bring us together as a congregation while welcoming new people to this wonderful place. The Vestry has discussed what we do well, what we can improve on and where we need additional resources to expand our efforts. The process of discernment and consultation with the Diocese regarding the priest in charge process has also continued.

I hope you will enjoy reading in this report about the highlights for the past year and our hopes for the future. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as senior warden. I have been truly blessed by working side by side with and supported by Betsy Scott who has worked faithfully, tirelessly and demonstrated great wisdom while serving as Junior Warden for the past two years. My heartfelt appreciation also goes to Liz Pearce who we have often referred to as the "transition warden". The knowledge she shared and her continued involvement was invaluable this past year.

In the upcoming year the leadership and the congregation will need to continue to examine where we need to focus for the future while caring for each other and moving forward. I look forward to continuing our faith journey together and encourage you to serve in ways that you might not have thought about before.

Submitted by Jay Douglas, Senior Warden

 **Christian Education – Lane Lenzi and Rob Peck**

The area of Children’s Education continued to grow in 2018 due largely in part to the leadership of Spencer Ballou and the Children’s Programming Committee. Sunday School continues to see consistent attendance thanks to the guidance of Emma McFarlane, Mitra Bryant, Katie Cosby and Herbert Jones. One of our most improved programs is the Children’s Chapel time during the service. Andrea Marcinkevicius has been a great coordinator of the program activity and the team structure used each Sunday executes the group session. One of the most fun additions to this ministry has been the Kidz Jam led by Rad and Michele Burt. Teaching music once a month during Sunday School and Children’s Chapel has given the kids aged 5-10 a fun and engaging way to participate in the service.

There are always ways to help this ministry and our current focus is on curriculum and planning for the Children’s Lenten Program and the feasibility of carrying out our annual VBS this summer. Our committee runs on great and enthusiastic volunteers, but we feel we have reached a point where we need a professional with a background in Christian Education. The committee continues to meet to discuss ideas for our Lenten Program and volunteers are ready to take the lead on VBS if needed. Our Mini Mission camp for rising 3rd to 5th graders is also scheduled for the summer.

Adult Education and Coffee and Conversation has grown throughout the year. Every Sunday between 15 and 25 people have arrived for conversations on a wide range of subjects, from church history to Marian art to Constitutional Law. New and old members, and a few returning members have had a chance to meet one another and delve into some fascinating conversations. Plans are in place for the upcoming Lenten and Easter seasons, and a few individuals have expressed interest in an opportunity to present and be a part of program planning for the year ahead.

Submitted by Rob Peck, Vestry Liaison

**Administration - Vera Meier, Roger Bowers, and Jack Austin**

***Annual Giving Campaign***

Committee Members - Vera Meier (Vestry), Kerry Grey, Grace Sparks, Margaret Grove

Annual Giving hosted two Coffee & Dessert events at parishioners’ homes in July and August, providing opportunities for parishioners to have one on one time with each other, with our new rector and with vestry members.

For 4 weeks, October 14 - November 11, we celebrated our church life together using the diocesan theme, “Now into the World” from the Sunday morning post-communion prayer.

Highlights included:

1. Parish Supper, Sunday evening, October 14, served by the vestry. 85 people attended. Many individuals helped including members of the stewardship and hospitality committees.
2. A large color banner was placed outside the church building promoting our theme.
3. The choirmaster and choir provided a thematic song, “Now into the World,” each Sunday, and special guest musicians were scheduled weekly.
4. A varied array of positive and informative materials were written and produced for Parish Pledge Packets, including a colorful “Narrative Budget” Brochure celebrating our ministries and future expectations.
5. Weekly emails and bulletin inserts reinforced our theme.
6. Sunday Sermons were topical and poignant.
7. Personal thank you notes were sent to pledgers by committee members.
8. Follow-up calls were made to those who did not return pledge cards during the campaign to determine if there were questions or concerns.
9. The campaign culminated with a Celebration Coffee Hour on November 11, thanking everyone for their pledges and celebrating a successful campaign.
10. Our goal for 2019 was $280,000 (an increase from the $258,819). As of January 23 we have received 88 pledges, totaling $287,071! Thanks, again, to everyone in the parish for their enthusiasm and support!

Next year we would like to fine tune our communications during the 4-week campaign by:

1. Improving our message and methodology with the church office, and
2. Increasing the involvement of church members with the Annual Giving Committee as we continue to “share our gifts and grow our community together.”

Submitted by Vera Meier, Vestry Liaison

***Property Committee***

This year enjoyed a tremendous amount of energy and effort to identify and address everyday maintenance and upkeep for our wonderful church. From resurfacing the floors from carpet to wood, addressing HVAC problems, to changing light bulbs, the committee has accomplished much. Those who contribute their time and talent make the difference! Once again, we are indebted to the tireless support and help from many of you here at St. Thomas.

As we look ahead to 2019, we want to encourage all who wish to participate in this most satisfying endeavor. Please contact us or any member of the vestry and clergy if interested. That said, our goals for 2019 include – but are not limited to – the following:

* Replacing the Parish Hall doors;
* Addressing draining issues in the kitchen;
* Replacing and/or repairing broken mini-splits in the Day School;
* Acting on an Environmental Assessment completed in December to save energy and reduce the cost of literally keeping the lights on;
* Planning for future renovations and major projects in consultation with all of you

Thank you again for all your support.

Respectfully Submitted,

Landon Woody

Paul Pearce

***Appreciation***

Thank you to the Finance Committee, we are so grateful for your oversight, expertise, and wise counsel this year. Also, a well-deserved thank you goes out to Tom Wren, who volunteered as registrar.

**Inreach –** **Kate Parthemos, Rad Burt, and Betsy Scott**

     The vestry's in-reach team has broad responsibility over all Hospitality functions, the Lots of Helping Hands Meals Ministry, Parish Life activities, Lay Pastoral Care, Lay Eucharistic Ministry, the Newcomer Ministry, and a variety of other related activities.  We are assisted by many members of the congregation in these efforts. We thank Rita Hicks, chair of the Parish Life Committee, Susannah Haddad for heading up the Lots of Helping Hands Meals Ministry, and Landon Woody and Grace Sparks for their leadership role with Newcomers.

     2018 brought many successes, but we are most proud for having reinvented our Sunday coffee hour to make it simpler and easier to handle.  On a continuing basis, Hospitality or Parish Life volunteers will host one special coffee hour per month. We will purchase ready to serve items for all other Sundays and have them available in the kitchen pantry.  There is no need for volunteers to purchase anything for coffee hour on these Sundays unless they particularly want to. Our Sunday welcome has been extended to provide coffee and a plate of cookies for our 9:30 Coffee and Conversation participants.

     2018 also saw the Hospitality team building community by providing a variety of occasions to gather and share a meal together, without asking people to bring anything except themselves.  You can expect more of that in 2019.

     Attracting volunteers remains our biggest challenge.  Ideally, the vestry in-reach team members should function as liaison to parishioner led committees, but this has not always been the case for lack of volunteers.  Especially for the Hospitality area, we need a healthy number of people to keep everything going. Our goal is to have a robust in-reach program overall. In order for that to be our reality, lots of help is needed, and in 2019 we will be trying to figure out ways to make it more fun and rewarding to serve.  Stay tuned!

Submitted by Kate Parthemos, Rad Burt, and Betsy Scott, Vestry Liaisons

**Worship – The Rev. Herbert Jones and Liz Pearce**

During 2018, our average attendance on Sundays was higher than in recent years. We welcomed new visitors and are glad to see familiar faces on a regular basis. The children’s worship time with Herbert continues to be a strong component of our service, and our parish is grateful for the volunteers who stepped up to assist with children’s chapel.

The special music programs and renewed enthusiasm for our choir have been an incredible addition to our worship at St. Thomas’ this past year. The strong clear voices emanating from the choir loft lift our congregation with joy. Incorporating the children’s voices has been a recent initiative that is positively received, and we hope will continue.

Looking ahead, we need to engage our parishioners more fully in serving in worship, for example by reading the lessons, ushering and serving at the altar. Our priest will be introducing mid-week Morning Prayer during Lent, and will be considering additional worship services throughout the year.

Prayerfully submitted,

Liz Pearce

**Outreach** – **Margaret Woody and Dan Hicks**

Outreach Areas: Concerned Northside Congregations (CNC) Group Home Ministries, CARITAS, St. Thomas Day School, Autastic Avenues, and OystoberFest

 2018 Highlights:

OystoberFest 2018: one of the most successful events, ever! We invited many more of our neighbors, who have come to visit our parish and to see St. Thomas Richmond in action, through Fundraising, Outreach and active Community Worship and Fellowship.

CNC Group Home Ministry: Vestry and St. Thomas Leaders invited National Alliance On Mental Illness (NAMI) to partner with Vestry and our Parish, to help us learn about mental illness and embrace mentally ill residents from our neighborhood, and include them in our parish life. More to come in 2019.

St. Thomas Food Pantry: September 2018 Deacon Frank Castellon and Liz Pearce facilitated a Food Pantry Retreat at Richmond Hill, to help Volunteers have fellowship, align ourselves with our growing Food Pantry needs and for education and prayer about FeedMore and how to continue providing sustainable food for our hungry neighbors.

Gratefully Submitted by,

Margaret Woody & Daniel Hicks, Outreach Vestry Liaisons