

**St. Margaret's Episcopal Church
95 Court Street
Belfast, Maine 04915**

**Parish Report for the Annual Meeting – Part II
Sunday, January 22, 2017 – 10:30 a.m.**

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Rector's Report

Last summer I wrote in *Reflections* about our first year together. Church is the community of God's people and it takes all of our collective prayers, service, and sharing to bring forth a bit more of God's kingdom on Earth.

Rectors and parishes, in cooperation with the diocese, create a Letter of Agreement when a rector joins a parish. My Letter of Agreement had three main points that St. Margaret's lay leadership wanted me to focus on. I include them here as a framework to share about some of the ways we minister together at St. Margaret's.

1. *Find creative ways to move St. Margaret's into the 21st century, making this parish a welcoming place for all.*

St. Margaret's, like the rest of the Christian Church, is undergoing change as society changes. The invitation we experience is continually discerning how to hold onto traditions while being open to movement of the Holy Spirit in our midst.

Our liturgy committee has worked well with all involved with liturgy and worship to be faithful to the essentials while finding ways to reach out to people who have not been involved or have been away from church for some time. One new experience was offering Ashes to Go, when Deacon Tom, members of the Daughters of the King, and I went to Waldo County General Hospital, Tall Pines, and Harbor Hill on Ash Wednesday. We were invited to return this coming Ash Wednesday. We had collaborative services – including the GBAM Good Friday service and the Midcoast Episcopal parishes' Easter Vigil. The 12-Step Eucharist was attended by new people and has opened up conversations and connections in our community.

Another way we are welcoming is keeping connected with our parishioners who are homebound and hospitalized. Several parishioners visit others in nursing homes. Eucharistic visits are shared by Deacon Tom, Faye Ward, Mary Provo, John Cuzzo, and me, extending the celebration of the Lord's Table to people's homes.

Part of my way of living out priesthood is being present in the community. Several people outside St. Margaret's have told me that they have never had a personal connection with clergy before. Each member of this parish has the opportunity to share the Good News of the Gospel within the context of where we work or volunteer.

Technology is our friend when we use it well. Chris Urick, as head of the Communication Committee, has faithfully maintained the parish website for years and established the Facebook account that is maintained by four parishioners and me. This reaches people who would not have found us otherwise. One of my favorite stories is how a \$5 Facebook ad brought a new parishioner to us. Her daughter's boyfriend saw the ad for the Blessing of the Animals on the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi and suggested that she ought to bring her dog to St. Margaret's. She's been here ever since.

I am clear that leadership does not mean that the rector decides things in a vacuum nor do I hold responsibility on my own. It takes all of us and we are fortunate to have a very capable Vestry and additional lay leaders to encourage and support all of us in ministry. We all pray and work together, discerning what God is calling St. Margaret's at this time and into the future.

2. Provide fresh energy and leadership to youth outreach.

One of the first requests I made of liturgy schedulers was to include our younger parishioners in leadership roles as often as possible. I believe our best Sunday liturgies are the ones with youth acolytes.

I am a member of the Committee on Youth Ministry through the Episcopal Diocese of Maine. As a member, I served as chaplain for the Teens Encounter Christ (TEC) weekend last March and the weeklong BION youth retreat at Camp Bishopswood in August. Youth from both experiences continue to reach out to me for prayer, guidance, and advice.

I am active in Encounters, the collaborative youth programming with St. Margaret's Episcopal, the Game Loft, First Congregational Church, and First Baptist. The Episcopal Diocese of Maine provided funding through the New Initiatives Grant, which allowed Encounters to continue from May through an overnight retreat at Camp Bishopswood in September. (Incidentally, a member that approved the New Initiatives Grant told me that she voted in favor of Encounters because she had worked with me on the TEC weekend. Her vote tipped the grant approval in our favor.) I continue to be involved with Encounters on a monthly basis. Encounters is funded by St. Margaret's, with support of the Vestry, Outreach, and the Women of St. Margaret's.

Thanks to parishioners, Godly Play has been reestablished after a several year hiatus. I anticipate this being an important part of Christian education into the future while we establish additional age-appropriate options for our younger members as they enter their teens.

3. Continue St. Margaret's leadership role in the community.

Leadership involves all of us! My ways of being a leader in this community include being an active presence and getting involved. I am a board member of Hospice Volunteers of Waldo County, the co-convener of the Greater Bay Area Ministerium (GBAM) along with the Rev. Deane Perkins of the Unitarian-Universalist Church, and one of the religious community liaisons of Belfast Has Pride along with the Rev. Jinwoo Chun of Belfast First Methodist Church.

I'm constantly talking up St. Margaret's parishioners' ways of serving in the community. I am grateful for all the ways you serve beyond our parish walls.

In addition to local involvement, I serve on the diocesan Commission on Ministry, which reviews and supports people in the process of Holy Orders to the diaconate and priesthood. At the national level, I serve as secretary of the Assembly of Episcopal Healthcare Chaplains.

As we move into 2017, I want to thank our Vestry, Senior Warden Ellen Kenney, Junior Warden Larry Theye, Treasurer Georgie Thomas, Organist Linn Johnson, Parish Assistant Elizabeth Moore, and everyone who contributes so much on a daily basis to the functioning of St. Margaret's.

The following pages include ways we minister together. Other reports will be shared verbally at the Annual Meeting. It is exciting to see the ways the Holy Spirit moves in our midst. Thank you for the opportunity to serve with you

Peace and blessings,

Christopher+

The Rev. Christopher Szarke
14th Rector of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, Belfast

ANNUAL REPORTS FOR THE YEAR 2016

ACCESSIBILITY REPORT

Several things were accomplished to aid church members:

- The use of amplified sound for those with hearing challenges and the requirement for announcements to be made using the microphone at the podium.
- Rebuilding the exterior stairs and railings at the main entrance and library.
- Demonstrating how the lift operates (demonstrations are also available after the meeting if you missed it!)
- Adjustment at the base of the ramp, which was not flush, to make more accessible.

The accessibility committee met several times to outline some goals and priorities. We are still in the process of prioritizing and understanding the costs; however here are some of the items discussed:

- Adding exterior signage so visitors know where our lift is.

-The next two items have already been bounced off the town planner to make sure they were feasible before pursued further:

- Creating handicapped parking that is more compliant with the ADA (American with disabilities Act) requirements.
- Removing the existing ramp and building one that is more compliant with the ADA requirements.

-Investigating how to make passage between the lobby and parish hall & parish hall and connector more accessible for people with walkers and wheelchairs. The required fire doors currently make this very challenging.

-Lobbying authorities to install a street light on Court St. across from church.

-Moving the baptistery in the rear of the sanctuary to allow for a more user-friendly entrance, exit, and seating.

- New floor treatment (rugs?) to prevent slippage, but work with walkers and wheelchairs.

-Although not accessibility, insulating connector corridor.

-Will accessibility to the second floor be required? If so most likely the most cost effective method would be a chair-railing lift in the stairwell unless the programmatic use of the spaces change enough to require an elevator.

Sue Garrett

ALTAR GUILD

The Altar Guild is a very important part of the worship at St. Margaret's. We are responsible for seeing that everything is in order for our worship services. We prepare the church for all the functions pertaining to worship. We decorate the church for Christmas, Easter, and weddings. We prepare for funerals and baptisms. We come on Saturday to dust, clean, prepare the candles and linens, and arrange flowers so the worship space is ready for Sunday Worship. We also prepare the space for any service during the week.

We have just finished a two-month trial period concerning how we schedule these tasks. Originally, two people were responsible for a month at a time. We are now scheduling two people one week at a time. This seems to be working well and is more flexible for people. Thanks to all of you who serve St. Margaret's in this manner. We are always looking for people to serve. If you are interested, please speak to me or to any member of the Altar Guild. We will train you.

Faye Ward, Head of Altar Guild

BUILDING and MAINTENANCE

The building maintenance budget was exceeded in 2016 because of several unplanned expenses. The major problem was water damage around the back door of the parish house. We have had to replace the wall between the door and the original house as well as the floor by the back door.

We have addressed the effect of water infiltration, but not the cause. We are under contract with Whitecap Builders to replace a portion of the back roof with a metal roof and to repair any structural damage that is revealed by removal of the current roof. Meanwhile, we have installed gutters and downspouts intended to carry rain water away from the back entrance.

Also on the maintenance list for 2017 is painting around parish house, particularly the eaves and roof brackets.

We have also recently had to replace the water heater and minor repairs to the heating system. Six new fire extinguishers were installed around the parish house during 2016.

Larry Theye

CHOIR

Choir – A Different Form of Ministry -- A Difference in Relating With God!

In Memory of our beloved Meg Malmberg ...

Why do we sing in church? Research done at the National Institute on Aging reported to the American Lung Association says that singing stimulates better blood flow by increasing the efficiency of chest wall muscles in air exchange. (American) John Lennon, Retired Professor of Vocal Performance, Emeritus at Emporia State University, states "... each individual has a deeply intrinsic need for the emotional release singing provides. Actually, human sound is the mind resonating through the instrument of the body. Conceived and evolved as one indivisible unit, the human body functions as the instrument of the human mind. Because the balance of this unity is so crucial I (Lennon) choose to use the word *BodyMind*, without separation, to express this oneness."

So, we find that singing is a natural (and primitive) human response that draws on the balanced united functioning of our bodies and minds. But, is there something more?

In an article in *crosswalk.com*, Mike DeVries states "I think we sing sometimes because we honestly feel like it. **We come together with the people of God, filled with joy. We can't wait to sing and join in with others.** ... Sometimes we sing purely because we need to. ... Sometimes we sing **because we need to be connected to something larger.**"

DeVries concludes, as do I, with these questions: "**Why do you sing? What kind of difference has singing made in your relationship with God?**"

May we always find harmony in our unity and unity in our harmony,
John Cuzzo

COMMUNICATIONS

The committee continues to seek members.

St. Margaret's is communicated to the local area and beyond via our website, Facebook presence, News from the Pews and Reflections newsletters, membership in the Belfast Area Chamber of Commerce with inclusion in their guide, a paid advertisement on the Our Town Belfast map of Belfast, and through our brochure available in church, parish hall, and downtown Information center. We do press releases to local media when appropriate and pay for Ned Lightner to videotape special services for inclusion on BCTV.

Chris Urick

2016 CORRIDOR EXHIBITS

In 2016 there were four exhibitions in the corridor gallery:

-*Crosses* (February through March 2016) 40 Crosses on loan from 10 parishioners

-*Water, Water, Everywhere: Images of Maine's Ocean, Lakes & Rivers*

(April through July 2016) 35 works by ten artist/parishioners including photographs, watercolors, paintings & pastels.

--*Celebrating Summer: Images of Landscapes, Gardens & Outdoor Events in Maine* (August through November 2016) Photographs, prints, pastels, quilts, watercolors by eight parishioners.

-*Angels: Our Loving Guardians* (December 2016 through February 2017) Works on loan from 20 parishioners. Exhibit includes prints, sculpture, ornaments & figurines.

Upcoming:

Summer 2017: Artwork by Hannah Ineson

Other exhibit ideas under consideration are: *Picturing Our Pets; Family Matters* (current or vintage pictures of families); *House Proud* (Belfast houses & architectural details); *People Pictures*: (images of family, friends & public events)

Betsey Feeley

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The finance committee at St. Margaret's is an informal group of parishioners who draft a proposed annual operating budget and present it to the Vestry. As all families know, imagining expenses and income for an entire year ahead is never easy. But in late 2016 and early 2017 the committee and then the Vestry approved a plan that totals \$179,718 in income and \$179,550 in expenses. It's going to be tight, but we have plan. New Senior Warden Ellen Kenney wants the Vestry to review the budget carefully each quarter. The plan includes \$108,419 in pledges. It also includes some funding from bequests to fully fund our outreach programs. The budget contains many line item dollar amounts that are required by contract or diocesan rules. But several line items are low, and the finance committee and the Vestry recognize that. We will be watching that closely in 2017. If you would like to participate in the work of the committee in 2017, contact Tom McCord, chair.

Daring Faith Report - We spoke a lot about “Daring Faith” in 2016. It is the name the Vestry gave to a call to the parish to offer suggestions large and small for possible “capital” projects – *not* from the operating budget – to help St. Margaret's fulfill its mission and grow. We received more than 30 proposals, including ideas for changes to our building, new ways to extend outreach, and new possibilities for music and teaching. The list remains open, and the new “capital budget” is still being developed. But in November 2016, the Vestry set six Daring Faith priorities: 1) Address ideas for our building, grounds, and improved access; 2) Consider possibility of a van for transport and outreach; 3) Research options for raising long-term income; 4) Update the audio-visual system in the Parish House; 5) Reconsider our signage along roads and highways; 6) Figure new ways to collaborate with other area congregations in matters of education and music.

Tom McCord, Vestry

GBAM Food Cupboard 2016

2016 was a year of transition for the Food Cupboard as Sue and Russell Wing retired from their leadership positions after more than 10 years of service. The GBAM Food Cupboard Board of Directors made decisions and took action to ensure continued operations. Cindy and Dick Frost represent St. Margaret's Church on the board and have been actively involved in various capacities this year.

Dave Johnson is the manager of the Food Cupboard, aided by many volunteers who pick up food at distribution points and warehouses, pack food for distribution, and staff distributions days. We handled more than 5,000 pounds of donated foods via the Postal Services food donation program in May, in addition to the weekly and other donations made by churches. We work with the Soap Closet to distribute soaps and mixed toiletries.

More than 300 families have been helped with nutrition needs IN 2016.

Cindy Frost

GROUNDS

A dedicated group of about 8 volunteers have worked very hard to get the grounds in to much better shape this year. We have focused on weeding the flower gardens, pruning back the shrubs and at the end of the year tackled the over grown south bank. We have a plan to enlarge the area people can stand on in the Memorial Garden and reduce a few areas that never look very good. But we need more volunteers, whatever level of physical strength you have if we are to continue to keep the gardens looking good.

Margie Spencer-Smith

OUTREACH

I believe that, as Christians, we have two duties: One: To honor God's Holy Sacraments and two: To feed the hungry, clothe the naked, protect the children, see the face of Christ in everyone we meet. The community of faith at St. Margaret's makes this possible in our beautiful Episcopal liturgy and our commitment to help our fellow children of God wherever they may be.

The Outreach Committee works within that gospel in our community, our diocese, our church at large around the world. Since March of 2016, St. Margaret's Outreach Committee has affected changes in many lives. We have via monies, volunteers' time, and goods distributed enabled many to keep warm in the cold, sheltered homeless men and women, fed those who are hungry, kept children dry and warm with coats, boots, socks, mittens, hats, learn more effectively, helped youth find a safe place to be themselves in groups, and so much more. Funds are available through our Grant Application process and apps are found on the T/T table in the Parish Hall.

Each month the minutes of the Outreach Committee are posted on the bulletin board and a report is submitted to the News From The Pews as well as the Vestry. Please check these sources for specific amounts given programs.

I am always available to answer any questions you may have about our ministry.

Susan Mayer, Outreach Coordinator

SERVICE LEADERS:

We have 4 Acolytes who serve at least once a month, and two Crucifers.

There have been 10 people who regularly serve as Ushers.

Cup ministers: there are 3 people who can serve at the 8am service. There are 8 people, two of whom are summer parishioners, who serve as cup minister at 10:15.

Readers: We have 6 readers for the 8 o'clock service. There are 16 regular readers for the 10:15 service.

Many of these people serve in two or more ways.

We make up the schedules for 2 to 3 months at a time. First we send out an email to ask for availability as well as speak personally to those servers who do not use email. We check with the priest re: any special services planned that may use more or fewer than the usual number of servers. When we have that information we sit down and make up the schedule which is then typed and sent out via email in two formats to all servers and the altar guild. We print up schedules both to give to those who do not use email and to post in the sacristy.

Linda Dunson

YOUTH EDUCATION

We had a wonderful Advent session of Godly Play when the weather permitted. And have decided that this will continue!

When we have the one church service we will have the Sunday school at 10:15. It will be run for 45 min.

We are targeting children K-6. Sue is looking for someone who may be interested in using our Godly Play materials with middle school and high school students to try to draw them in. I am wondering if this could be through the teen encounters.

We have four teachers who will alternate weeks with Cindy Frost and Susie Kraeger doing one week and Fox Buck and Sue Garrett doing another. We currently have three students when one of our kindergarten students told his mom “I have to sit still five days a week, one more day is too much”! We will be posting in the free press to try and invite more children.

Sunday school will continue the week after our annual meeting. Jan. 29th. At 10:15. Sue Garrett and Fox Buck will teach that week. The teachers will be taking the at home safe church training and have had a review of how Godly Play is presented to the children.

We have a lending library inventoried and are willing to work with other churches.

Sue Garrett

STEWARDSHIP REPORT – JANUARY 1, 2016 – DECEMBER 31, 2016

The definition of “stewardship” in the context of the church is the giving of our time, talents, and treasure for the benefit of the church and all God’s people. Often, because it *is* so important, we tend to think of stewardship as ensuring the financial well-being of the church, but this year the Stewardship Committee wants to recognize all those parishioners who give of their time and talents to ensure the functioning of the church as a community.

In addition to those listed on the following pages, other committees coordinate our efforts in the wider community (Outreach), develop a viable budget (Finance), and plan our liturgies (Liturgy). Others parishioners organize and supervise children’s religious education, ensure interesting, beautiful exhibits in the corridor, help with activities for residents of the Re-Entry Center, and plan our global cuisine pot-luck suppers. All of us working together make St. Margaret’s the very special place it is. Thank You!

The 2016 Stewardship Committee: Pat Griffith, George Mercer, Mary Rackmales, Kenneth Taylor, Larry Theye, Chris Urick, the Rev. Christopher Szarke

PLEDGE REPORT

PLEDGES (for the following year):

2015---65 (\$123,433) 2016—64 (\$117,782) 2017---61 (\$108,419)

Breakdown of pledges received for 2017

Total: 61 pledges for \$108,419

New: 7

Increased: 13

Decreased: 5

Stayed the same: 36

Pledged last year, but not this: 7

Deceased: 3

Moved: 1

Breakdown of 2017 pledges by amount

Less than \$1000: 21

\$1,000 - \$2,000: 23

\$2,100 - \$4,000: 12

\$4,000+ : 5

Median Pledge: \$1,200

**PARISHIONERS WHO GAVE THEIR TIME AND TALENTS IN 2016
FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY**

ALTAR GUILD:

Fox Buck Judith Cox Linda Dunson Sandy Gregory Rebecca Lewis Mary Provo
Mary Rackmales Margie Spencer-Smith Susan Sullivan Chris Urick Jeanne
Wagner Peter Walker Faye Ward Carol Whittle

USHERS:

Juliet Baker Judith Cox Susie Kraeger Rebecca Lewis Paul Mazur Wilma
Moses Mary Rackmales Chris Urick Jeanne Wagner Ed Williams

CRUCIFERS, CUP MINISTERS, AND ALCOLYTES:

Amanda Curtis Faye Ward Grace Littlefield Curtis Littlefield Madeline
Liversidge

Aubrey Sawyer Juliet Baker Fox Buck Kristen Burkholder Peter Clain Art Hall
Doug Mayer Paul Mazur Priscilla Tate Jeanne Wagner Peter Walker

CHOIR:

Fox Buck Kristen Burkholder Peter Clain John Cuozzo Jackie Curtis Linda
Dunson

Marian Fletcher Cindy Frost Dick Frost Ellen Kenney Tom McCord Mary
Provo

Faye Ward Keith Dunson Carol Winningham Charlie Wolf

READERS:

Juliet Baker Elaine Bielenberg Fox Buck Kristen Burkholder Nan Cobbey
Courtney Collins Don Cox Judith Cox Linda Dunson Cindy Frost Dick Frost
John Gregory Pat Griffith Charlotte Herbold Ellen Kenney Susie Kraeger Susan
Mayer

Suzanne Pelletier Susan Sullivan Kenneth Taylor Larry Theye Joan Whitlock

BUILDING COMMITTEE:

Don Cox John Cuozzo Randy Curtis Keith Dunson Dick Frost John Gregory
John Jamieson Wayne Kraeger Lou Pelletier Richard Pickering Larry Theye
Dennis Urick Peter Walker

GROUNDS COMMITTEE:

Peter Clain Tom Duplessie Cindy Frost Mary Rackmales Margie Spencer-Smith

Susan Sullivan Ed Williams Pam Williams

2016 Treasurer's Report

St Margaret's ended the year with expenses exceeding Income by \$9,000, a combination of revenues received being \$6,000 less than budgeted and expenses exceeding budget by more than \$2000.

Significant expenditures for the upkeep of the physical plant were a large contributor to the shortfall. Repairs authorized in prior years (for replacement of the parish house handrail and chimney repair) were made in 2016 and were paid from funds brought forward from 2015. Thanks to help from dedicated volunteers these costs were less than would have been incurred using only contracted labor. In addition there was an emergency expenditure for a replacement boiler of more than \$2000.

Going forward there will be additional expenditures for roof repair and replacement.

With the transition in Treasurers during 2015 and in 2016 with the untimely passing of Meg Malmberg , St Margaret's was audited for fiscal 2015 and 5 months of 2016. There were no material weaknesses, but several observations were reported to strengthen financial controls. These suggestions have been implemented.

WOMEN OF ST. MARGARET'S 2016

The Women's group met each month between March and December. We enjoy the fellowship our meetings supply. As usual, we have had several projects to raise money to give away. We had our annual Bakeless Bake Sale, Knit-Maine-ia, Fall Tea, and two Knit-a-thons. We gave away money to the Game Loft (costumes in April and Encounters expenses in December), New Hope for Women, 3 Bishopswood scholarships and a donation for a scholarship fund, Broadreach Family and Community Services, H.O.M.E. in Orland, Christmas gifts and gift cards to a needy family in the community, purchase of new chairs for the AA and Alanon space, Altar Guild supplies, and lemonade and coffee supplies for Sundays.

Judith Cox is president for 2017. Other officers for this coming year are: Ellen Kenney, vice-president, Cynthia Zajac, secretary, and Cindy Frost, treasurer.

Linda Dunson