

Crossing
the
Threshold



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2024**

**ST. THOMAS
EPISCOPAL
CHURCH
COLUMBUS,
GEORGIA**

2024 Annual Meeting Minutes

St. Thomas Episcopal Church Annual Parish Meeting, January 21, 2024

The agenda and annual reports (short and long forms) were sent electronically to members and a printed copy of the short form was available prior to the meeting. A printed copy of the long form is available on request.

A quorum convened and Rev. Grace Burton-Edwards called the meeting to order. Those unable to meet in person were given an opportunity to participate via Zoom. Prior registration was required. Rev. Grace announced the appointment of Sara Ginter to the position of Vestry clerk.

Spencer Garrard opened the meeting with a prayer.

The minutes from the 2023 annual meeting were distributed by email prior to the meeting. **A motion to accept the minutes was made, 2nd (Robert Moore/Dan Ginter), and passed without further discussion.**

Grace announced the Vestry nominees: Norm Easterbrook, Jessica Ezzell, and Sue Odell. Their qualifications were reviewed. No additional candidates were nominated. Grace explained the voting process prescribed by the Canons of the Diocese of Atlanta. Paper ballots were distributed and collected.

Reports: David Brandenburg reviewed the budget and reported a positive financial standing due to generous gifts and pledges. Ann Johnston (Co-Chair) reported from the Property Committee a busy year with many projects completed. Mitch Grossman (Chair-Endowment) reviewed the sources and uses of the Endowments and reported that an ESG Fund has been added. Ron Wirt reviewed plans for the Vision Campaign.

Announcements: Plans and dates for upcoming activities were announced. Grace thanked the outgoing Vestry members for their faithful service: Spencer Garrard (Senior Warden) for his tireless and steady leadership; Deidre Bohannon for her kind and gracious spirit; and Julia Slater for her legal expertise, and long history with and commitment to St. Thomas. She announced that these members will continue to serve on the Vestry until the contract with the construction company is signed in February providing continuity and an understanding of the prior planning and commitments.

Having counted all ballots it was announced that Norm Easterbrook, Jessica Ezzell, and Sue Odell were elected to the Vestry and David Brandenburg appointed as Senior Warden (2024).

Grace thanked all who attended in person and online. David Brandenburgh closed with a prayer.

RECTOR'S REPORT

Rev. Grace Burton-Edwards

Crossing the Threshold

2024 was an exciting year as St. Thomas crossed many significant thresholds together.

- **Physical thresholds:** We remodeled our worship space to make it more accessible. We crossed into All Saints Hall and found that it worked well for worship. In December, we crossed with thanksgiving back into our beautiful remodeled nave.
- **Outreach thresholds:** We supported existing partnerships with CVEM, East Carver Heights and the Wynnton Neighborhood Network and crossed into new opportunities with the newly organized Brewer Early Innovation Academy and Sleep in Heavenly Peace. We supported a family through the International Rescue Committee as they crossed into life in this country as refugees.
- **Membership thresholds:** Worship attendance increased during 2024, somewhat surprising given the many transitions during the year. Average Sunday morning attendance in 2023 was around 206. Average Sunday morning attendance in 2024 was around 237.
- **Thresholds of learning:** Participation increased in formation opportunities for all ages – children, youth, and adult. Youth learned about our wider church through a pilgrimage to General Convention. Youth and children enjoyed RENEW: A Green VBS.
- **Staffing thresholds:** We grieved the death of our beloved Rick McKnight. Many musicians stepped up to continue our rich musical tradition. We are delighted that Debbie Anderson agreed to become our new Director of Music for this season. Maddie Redden led children's ministries at the start of the year while we searched for a new Director of Children's Ministries, the wonderful Shayla Holloway.
- **Financial thresholds:** 161 pledges from parishioners generously supported our 2024 operating budget. In addition, 142 pledges and bequests funded our Making Room for All vision campaign, an extraordinary response. A generous gift from Judy Harding at the start of 2024 enabled us to complete our vision campaign without incurring construction debt, saving hundreds of thousands of dollars in interest.



What an extraordinary year! The reports that follow tell the story of God's provision and faithfulness. The Holy Spirit was with us every step of the way, leading us into new territory with faith and hope.

We expect 2025 will offer similar opportunities to cross new thresholds.

- **Physical thresholds:** We will settle in to our remodeled spaces and make them our own.
- **Outreach thresholds:** Your generous support for the 2025 operating budget enabled us to increase our outreach budget by 37%. We look forward to deepening current partnerships and exploring new opportunities for service.
- **Membership thresholds:** We hope 2025 will be another year of growth as we welcome new members and continue to Make Room for All.
- **Thresholds of learning:** Plans are already underway for Journey Groups, Welcome Classes, summer VBS and more.
- **Staffing thresholds:** We look forward to welcoming a new Associate Rector later in the year.
- **Financial thresholds:** Your generous support for the 2025 operating budget made all of these opportunities possible. Once pledges to the vision campaign are fulfilled, we will fund a new endowment in memory of Judy Harding which will provide additional support for our ministries.

Thank you for being part of St. Thomas as we cross these thresholds together, with the help of God.

Blessings,
Rev. Grace

ASSOCIATE RECTOR'S REPORT

Rev. Darius Sudayi, Associate Rector for Mission

Dear Brethren in Christ

It continues to be an honor and joy to serve with all of you in God's kingdom. It has been a blessing to see the vision of making room for all come to fruition this past year.

As your associate rector for the mission I get to go out and minister with other folks who do not have a pastor. This past year I worshipped with folks at St. Nicholas in Hamilton for a while. We are thankful that they now have a full time priest. I also got an opportunity to worship with folks at St. Stephens in Alabama for a while. They too now have a part time priest. I continue to worship, and work with folks at St. Mary Magdalene for two Sundays a month. I also do home visits, funerals and help with some administrative operations at St. Mary.

It is always a joy to worship with you on the second Sundays of a month, some of our evening prayers on Tuesdays and Thursday, and on our Wednesday services. It has been a blessing also to join our youth director as she leads an important ministry with the students of Columbus State University.

I praise God for all that you do here at St. Thomas as you stay true to our baptismal covenant. It has been a privilege to work with our Director for Community Engagement to help the Duarte family settle as refugees in our city. We thank God that they are acclimated to life in America. Jose has two jobs, their son is walking and growing fast! Wendy is continuing to adjust to life here. They are in the process of getting their greencards and they are so thankful for the emotional, financial and prayer support from all of you.

I praise God for every life which is changed, prayer answered, sin confessed because of the ministry of St. Thomas Episcopal Church. I continue to pray that we get the grace to continue to follow the Spirit's guidance as we do God's mission in this place.

I encourage you to look into many of our mission outreach ministries and consider joining in one way or another. I look forward to partnering with you as we continue to do God's mission.

Shalom

Fr. Darius Sudayi



SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

As you all know, at St. Thomas we lived through a momentous year in 2024. The renovation of the nave and other spaces excited our community. We have a beautiful place for worship, and one that is more accessible to everyone. The vestry took an active role in all the construction efforts. They acted on proposals for everything, from the design of the reredos screen to parking, landscaping and more. We owe them our gratitude.

St. Thomas benefitted from great generosity this year. Pledges set a record. As a result we have hired a choir director and an organist. We look forward to the addition of an associate rector at some time in 2025. Our church gave money in relief of the hurricane victims in North Carolina and Florida. We added members to our family in the past year. We have a new presiding bishop to celebrate. Things are happening at St. Thomas. Thanks to all of you for your part in this! Thanks be to GOD!

David Brandenburgh,
Senior Warden

TREASURER'S REPORT

What is this ministry?

The task of this ministry includes safeguarding the assets of the parish, provide and administer an annual budget, manage the finances to help assure funding for ministries of the church, and make recommendations to the Vestry regarding anything involving the finances of the parish. This ministry is instrumental in the establishment of an annual budget for the parish.

What lies ahead in 2025?

This ministry will continue to manage funding for the church to continue to make room for all.

Who participated in 2025?

Those serving on the finance committee are Karen Lord, Ellen Free, Tracy Leopard, Travis Wade, David Brandenburgh, Steve Melton, and Ron Wirt. Instrumental in providing pertinent information and directing the work are Rev. Grace Burton-Edwards and Patty Slembariski.

How did this ministry "cross the threshold" in 2024?

By safeguarding and allocating the assets of the Parish, this ministry helped ensure that the programs established to foster a community of love and acceptance had the funding needed to support and further those programs. In addition, the church embarked on a large and successful capital campaign that funded multiple expansion projects to provide room for all and better serve the parish. The finance committee oversees the direction of funds for these projects.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Lord
Treasurer

2024 VESTRY, CLERGY & STAFF

Vestry

Senior Warden: David Brandenburgh (2nd), **Junior Warden:** Louise Tulloh (3rd), Susan Connery (3rd), Michael Dempsey (3rd), Norm Easterbrook (1st), Jessica Ezzell (1st), Sue O'Dell (1st), Garrett Vance (2nd), Brian Walker (2nd)

(Each member serves a 3-year term. The year of each vestry member's term follows his/her name.)

Clerk: Sara Ginter **Treasurer:** Karen Lord

Clergy

Rector: Grace Burton-Edwards

Associate Rector for Pastoral Care: Roxane Gwyn

Associate Rector for Mission: Darius Sudayi

Staff in 2024

Debbie Anderson: Staff singer, Director of Music; **Katie Buckley:** Staff Singer, **Seth Burgamy:** Kitchen manager/Sexton, **Morgan Camp:** Assistant to the Kitchen manager/Sexton, **Michelle Folta:** Staff Singer, **Logan Gordy:** Staff singer, **Shayla Holloway:** Children and Family Ministries, **April Jacobs:** Staff singer, **Cameron Jackson:** Staff singer, **Taylor Mack:** Youth, Young Adults, and Campus Ministry Director, **Rick McKnight:** Organist/Choir Director, **Daniel Mitchell:** Adult Formation director, **Hunter Mullen:** Staff singer, **Riley Mullen:** Nursery attendant, **Jeffrey Oakman:** Staff singer, **Meg Olive-Allison:** Director of Parish and Community Engagement, **Lupe Ortiz-Sanchez:** Office assistant, **David Rambo-Serrano:** Staff singer, **Maddie Redden:** Interim Children & Family Ministries, **Adleyn Scott:** Interim Organist, **Patty Slembariski:** Director of Parish Administration, **Evie Smith:** Nursery attendant, **Dorothy Uwanawich:** Nursery attendant, **Jenneken Carpenter Varnum:** Nursery attendant, **Rachel Ward:** Staff singer, **Nick Williams:** Livestream tech, **Frances Woolfolk:** Custodian

2024 PARISH DATA

58 NEW MEMBERS:

| | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Rosanna Borders | Tim Gregory | Courtney Reed | Beth Thrift |
| Marcia Butterfield | Kayden Hiers | Jeremy Reed | Doris Tice |
| Renee Byrd | Matthew Hsu | Josie Reed | Rion Turner |
| Ashlyn Cariel | Mary Beth James | Christy Ruehl | Mary Lewis Walsh |
| Chad Cariel | Judy Jenks | Cliff Ruehl | Amandah Wehrhahn |
| Charlotte Chambliss | Rochelle Jones | Henry Ruehl | Cristian Wehrhahn, Sr. |
| Karen CortHELL | Marsha Mason | Maxwell Ruehl | Cristian Wehrhahn, Jr. |
| Betsy Covington | Tulip May | Avery Sleight | John West |
| Marcia English | Benjamin McKnight | Benson Smith | Mary Williams |
| Kimberlea Etchison | Eric Meeks | Bethany Smith | Dick Wood |
| Anne Gay | Cason Mitchell | Ed Smith | June Wood |
| Edward Gay | Cheryl Neal | Melanie Smith | Elise Young |
| Erin Gregory | Vincent Nicolais | Elisha-Gloria Thomas | Sofie Zeruto |
| Lizzie Gregory | Morrigan Olive-Allison | Grace Thomas | |
| McCall Gregory | Jan Pylant | Thelma Thomas | |

11 BAPTISMS

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Kayden Hiers | Cason Mitchell | Thelma Thomas |
| Matthew Hsu | Morrigan Olive-Allison | Amandah Wehrhahn |
| Tulip May | Elisha-Grace Thomas | Elise Young |
| Benjamin McKnight | Grace Thomas | |

22 CONFIRMATIONS/RECEPTIONS

| | | | |
|--------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Carol Boers | Susan Hansbarger | Tommy Meeks | Katie Underwood |
| Jerry Brown | Kathy Herren | Faye Melton | Chaz Wagner |
| Ruth Brown | Chris Jeffries | Steve Melton | Elissa Wagner |
| Bob Chitwood | Marlea Jeffries | Avery Sleight | Argy Wargo |
| Will Dempsey | Kelly McFalls | Nathan Smock | |
| Bonnie Ellis | Eric Meeks | Holle Tubbs | |

1 MARRIAGE

Ramsey Greathouse & Kelly Mezick

8 DEATHS/BURIALS

| | |
|--------------|---------------|
| Murray Craig | Rick McKnight |
| Judy Gunter | John Partin |
| Judy Harding | Steve Stewart |
| Dixie Harmon | Bob Wadkins |

MINISTRY REPORTS

We invited ministry leaders to summarize their activities in 2024 by responding to these questions:

- What does this ministry do?
- What lies ahead in 2025?
- Who participated in 2024?
- How did this ministry "cross the threshold" in 2024? This could include a summary of key events or major accomplishments.

Acolytes

Wilson Ford, Acolyte Director

Acolytes serve by carrying the petite cross, gospel book, or torches, and also serve as crucifer. Serving as an acolyte is a wonderful way for our children and youth to participate in worship and serve our church. As director I train acolytes and assist with scheduling. I would like to especially commend our Acolytes for learning to serve in TWO new spaces in 2024. Your flexibility and willingness to learn new ways of serving helped ease our transition to worship in All Saints Hall and then back into the "new Nave."

In 2024 the following children and youth participated as Acolytes at St. Thomas.

| | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Esi Akyempong | Kayden Hiers | Thomas Olukolade | Ryan Starkweather |
| Lawrence Akyempong | Asha Hostetter | Chloe Olive-Allison | Hagulwa Sudayi |
| Kona Cogle | Lola Beth James | Kingston Olive-Allison | Lovick Sudayi |
| Austin Connery | Gideon Jones | Sam Olive-Allison | Alice Underwood |
| Grayson Connery | Keagan McFalls | Kentleigh Peck | Ellie Underwood |
| Riley Connery | Kelly McFalls | Shelby Peck | Martha Wade |
| Elyse Dahlgren | Oliver Meeks | Tripp Peck | Bert Wadkins |
| David Flinn | Tommy Meeks | Wyatt Perkins | Colin Young |
| Addison Harrison | Aidan Mitchell | Benson Smith | Mia Young |
| Owen Harrison | Hudson Mitchell | Bethany Smith | |

Adult Formation

Grace Burton-Edwards

St. Thomas offers many ways for adults to learn together and grow in faith.

- Sunday morning Adult Formation, 9:30 am, usually in the library
- Wednesday evening offerings at 6:30 in the library
- Journey Groups – two seasons each year, with groups meeting on Sunday afternoons, Tuesday afternoons, and Wednesday evenings discussing the same topic
- A women's lectionary Bible study led by the Rev. Dr. Cindy Cox Garrard
- A book discussion group

Here are some of our adult formation offerings in 2024.

- Gatherings with Greater Beallwood Baptist Church focused on sermons by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- A Case for Love movie launched Journey Groups focused on sermons from then Presiding Bishop Michael Curry.
- Art France led discussion around what it means to love our neighbors.
- Bishop Wright's Lent video series was on the theme of "Letting Go".
- The Rev. Roxane Gwyn hosted a viewing of the film *The Philadelphia Eleven*.
- Jerry Brown led a series "In Search of Justice."
- We heard reports from General Convention, particularly on the Creation Care resolutions.
- Our Summer of Service invited conversation with outreach partners.

- Daniel Mitchell led a series on key leaders from early Christian history.
- We watched and discussed sermons by our new Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe.
- Fall Journey Groups discussed *The Screwtape Letters* by C. S. Lewis.
- Malinda Shamburger led a *Manna & Mercy* Journey Group.
- Jerry Brown led an exploration of *Mere Christianity* by C. S. Lewis.
- An Advent lunch series focused on A Healthy Community.

We had originally thought Wednesday formation would be canceled due to construction. However, the congregation wanted to continue to gather, so we found a way. Thanks to all who took part and patiently dealt with crowded tables.

Who participated in 2024?

Many, many people at St. Thomas take part in adult formation offerings. Your commitment to learning together is a key reason St. Thomas is a vital and growing congregation.

Special thanks to all who led adult formation in 2024, with apologies to anyone inadvertently left off the list.

- Journey Group leaders: Jerry and Ruth Brown, Larry Dooley, Norm Easterbrook, Korie MacDougall, Taylor Mack, Faye Melton, Perrin Nicolson, Malinda Shamburger, Mollie Smith, and Ron Wirt.
- Sunday adult formation leaders: Ashley Becker, Jerry and Ruth Brown, Christine DiFelicianantonio, Margo Easterbrook, Chaplain Stephen Echols, Art France, Roxane Gwyn, Lindsay Hardegree (Episcopal Community Foundation), Lisa and Greg Herring, Susan Leigh, Sandy McCann, Faye Melton, Linda Prince, Brian Schwartz, Phil Shuler (SafeHouse Ministries), Holle Tubbs, Katie Underwood.
- Wednesday adult formation leaders (when Journey Groups were not meeting): The Rev. Adrian Chester, Art France, Pauline Marth, Daniel Mitchell, Meg and Susie Olive-Allison, and more.

What lies ahead in 2025?

- We are beginning to outgrow the library, so we will need to discern how to adapt Sunday adult formation and make room for more people. We look forward to the gifts a new priest will bring to our opportunities for learning together.

Altar Guild

Sue O'Dell, Chair

The primary purpose of the Altar Guild at St. Thomas Episcopal Church is to prepare the altars in the Nave and the Chapel for the eucharist. Care of the altar, sanctuary, vessels, linens and vestments are other “behind the scenes” tasks necessary to support the liturgical life of the parish.

There are currently four altar guild teams, each of which is “on duty” for one week at a time. The teams are responsible for Sunday services in the Nave and the Chapel as well as the Wednesday night service in the Chapel and a monthly Friday morning service. The teams work together to prepare for Christmas season and Holy Week and Easter services and other occasions such as weddings and funerals.

2024 participation:

Team 1: Sue O'Dell, Susan Anderson, Beverly Gordy, Amy Hatfield, Carole Hill, and Malone Moore.

Team 2: Darlene Everitt, Paula Evans, Barbara Ellis, Leslie Holloway and new member Karen Corthell.

Team 3: Jo Cates, Lisa Herring, Marianne Sheehan and new member Argy Wargo.

During 2024 we were at last able to add a fourth team. Alice Barlow agreed to head up the team which also includes Anne Gay, Faye Melton, Nelia Partain and Doug McLeod.

We have some former members who are not currently able to participate but continue to be with us in spirit and prayer. Those members are Neal Fenter, Charlie Snipes and Sandi Pauli.

Many thanks to Taylor Mack and our great youth group for sharing their space as a temporary sacristy during the renovation. We are so excited to finally set up for worship in the new Nave and to settle in to our bright and spacious new sacristy. It continues to be a joy for all of us to participate in the work we do for each St. Thomas service.

New altar guild members are always welcome and we can figure out a way to accommodate anyone's schedule.

Brewer Early Innovation Academy Partnership

Margo Easterbrook, Partnership in Education Coordinator

Our Partnership in Education with Brewer Elementary School crossed a big threshold this year. Over the summer, Brewer transformed from an ordinary elementary school into a specialized learning center aimed at accelerated learning for Kindergarten through 2nd grade students in our district who are most at risk of falling behind. Qualifying students come from the four lowest performing school districts in the district.

Our purpose in forming this partnership 8 years ago was to improve the lives of at risk students living in low income households. To that end, we pledged to continue our partnership with the newly formed Brewer Early Innovation Academy.

Our Brewer Buddy Reading Program has continued. Under the leadership of Meg Olive-Alison, volunteers meet at the school on Tuesdays from 9:00 - 10:00 to work one-on-one with students who are most at risk.

We have been able to continue our Brewer Buddy Pack Program as well. Thanks to the generous financial support of St. Thomas Parishioners, we are able to provide packets of food items to send home in the backpacks of 80 students living in food insecure household every week. That's 320 meals per month!

In addition, we supplied the school with backpacks at the beginning of the school year for students who needed them. We supported teachers with a back-to-school breakfast in August, and will provide boxed lunches to the teachers for Teacher Appreciation Week in May.

We make a big difference in the lives of so many through our partnership with Brewer. We are proud of the work that we do and we couldn't do it without your support! Thank you for your support of our partnership with the Brewer Early Innovation Academy!

Volunteers for the 2024-2025 school year (so far) include: Michael Ankerich, Fred and Alice Barlow, Grace Burton-Edwards, Norman and Margo Easterbrook, Sara Ginter, Judy Heider, Tommie Hunter, Barbara Kreyling, Ann McDuffie, Martha Mullinax, Ruth Nichols, Steve Olive, Meg Olive-Allison, Nancy Powell, Libba Russell, Anna and Darius Sudayi, Robin Trimarchi, Katie Underwood, Mary Lewis Walsh, and Jane Wilson.

Chattahoochee Valley Episcopal Ministry

Malinda Shamburger, Director

For four decades, CVEM has worked to ensure that all people, especially those living in the Chattahoochee Valley, reap the benefits of strong communities. When our neighbors suffer, so does our community. There are several ways CVEM works for equity. **Our Direct Service program** assists our neighbors with rent, utilities, transportation, and other needs. In 2024, we continued to work with agencies in our community that provide assistance and continue to add to the list. Through these partnerships, we can assist more people and address root problems. **Our TAP program** continues to teach children how to be in community with one another by understanding the things that make us different are the things that will make us a stronger community. TAP does this through art, music, and inviting people of other religions and ethnicities to sit and talk with us. **Our Striving for Justice Conversations** allow people to learn about social justice issues, connect with people they may not ordinarily spend time with, and respond to whatever action is necessary.

In 2024, CVEM, along with St. Thomas was awarded a grant from the Episcopal Community Foundation that allowed us to purchase a van. The van will be a key component in what lies ahead in 2025, and it is also how we crossed the threshold in 2024.

We plan to take our Direct Service to another level by offering transportation to job fairs, food banks, community resources, and events to our clients. We will offer the use of the van to our churches in the Chattahoochee Convocation to participate in Diocesan events and programs.

Additionally, we also want to make it available for our Columbus churches to offer transportation to members who would like to attend church services and special programs but no longer drive.

Communications

Meg Olive-Allison, Director of Parish & Community Engagement

The Communications Ministry at St. Thomas helps to organize the internal and external communication of the church. This includes managing the website, Facebook, Instagram, emailed newsletters, mailed newsletters, emailed prayer list, as well as handling internal requests from staff members, requests from parishioners seeking information about happenings in the church or assistance with projects, and responding to inquiries from visitors and potential new members. This ministry creates and handles special printed communications projects throughout the year such as seasonal newsletters, Annual Parish Report, and the stewardship campaign materials.

Highlights from 2024:

- Using Instant Church Directory has allowed us to keep an up to date church directory with pictures! The directory is available in print, online, and through an app on phones and tablets, and can be updated easily!
- The company that hosted our website, Membership Vision, merged with another company at the end of 2023. In July of 2024 our website began to transition to another platform with this new company. This process has been long and frustrating and still is not complete! We anticipate making changes with our website in 2025 and are looking for what best will meet our needs.
- Volunteers continue to adopt Ministry Scheduler Pro to schedule themselves for a variety of ministries at St. Thomas.
- We continue to send email news three times a week with a news and events message on Monday, "Wednesday Word" from Clergy on Wednesday, and "This Sunday at St. Thomas" message on Friday. These regular messages are sent to 591 people on our email list through Mailchimp.
- We continued using Zoom and livestream to better connect from home.
- We continued sharing "Celebrations and Sorrows" by email each week to 430 email addresses on our Parish Mailing List through Gmail.
- We continued printing seasonal newsletters and mailing those to households in the parish who request them.
- We continue to use Facebook and Instagram to connect with one another and share news and updates.

Creation Keepers

Christine DiFeliciano, Chair

Purpose

Creation Keepers' mission is to share in the stewardship of our earthly home. Working to slow the realities of climate disturbance, we as faithful stewards REAP the bounty of God's creation and act with intention to:

- R4: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Refuse.
- Expand our own educational horizons to recognize the interdependence of life in the local Chattahoochee Valley, in our state and beyond.
- Advocate for policy and accountability to dismantle ecological injustice and racism.
- Prize God's good gifts of beauty and wonder as we commune in the sacred spaces of our natural environment.

Highlights for 2024:

- Creation Keepers presented a series on creation care during Adult Formation
- Collaborated with St. Mark's Episcopal in LaGrange for the October "Re-Wilding Workshop" to promote the new land management program of Georgia Interfaith Power & Light (GIPL).
- As a result of the workshop attended by 7 St. Thomas members, the Creation Keepers submitted a grant application and were awarded \$625 for a pollinator garden.
- Creation Keepers also submitted proposals for the annual Atlanta Diocesan Council Meeting pertaining to environmental stewardship and creation care. The proposals' language was amended and voted on, resolving a year of study in committee for Diocesan decision in November 2025.

Participants in 2024: Fred Barlow, Ashley Becker, Grace Burton-Edwards, Robert Chitwood, Christine DiFelicianantonio, Mick Etchison, Art France, Ann Johnston, Martin McCann, Faye Melton, Vicky and John Partin, Mike Rallo, Brian Schwartz, and Chris Williams,.

How did this ministry "cross the threshold" in 2024?

Creation Keepers' submission of proposals for the annual Atlanta Diocesan Council Meeting to consider and to resolve as a faithful group both the divestment from fossil fuels and the investment in land practices to sustain God's earthly gifts was a first: the initial wading into church policy and governance to multiply our collective behaviors for environmental stewardship and creation care. We continue to network with other individuals and groups to influence a faithful response in the care of our beautiful earthly home.

What lies ahead in 2025?

The planning, planting and "re-wilding" of a new pollinator garden. In its planting and nurturing, we are committed to spreading learning and love in our relationship to our earth, one plant at a time, one pollinator at a time.

East Carver Heights Community Development Corporation

Greg & Lisa Herring

Path to Shine - Columbus

Path To Shine®, Inc. is a mentoring program for elementary school children. We meet at Carver Heights Presbyterian Church's outreach building at 800 32 nd Ave. We meet on Tuesdays of the school year from 4:30-6pm. Our mentors are trained and background checked. The training focuses on helping children with learning. We start out with a healthy snack provided by volunteers; we work on homework or reading. Then we have a curriculum lesson with a book we read or a speaker. We "cross the threshold" by offering help to all those students in poverty who are not being reached or who don't have resources. We will add a new mentor from St. Thomas Episcopal Church in 2025!

Students receive new books at the end of the fall and spring semesters. We took students on trip to a pottery studio after reading "Dave The Potter" so they could experience making a pot on the wheel. We had our fun activity about learning to carve a Jack O'Lantern at Halloween and our Columbus High School volunteer helped with carving. Students learned about history at the National Infantry Museum with a guided tour by Greg Camp.

Path to Shine-Columbus mentored six students this year. Our mentors are Margo Easterbrook, Sandra Montgomery, Sheryl Wright, Suzanne Burdeshaw, Susan Gilbert, LaShanda Porter and Chad Keene. Sara Ginter organizes and schedules the snack angels, and they are Jessica Ezzell, Jennifer Fletcher, Mandy Flynn, Sara Ginter, Susan Gilbert, Leslie Holloway, Pauline Marth, Faye Melton, Vicky and John Partin, Charlene Rallo, and Donna Sharp. They provide each student with a healthy snack of a sandwich half, juice, and fruit.

Boxwood Friends and Neighbors Network

A Friends and Neighbors Network is where families who qualify for food assistance work together to unload and sort food, meet, pay dues, and then clean up and take the food home. A community gets formed through the work everyone does together and through the meetings which include prayer, a pledge and speakers who bring information about local resources and services. The food is purchased from Feeding the Valley with healthy food in mind. East Carver Heights has few grocery stores offering good produce and healthy options. The dues the group pays are pooled to purchase bulk items like tissue, cleaning products, and laundry pods. On average this year the Boxwood F.A.N.N. has served a dozen families. This year we had a program with Dr. Asante Hilts challenging us to make changes in eating, preparation, snacks, and habits. We are meeting for the F.A.N.N. back at the Boxwood Recreation Center. We are grateful to be back to the neighborhood where we started and closer to our members. Members learned to make smoothies, how to prepare meals, and keep healthy snacks in sight. We crossed the threshold of poverty by empowering F.A.N.N. members with powerful health knowledge. We plan new speakers in response to our members requests. We look forward to anyone wanting to offer budgeting advice or spiritual inspiration to the F.A.N.N. members to consider offering that in 2025.

We worked with the new Boxwood Recreation Director to hold several Boxwood Soccer awards banquets and some special events including the annual Trunk or Treat with sponsors: Target, the Community Warriors, Boys on the Hill and St. Thomas Episcopal Church. St. Thomas parishioners donated candy and several dressed up and handed out candy including Norm and Margo Easterbrook .

Our biggest event is our Christmas Party where over 80 soccer players received a new coat and Santa came for a visit! St. Thomas parishioner Margo Easterbrook was there to help serve pizza, empanadas, sandwiches, cookies, juice, and tamales. We crossed the threshold to make sure that St. Thomas parishioners bought new coats for children. We also had donations from St. Luke Methodist Church and Sentinel Comics. Coats were also purchased and donated by Brookstone School.

Boxwood Soccer:

2024 was a busy and successful year for Boxwood SC. We fielded five teams ages 6 to 16 for both the Spring and Fall seasons. The Spring season begins in February and continues to May. The Fall season begins in August and ends in November. This equates to 170 practices and games per season and 340 per year! We provide all registration, uniforms, equipment, water, snacks, coaches, team managers and organize practices and game rosters for all our players. In addition, we have our annual Summer Camp in July. Volunteers from St Thomas included Margo Easterbrook, Dan Ginter, Tony Lewis and Rev Grace Burton-Edwards. Our organization provides opportunities for social interactions and relationships in a safe atmosphere that our players may not otherwise have the opportunity to experience. Through teamwork, cooperation, and resilience in the face of adversity, our teams have achieved excellence, winning multiple trophies and championships. They have learned that the way to win on the soccer field is by loving each other, and in so doing have inspired their families, neighbors, and all of us who have been involved. We received donations of drinks, snacks and ice from many St. Thomas volunteers and appreciate your help.

We will continue with the five teams ages 6-16 in 2025. We are beginning a new opportunity for our players who graduate from High School and are interested in a summer internship/job in their area of interest. Our first recipient will finish his first year at Columbus Tech and will begin work at Advance Industrial in Augusta GA this summer.

Thank you to all of you who brought us the cases of water and snacks. Thank you to all who showed up with a trunk full of candy at Halloween. Thank you to all who were there to setup, serve and clean up at our parties. Thank you to the "real" Santa. Thank you for the individual donations and the Church's financial support. Thank you, St Thomas for your encouragement and continued support.

Endowment Committee

Mitch Grossman, Chair

The 2024 endowment committee consisted of devoted members including Marianne Richter, Robert Moore, Ann Burr, Travis Wade, Paul Hostetter, Marcel Meijer, Reverend Grace Burton-Edwards and chair Mitch Grossman.

St. Thomas finances are divided into three categories -the Annual Budget derived from your yearly stewardship giving used for salaries, repairs and utilities; Capital Campaigns, like our Making Room for All Vision Campaign, which is for larger specific projects, and the St. Thomas Endowment Fund for long term funding which provides us a source of income each year to support church and faith life beyond the day-to-day operations.

The endowment committee reviews endowment financials quarterly with our Truist advisors. As a reminder, in 2022 we opened an ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) long term investment account. With the committee's suggestion Vestry approved adding an ESG account so when someone wants to remember the life and love of our beloved St. Thomas, they have an option to include a gift that invests in things that align with our mission and focus like energy efficiency, inclusion, gender & diversity, human rights, and affordable housing.

In 2025 the committee will work on helping others understand the importance of planned giving. Each year only a small portion of the endowment fund is used, and the remainder is left to grow. Over time, as more generously include their gifts to St. Thomas, the stronger the living church becomes for generations. As a reminder a gift of perpetuity can be public or anonymous. In the coming year, the committee will focus on how we can better memorialize endowment gifts in a more meaningful and outward way. The endowment committee is very thankful to all those who have given or are thinking about giving to St. Thomas Endowment.

Episcopal Campus Ministry (ECM)

Taylor Mack, Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries

ECM, sponsored by the Diocese of Atlanta, serves as a community for undergraduate and graduate college students in the Columbus area to explore their faith and build friendships in an inclusive environment. Throughout 2024, ECM met on the main campus of Columbus State University (CSU) for worship and dinner on Tuesday evenings. At the start of the Fall semester, students requested that Eucharist be offered at each weekly gathering. This led to a partnership with local parishes where clergy from St. Thomas, Trinity, and St. Nicholas supplied Eucharist on a rotating basis. Through worship, prayer, and discussion, students were encouraged to examine their faith and explore new ideas about scripture. In addition to programming offered at CSU, several students participated in the annual Diocesan Campus Ministry Retreat at Camp Mikell. ECM's student warden, Avery Sleigh, also served as a delegate at the 2024 Diocesan Annual Council.

In 2025, ECM will begin a new partnership with The Abbey Presbyterian Student Center. By partnering with The Abbey, ECM will have a more accessible space to meet on CSU's Riverpark Campus. Students will also be able to engage more with the campus community by supporting The Abbey's lunch program and student food bank.

Episcokids

Shayla Holloway

2024 was a year of transition in our Children's Ministries. Thanks to Maddie Redden for joining our staff as Interim Direction of Children's Ministries. We welcomed Shayla Holloway as our new Director of Children and Family Ministries.

Nursery

Our Nursery is thriving and we have seen our numbers grow. Many new families and babies joined our congregation this year. Dorothy Uwanawich and Evie Smith have remained on nursery staff. Jen Carpenter Varnum and Riley Mullen joined the nursery team in December 2023. We were also able to open our second nursery classroom as a 3-4 year old class. This has allowed the older nursery children to have a Sunday School hour along with playing and being creative. We are hoping that in 2025 we will have a regular rotation of parishioner volunteers so we can have this class open each week.

Children's Formation

At the beginning of 2024 the Children attended **Children's Chapel** in the outreach center. They have now transitioned to having Children's Chapel in the Chapel each Sunday. Our rotation of parishioner volunteers have been sharing the Gospel lesson with as many as 30 children each Sunday. The Gospel is shared simply, and designed to stir children's imaginations and spirituality. A small altar and interactive lesson elements have also been implemented. In 2025 we are hoping for more volunteers from the congregation to join the rotation and our growing numbers.

Wonderful Wednesdays took place on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-7:30 with dinner from 5:30-6:20. Class took place in the Outreach Classroom or the Outreach community room. Children between the ages of 4 and 5th grade have encountered relevant themes through a rotation of weekly lessons and play. The Children's and Youth programs began to follow a rotation to bring clarity and consistency for families each week. We have a "wonderful" group each week with up to 12-15 children on average.

Shine Time, our Sunday School hour, took place from 9:30 - 10:15 with great support from volunteers. We started the year with centers and lessons in the Outreach classroom. The children spent a lot of the year learning Bible stories of Faith and Courage to help them throughout the school year. At the end of the year they have transitioned to the Shine Curriculum of *Seeking Justice Together*. We focused on teaching the children the full story of the Bible in bite size pieces. Our average attendance, with Tween Time happening, was between 10-15 children.

Highlights

- Shrove Tuesday with children's activities put on by the youth
- Flowering the cross on Easter
- Children's Egg Hunt and Parish Picnic
- Vacation Bible School, ReNew, where we were able to secure lots of bed items to support Sleep in Heavenly Peace, teaching children to love and care for others as God has loved them.
- Outdoor pet blessing at Lake Bottom Park
- Trunk or Treat
- All Saints Procession
- Saint Nicholas visited more than 50 children and youth in the Chapel
- Lessons and Carols Christmas Pageant with 25 participants
- Children's Christmas Party

In 2025, after many transitions and changes this year, we hope to encourage parishioners to offer their time and talents to the youngest members of St. Thomas Episcopal Church. As we continue to grow in our faith and live into our baptismal promises we want to continue to provide opportunities to expand our ministries by sharing the Good News to our neighbors and members of our greater community.

Flower Guild

Ralph Wimberly, Chair

The Flower Guild provides us an opportunity to bring our different artistic talents to share with worship and other events throughout the church year. I am excited about what lies ahead as the renovation is completed. I look forward as to how the renovated space will affect our focus in what we are called to do. Many thanks to all who support this ministry.

I had a small but dedicated team who participated with grace and determination to overcome change and obstacles we faced. Many thanks and gratitude for Jo Cates, Nelia Partin, Ceci Shirley, Christine Slusher and Kathy Frost.

We were somewhat nomads as we adjusted to working without a flower room to work out of. We moved our supplies to the Parish Hall where we worked using the kitchen and granite top as our work space and our cooler in the robing hallway. We did It! Now we have a great new flower room to call home. Different yes but well worth the wait. New adventures await us in 2025 as we cross the threshold.

Foyers Groups

Barbara Brandenburgh

Foyers are groups that meet for fellowship over a dinner throughout the school calendar year. Each year a committee forms new groups. Church members can sign up for Foyers in two ways: clicking on a link in the August editions of Spiritual Adventures or through the Ministry Pledge Forms. Groups are formed in the late August/early September time frame. A Dinner Group Leader is assigned to every Foyers group. The dinners kick off in September/October and finish up in April/May. All dinner groups converge one final time in June for the annual Foyers Finale dinner in Parish Hall. This year it will be held on Sunday evening, June 22.

Eighty-eight participants signed up in the fall of 2024 with six dinner groups being formed. The participants this year include: Alice & Fred Barlow, Ashley Becker, Carol Boers, Kathy Bonner, Barbara & David Brandenburgh, Ruth & Jerry Brown, Reggie Brushwood & Bill Lacy, Ann Burr, Fran Carpenter, Karen Corthell, Marcia English, Kim Etchinson, Ellen Free & Paul Dahlgren, Kathy Frost, Anne & Ed Gay, Sara & Dan Ginter, Susan Hansbarger, Judy Heider, Leslie & Jeff Holloway, Ena Hunt, Susan & Keith Leigh, Tracy Leopard & Penny Wise, Rosemary & Milton Lites, Virginia & Toby McCullough, Kim MacDougall, Korie MacDougall, Luise May, Ann & Dan McDuffie, Doug McLeod, Faye & Steve Melton, Martha & Jerry Mullinax, Ruth Nichols, Celia Page & Jenny Holder, Vicky Partin, Gerry Pittman, Linda Prince, Charlene & Mike Rallo, Malinda Shamburger, Christine Slusher, Ceci Shirley, Amy Smith, Lynn & Michael Smith, Nathan Smock & James Camp, Jennifer St. John, Mike & Linda Stephens, Molly Sutter, Bernie Sutter, Bobsie Swift, Margaret Terrell, Chaz & Elissa Wagner, Mary Lewis Walsh, Argy Wargo, Anna & Chris Williams, Mary A & Don Williams, Jane & Dave Wilson, Allyson Young & Mitch Grossman, Betsy & Rick Covington, Cynthia & Spencer Garrard, Marcia Sellers Butterfield, Mollie Morton Smith & Robin Trimarchi, and Katie Buckley.

Deeper connections are made by the simple action of crossing over one's threshold into their home (or restaurant) for the sole purpose of fellowship and sharing a meal together.

Grounds

Martin McCann, Chair

The Grounds Committee is a sub-committee of the Property Committee. Members include Tracy Leopard, Ann Johnston, Danny Ginter, Fred Romanus, and Martin McCann. The usual function is to sponsor workdays sprucing up the foliage and grounds about the church. Occasional indoor workdays involve cleaning and polishing woodwork in the nave and All Saints' Hall.

This year we had these workdays, but in addition, we had workdays dedicated to major projects. These involved the whole congregation (and others). I have omitted a detailed list of attendees due to the numbers.

First, we commemorated the Swift Memorial Garden, by placing a stone and memorial plaque honoring Clifford Swift by the handrail leading down the Swift Garden Trail.

Second, we had a massive workday moving records from the nave attic to the library and moving the contents of the basement to the youth hut. There was a huge turnout of St. Thomas members for this. Isiah Harper brought trucks and a large contingent of students from Northside High School. The move was designated "A MIRACLE".

Thirdly, under the direction of Tanya Edwards-Jones we have updated the fire pit and created a picnic area between the Day School and the old parish hall. The youth did yeoman's work on this project.

All in all, a very successful year. We will return to the regular gardening and trimming tasks in 2025.

Submitted with thanks to all,
Martin McCann & Ann Johnston..

Kitchen

Seth Burgamy, Kitchen Manager

The kitchen with the help of volunteers accomplished serving over 1,750 Wednesday night meals. We also provided food for a variety of special events including the Annual Meeting, the yard sale preview, movie nights, Easter Vigil, Easter breakfast and Easter 2 lunch, supported Trunk or Treat and VBS, provided lunch meetings, Thanksgiving dinner and Advent lunches.

Lay Eucharistic Ministers & Lectors

Meg Olive-Allison

These volunteers have dedicated their time and talent to serve during worship on Sundays and Wednesdays, in addition to serving in weddings and funerals. We are grateful for those who have returned to serving at the altar or reading in services and those new folks who have been added to the roster.

Lay Eucharistic Ministers and Lectors in 2024 include:

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Paula Acton | Cindy Cox Garrard | Pauline Marth | Marianne Richter |
| Alice Barlow | Spencer Garrard | Ann McDuffie | Brian Schwartz |
| Barbara Brandenburgh | Dan Ginter | Marquette McKnight | Susan Sealy |
| David Brandenburgh | Susan Hansbarger | Marie Massey | Malinda Shamburger |
| Jerry Brown | Linda Harmon | Faye Melton | Ceci Shirley |
| Ruth Brown | Alaina Harrison | Charlene Moore | Mike Smith |
| Ann Burr | Amy Hatfield | Malone Moore | Mollie Smith |
| Jack Ceccato | Judy Heider | Randy Moore | Nathan Smock |
| Nicole Ceccato | Leslie Holloway | Robert Moore | Jennifer St. John |
| Besty Covington | Elizabeth Hostetter | Jerry Mullinax | Katie Underwood |
| Pat Daniel | Paul Hostetter | Kathleen Mullins | Travis Wade |
| James Decker | Ena Hunt | Perrin Nicolson | Kern Wadkins |
| Christine DiFelicianantonio | Tommie Hunter | Meg Olive-Allison | Chaz Wagner |
| Donna Dooley | Melissa James | Susie Olive-Allison | Elissa Wagner |
| Larry Dooley | Rebekah Kreyling | John Partin | Hannah Walker |
| Norm Easterbrook | Bill Lacy | Vicky Partin | Jonathan Walz |
| Tanya Edwards-Jones | Susan Leigh | Laura Perkins | Stefania Wilcox |
| Jessica Ezzell | Tony Lewis | Mike Rallo | Ron Wirt |
| Jennifer Fletcher | Jeremy Mack | Heidi Regan | Molly Wright |
| Mandy Flynn | Taylor Mack | Sid Regan | Allyson Young |

Women's Lunch Bunch

Sara Ginter & Faye Melton, Convenors

This group for women meets for lunch once a month on the second Tuesday at Parker's Pantry. The group is informal and open to all who identify as women. An average of 12- 15 women gather each month and have greatly enjoyed getting to know one another and share a brief prayer together.

McCann African Mission

Sandy McCann, Coordinator

The African Mission Fund was established in 2004 as a pathway for donations to the mission work of Sandra and Martin McCann during their time in Africa. Although they returned eight years ago, donations made to this fund are still being used to support education in Tanzania. Donations are primarily from the Outreach Council of St. Thomas Episcopal Church, although individuals, both from within and outside of the parish, also contribute.

Ten new Hewlett Packard computers were purchased in October for the incoming first- year degree students of Msalato Theological College in Dodoma, Tanzania. We have a trustworthy local Muslim merchant, Brighton Katabazi, who not only purchases the computers but also delivers them to the college and takes pictures of the students who receive them. I am proud that we are purchasing locally, helping the economy as well as the students. This year we have crossed the threshold of supplying computers to the seminarians for the past ten years. For theological students to have any hope of keeping up with the world, in a land where almost no one can afford textbooks, a computer is a library and a lifeline to the outside world.

A gift of \$1200.00 was also sent to the Diocese of Mara in northern Tanzania for the Mothers' Union Fund. George Okoth, the bishop of Mara, was a classmate of mine at Virginia Seminary and he and his wife, Janet, were our next-door neighbors for many years at Msalato. The wife of a diocesan bishop is automatically the head of the Mothers' Union in her husband's diocese. This year the Okoths led a five-day training session for Sunday School teachers from each of the parishes.

Words fail when trying to express my depth of gratitude for Patty Slembariski's expertise and diligence in keeping the financial records of the African Mission Fund for the past twenty years. We also thank St. Thomas for maintaining this account and the Outreach Council for generously supporting such endeavors.

Memorials Committee

Ann Johnston, Chair

The Memorial Committee is responsible for the maintenance of all memorial gifts from the past to the present. We are also responsible for deciding the appropriateness of gifts that are offered.

The Memorial Committee members for 2024 are: Mary Free, Nelia Partain, Jonathan Walz, Ralph Wimberly and Ann Johnston, Chair.

In 2024 the work the committee did was mostly divided between some of us working with the Design Committee and some continuing work on the Swift Memorial Garden.

The committee is also responsible for the columbarium. The columbarium has a large memorial tree in its center whose roots are breaking the surrounding concrete causing a tripping hazard. The committee has struggled to get this remedied. A plan has been developed and we hope to get it implemented in early 2025.

Men's Group

Paul Hostetter

What does this Ministry do?

The St. Thomas Men's Group was formed to offer the male members of St. Thomas Church an opportunity to support feeding ministries, yard work around the church, parking assistance, outreach activities, and social time together as men of faith.

This year we held 5 social events at locations including Jarfly, Mixed Market, Trevioli and at the home of Michael Dempsey. These opportunities have created deeper connections at a time when friendship and faith are more important than ever. We cooked 500 hotdogs for this year's Trunk or Treat event, cooked hotdogs again for an arts event in Lake Bottom Park, assisted with parking at several events, worked with House of Heroes on a home that needed a new walkway, and supported the soccer program with beverages and food.

What lies ahead in 2025?

We plan to continue doing what we have been doing: supporting the church's mission and providing social opportunities that allow us to further deepen friendships at St. Thomas.

Who participated in 2024

David Acton, Fred Barlow Jr, David Brandenburgh, Reggie Brushwood, Jerry Brown, Ray Capo, Robert Chitwood, Mike Dempsey, Larry Dooley, Norm Easterbrook, Skip Farrow, Dan Ginter, Mitch Grossman, Isiah Harper, Greg Herring, Paul Hostetter, Tommie Hunter, Chris Jeffries, Bill Lacy, Keith Leigh, Jeremy Mack, Martin McCann, Marcel Meijer, Andrew Meeks, Eric Meeks, Steve Melton, Mike McFalls, Robert Moore, Jerry Mullinax, Perrin Nicholson, Mike Rallo, Roger Redden, Fred Romanus, Cliff Ruehl, Mike Smith, Travis Wade, Kevin Waldrup, Markus Weidler, Dave Wilson, Brian Walker, and Ron Wirt.

How did this ministry "cross the threshold" in 2024?

By engaging our members in service and fellowship. We crossed the threshold by responding to needs when asked by Rev. Grace, Rev. Roxanne, our members, or other leaders in the church; we supported the mission of St. Thomas in Columbus in all areas, and always with a nod to inclusion and diversity.

Music

Debbie Anderson, Director of Music

2024 has been a year of mourning for the St. Thomas Choir and finding our way after losing Rick McKnight in July. Many people contributed their gifts during Rick's final months of illness and his passing. Michelle Folta and Nathan Smock led the Easter rehearsals and services while Rick was in treatment. Adleyn Scott filled in during the summer and became the interim organist/pianist after Rick's death. We are so grateful that Rick had the energy, and sheer will to continue to lead us in many of the services after Easter, and to be an integral part of the planning and development of the new Quire Chancel for the Nave renovations. We are grateful for Rick's life and leadership.

In August, Michelle Folta, choir members old and new, and members of the local chapter of the American Guild of Organists rehearsed and performed the music for Rick's beautiful funeral service at St. Luke Church. As we moved almost immediately into a new church year, we continued to be grateful for Rick's leadership and the music and memories we made together over the last 21 years. One of our favorite sayings from our choir pilgrimage to Norwich in 2018 is, "They shall laugh and sing together!" We continue to laugh and sing together to the glory of God and in memory of Rick McKnight.

During the discernment after Rick's death, the vestry decided to make the Organist/Choir Director job two positions—Director of Music and organist. I am grateful to be able to step into the position of Director of Music, and so happy to welcome Robin Ericksen as our new organist.

The St. Thomas Choir leads worship at 10:30 on Sundays, rehearsing hymns, Psalms, service music and anthems on a weekly basis. This is a non-auditioned group that meets on Wednesdays from 6:30-8:15 PM and again at 9:30 AM on Sundays, August through Pentecost. The Summer Choir sings during June, July and the first part of August. Summer Choir is open to anyone who wants to show up and participate in leading the hymns and service music. Leading the services through music, whether in the St. Thomas Choir or in the Summer Choir, creates a deeper connection to our worship and a deeper understanding of God's boundless love through music.

For many years, St Thomas's Choral Scholar Program has trained students from CSU in the Episcopal tradition of choral singing and worship. St. Thomas also has other paid singers who enrich our singing. We are blessed to have their talents anchoring each vocal section of the choir. Our Choral Scholars this year were Logan Gordy, Cam Jackson, David Rambo Serrano, and Rachel Ward. Our other paid singers are Katie Buckley, April Jacobs, Hunter Mullen, and Jeffrey Oakman. Hunter Mullen is also serving as a new conducting scholar. Hunter grew up at St. Thomas and recently graduated from the Schwob School of Music. He has applied to graduate schools to study conducting in the fall. Throughout the year, we also have guest instrumentalists and vocalists that add to our worship. We could not do any of this without your support of the St. Thomas music program.

What an incredible year! Epiphany, Lent, Easter, moving to All Saints Hall for worship, losing Rick, re-learning to make music in the new space during Advent and Christmas—all have brought challenges, wonderful discoveries, and gratitude to our life together. The St. Thomas music program has a long history of excellence. We will continue to build on this rich tradition as we move into 2025.

2024 St. Thomas Choir Roster

Laurie Alltop, Fred Barlow, Ashley Becker, Carol Boers, Shara Bryan-Torsiello, Katie Buckley, Renee Byrd, Raymond Campbell, Ashlyn Cariel, Patty Cariel, Fran Carpenter, Bob Chitwood, Rick Covington, Kim Etchison, Summer Flinn, Michelle Folta, Cindy Cox Garrard, Logan Gordy, Isiah Harper, Elizabeth Hostetter, Seyi Isijola, Cam Jackson, April Jacobs, Rochelle Jones, Steve Lewis, Marquette McKnight, Kim MacDougall, Korie MacDougall, Luise May, Joe Mills, Shana Monteith, Hunter Mullen, Ruth Nichols, Jeffrey Oakman, G.L. Page, Mary Ann Rahm, Jeremiah Rapp, Doyle Register, Amy Rivers Smith, Jim Rutland, Adley Scott, David Rambo-Serrano, Nathan Smock, Margaret Terrell, Louise Tulloh, Rachel Ward, Ron Wirt, Susan Wirt, Molly Wright

Outreach Council

Michelle Mullen, Chair

The Outreach Council includes leaders of all our Outreach Ministries who meet to coordinate our Outreach efforts and determine how the amount of the annual church budget designated for outreach will be shared. The budget for outreach is based on ten percent of the total budgeted pledges minus our diocesan commitment.

In 2024, the total budget for Outreach was \$57,500, designated as follows:

- African Ministries \$6,000
- Brewer/Boxwood \$3,000
- Carver Heights Presbyterian \$1,200 (where Path to Shine meets)
- Creation Keepers \$3,000
- Chattahoochee Valley Episcopal Ministries \$18,000
- East Carver Heights CDC \$18,000
- Miscellaneous \$550
- Path to Shine (Diocesan dues) \$1,000
- Stewart Community Home \$750
- Wynnton Neighborhood Network \$6,000

Most of these ministries submitted a separate annual report detailing their activities in 2024. In addition, St. Thomas supported outreach ministries with donations from reserve funds and designated gifts. Budgeted funds remaining at the end of 2024 were transferred to the Outreach account in our designated fund to be used for future outreach opportunities. We are grateful for the generosity of St. Thomas members which allows our congregation to support and be part of so much good work in the community.

Who participated in 2024?

Jo Cates and Libba Russell (WNN), Malinda Shamburger (CVEM), Greg Herring (East Carver Heights, Boxwood Soccer), Lisa Herring (East Carver Heights, Path to Shine, FANN), Margo Easterbrook (Brewer Partnership), Florence Wakoko (Episcopal Relief and Development), Sandy McCann (African Mission), Christine DeFeliciano (Creation Keepers), Michelle Mullen, Meg Olive-Allison and Rev. Grace.

How did this ministry "cross the threshold" in 2024?

In 2024, the Outreach Council continued its work to find new ways to partner with others to spread God's love in the community. Some highlights include: • Sponsored the build of 10 beds for children in our community through Sleep in Heavenly Peace • Supported a neighboring ministry, International Friendship Ministries, at their fundraising luncheon • Gifted a used vehicle to the Duarte family for reliable transportation to work

What lies ahead in 2025?

As we look ahead to 2025, the Outreach Council is excited to see what new opportunities will arise for St. Thomas to nurture the bonds of community through service.

Pastoral Care

*Donna Sharp - Chair of the Pastoral Care Committee alongside
The Rev. Roxane Gwyn, Associate Rector for Pastoral Care*

The Pastoral Care committee serves growing numbers of members and friends through prayer, visitation, sharing Holy Communion, cards, calls, and other communication and service. In the coming year and years ahead, the Pastoral Care committee and its many lay and clergy ministers seek to love every person by increasing the numbers of people we serve and increasing the numbers of people who serve. We believe that every person, not only our elders and those with physical challenges, stands in need of pastoral care from their parish.

BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY: Bereavement booklets, a set of 4 during the year, are sent to families following the loss of their loved one, including guidance about coping with loss and remaining strong in their faith. Thanks to Christine Slusher and Ceci Shirley for leading this ministry of caring now and to Steve Scott for leading it for many years.

CARD & GIFT MINISTRY: More than 20 parishioners were a part of this team in 2024, serving as greeting-card writers, texters, and phone-callers to 25 people. Seasonal gifts were shared with members who are homebound or going through illness.

LAY EUCHARISTIC VISITORS offer an extension of our Eucharistic table to those who cannot physically join us at church. 2024 found us blessed with a dedicated team of LEV's: Alice Barlow, Ann Burr, Ben Daniels, Daniel Mitchell, Charlene Moore, John Partin, and Donna Sharp. These lay ministers and our clergy try to provide communion on at least a monthly basis.

MEALS were offered on an as-needed basis, determined by staff and pastoral care ministers. 22 known (and many unknown) parishioners participated in providing food to folks in life transitions. Meals are organized through an on-line sign-up system coordinated by staff.

VISITATION: In 2024 we began a lay visitation schedule in addition to ongoing visits by clergy. Volunteer parishioners connected with people from our parish who enjoy occasional visits.

Prayer Group

What is this ministry?

The St. Thomas Prayer Group takes time to pray together for our parishioners, our neighbors, our church, and the world. We meet at 11:30 each Monday morning on Zoom or in the Chapel. We pray from both a public and a private list. Names on our private prayer list and reasons are held in confidence. Contact one of the members if you are interested or would like to be included in the prayer list.

The Prayer Group is made up of Sonya Boyd, Nicole Ceccato, Beverly Tant-Gordy, Kathy Herren, Renee McAneny, Malinda Shamburger, Donna Sharp, Mary Jane Thomas, and The Rev. Roxane Gwyn. We have happily added one person to our group this year, Argy Wargo. We look forward to continuing our faithfulness of prayer throughout the year ahead, continuing to lift up the needs of our parishioners, our neighbors, our church, and the world.

Property Committee

Ann Johnston & Tracy Leopard, Co-Chairs

The mission/ministry of the Property Committee is to manage the maintenance, repair and improvements of St. Thomas's buildings and grounds in such a fashion that all members and visitors will feel they have been in the presence of God when in attendance, helping us to reach others in our wider community.

The committee meets on the first Monday of each month. Members serving during 2024 were Ann Johnston and Tracy Leopard, Co-Chairs; Dan Ginter, Tanya Edwards-Jones, Martin McCann, Fred Romanus, Spencer Garrard and Chris Jeffries. Church staff members who are part of the committee are Grace BurtonEdwards, Patty Slembariski, and Seth Burgamy. Louise Tulloh served as the Vestry liason for the property committee.

During the year, the committee coordinated, managed, and actively engaged in on-going maintenance and repair projects throughout the church, rectory, day school and the entire church grounds. The largest project in 2024 for the property committee was the same one that was the largest for the entire church - participation in the many events and sub-projects of the renovation! Tree maintenance and removal, as necessary, was a recurring effort in 2024, with a few more trees that will require attention in 2025. As usual, repairs occurred as needed, to include roof leaks, plumbing leaks, electrical issues and the occasional removal of pesky and destructive squirrels. Functional and aesthetic improvements included a new lift, the installation of a ramp at the back of the church, painting and carpet cleaning inside, and lots of landscaping outside. In 2025 the committee looks forward to completing post renovation projects, to make our entire space a beautiful and functional one!

Rector's Discretionary/Benevolence Fund

Rev. Grace Burton-Edwards

Contributions to the Rector's Discretionary Fund support unbudgeted needs for the work of the church. Funds given as an honorarium for the rector or given for use in the congregation at the rector's discretion are deposited in the Rector's Discretionary Fund. In 2024, \$2,531.08 was given to the discretionary fund for use in the congregation at the rector's discretion, and \$5,503.78 was spent.

The Rector's Benevolence fund is held in a separate checking account to which the rector is the only person who has access. This is to protect the anonymity of people who are aided by the fund. The Senior Warden reviews expenses from the benevolence fund on a periodic basis. In 2024, \$4,026.00 was given to the benevolence fund, and \$4,315.96 was shared.

St. Thomas Day School

Kym Futch, Director

St. Thomas Day School's purpose is to build a strong core of school readiness in each student through social, intellectual, emotional and physical development in a loving Christian-based teaching environment. Highlights from the year 2024: Classrooms were painted and freshened up. New play equipment for the playground was also purchased.

We have 2 Pre-K classes this year and are almost at maximum capacity with 72 students. We have 15 employees. Our goal for the 2025-2026 School year is more advertising and hope for an increase in Pre-K enrollment.

Ushers

Dan Ginter, Captain

Ushers have an important role in the St. Thomas ministry. They are the first people to meet and greet people as they enter the church. They demonstrate a positive Christian attitude and are there to assist. Ushers ensure security during the service by locking all doors, being aware of any possible intruders, assisting in the collection of the offering and communion, and helping a Vestry member count the offering. . Anyone wanting to join the usher ministry is welcomed and will be given the opportunity to serve St. Thomas. We had the opportunity to usher 68 times this year.

There were a few new members who joined us, and all names are listed below. The construction of the nave required a different approach to performing our duties in the temporary nave in All Saints Hall. The duties of the ushers and each month's duty roster are kept in the table drawer in the narthex. Other than the assigned duty, ushers volunteered for unannounced events such as funerals and other special programs. December was difficult to schedule with many ushers leaving town and some ushers participating in other duties within the church.

The following is a list of ushers in 2024:

| | | | |
|----------------------|----------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Alice Barlow | Mitch Grossman | Doud McLeod | Donna Sharp |
| Barbara Brandenburgh | Amy Hatfield | Andrew Meeks | Ceci Shirley |
| David Brandenburgh | Greg Herring | Charlene Moore | Christine Slusher |
| Jerry Brown | Lisa Herring | Malone Moore | Sonny Taunton |
| Reggie Brushwood | Tommie Hunter | Randy Moore | Jack Tice |
| Betsy Covington | Bill Lacy | Robert Moore | Jane Wilson |
| Michael Dempsey | Keith Leigh | Michelle Mullen | Mary Jane Wrenn |
| Larry Dooley | Tony Lewis | Susie Olive-Allison | Allyson Young |
| Norm Easterbrook | Pauline Marth | John Partin | |
| Skip Farrow | Bob McAneny | Vicky Partin | |
| Neal Fenter | Renee McAneny | Charlene Rallo | |
| Danny Ginter | Ann McDuffie | Steve Scott | |
| Allen Gordy | Mike McFalls | Malinda Shamburger | |
| Beverly Gordy | | | |

Vergers

Meg Olive-Allison

While the verger takes on a visible role in making sure a worship service moves smoothly, much of the verger's work is done behind the scenes and prior to the start of the service. A partial checklist a verger goes by at St. Thomas looks something like this:

- Touch base with lectors and lay Eucharistic ministers (LEMs) to make sure they are in attendance and are prepared for the service; if not, assign replacements.
- Check the readings to make sure they are properly marked.
- Light the candles on the altar.

The work of our vergers allows clergy time to greet parishioners, make announcements, and prayerfully prepare the parish for worship. While preparing the church for worship, vergers, as part of their ministry, also offer words of greeting and welcome to newcomers and visitors.

Thanks to our Vergers who served in 2024 -

Especially as we worshipped in three different worship spaces!

Michael Ankerich
Tanya Edwards-Jones
Paul Hostetter
Joe Mills
Mike Owen

Perrin Nicolson
Malinda Shamburger
Katie Underwood
Travis Wade

Welcome Committee

Sara Ginter and Jane Wilson, co-chairs

As members of the Welcome Committee, we provided a friendly welcome and acted as liaisons ensuring that our visitors were comfortable and included. The committee met monthly to review visitor contact status and assigned new visitors to an individual committee member. This year we had 58 new members.

- Committee members followed up and maintained contact with visitors.
- Committee members kept visitors informed of activities in which they have shown an interest.
- Helped visitors with any special needs they may have (particularly accessibility).
- Encouraged visitors to become involved in the many activities and service opportunities.
- Made sure that visitors are added to our email list.
- When appropriate, provided information on becoming a member.
- Worked closely with staff – making sure that we are meeting our visitors' needs.
- We have also provided support by attending the welcome classes, new member breakfasts, and confirmation services.

Participants in the Welcome Committee this past year were Barbara Brandenburgh, Grace Burton-Edwards, Reggie Brushwood, Sara Ginter, Beverly Gordy, Roxane Gwyn, Ena Hunt, Lisa Herring, Susan Leigh, Faye Melton, Rick McKnight, Meg Olive-Allison, Susan Sealy, Malinda Shamburger, Taylor Mack, and Jane Wilson.

In 2025 we will continue to help visitors experience the open and welcoming atmosphere that is St. Thomas.

Women's Group

Ellen Free & Susan Sealy, Convenors

Our goals are friendship and fellowship for those who identify as women at St. Thomas. We meet for dinner at various restaurants around town. Our group had about 18 participants monthly. We will continue to love every person by welcoming and accepting all who attend/participate.

Women's Lectionary Bible Study

Cindy Cox Garrard

Women's Lectionary Bible Study meets for an hour weekly during the school year to study the texts for the upcoming Sunday. The class is taught by the Rev. Dr. Cindy Cox Garrard, a retired United Methodist pastor, with a study sheet written by her provided early in the week to the attendees. We examine and question the texts and learn some about the background and contextual meaning of the texts and pray for members' concerns. We have around 40 on the mailing list, with average attendance of 23-30. All women are welcome, and we have a zoom component which means that not only do we have folks who no longer live in Columbus in the class, women can "attend" when they're not here in person. Women from a variety of denominations attend, from Episcopal to United Methodist to Baptist to Roman Catholic. We have added a monthly lunch for fellowship at Parker's Pantry.

Worship Committee

Rev. Grace Burton-Edwards

What is this ministry?

Worship is the heart of everything we do together. We gather to give thanks to God, be nourished by Word and Sacrament, and go out to serve. Our 10:30 service took place in All Saints Hall for most of the year while the Nave was under renovation. Amazingly, the Chapel remained open throughout most of the construction process, so we were able to continue to gather there for the 8:30 service and on Wednesday nights.

Who participated in 2024?

In person worship attendance increased in 2024, even while gathering in All Saints Hall. Online worship participation declined, in part because moving the livestream system to the parish hall meant we were not able to livestream the 8:30 service on Facebook during the renovation process. Here is our average Sunday morning attendance for each month of 2024. Online numbers are based on longest unique views during the first 24 hours (YouTube) or 48 hours (Facebook).

| | 8:30 in person | 8:30 online | 10:30 in person | 10:30 online |
|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
| January 2024 | 26 | 24 | 228 | 74 |
| February 2024 | 27 | 24 | 202 | 56 |
| March 2024 | 32 | 26 | 256 | 82 |
| April 2024 | 30 | 17 | 215 | 55 |
| May 2024 | 31 | 13 | 201 | 64 |
| June 2024 | 30 | 11 | 165 | 48 |
| July 2024 | 26 | 16 | 187 | 60 |
| August 2024 | 32 | 14 | 216 | 49 |
| September 2024 | 26 | 10 | 187 | 44 |
| October 2024 | 28 | 14 | 192 | 45 |
| November 2024 | 29 | 13 | 222 | 52 |
| December 2024 | 32 | 12 | 218 | 46 |

A Contemplative Healing service led by the Rev. Roxane Gwyn and cantors Jeffrey Oakman and Hunter Mullen gathered once a month in the chapel. Around 15 to 25 people participated each month. We plan to continue this service in 2025.

The Worship Committee consists of Dan Ginter (chair of Ushers), Debbie Anderson (Director of Music), Sue O'Dell (chair of Altar Guild), Ralph Wimberly (chair of Flower Guild), Wilson Ford (Acolyte Director), and all of our Vergers – Tanya Edwards-Jones, Paul Hostetter, Perrin Nicolson, Mike Owen, Malinda Shamburger, Katie Underwood, Travis Wade, Jonathan Walz. Rev. Grace leads the committee. Meg Olive-Allison coordinates schedules for worship leaders. Rick McKnight, our Organist and Choirmaster for twenty years, was a faithful member of this committee until his death in July.

How did this ministry "cross the threshold" in 2024?

Worship at St. Thomas crossed several physical thresholds in 2024. The most dramatic was moving out of the nave, choir room, flower room, and sacristy into temporary locations. The choir rehearsed in the chapel and in All Saints Hall. Part of the youth room became the sacristy. The flower guild worked in the parish hall. Acolyte robes were moved to the hallway by the library. On April 7, the congregation stayed after worship to move everything out. Exactly eight months later, on Saturday, December 7, we gathered for our first service in the remodeled nave - the funeral of John Partin.

Worship also crossed a threshold of grief. Rick McKnight experienced more challenges with his illness before his death in August. Michelle Folta led choir rehearsals during his treatment early in the year. Debbie Anderson stepped in to lead the summer choir when Rick went on disability. Adleyn Scott graciously offered to play for worship "for as long as needed." Michelle Folta, Roger Redden, Debbie Anderson and Marc Boensel organized a grand musical send off at Rick's funeral, which was held at St. Luke Church.

A music search committee was formed, with Ron Wirt as chair. Members included Raymond Campbell, Donna Dooley, Jessica Ezzell, Ruth Nichols, Linda Prince, Patty Slembariski, Brian Walker, and Rev. Grace. This committee discerned that worship at St. Thomas would be best served by creating two positions – a Director of Music to lead the choir and plan music for worship, and an Organist to accompany the choir and play for services. To ease the transition for choir and congregation, Debbie Anderson graciously agreed to accept the position of Director of Music for the next few years. We were equally thrilled when Robin Ericksen applied for the position of Organist and agreed to serve.

What lies ahead in 2025?

Having crossed many key thresholds in 2024, now we get to live in them! We will spend the next few months trying different arrangements for the chancel and choir. Debbie and Robin are already working as an effective team to plan music for the coming year. The Rev. Taylor Burton Edwards, husband of Rev. Grace, agreed to lead the contemplative healing service while we search for a new Associate Rector. We look forward to inviting a new priest to join our staff and be part of our worship life.

Wynnton Neighborhood Network

Mary Lou Jarrell, WNN Board Chair & Libba Russell, St. Thomas Liaison

What does this ministry do?

Wynnton Neighborhood Network started in 1985 (39 years old) by some of the same individuals who started Feeding the Valley. We are comprised of eight different congregations who work together to share resources to meet the needs of those in our community who are food insecure and/or struggling to pay their electric or gas bills. In our Network are the following congregations:

Epworth United Methodist Church
Living Grace Church
St. Matthew Lutheran Church (new in 2024)
St. Paul Church

St. Thomas Episcopal Church
Shearith Israel Synagogue
Temple Israel
Wynnton Methodist Church

What lies ahead in 2025?

Wynnton Neighborhood Network will continue to serve those in need in our community who are food insecure and/or struggling to keep their lights or gas on. WNN will celebrate her 40th birthday in May of 2025 and look towards the future with wonderful congregations, Board members and volunteers.

Who participated in 2024?

We have a total of almost 100 volunteers from our Network congregations as well as other organizations. Many of them are from St. Thomas, including our Volunteer Chair, Barbara Ellis, and a team of shoppers. We could not do what we do for this community without them!

We love our volunteers!

How did this ministry “cross the threshold” in 2024?

During 2024, Wynnton Neighborhood Network served food assistance to 6,132 families which included 20,512 individuals, of which there were 9,208 children (18 and under). While the number of families served in 2024 is 4% less than 2023, it was an 18% increase from 2022 and a 73% increase from 2021. The number of individuals served was a new record (4% higher than 2023) and was 35% higher than 2022 and 100.8% higher than 2021.

Utility assistance of \$57,479.66 was given to 615 households. These numbers are slightly lower than 2023, partly due to Georgia Power’s response to Hurricane Helene which delayed any cut off of services until December 15, 2024. We anticipate high volume in January of 2025.

Young Adults Connecting Together (YACT)

Taylor Mack, Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries

YACT serves as a fellowship group for individuals 21-40ish at St. Thomas and in the wider Columbus community. Participants in 2024 included singles, married couples, parents, college students, professionals, and everything in between. We gathered for monthly socials at different locations in Columbus. These socials were aimed at exploring different parts of Columbus so both those who grew up in Columbus and those new to the area could get to know the city better.

Socials in 2024 included Columbus RiverDragons Game at The Columbus Civics Center, Dessert Tasting at Saltcellar, Pottery Painting at Bareware Pottery, Columbus Lions Game at the Columbus Civics Center, Whitewater Rafting with Whitewater Express, drinks at Eighteen85 Rooftop Bar, Ax Throwing at Columbus Axe, Lunch at Nonic, The Air Force Band Concert at the RiverCenter, Bingo at Scofflaw Brewing, and a Holiday Party at the home of Taylor and Jeremy Mack.

In 2025, YACT plans to continue offering monthly socials to explore new places in Columbus and welcome new young adults into a community of Christian friendship.

Youth

Taylor Mack, Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries

In 2024, St. Thomas Youth, also known as the Thommies, experienced a year of growth and transformation. The number of middle and high school participants grew throughout the year as youth worked together to build an inclusive and welcoming community of Christian friendship.

Thommies gathered throughout the year for numerous events focusing on Christian formation, service, and fellowship. In Sunday School classes throughout the year, youth covered educational topics such as: Vocation and Values (hearing from parishioners about applying their Christian values to their chosen career), Echo The Story (experiencing the biblical narrative through storytelling, creative reflection, and dialogue), and the Bible Project Advent Word Series (studying the rich meaning behind hope, peace, joy, and love).

They also gathered on Wednesday evenings during the school year for a mix of discussions, crafts, activities, and games. In service of the parish and greater Columbus community, youth volunteered as shepherds for Vacation Bible School, packers for Wynnton Neighborhood Networks's holiday distributions, and clean-up crew for the St. Thomas youth work day (restoring the courtyard and firepit). Fellowship opportunities for youth in 2024 also included Lunch and Games at the Rectory, Graduation Sunday, Youth Sunday, Back to School Bowling night at Stars and Strikes, and the Youth Winter Party at the Columbus Ice Rink. For the annual summer trip, a group of six youth traveled to Louisville, KY to attend the 81st Episcopal General Convention and witness the election of Presiding Bishop Sean W. Rowe. While in Louisville, youth also enjoyed packing snack bags for [Louisville Outreach for the Unsheltered \(L.O.U.\)](#), visiting the Thomas Merton Center at Bellarmine University, exploring the Abbey of Gethsemani, and spending an evening playing Top Golf. Many youth also chose to participate in Diocesan EYC events throughout the year including the Happening and the New Beginnings retreats held at Camp Mikell. Every gathering and event for youth was made possible by a team of dedicated volunteers and parents who provided supervision, transportation, and guidance.

In 2025, the Thommies are looking forward to building on Christian education of the past year by exploring how biblical lessons can influence how we interact with the world today. They are also looking forward to more fellowship opportunities with an emphasis on inclusion and peer leadership. Youth also plan to embark on a mission trip to Charlotte, NC facilitated by CROSS Missions in July of 2025.

2024 FINANCIALS

| OPERATING ACCOUNT | 2024 Budget | 2024 Actual | 2025 Budget | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| REVENUE | | | | |
| Contribution Income | | | | |
| Pledges | 643,348.00 | 626,389.10 | 868,734.00 | 96% of pledges |
| Gain/Loss - Stock Gifts | 0.00 | (334.81) | 0.00 | |
| Member Givers | 101,284.00 | 101,339.26 | 101,812.00 | 3 year average |
| Post-Campaign Pledges | 1,500.00 | 1,100.00 | 1,100.00 | |
| Total Contribution Income | 746,132.00 | 728,493.55 | 971,646.00 | |
| Other Income | | | | |
| Endowment Draw -Unrestricted | 85,710.00 | 85,710.80 | 84,195.00 | 4% of 3yr avg |
| Baird Draw | 23,199.00 | 23,198.97 | 23,355.00 | 4% of 3yr avg |
| Transfer From Designated | 22,000.00 | 56,839.67 | 0.00 | |
| Diocesan Support | 23,000.00 | 23,000.00 | 23,000.00 | |
| Miscellaneous Income | 22,000.00 | 23,167.52 | 32,925.00 | |
| Webstore Income | 250.00 | 75.80 | 0.00 | |
| Desig.funds transfer-Brewer/Bxw | 0.00 | 311.00 | 0.00 | |
| Desig.funds transfer-Cont. Ed | 0.00 | 321.96 | 0.00 | |
| Desig.funds transfer-Children | 0.00 | 1,090.00 | 0.00 | |
| Desig.funds transfer-Music | 0.00 | 4,780.00 | 0.00 | |
| Desig.funds transfer-Youth | 0.00 | 1,100.00 | 0.00 | |
| Total Other Income | 176,159.00 | 219,595.72 | 163,475.00 | |
| Special Income | | | | |
| Day School | 24,000.00 | 24,000.00 | 24,000.00 | |
| Utility Reimbursement | 6,000.00 | 6,465.00 | 6,000.00 | |
| Renewal Fund | 39,000.00 | 39,113.24 | 0.00 | |
| Endow.Draw for Capital Exprss | 21,427.00 | 21,427.00 | 21,048.00 | 1% for Capital Reserves |
| Total Special Income | 90,427.00 | 91,005.24 | 51,048.00 | |
| TOTAL REVENUE | 1,012,718.00 | 1,039,094.51 | 1,186,169.00 | |

2024 FINANCIALS

| EXPENSES | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---|
| Admin/Payroll/Benefits | | | | |
| Administration | 52,645.00 | 58,263.01 | 57,900.00 | |
| Payroll/Benefits | 612,603.00 | 619,801.15 | 727,885.00 | |
| Total Admin/Payroll Benefits | 665,248.00 | 678,064.16 | 785,785.00 | |
| Christian Education | | | | |
| Adult | 1,500.00 | 1,546.54 | 1,500.00 | |
| Children | 3,750.00 | 4,839.82 | 4,000.00 | |
| Episc. Campus Ministry | 3,000.00 | 3,010.55 | 3,000.00 | |
| Young Adult/College | 2,000.00 | 1,782.88 | 2,000.00 | |
| Youth | 3,750.00 | 4,972.28 | 4,500.00 | |
| Total Christian Education | 14,000.00 | 16,152.07 | 15,000.00 | <i>Excess covered from designated funds</i> |
| Diocesan Pledge & Expenses | 71,840.00 | 70,974.19 | 82,305.00 | |
| Evangelism | 4,500.00 | 3,488.70 | 4,500.00 | |
| Outreach | 57,500.80 | 57,807.67 | 78,942.90 | <i>10% pledges minus Dioc.commitment</i> |
| Parish Life | 13,000.00 | 14,978.42 | 22,100.00 | <i>Donations for meals in designated income</i> |
| Properties | 117,726.00 | 141,548.43 | 141,612.10 | |
| Capital Reserve | 21,427.00 | 21,427.00 | 21,048.00 | |
| Stewardship | 2,000.00 | 1,608.35 | 2,000.00 | |
| Music | 19,310.00 | 24,089.31 | 19,310.00 | |
| Worship | 12,000.00 | 8,956.21 | 13,566.00 | |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | 998,551.80 | 1,039,094.51 | 1,186,169.00 | |
| (OVER) UNDER ACTUAL | 14,166.20 | (0.00) | 0.00 | |

2023 FINANCIALS

DESIGNATED ACCOUNT

By the canons (rules) of the church, all designated gifts are used for the purposes for which they were designated. The Vestry is charged to oversee all financial transactions of the parish.

| DESIGNATED ACCOUNT | | 2024 Actual | VISION CAMPAIGN | |
|-----------------------------------|--|----------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Beginning Balance | | 214,574.66 | Total cost of project | 4,116,605.00 |
| Revenue (incl. Vision Campaign) | | 3,519,159.78 | Total Gifts & Pledges | 4,116,605.00 |
| Expenses (incl. renovation costs) | | (3,538,844.53) | Total received as of 12/31/24 | 2,853,374.96 |
| 12/31/24 Cash Balance | | 466,112.57 | | |

| MONEY MARKET ACCT (Harding gift + Reserve funds) | | Special Outreach Collections | |
|--|------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| 12/31/2024 Balance | 842,008.38 | African Mission | 6,600.00 |
| | | Buddy Packs | 12,696.00 |
| | | CVEM | 4,722.00 |
| | | Rctr's Bwlnr | 4,026.00 |
| | | WNN | 5,620.50 |
| | | Total | 33,664.50 |

| ENDOWMENT ACCOUNTS | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| January 1 - December 31, 2024 | Beginning Blnc | Ending Blnc |
| Unrestricted (Wilkins) | 2,122,317.30 | 2,447,776.78 |
| Restricted (Baird) | 580,304.03 | 672,006.25 |
| ESG | 108,477.83 | 119,586.60 |

MAJOR GIFTS: The fourth of four initial gifts of \$250,000 from Clifford & Bobsie Swift was received in 2024 and applied to the Vision Campaign. We thank Bobsie for generously extending her pledge through 2026 to support the Vision Campaign. In addition, Judy Harding had named St. Thomas as beneficiary of a charitable remainder trust. Upon her death in January 2024, funds in that trust, \$2,467,880, were transferred to St. Thomas for use at the Vestry's sole discretion. Vestry invested her gift in short-term instruments to help with cash flow during construction and designated a portion to complete the Vision Campaign. At the conclusion of the Vision Campaign, an endowment fund will be created in Judy's memory.

ENDOWMENT FUND GIFTS: By vestry resolution, undesignated memorial gifts up to \$5,000 are divided equally between the Memorial fund and the Endowment fund. We received \$2,785 in memorial gifts to the endowment in 2024, including all donations in memory of John Partin.

LEGACY SOCIETY

The following persons made a legacy gift to the St. Thomas Endowment upon their deaths or have shared their intention to do so. Please let us know if your name is missing from our records. Thank you to all who support St. Thomas during this life and in perpetuity.

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Michael Ankerich & Charlie Snipes | Carole Hill | Tom & Sherry Wade |
| Margaret Baird | Ena Hunt | Travis & Mitchi Wade |
| Max & Ann Burr | Lewis & Lori Kent | Georgia Wilkins |
| Grace Burton-Edwards | Martin & Sandra McCann | Ralph Wimberly |
| Rusty Callaway | Randy & Charlene Moore | Gardner & Judy Wright |
| Julie Chandler | Perrin & Becca Nicolson | Ruth Wright |
| Shannon Dunaway | Celia Page & Jenny Holder | Belle Zimmerly |
| Roscoe Duncan | John & Vicky Partin | |
| Mike Edmondson | Murphy Pound | |
| Tanya Edwards-Jones | Marianne Richter | |
| Neal Fenter | Donna Sharp | |
| Joe Fischer | Mike & Lynn Smith | |
| Allen & Beverly Gordy | Clifford & Bobsie Swift | |
| Mitch Grossman & Allyson Young | Marge Tidmarsh | |
| Judy Harding | Alice Turley | |

2025 PLEDGES & GIFTS

176 PLEDGES

TOTAL = \$904,932

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| David & Paula Acton | Kenny & Mickie Hall | Nancy Powell |
| Joe & Messina Akyempong | Susan Hansbarger | Linda Prince |
| Debbie Anderson | Sammy & Amy Hatfield | Jan Pylant & Judy Jenks |
| Max Anderson | Judy Heider | Maryann Rahm |
| Susan Anderson | Greg & Lisa Herring | Mike & Charlene Rallo |
| Michael Ankerich & Charlie Snipes | Carole Hill | Roger & Erin Redden |
| Fred & Alice Barlow | Steve Hodges & Pat Daniel | Sid & Heidi Regan |
| Beth & Marty Barr | Paul & Elizabeth Hostetter | Doyle & Nancy Register |
| Ashley Becker | Ena Hunt | Marianne Richter |
| Barbara Billings | Tommie Hunter | Cliff & Christy Ruehl |
| Carol Boers | Seyi & Nike Isijola | Libba Russell |
| Deidre Bohannon & Lauren Copes | April Jacobs | Brian Schwartz |
| Rosanna Borders | Mary Beth James | Steve & Adley Scott |
| Gerry & Sonya Boyd | Paul & Ann Johnston | Susan Sealy |
| David & Barbara Brandenburgh | Tom Jones & Tanya Edwards-Jones | Malinda Shamburger |
| Jerry & Ruth Brown | Rebekah Kreyling | Donna Sharp |
| Reggie Brushwood & Bill Lacy | John & Kayron Laska | Mark & Marianne Sheehan |
| Ann Burr | Keith & Susan Leigh | Ceci Shirley |
| Grace Burton-Edwards | Tracy Leopard & Penny Wise | Steve & Julia Slater |
| Renee Byrd | Tony & Theresa Lewis | Chris & Patty Slembariski |
| Raymond Campbell | Steve & Stephanie Lewis | Christine Slusher |
| Ray Capo | Karen Lord | Ed & Melanie Smith |
| Paul & Jo Cates | Kim MacDougall | Amy Smith |
| Jack & Nicole Ceccato | Jeremy & Taylor Mack | Mollie Smith |
| Bob Chitwood | Laurie Mahon | Mike & Lynn Smith |
| Susan & Ami Connery | Steve & Pauline Marth | Bernie Sutter |
| Karen Corthell | Marie Massey | Bobsie Swift |
| Rick & Betsy Covington | Luise May | Sonny Taunton |
| Paul Dahlgren & Ellen Free | Bob & Renee McAneny | Doris Tice |
| Michael & Hunter Dempsey | Martin & Sandy McCann | Jack Tice |
| Christine DiFelicianantonio | Dan & Ann McDuffie | Dick & Debbie Tompson |
| Larry & Donna Dooley | Mike & Libby McFalls | Steve & Deborah Tucker |
| Norm & Margo Easterbrook | Mac & Ansley McKnight | Louise Tulloh |
| Bonnie Ellis | Andrew & Chelsea Meeks | Katie Underwood |
| Mike & Barbara Ellis | Eric & Bryce Meeks | Julie Van Meter & Fred Romanus |
| Marcia English | Steve & Faye Melton | Garrett & Timothy Vance |
| Kimberlea Etchison | Joe Mills & Jim Rutland | Ronald Veasey |
| Paula Evans | Shana Monteith | Vicky Veteto |
| Darlene Everritt | Randy & Charlene Moore | Tom & Sherry Wade |
| Jon & Jessica Ezzell | Robert & Malone Moore | Travis Wade |
| Frank & Pam Feagle | Mike & Eliza Morrill | Mary Jane Wadkins |
| Neal Fenter | Tom & Michelle Mullen | Brian & Hannah Walker |
| Summer Flinn | Jerry & Martha Mullinax | Mary Lewis Walsh |
| Brantley Ford & Lon Hodges | Kathleen Mullins | Jonathan Walz |
| Tom & Monica Fortson | Ruth Nichols | Argy Wargo |
| Art & Kathy France | Vincent & Suzanne Nicolais | Del & Joann Weeks |
| Mary Free | Perrin & Becca Nicolson | Paul & Jane Westburg |
| Kathy Frost | Sue O'Dell | Dan & Stefania Wilcox |
| Alice Gammage | Mandy Ochoa | Chris & Anna Williams |
| Spencer & Cindy Garrard | Mike & Elizabeth Ogie | Don & Mary Williams |
| Ed & Anne Gay | Meg & Susie Olive-Allison | Dave & Jane Wilson |
| Jim & Beth Gilbert | Michael & Allison Owen | Ron & Susan Wirt |
| Dan & Sara Ginter | Celia Page & Jenny Holder | Liz Wise |
| Cindy Godwin | G. L. Page | Mary Jane Wrenn |
| Allen & Beverly Gordy | Nelia Partain | +6 Anonymous |
| Mitch & Allyson Grossman | Bill & Sandi Pauli | |

VISION CAMPAIGN PLEDGES & GIFTS

142 PLEDGES + ADDITIONAL GIFTS; TOTAL = \$2,853,375

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| David & Paula Acton | Judy Heider | Celia Page & Jenny Holder |
| Debbie Anderson | Greg & Lisa Herring | Nelia Partain |
| Susan Anderson | Carole Hill | John & Vicky Partin |
| Fred & Alice Barlow | Steve Hodges & Pat Daniel | Bill & Sandi Pauli |
| Ashley Becker | Paul & Elizabeth Hostetter | Fran Poole-Carpenter |
| Carol Boers | Ena Hunt | Nancy Powell |
| Deidre Bohannon & Lauren Copes | Tommie Hunter | Linda Prince |
| Gerald & Sonya Boyd | April Jacobs | Jan Pylant & Judy Jenks |
| David & Barbara Brandenburgh | Melissa James | Maryann Rahm |
| Jerry & Ruth Brown | Chris & Marlea Jeffries | Mike & Charlene Rallo |
| Reggie Brushwood & Bill Lacy | Paul & Ann Johnston | Roger & Erin Redden |
| Shara Bryan-Torsiello | Wayne & Kyle Joiner | Madison Redden |
| Katie Buckley | Tom Jones & Tanya Edwards-Jones | Doyle & Nancy Register |
| Ann Burr | Lewis & Lori Kent | Marianne Richter |
| Grace Burton-Edwards | David & Kris Keske | Brian Schwartz |
| Raymond Campbell | Rebekah Kreyling | Steve & Adley Scott |
| Cristian Cantu | John & Kayron Laska | Susan Sealy |
| Ramon Capo | Keith & Susan Leigh | Malinda Shamburger |
| Ray Capo | Tracy Leopard & Penny Wise | Donna Sharp |
| Jack & Nicole Ceccato | Tony & Theresa Lewis | Ceci Shirley |
| Bob Chitwood | Karen Lord | Steve & Julia Slater |
| Susan & Ami Connery | Kim MacDougall | Stephen Slater |
| Betsy & Rick Covington | Jeremy & Taylor Mack | William Slater |
| Paul Dahlgren & Ellen Free | Steve & Pauline Marth | Chris & Patty Slembariski |
| Michael & Hunter Dempsey | Marie Massey | Christine Slusher |
| Steve & Christine DiFelicianantonio | Luise May | Amy Smith |
| Norm & Margo Easterbrook | Bob & Renee McAneny | Mollie Smith |
| Tammy Edwards | Martin & Sandy McCann | Mike & Lynn Smith |
| Kimberlea Etchison | Dan & Ann McDuffie | Sue Smith |
| Jon & Jessica Ezzell | Mike & Libby McFalls | Nathan Smock |
| Frank & Pam Feagle | Rick & Marquette McKnight | Jennifer St. John |
| Neal Fenter | Andrew & Chelsea Meeks | Bobsie Swift |
| Mike & Mandy Flynn | Eric & Bryce Meeks | Margaret Terrell |
| Brantley Ford & Lon Hodges | Steve & Faye Melton | Jack Tice |
| Art & Kathy France | Joe Mills & Jim Rutland | Louise Tulloh |
| Mary Free | Randy & Charlene Moore | Katie Underwood |
| Kathy Frost | Mike & Eliza Morrill | Julie Van Meter & Fred Romanus |
| Alice Gammage | Tom & Michelle Mullen | Ronald Veasey |
| Spencer & Cindy Garrard | Jerry & Martha Mullinax | Tom & Sherry Wade |
| Dan & Sara Ginter | Kathleen Mullins | Travis Wade |
| Cindy Godwin | Ruth Nichols | Brian & Hannah Walker |
| Allen & Beverly Gordy | Vincent & Suzanne Nicolais | Chuck & Argy Wargo |
| Mitch Grossman & Allyson Young | Perrin & Becca Nicolson | Chris & Anna Williams |
| Roxane Gwyn | Sue O'Dell | Dave & Jane Wilson |
| Susan Hansbarger | Jeffrey Oakman | Ralph Wimberly |
| Judy Harding | Mike & Elizabeth Ogie | Ron & Susan Wirt |
| Isiah Harper | Meg & Susie Olive-Allison | Mary Jane & Bruce Wrenn |
| Sammy & Amy Hatfield | Michael & Allison Owen | + 5 Anonymous |