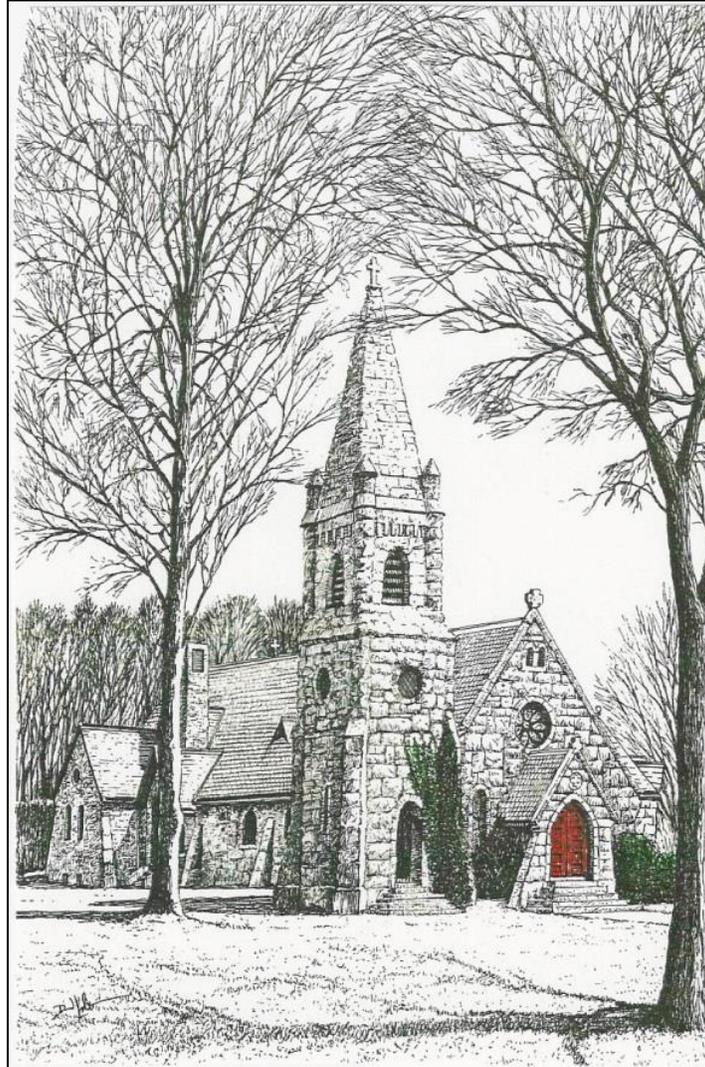


Church of the Messiah

22 Church Street

Woods Hole, MA



ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, January, 31, 2021

11:30 AM

Church of the Messiah
Woods Hole, Massachusetts

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

January 31, 2021

11:30 AM AGENDA

Welcome	Jean Taft
Welcoming New Members	
Opening Prayer	The Rev. Deborah Warner
Reading of the Warrant	Winifred Dick
Parish Register	The Rev. Deborah Warner
Committee Reports	
Building & Grounds Committee Report	Paul Graney
Outreach	Carol Casey
Environmental	Maureen Nolan
Cemetery	Doug Amon
Altar Guild	Tammy Amon
Deanery, Diocesan Convention Reports	Dicky Allison Helen Gordon
Music Director's Report	Brittany Lord
Treasurer's Report	John Nolan
Capital Campaign Committee Report	Debbie Dougherty, Charles Mann
Wardens' Report	Jean Taft, Nancy Rea
Rector's Report	The Rev. Deborah Warner
Nominating Committee	Don Aukamp
Other Business	
Necrology	The Rev. Deborah Warner
Benediction and Dismissal	The Rev. Deborah Warner

Church of the Messiah
PARISH REGISTER
January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020

The following information has been recorded in the Church of the Messiah Parish Register from January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020. Unless otherwise noted, the names recorded are for those persons or families who have had or have requested a formal association with the parish or have recently begun attending services. Names are listed in chronological order beginning on January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

Baptisms

*Frank Michael Bilotta, IV
Leia Philip Shepley-McTaggart*

Marriages

John Edward Hanson and Helen Christina Rouner (in the Herb Garden)

New Additions and Members to the Church of the Messiah

*Sally Brady (returning member who attends from Vermont)
Randy Hensley and Frank Gormley
Staci Jacin and Rob Shertzer and their children Evelyn and William
Carol Rader*

Friends of the Church of the Messiah (attending virtually)

*Betsy and Bruce Bethke
Barbara Brown
Paul Berlinguet
Kevin Cruse
Rosemary Davis
Trymm and Sissel Eggen (former members)
Emily Gordon
Randi Graham
Maureen Lewis
The Rev. Sarah Hollar and Peter Macon
June Thomas
Lucy Young*

Memorial Services and/or Burials in 2020

The list, in chronological order, all who have been interred in the Village Cemetery, Church of the Messiah Cemetery or Memorial Garden regardless of religious affiliation or have had a memorial service at the Church of the Messiah or in Woods Hole where the rector officiated

*Carol Francis Conover
Frank Egloff
Frederick Wiseman
Mary Casey
Robert Prendergast
Gerard Swope
Prosser Gifford
Jean Halverson*

Memorial Services and/or Burials in 2020 (Continued)

Alan Grant
Constance Buchanan
Dorothy Aspinwall
Bruce Courcier

Service Record for January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020

These numbers reflect the total number of services whether or not the person(s) or family involved were or are associated with the Church of the Messiah.

Holy Communion

<i>Sunday</i>	18
<i>Weekday</i>	2
<i>Private</i>	4

Morning and Evening Prayer

<i>Sunday</i>	39
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Baptisms 2

Marriages 1

Memorial Services / Burials 8

Average Sunday attendance

In person:
January 1-March 13, 2020 74

*Virtual worship***
March 20, 2020 – December 31, 2020 90

Connections per week 52

* *This number represents the average service attendance of all services held on Sundays and after 4 PM on Saturdays throughout the calendar year of 2020.*

** *This number does not include people who attend services online other than Sunday mornings.*

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Annual Report – 2020

Because of Covid-19, this was a disappointing year for the Outreach Committee. Along with every other committee, we had to curtail meeting together in person and it was late summer before we were up to speed with Zoom meetings. We also were unable to continue our monthly dinners at the homeless shelter as they would not allow anything to be brought in to the residents from the outside.

Our one successful activity was our Christmas collection. Jill Glidden has faithfully decorated a Giving Tree for the church every December and she did so again this year. We collected bedding, new and gently used, and new pillows for the shelter, which they still accepted. In addition, we also collected clothing, especially socks and sweatshirts, for the Immigrant Center in New Bedford. We have been working with the Unitarian Fellowship to help the many immigrants who work there in the fish factories. Our donations are greatly appreciated.

We are looking forward to a new year and more activity as our members and neighbors receive the vaccine and life becomes more normal.

Carol Casey
Outreach Coordinator

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

Annual Report - 2020

Goals: To educate ourselves and our community about environmental problems issues and possible solutions.

To seek and offer possible ways to live more lightly on this earth, as individuals and as a community.

Members: Denise Jay, Brittany Lord, Mary Anne Mann, Maureen Nolan, Vivian Esswein, Rhona Carlton-Foss, Carol Casey, Sally Hauck, Mary Swope, Dicky Allison, Deborah Warner

Our environmental group grew out of the Outreach Committee. We felt that part of outreach involved environmental concerns, but felt it was too big and too important to be just a part of another committee. So after church one Sunday in 2019, we offered a workshop of small steps everyone could do to soften their impact on our Earth along with a sign-up sheet. We were thrilled to find so many people interested, and our committee was born. One of our actions was to find our little corner in the Good News to communicate environmental concerns. In the Good News there are websites, books, and advice from our own committee members. Thanks to Brittany, we can include gardening tips that allow us to be kinder to our environment. There are alerts for clean-ups of the beaches and neighborhoods. There were recipes for making safe cleaners and hand soap. Denise added great articles and projects to check out at the diocese level. Mary Anne Mann and I investigated food packaging and ways to cut down on it. Vivian offered ideas on soil sequestration and other ways to reduce our carbon footprint. Keeping the ocean safe is key for all of us, as is supporting regulations that decrease waste, like banning plastic bags, single use plastic like Nips and water bottles. (COVID has put a lid on some of that temporarily.) One of our challenges has been to try to keep from getting overwhelmed by the enormity of the climate change issue, and focus our efforts on things that we can control. Thanks to Deborah for keeping us on track.

Respectfully submitted,
Maureen Nolan

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Annual Report – 2020

Church of the Messiah Churchyard and
Woods Hole Village Cemetery

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As COVID-19 has affected most every facet of the Church's communal life, the Cemetery has likewise been impacted. Although having twenty interments during the year, almost as many have been postponed until families may gather safely in larger numbers to bury their loved ones.

The Cemetery Committee (CEMCOM) continues to work on plans and projects to enhance the beauty of the cemetery grounds and maintain and protect them for the already interred and families and visitors to our sacred village churchyard.

The CEMCOM is in the process of reviewing its Regulations as to Purchasing Requirements with the view toward our present and future availability of space for interments. We hope to be fair in our decision making and yet cognizant of our responsibilities to provide for future generations. Our Cemetery is a non-denominational, village cemetery, welcoming to all, aware of its history and sensitive to its mission of caring for all in their time of loss and grief.

Our Annual Appeal, under the supervision of Phil Alatalo, has continued to receive generous donations from our Cemetery families and friends for our annual Operating expenses and Perpetual care. The Cemetery Committee thanks you very much!

We hope to plant more trees throughout the grounds this coming year in an effort to continue to beautify this special place.

Our thanks to Nancy McDonald, parish administrator, John Nolan, treasurer, and Bruce Bagley, church sexton for their continued assistance. We also thank Jennifer Beth Kelly, who provides the committee with monthly Financial reports, our always supportive Rector, Deborah, and all of our CEMCOM members who do an outstanding job and are faithful to our mission and ministry.

Dee Aukamp-Co-Chair

Robyn Ackroyd

Phil Alatalo

Laura Kelly

Cary Rea

Freddie Valois

John Vose

Finally, the Cemetery Committee would like to express our deep sadness upon the death of Dorothy Aspinwall. Dorothy was the inspiration, designer and overseer of the Memorial Garden. A true friend of the Cemetery! We will be planting a tree in her memory near the Memorial Garden this spring.

Respectively Submitted

Doug Amon, Co-Chair & Dee Aukamp, Co-Chair

ALTAR GUILD

Annual Report – 2020

With the COVID-19 Pandemic dominating the activities of the lives of families, schools and churches, the Church of the Messiah has been able to continue with its Sunday services within a remote format thanks to the creative efforts of our rector Deborah, Brittany Lord, Dicky Allison, Helen Gordon and Jean Taft.

The Altar Guild has held together as TEAMS to offer its assistance for Sunday services and special occasions. Thanks to all of our members for their continued support and ministration to Deborah and the Church members so that the Word of God may be proclaimed and the Church family may be sustained.

Hopefully this new year will bring an easing of restrictions for in-church gatherings and we might celebrate our faith and share our fellowship in person.

I know that we will all, myself included as a team member, continue in this vital and rewarding ministry.

With blessings and appreciation for the entire Altar Guild members and consultants

Members

Tammy Amon
Nancy Cloos Babin
Judy Coonley
Jennifer Stone Gaines
Sally Hauck
Joyce Haycock
Mary Heard
Denise Jay
Laura Kelly
Susanne Mann
Nancy Rea
Patti Riccardelli
Priscilla Ruegg
Jane Vose

Consultants/Back up

Dee Aukamp
Douglas Amon
Arden Edwards
Terry Soares

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Annual Report – 2020

Initially, the year 2020 started much like any other with lots of great music planned for upcoming services, a combined Choral Evensong service with St. Barnabas scheduled for April, and great anticipation for the return of the Noontunes Summer Concert series after a year off in 2019 due to construction of the new parish and community center. However, as we began to proceed further into 2020, it started to become clear that this wasn't going to be like any other year.

At the end of January, beloved long-time parishioner and choir member Carol Francis-Conover passed away very unexpectedly. Carol was a loving and caring person and a dedicated member of the choir and will be deeply missed. Her life was celebrated at a beautiful memorial service in February.

Once into March, the COVID 19 virus was a growing concern and it was clear that it would begin to affect daily activities. We held our last in-person choir rehearsal on Wednesday, March 11th and had a combined rehearsal with St. Barnabas on Thursday, March 12th in preparation for Evensong. The last in-person worship services were on March 15th, but we decided not to have choir that day. However, while these may have been the last "in-person" activities, the choir never "missed a beat" and we have been meeting virtually every Wednesday evening since!

For the first couple of months, our meetings were a time to gather together for fellowship. We shared family stories, photos and heirlooms, we exchanged recipes, we shared stories of our favorite musical experiences, travel stories and memories. We even had a fun Christmas celebration in December which included playing Pictionary using the whiteboard feature in Zoom. It was (and is) a wonderful chance to get to know one another even more and to feel connected during a time where it is incredibly easy to feel isolated and alone.

By May, it became increasingly clear that we were in this for the long haul, and we decided to try to sing as a choir virtually. Our first attempts were successful, and we have been recording choir anthems and/or hymns for every service since, even during the summer months when the choir usually takes a break. Our weekly meetings are now back to being "normal" choir rehearsals where we practice the upcoming music. For this to work, everyone has to mute except for me, and I play the parts and the accompaniment from my piano while everyone sings on their own. I can't hear them singing and they can't hear each other, but it allows choir members to ask questions or request to hear certain notes and tricky spots, and allows me to relay information about cut-offs and other performance notes.

Back "in the day," I used to plan choir anthems and hymns usually working a month or so ahead. These anthems and hymns would then be rehearsed during choir rehearsal, then we would sing them live at worship. Preparing choir anthems and hymns now have taken on some extra steps. I start by planning at least a month ahead, then I go into the church and record all the accompaniments for each of the upcoming pieces. I have to remind myself that I'm actually "performing" these pieces at the time I am recording, even though it doesn't feel like it! I also record tracks for individual voice parts while listening with headphones to the accompaniment I just recorded. Back at home, I take all these tracks and create final recording tracks for choir members to sing to. These are all uploaded to what we call "The Choir Room" on Google drive, which all choir members can access. From there, they can see lists of the upcoming music, performance notes, and access these recording tracks. When a choir member records, they listen to the recording track on a computer with headphones while singing into another device, usually a smart phone or iPad. Once they are satisfied with their recording, they send it to me by email or text or upload it directly to Google Drive. From there, I take everyone's individual recordings and assemble them together with the accompaniment part using a computer program called

Audacity. This then takes some time to line everyone up, adjust the balance, etc. Once this is complete, I export it as an mp3 audio file and send it over to iMovie. This is the program that I use to create the slideshows and videos that go along with most of our anthems. I use pictures or videos that I have taken (great excuse to loiter in my garden!) as well as pictures sent in by members of the congregation to create the slideshow. I then export it as a final video file which is what you see on Sunday morning.

None of this would be at all possible without the amazing dedication and hard work of all of our fantastic choir members!! They have all enthusiastically stepped up to the challenge of learning new technology and techniques to be able to take on this difficult task. It is not at all easy to record yourself singing by yourself and often requires lots of time and concentration. **Thank you SO MUCH to Mary Swope, Helen Gordon, Jean Taft, Maggie Holden, Joan Stephenson, Dicky Allison, Arden Edwards, Rhona Carlton-Foss, Randy Hensley and Robert Taft who have worked tirelessly week after week to make this all possible.** I want to welcome Randy to the choir! He joined us in October and we are thrilled to have him singing with us. I would also like to thank Robert Taft who sang with us until the end of December. We will miss him but send him our best wishes as he joins the Army to play tuba in the Army band.

I also want to take a moment to thank **Helen Gordon, Dicky Allison and Jean Taft** for all that they are doing to help make our live virtual Sunday services possible. There is an absolutely immense amount of work and careful planning that is behind each and every service. Besides all of the amazing technological expertise that they use every Sunday to keep our services flowing smoothly, they also serve as readers, LEMs, ushers and bell ringers, and endure the pressure of singing hymns live for all of these services. Thank you so much for everything that you do! Your work and dedication is absolutely critical to create such organized, polished worship services during this time. Also thank you for all of your technical assistance to myself and other choir members, always willing to rush in to help with technical problems, equipment failures and recording difficulties!

Some unique opportunities presented themselves during 2020. I was able to work with a few guest soloists on occasion. Soprano Sarah Bach performed for us a few times. I would send her an accompaniment and she would record herself singing her part. We even did a couple using video of both of us performing (split screen). I was also able to record some pieces with violinist Michael Winer who lives in CT. He would record his part then I would record my accompaniment part while listening to him. Mary Sholkovitz and I were able to record some live flute and piano music together over the summer that was then used for services intermittently during the summer and fall. I used three devices to record our playing, the main camera looking at both of us, my iPad recording Mary, and my smart phone recording myself. I then edited it together so that the camera angles would change during our performance.

One of the most unique opportunities was the chance to join with other Episcopal churches in the Cape and Islands Deanery to put together a virtual service of Advent and Christmas Lessons and Carols. There were eight churches including us that participated in this effort: Church of the Holy Spirit, Orleans; St. Mary of the Harbor, Provincetown; St. Mary's Barnstable; Grace Church Vineyard Haven; Christ Church Plymouth, St. Barnabas' Church, Falmouth and St. John's in Sandwich. Each church contributed different pieces including music, readings, prayers and photos, which I then combined all together into one service. Each church then used the service either in place of a Sunday service or for around Christmas.

As we start the year 2021, there are still a lot of questions as to what this year will bring. Once thing is certain though – we will continue to make wonderful music here at the Church of the Messiah! Thank you to all for your continued love and support.

Looking forward to a musical 2021!
Brittany Lord, Music Director

BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Annual Report - 2020

With our Parish Community Center building construction complete, we can now put time and energy into the outside spaces between the PCC and the Stone Church and the outer areas of the PCC. Our biggest objective is for connecting walkways between the two buildings. Donations have been generously made to get this project started. We have a concept plan in place from Tom Lee – the landscape architect who did the plans for the PCC. It is always good to occupy a space before a final plan is done, so that needs can be assessed. To date this is where we are in our thought process:

- 1) Preserve the open campus feel between the two buildings
- 2) The pathways will be handicap accessible.
- 3) A hard look is being done to the existing handicap ramp and ways to improve/possibly replace the wooden structure and incorporate that into the new pathway layout.
- 4) Addition of a walkway connecting the front walkway of the PCC to the back patio area.
- 5) Filling in the empty spaces in the patio (a design element, that many felt was a tripping hazard) with bluestone for a more solid gathering space

A report will be given to the Vestry in February for a review of ideas, budget and timeline. Our goal is to have a design in place by the end of March, estimates by end of May and construction to begin in the fall with completion by the end of this year. Please e-mail any thoughts to Terry Soares at mtscapecod@gmail.com

Other items:

- A) The Pollinator Garden: This is the steep slope area between the north side of the PCC and the Steamship Parking. This area is too steep to mow and from the beginning the long range plan was to continue adding groups of native species and native cultivars to fill in the area. The plant selection will focus on providing wildlife habitat and pollinator plantings for birds, butterflies and pollinating insects. The new plantings already reflect that with native River Birch, Bayberry, Inkberry and Clethra already in place.
- B) The Love First families helped with the planting of over 500 bulbs in the Pollinator Garden this fall. With masks and social distancing - it was wonderful to see the energy these families bring to our Church!
- C) One of my favorite traditions at Messiah has always been the fall clean-up followed by a warm lunch. This year we had to skip the lunch, but had a wonderful turn-out for our fall clean-up. The last of the construction brush was removed from the lower part of the Pollinator Garden as well as invasive plants removed. No leaves left the site – they were repurposed as mulch along the stone wall of the Steamship parking lot. We were also able to do much needed pruning of shrubs along the North side of the Stone Church, as well as cutting back of perennials and weeding of the beds. All of this work done in under 3 hours – many hands made the work go quickly – and it was so great to see faces (masked!) I had not seen in person since March 2020.

Updates will be announced in April for more plantings along the front walkways to the PCC. Please contact Terry Soares if you are interested in being part of our Messiah Gardeners - we will be planting, weeding and watering. Thank you again for all the support for making the outside of the Church and PCC look as beautiful as the inside.

Respectfully submitted,
Terry Soares

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Annual Report – 2020

After much research, discussion, community and Parish interaction, the Church of the Messiah's Vestry decided to sell Fisher House in 2015, use the proceeds to expand the Church's endowment fund, and restructure and expand the original 1852 First Church to house both Parish offices and a large community gathering room. To finance this transformation, a Capital Campaign was launched in 2016, led by Sandra Rodgers, with a goal of raising \$1.55 million, with a challenge goal of \$1.7 million, targets developed in consultation with a development specialist.

Those targets provided the general cost parameters for developing the plans for the transformation of the building. By mid-2018, Sandy and the Committee did an excellent job of fund-raising and were on track to reach the challenge goal. However, due to sharp increases in building material costs and other factors, when actual bids came back, they all were substantially over \$2 million. Clearly a major additional fundraising effort would be required. With profound thanks to Sandy Rodgers and her Committee for the success of the Campaign to date, the Campaign moved into its Phase 2 with Charles Mann appointed as Committee Chair for this final period.

As construction progressed on the PCC, costs continued to escalate and the Campaign goal was reset at \$2.3 million with a stretch goal of \$2.5 million and an end date of January 31, 2021. Even this ambitious target fell short of covering the project's full costs. When all aspects of the project are included — furniture, audio visual equipment, Campaign expenses, and acoustical improvements to the Woods Hole Community Room — the total project cost is \$2.67 million.

When we mailed out the final Capital Campaign outreach letter on November 1, 2020 (All-Saints Day) we believed that we could reach our stretch goal of \$2.5 million, but the \$2.67 total cost of the project seemed far out of reach. Then, in mid-November, we received a response to our May appeal to the Hermann Foundation – one of our largest and earliest donors – news of an additional grant of \$150,000. Raising the full cost of the PCC suddenly was a feasible goal.

Capped by the generous response to our final outreach that ended today, January 31, 2021, over the five years of the Campaign, 368 individuals, families and foundations have contributed in money and pledges just over \$2.7 million, many contributing multiple times. This generosity provides all the funds needed to pay the full costs of transforming our legacy First Church into the modern and welcoming Parish and Community Center. In addition we have in hand \$32,150 designated by donors towards handicap accessible pathways to link the PCC and the Stone Church.

Recognizing the major contributions from the Hermann Foundation, the Vestry has voted to recognize the Hermann Foundation in an appropriate way. In doing this, the Messiah joins the list of major Falmouth community organizations that honor the Foundation's support: The Hermann Room at the Falmouth Public Library; the Hermann Theatre in the Simon Center for the Arts at Falmouth Academy; the Hermann Gallery at the Falmouth Art Center; the Hermann Garden at the JML Care Center and multiple locations at the Falmouth Hospital.

The Committee, the parish, and the community are deeply grateful to all those individuals, families and foundations that supported the Campaign and have made possible this new community and parish resource.

Thank you, thank you, all!

Charles Mann, Chair, Capital Campaign Phase 2
Sandra Rodgers, Chair, Capital Campaign Phase 1
Don Aukamp
Carol Casey

Deborah Dougherty
Arden Edwards
Mark Haycock

Note: As the Campaign ended on the date of this report, 1/31/21, totals are subject to minor adjustment.

LAY LITURGICAL LEADERS

Annual Report - 2020

Worshipping God is one of the primary acts of love to which all people of faith are called. We are most grateful to the following members of the Church of the Messiah who have enhanced our worship by offering their gifts in one or more of the following ways during 2020:

If, by chance, we inadvertently left out your name, please accept our apology. On the other hand, if you wish to serve in any of these liturgical capacities, please speak with the Reverend Deborah Warner.

Lectors: *Julia Alling, Dicky Allison, Dee Aukamp, Mary Fran Buckley, Carol Casey, Debbie Dougherty, Peter Franklin, Tara Franklin, Jeannette Fullerton, Jennifer Gaines, Jim Galloway, Nancy Galloway, Helen Gordon, Bob Haskell, Randy Hensley, John Holden, Laura Kelly, San Lyman, Charles Mann, Alison Martin, Nawrie Meigs-Brown, Peg Nicholson, Millie Potts, John Rodgers, Sandy Rodgers, Ted Ruegg, Terry Soares, Mary Swope, Jean Taft, Carol Wagner and Steve Wagner.*

Intercessor Leaders: *Gloria Borgese, Debbie Dougherty, Jeannette Fullerton, Jennifer Gaines, Bob Haskell, San Lyman, Charles Mann, Nawrie Meigs-Brown, Peg Nicholson, Nancy Rea, Sandy Rodgers, Ted Ruegg, Mary Swope, Carol Wagner and Steve Wagner.*

Lay Eucharistic Ministers: *Phil Alatalo, Dee Aukamp, Sally Hauck, Laura Kelly, Toby Lineaweaver, Nawrie Meigs-Brown, John Rodgers, Jean Taft, John Vose and Carol Wagner.*

Technology Team: *Dicky Allison, Helen Gordon, Brittany Lord and Jean Taft*

Ushers: *Doug Amon, Don Aukamp, David Brown, Mary Fran Buckley, Bill Dougherty, Debbie Dougherty, Dee Aukamp, Peter Franklin, Tara Franklin, Arthur Gaines, Jennifer Gaines, Bob Haskell, Charlie Hauck, Sally Hauck, Joyce Haycock, Mark Haycock, Mary Heard, Laura Kelly, Charles Mann, Susanne Mann, Alison Martin, Nancy Rea, John Rodgers, Priscilla Ruegg, Ted Ruegg, John Rodgers, Sandy Rodgers, Ron Schlitz, Carol Wagner and Steve Wagner.*

Last, but not least, thank you to all our enthusiastic church bell ringers – of all ages!

The Rev. Deborah Warner

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Deborah Warner

VESTRY and WARDENS' Annual Report - 2020

With the arrival of COVID 19 and a countrywide shutdown in March, all church functions needed to shift drastically. Our rector, The Rev. Deborah Warner, and other staff met the challenge brilliantly.

The installation of a camera/sound system in the church and the faithful efforts of a small team (socially distanced) enabled church services to be available to the congregation. Deborah continued to meet virtually with our *Love First* families and the children's presence and contributions to services, particularly at Christmas, are a great blessing. While it was difficult not to see each other in person, an upside was that members at a distance could join us. This will probably be an option that we want to continue to offer when we resume in person worship.

A new laptop for Music Director, Brittany Lord, and the commitment from choir members provided us all with the same wonderful music we love in our services. Again, something that can continue.

Like most meetings in 2020, vestry meetings were held virtually via Zoom. This medium worked well and allowed the vestry to complete all needed business with ease.

The church received a diocesan grant to assist in the purchasing of the audio-visual equipment. There were additional grants that were provided to the Capital Campaign.

Financially, we are doing well, given the challenges imposed by the pandemic. Despite no in person offerings, members have stepped up both for our operating budget and the capital campaign for the new PCC.

Respectfully submitted,

Wardens: Jean Taft and Nancy Rea

DIOCESAN CONVENTION REPORT

Annual Report - 2020

A comprehensive report on the Convention with all the happenings and speeches can be found at <https://www.diomass.org/diocesan-convention-2020>. You can watch the Convention on YouTube also. The links are all on the convention page found above.

Doing a convention by Zoom was a real experience. At first, due to a little glitch, there was a limit on attendance. One hundred of us were admitted and 300+ people were waiting and unable to be admitted. Then they fixed the glitch and the final tally was 479 attendees. We all had to put an app or two on our phones in order to vote on elections and resolutions. All in all, it was much more comfortable attending a convention from our own houses than attending in person. No lines at the Ladies Room. Coffee whenever you wanted it. Chores could be done between sessions. The money that was saved from not renting the venue will be applied to the 2021 Convention venue.

The Budget

There was a lot of activity before the Convention, knowing that Zooming had certain limitations. The budget was extensively discussed in meetings in the months before the Convention so comments were limited to 2 minutes per person during the meeting. The Budget, including Clergy Compensation and Benefits, passed nearly unanimously with very little discussion.

Resolutions:

The procedure to speak for and against the resolutions was outlined at the beginning of the meeting. Comments were limited to 5 minutes. The following are Resolution excerpts from the Report on the Convention mentioned above. All resolutions include action items and ways to accomplish and/or move forward on them.

A Call for Repentance and Reparations

Resolved, that the 235th Convention of the Diocese of Massachusetts directs Diocesan Council and invites the congregations and institutions of the Diocese of Massachusetts (**that's us**) --in the name of repentance, reconciliation, and accountability to our siblings of color in our diocese-- prayerfully and purposefully to explore their historic involvement in and present wealth derived from the forced labor of enslaved people.

Response to Presiding Bishop Curry's Declaration of a Climate Emergency

Resolved, that the 235th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts will call on the bishops to issue a proclamation declaring a climate emergency, thereby recognizing Bishop Curry's call to care for God's beloved world, and further recognizing that accelerating global warming and mass extinctions are destroying God's Creation, threatening to make our planet uninhabitable, and therefore committing us to embrace brave and difficult change.

Resolved, that the 235th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts encourages the communities, clergy, and laity of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts (**that's us**), to expose the greed at the root of the destruction of God's Creation, through preaching, education, and outreach. A study of history will bring us to terms with patterns of resource overconsumption and exploitation. This ultimately liberating knowledge will form the foundation of our truly life-giving actions guided by love, gratitude, humility, and justice.

A Call to Address the Neglect of the Seven Historically Black Churches of the Diocese and to Strengthen Their Interrelationships

Resolved, that the 235th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, in response to our mission strategy to reimagine our congregations and build relationships, commends the newly formed Racial Justice Commission (a continuation of the racial reconciliation work begun in 2018) to appoint a committee of representatives from the seven historically Black churches in our diocese to address the neglect--through overt and systemic discrimination; unequal treatment; and the disparate impact of circumscribed decision-making--of the seven historically Black churches by our diocese.

Resolved, that we, the gathered leaders of the diocese at this 235th Convention, aware of the sin of racism and its dehumanizing impact, condemn racism in all its forms and expressions, and recommend all clergy and lay persons **(that's us)** in our diocese to work to systemically dismantle it.

The Bishop's Address

The Bishop's Address was awesome as always and everyone should read or listen to it. He drew heavily from Ecclesiastes. "For everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven."

<https://www.diomass.org/news/diocesan-news/annual-address-bishop-gates-2020-diocesan-convention>

It is customary for a resolution to be presented in response to the Bishop's address. This is how the resolution ends:

"Resolved, that we pray to God that, called to follow the star of resurrection hope in the Way of Love, our hearts and the hearts of all people of this land are moved so that the barriers which divide us may crumble, the plywood of fear may fall, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; and that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace through Jesus Christ our Lord (ref. Book of Common Prayer, p. 823); and be it further

Resolved, that we go forth from this Convention, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to be the Church in Community, to be the Body of Christ, who--even though masked, even though physically distant, even though gathering mostly virtually, even though sad, anxious, and tired--are loved and capable, blessed to be a blessing, serving those who need us."

Respectfully submitted,
Dicky Allison
Helen Gordon
Diocesan Representatives

DEANERY REPORT

Annual Report 2020

It has been quite a year for the Cape and Islands Deanery.

We started 2020 in January with a workshop on Asset Mapping. Asset Mapping is, among other things, a disaster planning tool. Primarily, each parish presents their personnel, their ministries and their strengths on a website. One advantage is that if a parish wants to start a ministry, they don't have to reinvent the wheel but can look at what other churches have done and can call and ask questions of the relevant people. In addition, if a disaster hits, like a hurricane, a blizzard or a gas explosion, churches with facilities, skilled volunteers or specialist tools can make those available. Everyone is encouraged to check out the Cape and Islands Asset Map: Here's the link: <https://www.episcopalassetmap.org/dioceses/diocese-massachusetts>. You can browse the map for our diocese and our parish.

Then the Pandemic.

The March meeting was an experiment in Zooming. Before this meeting Helen Gordon spearheaded getting all the parishes in the Deanery set up with Zoom accounts with money from the Dean, Terry Pannell (Rector of St. Mary's, Provincetown). Because this kind of communication is Helen's specialty, all the parishes except Harwichport were zooming by the March Assembly.

Lots of discussion centered around when we might be returning to in-person worship. The original suggested date from the Bishops was at least May 31. We know now that wasn't possible, but at least all parishes knew to plan Holy Week and Easter as virtual services. Many plans were put on hold or altered: Barbara Harris' funeral and all funerals and weddings, Bishop Gates' sabbatical, searches for new clergy, congregational assessments, confirmations, ordinations, clergy conferences, grants, Amazing Grace Summer Camp. These are just a few.

Because the income streams in the parishes were decreased due to virtual worship, the Diocese stepped in to provide grant opportunities so clergy and staff didn't lose their jobs.

Many positive suggestions were made in the March Assembly also. Everyone was encouraged to use time with our congregations to start paying attention to Carbon Tracking and to pay attention to the Earth and Climate Change. People were planning Zooming Bible studies and Book Groups and Zooming cocktail parties and game playing.

Other discussion at the March Assembly involved raising the profile of the Deanery in the parishes and information about the upcoming Decennial Census from the Census workers present.

At the May meeting, we knew we were in for the long haul. It looks like living with the COVID-19 pandemic is a process, with peaks and valleys. We also knew that singing spread the virus. There was talk of banning singing for 2 years. Mostly we talked about community and financial survival. How do we stay connected? How do we pay the bills? The Diocese is no different from the rest of the world.

Normally the next Deanery meeting would be in September, but we were thirsty for connection, so we had a meeting in June. We all greeted the Rector from Nantucket. (Does that sound like the beginning of a limerick?) We hadn't seen him at a Deanery meeting in two years. He said what we all knew: Zoom is enabling many more people to join meetings and services than come in person.

Highlights:

The Diocesan Convention in November would be changed from two-day in person to one day virtual.

The Dean suggested that church treasurers should be tracking COVID-related expenses so budget people can understand how the parishes are being impacted by the pandemic.

There was a program on Networking and Formation from Martha Gardner.

Although Covid-19 shelter-in-place procedures and virtual learning has eliminated school shootings, violence in the home has escalated. There was discussion around the topic of recent local vandalism and unexpected violence to peaceful protestors. St. Barnabas offered training two years ago in preparation for whatever crisis might occur during church or while staff are working. The training touched on lots of possible crises, like clergy and lay abuse, fraud, active shooters, etc. They would be happy to share their resources.

In the September Assembly, we counted our blessings. Everyone wanted to go back to church, but people have been wonderful. Rector after Rector spoke about how proud they were of their parishioners. Each parish present spoke about the wonderful happenings taking place in their faith communities. Parish after parish reported that people are positive and generous and amazing. Zoom is working. They want to go back, but they are being responsible and know the time is not now. We all laughed about people singing alone at home and what that sounds like when you are used to singing with others in church.

A program called Sacred Ground was mentioned. The national Episcopal Church and Presiding Bishop Curry came out with it and St. Mary's in Barnstable has done it. There are 10 video sessions and readings, usually every other week, and it's on anti-racism and white privilege.

Organists/Choirmasters have been very creative and have used technology to put voices together that were recorded apart. This is the assembly in which we were encouraged to put together a Deanery-wide Lessons and Carols. As the Regional Canon said, "the Church has left the building".

Respectfully submitted,
Dicky Allison
Carol Casey
Helen Gordon
Deanery Representatives

RECTOR'S REPORT
for the 2021 Annual Meeting of the
Church of the Messiah, Woods Hole, MA

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he or she is a new creation. The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come! II Corinthians 5:15

Thank you, friends. Thank you to each and every one of you – whether you are new to the parish, have been worshipping with us online since March or are a long-time member. Your presence and participation in whatever way - especially this year, has allowed the vision of Paul's words from his second letter to the Church in Corinth to take root in our life as a congregation during the astoundingly different year of 2020.

While Paul's words were written to a church under siege because of factions and political upheaval, they also ring true as we seek to be part of the Body of Christ in the midst of very unsettled times. With the geographical distance, challenges, frustrations and loss of what used to be called "normal" each of which is associated with the pandemic, nonetheless we continue to honor and support each other. We have done this despite the range of political and racial discord and confusion which has rocked our community and country.

When we gather and share the ministry of Christ, we *are* a new creation. That which might divide us or even seem daunting is eased when we see ourselves not as a single person, unit, family or "pod"; but part of something far, far bigger: part of the Body of Christ living and ministering in the here and now.

For many of us, 2020 began with a sense of the ordinariness and familiarity to it. The choir rehearsed on Wednesday evenings and at 9:00 on Sunday. They sang at the 10 o'clock service. Vestry and committee meetings were held face to face, and our doors were open to groups from the wider community to share in our gracious meeting space in the Parish and Community Center.

Towards the end of January, our life as a parish family started to change. Our devoted choir member and outreach witness, Carol Francis Conover, died very suddenly. That was followed by the death in early February of Frank Egloff, a beloved communicant and confidant to generations at the Church of the Messiah and the Woods Hole community.

By the end of February, we began to hear of a virulent virus infecting people around the globe. Lives everywhere were thrown in the upheaval. Businesses, schools, colleges, restaurants, hotels and numerous other livelihoods were shut down. Our ability to go wherever we wanted, whenever we wanted was taken away as we were ordered to remain in lockdown. By mid-March, in accordance with diocesan and government directives, the painfully necessary decision was made to temporarily suspend in-person worship and meetings. At that moment, we knew our ministry and the shape of our worship must shift radically.

While our usual means and place of gathering was temporarily halted, our ministry and mission continued to move forward. We opened ourselves up to new models of ministry and means of gathering.

Thankfully, we were and have been able to move into a new way of "being church" because of the extraordinary generosity and talent of our technology team: Helen Gordon, Brittany Haskell, Dicky Allison and Jean Taft. They did not let us miss a beat. They were and have remained steadfast in their willingness to step forward to make sure any and all who wish to attend virtual services live on Sunday or by a recording later in the week have been able to do so.

Along with the vestry and Regathering Oversight Committee (Phil Alatalo, Dicky Allison, Helen Gordon, Brittany Lord, Susan Morse, Heather Shepley, Jean Taft and myself) our ministry and sense of who and what we are called to do and be has continued to evolve. All committee and vestry meetings are held online – allowing people to participate in shaping our ministry from the safety of their homes. Thanks to the technological and artistic skill of our Music Director, Brittany Lord, our choir has learned a new way to “*sing the Lord’s song*” in this “strange land” thereby offering their musical gifts as a means of enhancing our worship in ways that we had never dreamed of.

By early June, we had a new audio system in place. A short while later, the installation of three new fixed cameras allowed the quality of our virtual worship services to be much clearer and sharper.

During the spring, I began to meet briefly on Sunday mornings with our *Love First* families before Colette and Matt Potts and/or Rachael Rhude continued on with a more focused lesson. The summer gave me a chance to get to know the families better as we met at least every other Wednesday evening for a chat and check in. Along with (masked) backyard visits, these Wednesday evening chats provided the opportunity to get to know these wonderful families most of whom, you may remember, had only arrived in early January. Beginning in October, we started to meet weekly for a half hour each Sunday morning, giving us a chance to experience and share our celebrations and concerns as a community within a community.

The presence of the *Love First* families has ushered in a new chapter in our life as a congregation. Their devotion to each other and their commitment to fully engage the principles of “*loving ourselves, loving others and loving God*” in how we study the Bible and try to live our lives has been an extraordinary gift to me personally and to the wider parish.

As a means of demonstrating their commitment and care for each other and the community, thanks to the generosity of Terry and Reg Soares, a number of our *Love First* families planted hundreds of bulbs in the fall which will help all of us welcome the spring. Their young artistic talents were put to good use thanks to Brittany Lord for ordering and preparing outdoor wooden crèche figures, and San Lyman put her loving artistic grace to work in offering “guidelines” to help the children paint these crèche figures.

Along with the hanging Christmas lights on bushes, trees and the Parish and Community Center balcony, these figures and lights have been a very “outward and visible sign” of the love and nurturing spirit that has taken hold of our congregation even in the midst of a pandemic and is freely offered to the wider community and all who pass by.

As all of this new visioning and ways of “being church” was going on, we have been graced by the extraordinary dedication and diligence of Charles Mann’s steady hand on the tiller of the Capital Campaign. He has been ably guided and supported by the wisdom and experience of Debbie Dougherty and Peg Nicholson. Together with John Nolan our Treasurer and others in the congregation, Charles, Debbie and Peg have done an extraordinary job in help us get ever closer to reaching our campaign goal. This is all possible because of the financial generosity of members of the congregation and community. You have made this long hoped for dream become a reality. Again, thank you.

In 2020 in addition to the following *Love First* families who attend our Sunday Morning Chats and parish events: the Behunins, the Davins, the Jacin-Shertzer family, the Parks, Potts, the Sutherlands and the Wards, we are delighted to officially welcome Randy Hensley and Frank Gormley as well as Carol Rader to the Church of the Messiah. Our virtual services have allowed us to connect with present and former parishioners (including Lynne Hoar and Reta and Dick

King) living elsewhere. We have been able to welcome friends who, while not formal members, still are a regular part of our Sunday virtual services: Barbara Brown, Rosemary Davis, Randi Graham, Emily Gordon, The Rev. Sarah Hollar and Peter Macon. Welcome to each of you!

Even as we welcome in these families and friends and are blessed by their love and contributions, we grieve the loss of two other parishioners in addition to the death of Carol Francis Conover and Frank Egloff who died this year. Gerry Swope died in May and Prosser Gifford died in July. Both men were devoted to their families and the Woods Hole community. They were loving and kind in sharing their wisdom among all of us and the broader community. The Swope and Gifford families were able to gather at their family member's grave for their burial in the Church of the Messiah and Woods Hole Village Cemetery. I know that you join me in looking forward to the time when we can all safely gather as a parish community and offer our own prayers and songs of celebration for these two lovely generous gentlemen who were so formative in our sense of what it means to be a church community here and now.

In closing, I first offer thanks to our dedicated staff that has been steadfast throughout this strange and challenging year: Doug Amon, Bruce Bagley, Jennifer Kelly, Brittany Lord, Nancy McDonald and Jessica Morrison. I also wish to thank The Revs. Barbara Peterson and Matthew Potts who have been kind enough to serve as our guest celebrants and preachers during the year. Each of these people has done their best to keep us moving ahead at a safe and steady pace.

Second, I thank the Regathering Oversight Committee whom I have already named earlier in this report. They have been creative, cheerful, wise and extremely thoughtful in discerning how we can meet the challenges imposed by the pandemic while being a beacon of hope in this time of physical distancing. We could not be doing what we are doing, nor could we be looking ahead with as much confidence and courage without each of them.

Third, I thank the vestry: Nancy Rea, Jean Taft (wardens), John Nolan (treasurer) Winifred Dick (clerk) and Susan Morse, Mary Fran Buckley, Paul Graney, Don Aukamp, Charles Mann and Peg Nicholson (vestry members). They have been very supportive to me and the parish we are discovering over ways by which we are being called into a new creation. The vestry was willing to spend financial resources to upgrade the audio-visual system and thereby help us reach out to those who are "absent from us" and they were helpful and supportive in applying for different loans from the diocese and the government to meet some of the financial obligations imposed by the pandemic.

Finally, as I have said so often in the past to you and to friends and colleagues here and elsewhere, it continues to be my great honor to serve as your rector and pastor – now more than ever. I look ahead with great hope and confidence to the new life and ways of witnessing to which we are being called as a community of faith. To each of you, I say, thank you so very much.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Deborah M. Warner, Rector