



ST. MICHAEL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ARLINGTON, VA

2024 ANNUAL REPORT





**St. Michael's
75th Anniversary
1948–2023**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Rector's Report	I
Senior Warden's Report	4
Junior Warden's Report	6
Treasurer's Report	7
Every Member Canvass (EMC)	9
St. Michael's Endowment Fund	10
Parish Communications	11
Parish Office Report	11
 Worship	 12
Acolytes	12
Altar Guild	12
Flower Guild	13
Lector Ministry	13
Ushering Ministry	14
Welcoming Ministry (Greeters)	14
Music Program	14
 Christian Formation	 15
Adult Formulation	15
Education for Ministry	17
Formation for Children and Youth	17
 Outreach	 18
Outreach Committee: <i>In kinship with our neighbors</i>	18
 Parish Life	 21
Arts & Faith Ministry	21
Wednesday Lunch Bunch Book Group	23
Prime Time	23
 Appendix: Financial Report Detailed Tables	 25

Rector's Report

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations for ever and ever. Ephesians 3:20-21

2023 began masked, but thankfully, did not end that way. Slowly but surely, the rhythms of our communal life resumed more fully than anytime before the pandemic began. If there was a theme that captured the essence of all that took place, it would be abundance. There was an abundance of gratitude, an abundance of energy, an abundant generosity of spirit, an abundant commitment of resources, and abundant joy in the time spent in one another's company. At the core of it all was clarity about our renewed commitment to be formed as followers Jesus Christ.

The Vestry book for study was, "Leading Faithful Innovation: Following God into a Hopeful Future," by Zscheile, Binder, and Pinkstaff. Despite what the title might imply, this was not a manual about how to change the way we do church. Rather, it was a thoughtful framework for returning to the basic spiritual practices that have formed Christian communities since the beginning of time. Using the story of Lydia from Acts 16 as our theological grounding, we reflected on the core mission of God's church, and the ways in which that mission comes to life at St. Michael's. We spent time exploring the basic spiritual practices of Listen, Act, and Share, and the ways in which those habits shape our journey as leaders, and as a community. We became acutely aware of the abundance of spiritual practices that enhance our work as leaders.

Behind the scenes, the Vestry supported multiple transitions in staff leadership. Our Parish Administrator took on a more substantial role, as we increased her hours to thirty per week. Katrina Moore continues to be a competent and thoughtful presence in the office, supporting any number of initiatives that help things to run smoothly on a daily basis. Additionally, our Music Minister of five years, Noel Warford, completed his time with us, as his PhD work came to an end. We were blessed to call Mike Schmidt as our new Music Minister, beginning October of 2023. Karen Ruff, St. Michael's parishioner, stepped into the role of Children and Families Minister in a volunteer capacity. I shared the news that my family is expecting a second child in December. Preparations began for my leave, three months of parental leave combined with three months of sabbatical, to begin in December. In preparation for my time away, we added a third warden to the team of Vestry leaders. Despite what felt like a shifting landscape, lay leaders were agile and generous in supporting all manner of transitions. All of the energy spent keeping things orderly behind the scenes meant that we were able to competently serve parishioners, and capably engage with the greater Arlington community. We continue to be grateful for the abundant blessed of working with a dynamic and faithful staff!

The Stewardship Committee created and led an ambitious and successful annual giving campaign. With the inspired leadership of Dan Ruff, and thoughtful presence of Carol Halvorson, Dean Scribner, Vicki Barnett, and Kaipō McCartney, we executed a three-week campaign. Parishioners have been abundantly generous in responding to the invitation to sustain the mission and ministries of the congregation.

That was just what took place behind the scenes! In the meantime, virtual worship remained available throughout the year. Hybrid meeting spaces continued to offer maximum flexibility for all manner of gatherings. The rhythms of communal worship, formation, and fellowship flourished in a show of true abundance.

The Hospitality Committee continued to provide much needed leadership for a variety of functions. Sunday morning fellowship was more regularly attended, and coffee hour teams took turns hosting on a weekly basis. We continued our Mardi Gras party, parish picnic, Back-to-School celebration, and Christmas Eve reception, all of which were well received. The leadership these individuals provide continues to make an impact at weekly coffee hours, annual events, and the general spirit of hospitality that demonstrates the abundant love that knits the St. Michael's community together.

The work of Outreach remained grounded in the Biblical principle of kinship with our neighbors. You can read in more detail about the work the committee accomplished in the Outreach Report. Of note, was the expressed desire to give parishioners more direct knowledge of the work of our Outreach partners. Shepherds facilitated opportunities for parishioners to visit APAH and Path Forward, and to learn more about Bridges to Independence, our newest partner. We have seen active engagement from individuals new to the parish, in addition to those who had not been previously involved. I am profoundly grateful for the work of the committee, and the shepherds of each organization, who led us deeper into the commitment to share all that we have beyond these four walls—a manifestation of the abundantly comprehensive nature of God's love for all.

In a later section of the report, you can read about the many ways in which our formation as disciples of Jesus remained at the core of our work together. Of note this year was our first pilgrimage with Lomax AME Zion Church. The pilgrimage to Cambridge, Maryland was a catalyst for deepening relationships, and a renewed commitment to learn about our local context and faith communities. Pastor Nelson very graciously led worship and preached on World Communion Sunday, when I was too sick to do so. It remained a powerful day of the church communities worshipping with one another. During the fall months, thirteen parishioners from St. Michael's accompanied parishioners from Lomax under Pastor Nelson's leadership in a series of Bible Studies and discussions about our hopes for acknowledging the sin of racism, and the ways in which it impacts our communal life. Our relationship with Lomax AME Zion church continues to grow, as a part of our intention to more abundantly embody what it looks like to become beloved community.

The celebration of St. Michael's 75th anniversary represented months of work from a variety of lay leaders and staff. Our intention with this celebration was to remember where we had been, and hopefully look forward to all that is to come. Lay leaders spent time researching our communal history, as well as that of Arlington County. We were joined by former rectors The Rev. Howard Humphrey and The Rev. Leslie Hague for the celebratory liturgy on September 24th. Of note was the blessing of a new title deed to the property, which removed the racially restrictive covenant found on the original deed to the property. Evelyn Bence wrote a new history of the parish, giving more shape to the character of the community than had previously been done. Additionally, Parish Administrator, Katrina Moore spent time providing a visual representation of our history. Celebration committee chairs, Tim and Cindy Matlack, provided extraordinary leadership in planning the culminating celebration. The Arts and Faith Exhibit, Celebrating our Community of Saints, provided another lens through which to explore hopes for the future. This event provided a lens into the many ways in which God's presence continues to bless the St. Michael's community throughout the decades.

I continue to be humbled by the opportunity to lead alongside such a faithful group of laity and staff. I would go anywhere with you all, confident in your ability to be companions of ease, delight, and abiding faith. I am grateful for the ways in which the gifts of our seminarians, Hayden Paul and Drew Downey, enhanced our imaginative capacity for dynamic leadership. Benefitting from the talents of Noel Warford and Mike Schmidt have exceeded my hopes for a life-long tenure in the church—they are simply superb! Katrina Moore has been a tireless and creative companion in the office, always exceeding the high expectations for the person serving in that capacity. Cindy Matlack continues to serve as our volunteer communications coordinator, sharing an excess of talent and a generosity of time. Parishioner, Karen Ruff, serving in the capacity of Children and Families Minister, has gathered an esteemed group of Children's Worship Leaders, who continue to provide an answer to countless prayers. The leadership of the Vestry during this year of transition has been steady beyond belief. I am particularly grateful to retiring vestry members, Molly Beier and John Kelleher, for their years of service. Finally, our team of wardens, Vicki Barnett, Jim Dinan, and Kaipō McCartney, have gone above and beyond to ensure that no matter what comes, St. Michael's continues to be a reflection of God's beloved community. For these reasons, and so many more, I am filled with abundant gratitude to God to continue to serve as your rector.

Blessings,

The Very Reverend Beth Franklin, Rector

Senior Warden's Report

As this annual report illustrates, the past year has been a lively one at St. Michael's, marked by a number of changes as well as remarkable levels of engagement and shared leadership among our members.

On the transition front: After five years of wonderful music and choral leadership, our music minister and organist Noel Warford departed in October for a teaching position at Oberlin College. We had the great good fortune to find Mike Schmidt, who is also the Director of Choral Music and Chapel Music at Episcopal High School in Alexandria. Mike began only several weeks after Noel's departure and is already shaping a new era of music at St. Michael's.

We also wanted to return to some form of regular Sunday school and spiritual formation, especially for our young people. Karen Ruff volunteered and is now our Children and Families Minister, supported by a great team of volunteers; she joins Dan Plafcan, who meets regularly with our older youth. Beth Franklin also launched Story Core, a program of Bible study and discussion that meets during coffee hour.

Of course, we are still in the midst of the biggest transition! Following the joyful birth of her son Nicholas Pierson in December, Beth Franklin is on a six-month combined maternity leave/sabbatical. Reverend Rosemari Sullivan, a familiar face to most of us at St. Michael's, graciously agreed to serve as our supply priest for that period and is joined by our seminarian Drew Downey. In Beth's absence, the Vestry has taken on many new responsibilities and I want to especially thank fellow wardens Kaipo McCartney and Jim Dinan for all their work.

Transitions can sometimes be a strain on a community but the opposite seems to be the case at St. Michael's—I think they've had a positive and energizing effect. Coffee hour is drawing pre-pandemic numbers, with the responsibilities each week shared by different teams from the Vestry, former Vestry, Youth Group, Men of St. Michael's, and the Hospitality Committee. In Beth's absence different St. Michael's members are taking turns writing the weekly intro to our Newsletter, which Cindy Matlack continues to create and send out every week. Led by Dan Ruff, our pledge drive set a new record, with pledges for 2024 up 7% over last year!

And our ministries and outreach work continue. Our contributions and volunteers support a [host of local initiatives](#) that help our neighbors who are affected by food insecurity, housing instability, homelessness, and domestic violence. They also reflect our commitment to Care of Creation (as does the team of volunteers who tend our gardens and lawn). Our worship would not be possible without those involved in the Altar Guild and the various Worship Ministries. Thanks to our Arts and Faith program, regular exhibitions by local artists adorn our walls.



Our partnership with the Lomax AME congregation deepened in 2023 with a pilgrimage to Cambridge, Maryland, where we viewed the new Harriet Tubman memorial, the local museum, and other sites important to her life and work. Afterwards the two congregations submitted a memorial stone in the walkway around the Tubman Memorial. A group of St. Michael's members also participated in Pastor Adrian Nelson's doctoral project on Howard Thurman's commitment to racially welcoming local communities. Wendy Ikezawa's November report about the Diocesan Racial Justice and Healing Pilgrimage to civil rights sites illustrates the connection between the localized work we do and the larger mission of the Church.

Finally, a high point of 2023 was the [75th anniversary celebration of St. Michael's](#) in September, marked by a large gathering of current and former members, including several former clergy. Member Evelyn Bence wrote a wonderful [history of St. Michael's](#) that serves as a reminder that we have always had transitions and ground-breaking moments, and that we have always grown and thrived. St. Michael's is an exciting church to be part of!

Vicki Barnett, Senior Warden



Junior Warden's Report

The parish continued to be good stewards of its grounds and buildings in 2023. Highlights include replacing the leaking side porch roof at the rectory, removing deadwood from our mature trees at the church and rectory to help keep them safe and healthy, and replacing the failing freezer and refrigerator. We have also ordered a new induction stove for the parish hall kitchen, so 2024 promises delicious food prepared in a fully functional kitchen!

The good works on our church and rectory grounds were the product of many hands. The Mowing Ministry continued to tend to our lawn. The Building and Grounds and Care of Creation Ministries did yeoman's work on planting, pruning, weeding, and organizing fall leaf raking parties (which are always fun for parishioners of all ages).

We soon say goodbye to gardening stalwart Helen Hines, so this is an appropriate place to thank her for all she has done at St. Michael's. While Helen will be hard to replace, please remember volunteers for these ministries are always welcome!

*Respectfully submitted,
Jim Dinan, Junior Warden*



Treasurer's Report

The information presented in this report is based on the preliminary end-of-year financial Statement of Activity (AKA “profit and loss statement”) for 2023. The Statement of Activity is the basis for comparing planned and actual income and expenses in our Mission Spend Plan (AKA “operating budget”). The numbers here are preliminary and may change slightly when the accounts are officially closed for the year.

The Statement of Activity is one of the two fundamental financial statements produced for the parish. The other is the Statement of Position (AKA “balance sheet” or “net worth” statement). I am not including a 2023 Statement of Position in this report because some of the information needed will not be received from our financial institutions until early February. I will let parishioners know when full and final financial statements for 2023 are available and how to access them.

Meanwhile, I am delighted to report that St. Michael's had a much better-than-expected financial year in 2023. The MSP adopted by the congregation in early 2023 projected an operating deficit for the year of -\$38,639. In fact, we ran a surplus of +\$6,901.

THANK YOU!

Many thanks to Beth Addington and Michael Avenick, our volunteers who audited the financial records for 2022. Their efforts are greatly appreciated and are crucial for the continued financial health of our parish!

What caused this most favorable outcome? Primarily, the answer lies in higher income than projected, by 15%. Each year, the Vestry proposes a budget largely based on the amount of income that has been pledged for the year. In 2023, actual pledge income was higher than the pledged amount because a number of parishioners who had pledged actually contributed more than their pledge amount. In addition, “other contributions” (that is, gifts that aren't the result of pledges and are therefore unpredictable) were

higher than originally projected. More unexpected income resulted from higher rents paid by users of our building and from a change in where we hold some of our cash to take advantage of higher interest rates.

On the expense side of the budget report, overall expenses were 2% higher than those projected in the MSP. In the major categories of expenses, (salaries and benefits, buildings and grounds, parish administration, Christian education, parish activities, and outreach and mission) only parish activities exceeded the budgeted amount by more than 10%. This resulted from mid-year developments in two sub-accounts: hospitality and communications. First, the vestry decided to pay for a brunch for the parish to celebrate St. Michael's 75th anniversary. This seemed especially appropriate given that pledge income was running ahead of projections. Second, fees went up for our web host; and we obtained a discounted fee by signing and paying for a two-year agreement with another of our contractors who provides website-related services.

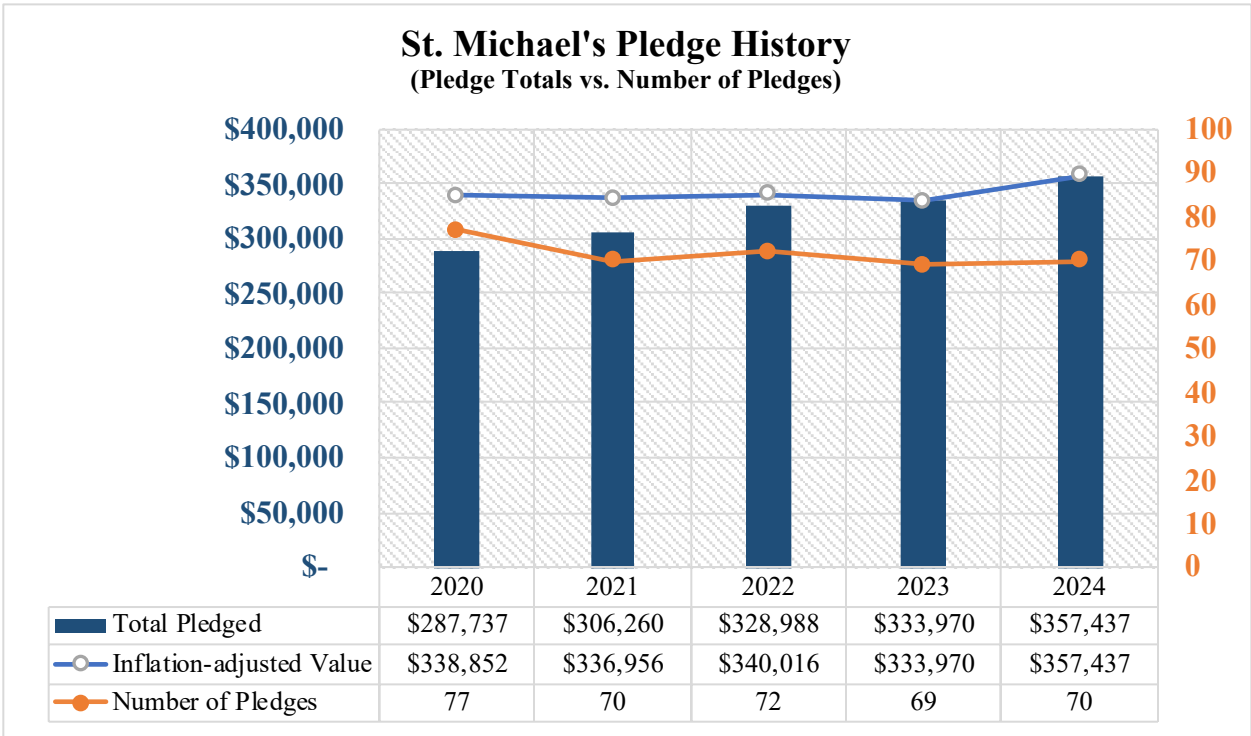
SUMMARY TABLE OF INCOME AND EXPENSES FOR 2023				
	Actual End-of-Year Results 2022	Actual End-of-Year Results 2023	Projected in 2023 MSP	Actual End-of-Year % Over/Under 2023 MSP
Income				
Pledges & Offerings	\$367,172	\$396,575	\$353,970	+12%
Investment & Other Income	\$11,747	\$28,376	\$15,500	+83%
Total Income	\$378,919	\$424,951	\$369,470	+15%
Expenses				
Salaries & Benefits	\$226,221	\$238,513	\$234,739	+2%
Buildings & Grounds	\$49,217	\$56,196	\$56,780	-1%
Parish Administration	\$46,859	\$41,673,	\$39,510	+5%
Christian Education	\$3,038	\$5,304	\$6,000	-12%
Parish Activities	\$9,302	\$18,536	\$13,300	+39%
Outreach & Mission	\$52,277	\$57,830	\$57,830	+0%
Total Expenses	\$386,914	\$418,050*	\$408,159	+2%
Net Income (Income minus expenses)	-\$7,996	\$6,901	\$-38,369	

*Total expenses in summary table adjusted for rounding error.

A full (preliminary) Statement of Activity compared to the MSP (including all major accounts and sub-accounts) is included as an Appendix to this report. As you examine especially the subaccounts, keep in mind that they differ greatly in size. A big percentage over or under budget in a small account is much less significant than similar figures in a large account.

Janet Hansen, Treasurer

Every Member Canvass (EMC)



Data current as of January 1, 2024

This year’s stewardship campaign, “Remembering and Becoming One,” was a continued celebration of St. Michael’s 75th anniversary. It asked parishioners to give generously as a reflection of our hopes for the ways in which we are becoming one body, one church, and one community at St. Michael’s. The campaign set a goal of a 6% increase in pledged dollars.

We are very pleased to report that St. Michael’s met its goal with 70 pledges received for 2024. This represents a positive trend compared to last year, with 9 new pledges and 61 renewing their commitment. This is a slight increase in the number of pledges received and equates to a 7.0% increase in commitments which total \$357,437. Recognizing that part of the story over the past few years has been the nation’s inflation rate, we’ve added a blue line to the pledge history chart. This line shows the pledge totals adjusted for inflation in December 2023 dollars. While the chart tells a story of consistent growth in actual dollars, it’s especially heartwarming to see a steady and faithful commitment reflected even in inflation-adjusted terms. Your generosity enables us to continue to grow closer as one body, to build upon our existing commitment to become one church, and to more generously contribute to God’s vision for one community. We are incredibly grateful for every pledge, and we are excited to see what we can achieve together in 2024. Thank you so much!

I would like to extend my thanks to Vicki Barnett, Carol Halvorson, Kaipo McCartney and Dean Scribner who served on this year’s Stewardship Committee. We are incredibly grateful for and humbled by the steadfast generosity of the people at St. Michael’s.

Dan Ruff

St. Michael's Endowment Fund

Established in 1999, the St. Michael's Fund seeks to ensure a firm financial foundation in furtherance of the mission of St. Michael's Church. The fund's most important purposes include providing additional funds for the maintenance of church properties and the expansion and creation of programs and outreach ministries. The St. Michael's Fund Board members in 2023 were Keith McCartney (Chair, 2027), Demian Perry (2025), Bernadette Stout (2026), and incoming members Brian Cavey (2028) and Keelen Collins (2024).

2023 marked the first year the St. Michael's Fund was invested solely with the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (DFMS) of The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. The St. Michael's Fund began the year holding 9,832.872 shares in the DFMS endowment portfolio with a Market Value of \$229,409.11, and as of 11/30/2023 had 9,899.128 shares with a Market Value of \$242,715.99. During the course of the year St. Michael's took quarterly withdrawals of \$2,625 in February, May, August, and December for a total disbursement of \$10,500 towards the Mission Spend Plan. These withdrawals were counterbalanced by reinvesting the DFMS quarterly dividend income earned over the course of 2023, with \$3,183.79 in March, \$3,190.60 in June, \$3,196.62 in September and a tbd amount in December (estimating ~\$3,200). In addition, the St. Michael's Fund received contributions in the amount of \$100 from John Harves, \$1,250 from Alex and Bernadette Stout, and a matching contribution of \$1,250 from Bernadette Stout's employer. Those contributions will be reflected in the St. Michael's Fund DFMS 4Q2023 or 1Q2024 statements and are greatly appreciated by the St. Michael's Fund Board.

One aspect of the transfer of St. Michael's Fund assets to the DFMS is that while overall management of our endowment appears to have been improved relative to our experience with the Trustees of the Funds (TOTF), the timeliness of statements has not. As I write this excerpt in mid-January, we have just only recently received our November 2023 monthly statement and based on when the St. Michael's Fund Board received our DFMS 4th Quarter Final Trust Fund Statement for 2022, we will not likely receive our 2023 DFMS year-end statement until late February or early March. At this time it is not possible to provide an annual rate of return for 2023, although DFMS share prices appreciated 5.1% over the course of the first 11 months of 2023, and St. Michael's Fund holdings appreciated 5.8% for the same time period.

The DFMS Executive Council sets the annual dividend payable of the Trust Funds in the DFMS Portfolio. For 2024, the amount is \$1.28 per share based on 5.0% of the average yearend market values of the DFMS portfolio for the five-year period ending in 2022. For the St. Michael's Fund, this works out to ~\$12,500 for 2024, or ~\$3,125 per quarter. Per the Payout Policy for the St. Michael's Fund, the annual amount to be paid out of the St. Michael's Fund for use by the Vestry shall be at least 80 percent (80%) but no more than 100 percent (100%) of the annual distribution from the custodial trust funds as determined by the investment custodians (i.e. the DFMS Executive Council). What this means is for 2024 the St. Michael's Fund will provide NLT ~\$10,500 and NMT ~\$12,500 to the Vestry for the Mission Spend Plan.

The Board continues to thank St. Michael's parishioners for their continued support of the St. Michael's Fund and the long-term financial resources of St. Michael's Episcopal Church.

Keith McCartney, Chair

Parish Communications

In 2023, we published weekly newsletters and sent out occasional messages as needed. All communications were distributed electronically as well as mailed to parishioners who chose that option.

- If you aren't on the mailing list, please [subscribe](#) to receive our electronic communications (or via our website, choose "Connect, Parish Communications") or contact the [Parish Office](#). You'll receive weekly updates and other news that needs to be shared. If you prefer, paper copies of the updates and special announcements can be mailed to you.
- In addition, we occasionally publish "News for Neighbors" to share news and events which may affect our neighbors. You're welcome to sign up to receive that, too (from the website menu, choose "Connect, News for Neighbors").
- "Like" us on [Facebook](#) to receive social media postings.

Cindy Matlack

Parish Office Report



In 2023, I learned that there is no such thing as a "normal" week at St. Michael's. As the liturgical calendar moves through seasons, so does the year in a parish office. There are those predictable, annual milestones that interrupt the weekly flow, like Advent and Holy Week or the Parochial Report. Some of the less-than-routine happenings around the office in 2023 included various improvement projects, like the library renovation and new furniture/carpet in the offices. We also spent several weeks preparing for St. Michael's 75th

Anniversary celebration, and wrapped up the year with preparations for Beth's leave. I'm so grateful for all groundwork Beth laid to make her time away as seamless as possible, as well as for the leadership teams at St. Michael's that are working together to keep daily operations going.

We continued to host music lessons, art classes, and theatre workshops throughout 2023. Additionally, a science camp met daily throughout the summer, and we look forward to having them return this summer.

Katrina Moore, Parish Administrator

WORSHIP

Mercifully, 2023 represented the first of several years that our worshiping life together proceeded without interruption. Though we began in January with the requirement of masks, thankfully we did not end that way. Parishioners more regularly reincorporated worship into rhythm of life as the year progressed. We continued with a single offering of Sunday worship, at 9:30 AM on a weekly basis. Additionally, live streaming and digital recordings of services remained available, as did weekly episodes of sermons on the website and in podcast format. An addition to worship life came in October of this year, with a Children's Worship service, offered weekly during the liturgy of the word.

Acolytes

St. Michael's acolytes provided support for all of the services during 2023. We are currently a small group and toward the end of the year hosted a few opportunities for people to be an acolyte-for-a-day. We hope that some of those participants may elect to become regular acolytes during 2024.

Wil Harkins

Altar Guild

A church service entails preparation, and the Altar Guild (in conjunction with the Flower Guild) continues to set up the altar for services to maintain beauty and comfort in the traditions of the seasons of the liturgical calendar. For most services, setting up and cleaning up after the service offers a relatively short, quiet time to reflectively work individually or with a partner. Major celebrations and changes to liturgical seasons as well as periodic general maintenance "polishing" sessions involve a bigger team working together to assemble all of the elements to prepare the sanctuary. 2023 saw the addition of new members to the Guild and a focus on training and documentation of processes and instructions. In order to level the workload among the members, we also initiated a quarterly rotating leader of the Guild. We will evaluate that leadership model throughout 2024. We continue looking for new members who will join us in 2024 in this support mission. Please contact Beth or any member of the Altar Guild if you're curious about why and how the communion table is readied each Sunday.

Cindy Warkentin

Flower Guild

In 2023 the Flower Guild enjoyed its first full year of operation (separate from but working closely with the Altar Guild), whose responsibility is to arrange and place flowers on the altar for regular worship and special services within the church. During the year our seven members continued to show their distinctive styles and artistic creativity in their arrangements during each liturgical season. As we continue to build this ministry and hopefully train more members, we have welcomed the handmade wreaths hung on the reredos during Lent and the long stretch of “Ordinary Time” that follows Pentecost. Outside of the two weekly altar arrangements, our major expenditures are Easter lilies/flowers and Christmas poinsettias and greenery, which are purchased in bulk from a local greenhouse. Although we have been able to keep our expenses low with cuttings from the church gardens and flowers provided by guild members, our major source of funds used for the ministry is through altar flower dedications and donations which may be made by anyone online and are acknowledged in the appropriate Sunday worship bulletin. We are happy to train anyone who is interested in participating in this creative, fun ministry!

Barb Adams, Chair

Lay Eucharistic Ministers

Lay Eucharistic Ministers continue to serve communion and lead the Prayers of the People on a weekly basis. LEMs have been exceedingly gracious and thoughtful as parishioners navigate through theological and practical ramifications of receiving wine from the common cup at this point in time.

The Very Reverend Beth Franklin, Rector

Lector Ministry

Lectors are members of the congregation who, after training, and by continued study, regularly read the lessons at each of the Sunday services. We are blessed to have a regular rotation of lectors who represent the breadth of diversity at St. Michael's. During 2023, lectors faithfully enhanced the worship of the community on a weekly basis.

The Very Reverend Beth Franklin, Rector

Ushering Ministry

Ushers welcome those attending the service, provide service bulletins, help seat those who need assistance, participate in the worship service, and help in any other way the clergy requests. During the worship service, the ushers carry the elements to the altar, take up the collection, and guide parishioners to the altar for communion.

Serving as an usher is a great way to meet your fellow parishioners and to help newcomers feel welcome. If you'd like to know more about becoming an usher, please contact [Cindy Matlack](#).

Cindy Matlack

Welcoming Ministry (Greeters)

Greeters welcome parishioners for worship on Sunday morning when they first enter the building. The hospitality and commitment of these leaders continues to benefit the entire St. Michael's community.

The Very Reverend Beth Franklin, Rector

Music Program

The year 2023 marked a significant transition for St. Michael's Music Ministry. In mid-October, Noel Warford concluded his role as Music Minister, having accepted a visiting professor position at Oberlin College. Concurrently, I commenced my tenure. As I embark on this new role at St. Michael's, I am impressed by how well-organized Noel left everything, facilitating a smooth transition for me. I want to thank him for his five years of ministry at St. Michael's. I would also like to thank Beth, the vestry, the choir, and the congregation for their warm and embracing welcome into this community.

During my brief tenure at St. Michael's, I have observed and been impressed by the community's deep appreciation for music. The love of music in this congregation is evident in the robust singing of favorite hymns and in the practice of listening to the organ postlude after services. Clearly, the love of music is a longstanding tradition within this congregation. I am eagerly anticipating the future of my ministry here.

Looking ahead to 2024, I hope to continue to learn about what St. Michael's values in its music ministry, what the standing traditions and beloved practices are, and the strengths of the congregation, as well as how the music ministry can support all of this. I am also hoping to recruit some more singers to our choir and expand the choir's repertoire to include various styles of music. I look forward to your continued support and partnership.

Mike Schmidt, Music Minister

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Adult Formation

The year began with the continuation of the youth confirmation class which involved 16 classes with six youth spanning 2022–23. They were engaged and thoughtful throughout our time together, which included biblical, theological, historical content. Ultimately, we equipped youth to make a distinction between confirming and conforming, empowering them to decide whether or not to be confirmed in the church. All six chose to be confirmed in May. One of the remarkable outcomes of the confirmation class was an opportunity for the youth to share their experiences and stories with the congregation. They were honest about the impact of violence in schools, the prevalence of drugs, and ultimately, the toll it has all taken on their mental health. It was a declarative cry for the adults in this community to do more to support them. The congregation responded with incredible faith and generosity. Many were trained to administer Narcan, and in Arlington County's Askable Adult program. Additionally, the youth were supported in visiting Senator Tim Kaine's office to learn about the impact their stories can have in shaping legislation. It was a powerful formation process for all involved.

During the season of Epiphany, the hospitality committee organized Sharing Faith gatherings, which small gatherings of parishioners in the home of a host. Each gathering was well attended, allowing parishioners to enjoy meaningful conversations about their faith. During the season of Lent, I offered a parish wide book study, "Humbler Faith, Bigger God," by Sam Wells. Additionally, The Rev. Dr. Peggy Parker's Stations of the Cross were on display in the parish hall, thanks to the Arts and Faith ministry. During the season of Pentecost, I offered a discussion group on "The Hidden Wound," by Wendell Berry.

We concluded the program year with a pilgrimage to Cambridge, Maryland with our sister congregation, Lomax AME Zion Church. This was a powerful opportunity to strengthen relationships, and learn more about local experiences in striving for justice. Our hope is that this is the first of many pilgrimages to come.

This first part of the year provided tremendous insight as to the formation needs of the congregation. One source of this insight came from the diverse group of youth confirmation sponsors, all of whom were St. Michael's parishioners. Most felt ill equipped to talk about their faith with teens, or serve as a resource in this capacity. With substantial support, we spent time in conversation clarifying what was and was not required of a faithful adult in this role. Another revealing example of the formation needs of the congregation were communicated clearly by the parents of young children. In a variety of forums (surveys, discussion groups, and one on one discussions) parents shared their desire for children to receive basic Christian formation, and their feelings of inadequacy to take part in meeting these needs. What I took away from these insights is that there is a hunger to be formed as Christians in a meaningful way. There is a curiosity that transcends that which has been articulated in recent years.

The offerings that took place in the fall are a direct result of the clarity mentioned above. We have been blessed by the volunteer leadership of Karen Ruff as the Children and Families Minister. Under her guidance, we have launched weekly children's worship on Sunday mornings during the liturgy of the word. Additionally, parishioner, Dan Plafcan, is leading our 5th–9th graders in a series of Sunday School breakfast club gatherings at his house. Both lay leaders are currently supported by the ministry of volunteers.

The fall began with a series of parish-wide events, all of which offered intergenerational formation opportunities. These included the Back-to-School celebration, Discipleship Sunday, Shrine Mont Parish Retreat, celebration of St. Michael's 75th Anniversary, and World Communion Sunday.

The Shrine Mont parish retreat was a great success, engaging over eighty parishioners of all generations, including long time attendees, and many who were new to the mountain. The Rev. Ken Malcolm engaged the adults in Holy Scripture, while St. Michael's staff provided leadership for the children's programming. Worship with two other churches on Sunday morning reinforced the Diocesan nature of our communal commitment to formation.

Story Core: Sharing our stories and getting to the core of the Christian Story

The series often featured on NPR, StoryCorps, served as the inspiration behind the title of our new Sunday morning gatherings. StoryCorps has committed to the idea that everyone has an important story to tell, and sharing those stories highlights the humanity and possibility in us all. They are not a Christian organization, but their concept has taken root, as good ideas tend to do. An intentional spin on their concept, in our context Story Core will provide an opportunity to share your story while getting to the core of the Christian story.

Beginning in October Sunday mornings took a different shape. Worship remained unchanged, as did the offering of coffee in the parish hall following the service. After a period of time for fellowship, all were invited to join a table in the parish hall for discussion of a scriptural story, and the opportunity to share part of your story. The two are intimately intertwined, and this time of sharing our stories and getting to the core of the Christian story will help us to make these connections explicit.

Sundays in the Fall were spent with stories from the Gospel of Luke. There is no homework, and no need to have participated in conversation the week before. The intention is for this to be an intergenerational conversation, accessible no matter how much time you've spent with Holy Scripture. There will be no lecture, but a three-to-four-minute introduction of the day's text, and three questions to help guide discussion at your table.

The hope for our time together on Sunday morning is not a comprehensive historical analysis of the Biblical text. The hope for our time together is to move these essential Christian stories

from our heads to our hearts – getting them into our very bones. In getting to the core of our stories, together, we'll begin to give shape to the ways in which God's story is a part of our story, and our story is a part of God's story.

The Very Reverend Beth Franklin

Education for Ministry

St. Michael's continues to offer Education for Ministry as a formation program. The group meets on Thursday mornings at the church and graduated 2 members from the program in 2023 from St. Mary's parish. The EfM group expects to recognize two graduates in 2024 as well.

Beth Cavey

Formation for Children and Youth

In 2023, six youth who completed the confirmation classes begun in Fall 2022 chose to be confirmed, celebrated in a heartwarming service on May 21st. Eager to invest in the future of St. Michael's children, the Children and Youth Ministry Committee (The Very Rev. Beth Franklin, Molly Beier, Dan Plafcan, and Karen Ruff) surveyed St. Michael's families and held two listening sessions to understand their vision for faith formation. We discovered a strong desire for both younger children to have their own formation offering during the worship service and for middle schoolers to have dedicated time outside of the service.

In October, we launched Children's Worship, where a team of three experienced teachers take turns leading lively sessions based on Illustrated Ministry's Mini Revolutions curriculum, helping our four to ten-year-olds explore faith through playful learning. Children's Worship takes place every Sunday during the Liturgy of the Word and there have been four to eight children participating each Sunday.

Meanwhile, also in response to the survey of parents, Dan Plafcan led St. Michael's fifth to ninth graders in an exploration of nothing less than their purpose and place in the world, through the lens of the Christian faith. The young theologians met roughly every other Sunday (for a total of six times), hosted over breakfast at the Plafcan/Kusiak home and accompanied by a second adult (usually another parent). After each "Sunday School Breakfast Club," they walked together to church for worship service. The existential wondering and critical thought of this age group—which does not take for granted or privilege Christian understandings—deeply motivated the syllabus. The syllabus was also inspired theologically by recent Christian apologetics such as Samuel Wells' "Humbler Faith, Bigger God: Finding a Story to Live By" (2022). Dan plans to offer Sunday school to this age group in the winter/spring.

It is a privilege serving as your volunteer Children and Family Minister, and I'm deeply grateful for the dedicated team of creative teachers, Paula Dierkes, Carol Halvorson, Lisa Harkins, and Dan Plafcan, as well as the St. Michael's families who make this ministry take root and grow.

Karen Ruff, Children and Family Minister



OUTREACH


Outreach Committee: *In kinship with our neighbors*




Our guiding theme of “living as doers of the Word alongside Christ and others” (inspired by James 1:22) inspires us to work with community partners and to reach out to our neighbors—those who don’t have enough to eat; those who don’t have an affordable, safe place to live, and those who are at risk and need supportive services. St. Michael’s also increased contributions to global disaster/emergency relief. We added Bridges to Independence as a new community partner. Our goal is to increase volunteer opportunities in 2024!

St. Michael’s supported our neighbors and partners with contributions of goods and services, financial resources and volunteered time and talent as summarized below:

Partner	Description	St. Michael’s Contributions
 (Arlington Food Assistance Center)	<i>Provides weekly supplementary food to an increasing number of families.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Parishioners bagged food or sorted cans on the first Saturday of each month contributing 660 hours valued at \$20,988.Our Advent food drive resulted in a donation of 52 pounds of food valued at \$94.Donated \$5,000.
AFAC will visit St. Michael’s in March.		
 (Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing)	<i>Provides housing for low-income individuals and families.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">14 parishioners toured APAH; 10 volunteered at nearby Fisher House and for other activities (40 volunteer hours)Church members contributed 26 gift cards (\$500).Donated \$5,000.
APAH will visit St. Michael’s in November.		

 <p>BRIDGES TO INDEPENDENCE</p>	<p><i>Leads individuals and families out of homelessness and into stable, independent futures.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 volunteers helped with Mother's Day brunch and popup store. • In Advent, church members contributed 12 gift cards (\$300) • Donated \$5,000.
<p>Bridges will visit St. Michael's in May.</p>		

<p>DOORWAYS for Women and Families</p>	<p><i>Creates pathways out of domestic violence and homelessness toward safe, stable lives, providing temporary shelter and transition to permanent housing for women and families</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parishioners donated 15 workbooks for children. • In Advent, church members contributed \$250 in gift cards. • Donated \$5,000.
<p>Doorways will visit St. Michael's in February.</p>		

	<p><i>Collects blood that saves lives every day in our community.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October's 6th annual Blood Drive in memory of Kim Sutter resulted in 31 units of whole blood (valued at \$200-\$300/unit) that is most often used to treat patients undergoing cancer treatments, surgeries, inherited blood disorders and accident victims. • In five years, we contributed 217 units of blood
<p>The next blood drive will be in October.</p>		

<p>PathForward <small>Together, we end homelessness. DONOR & ASPIRE</small> (formerly ASPAN)</p>	<p><i>Provides immediate services to end homelessness and rental housing with supportive services for formerly homeless individuals.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Sibert House planted vegetables, flowers and herbs. • In the fall, we shared an end-of-summer picnic with SH residents. • In Advent, church members contributed \$175 in gift cards. • Donated \$5,000.
<p>PathFoward will visit St. Michael's in September.</p>		

<p>Disaster and Humanitarian Relief</p>		
<p>WCK (World Central Kitchen)</p>	<p><i>Uses the power of food to nourish communities and strengthen economies in times of crisis and beyond.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donated \$8,000 to support Hawaiian earthquake victims, Ukrainian refugees and people suffering in Gaza and Israel.
<p>Doctors Without Borders</p>	<p><i>Provides humanitarian medical care.</i></p>	



FOOD INSECURITY

AFAC: 5,000 (donations); \$94 (food contributions); \$20,988 (volunteer time).

HOUSING INSECURITY AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

APAH, Bridges and PathForward: \$15,000 (donations); \$975 (contributions).

MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR MOST VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Doorways and Inova Blood Drive: \$5,250 (donations); \$8,000 (contributions).

DISASTER/EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

WCK and Doctor Without Borders: \$8,000 (donations).



In total St. Michael's contributed \$34,225 to help neighbors in our community and to support emergency relief and held at least one volunteer activity each month.

You can help us to do more with our time and talent by volunteering and contributing. Learn more about our partners during their visits to St. Michael's in 2024. Or, suggest additional activities or priorities that we should consider to bring us in kinship with our neighbors.

2023-24 Members of the Outreach Committee:

Linda Kelleher (Chair), Kristen Hand, Janet Hansen, Marie Muller, Evan Robertson, Todd Trapp, Bob Moore (Vestry liaison)

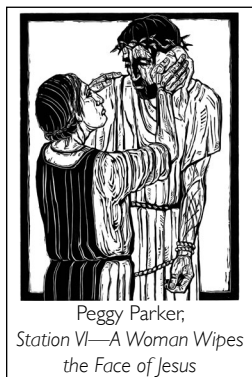


PARISH LIFE

Arts & Faith Ministry

The Arts & Faith Ministry produced three exhibitions for 2023: “Bearing Witness: Stations of the Cross,” “Beyond Boundaries,” and “Celebrating Our Community of Saints.”

Winter: Bearing Witness: Stations of the Cross



Created for Lent, this solo exhibition presented woodcut prints by local printmaker and sculptor Margaret (Peggy) Adams Parker. Also a Senior Lecturer at Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Parker's graphically stark work was displayed in the parish hall and online. The latter can be viewed in its entirety [here](#).

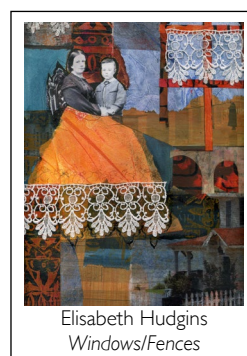
Parker also gave an artist talk, “Bearing Witness: Seeing As a Holy Act.”

The show opened on February 22, 2023, and concluded on April 6, 2023.

Spring: Beyond Boundaries

Rescheduled from 2022, “Beyond Boundaries” brought back to St. Michael's the Arlington collaborative group Studio 10, comprising artist Elisabeth (Beth) Hudgins, Kathleen (Kat) Jamieson, Linda Maldonado, Elise Ritter, and Deborah Taylor.

In the parish hall and online, the group exhibition of nearly four dozen works offered paintings, watercolors, and watermedia on the narrower themes of “Breaking Through,” “Horizon,” “Finding Form in Space Without Shape,” “Pausing at the Threshold,” and “Stretching Beyond.”

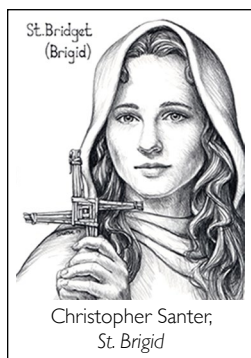


For viewers' self-study or group discussion, two sets of questions, “Investigating Boundaries in the Artworks” and “Investigating Boundaries in the Bible,” were made available in the parish hall.

The exhibit, which ran from May 20, 2023, through June 20, 2023, can be seen in its entirety [online](#).

Throughout 2023, Studio 10 artists continued to display their work in the hallway leading to the sanctuary. Framed and available for purchase, several of the works were sold and at least one was donated to the St. Michael's Art Collection.

Fall: Celebrating Our Community of Saints



The final exhibition for 2023, “Celebrating Our Community of Saints,” was a principal feature of St. Michael’s 75th Anniversary Celebration. A group show, it featured work by local artists Dana Ellyn, Elise Ritter, Kathleen Stark, and George Ziobro; woodcuts by Florida artist Kreg Yingst, who has exhibited at St. Michael’s in the past; and Minnesota artist Christopher Santer, whose prints of images of saints were drawn from his ongoing series of more than 100 saints and figures from the Gospels.

On view in the parish hall from September 13, 2023, to October 13, 2023, the group exhibition featured a statement by St. Michael’s rector, The Very Rev. Beth Franklin, as well as a reception for the artists.

The show can be viewed in its entirety [here](#).

It was decided that there would be no Advent 2023 or Lenten 2024 exhibition because of Rev. Franklin’s parental leave and sabbatical. An exhibition of icons by George Ziobro was planned for January 2024.

Other 2023 Activities: The St. Michael’s Art Collection and Fund

Ministry founder and leader Maureen Doallas produced for Rev. Franklin’s and Vestry consideration a draft set of “Art Fund and Collection Guidelines” to ensure that monies contributed to the Fund are used properly and that artworks donated to St. Michael’s Collection are appropriate, well-cared-for, and maintained and stored properly. Rev. Franklin distributed a copy of the Guidelines to Vestry members and held one discussion with Vestry members; discussion for purposes of adoption is expected in 2024.

In September 2023, to mark the parish’s 75th Anniversary Celebration, Maureen donated to St. Michael’s another artwork: “Mystical Marriage” by Tanja Butler. This is an original, limited edition (52/60) 10”x14” print on 18”x25” inch archival paper, a linoleum relief. It is unframed. Its approximate value: \$125. Information about the artwork, including an artist statement, accompanied the donation, acknowledgment of which was made in writing by Rev. Franklin. The artwork, in pristine condition and placed in the archival storage box, which was also donated, was purchased from the nonprofit CIVA before the organization ceased operations.

Maureen’s in-kind donations comprised an archival storage box 22”x30” for storing donated and unframed artworks, and a set of 4 cotton gloves for handling artworks. Both items were purchased from Blick Art Materials. Their approximate value: \$63.00.

Maureen has purchased a number of other artworks intended for the Collection once the Guidelines are adopted.

Maureen E. Doallas, Arts & Faith Founder, Leader, and Curator

Wednesday Lunch Bunch Book Group

The Wednesday Lunch Bunch Book group has met regularly, once a month, for more than 10 years, and we have read over 110 books since then! The group is informal in selection of books, focusing primarily on popular fiction and nonfiction works that stimulate discussion around spiritual, moral, ethical, and social topics. Almost any book is a candidate as the group has taken on light-hearted as well as weighty tomes. Members volunteer to “lead” the discussions, but everyone contributes their thoughts and perceptions. The group meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month from 1:00–2:00 PM in the library September through May, with a 3-month break over the summer. We also pause for the month of December in recognition of the holidays. Everyone is welcome! For more information, please contact [Cindy Warkentin](#).

Just a note: we read *Killers of the Flower Moon* before any murmurings from Hollywood!

Cindy Warkentin

Prime Time

Recent church-history research identified a potluck lunch for seniors (formerly titled XYZ) as the parish’s longest-running program. Now open to anyone whose schedule allows, the parish-hall lunches fall on the first Thursday of every other month. Since the Covid intrusion, some participants choose to forgo the meal and attend only the 1:15 programs, as follows: In February, we enjoyed exploring the origins of common sayings/idioms. Our April program featured an old-timey hymn sing. June—exhibiting samples of his work, avocational nature photographer Greg Strong relayed pointers for getting good shots. In August, Beth Franklin again welcomed the group at a festive lunch at the rectory. In October, three parishioners who hail from Hawaii shared perspectives on the islands’ unique cultural and religious history. In Advent, a traditional carol sing-along followed a dramatic holiday reading by TJ Burnside Clapp. At every gathering—average attendance about 20—we enjoy the fellowship—and laughter—of women from Lomax AME Zion. In the new year, all are welcome to join us, for food, conversation, and inspiration.

Evelyn Bence

APPENDIX: FINANCIAL REPORT DETAILED TABLES

ACTUAL VS PROJECTED INCOME AND EXPENSE FOR 2023 (ALL ACCOUNTS)

	Actual 12/31/23	2023 MSP	Actual vs projected	Explanation of Variances +/- 10% of MSP
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
Pledges & Offerings				
4100 · Pledges	334,626	\$333,970	107%	% includes pledges + adv. Pledges
4101 · Other Contributions	34,353	\$20,000	172%	Unpredictable
4104 · Advance Pledges Transfer	22,400			
4200 · Prior Year Pledges	5,196			
Total Pledges & Offerings	\$396,575	\$353,970	112%	
Investment & Other Income				
4401 · St. Michael's Fund Transfer	\$10,500	\$10,500	100%	
4402 · Interest Received	\$6,001			Interest on new MMA
4520 · Miscellaneous Income	\$11,875	\$5,000	238%	More rental income than expected
Total Investment & Other Income	\$28,376	\$15,500	183%	
Total Income	\$424,951	\$369,470	115%	
Expense				
Salaries & Benefits				
5110 · Salaries	\$175,273	\$173,343	101%	
5111 · Contractors & Staff Expenses	\$2,110	\$2,200	96%	
5115 · Supply Clergy Stipend	\$2,121	\$1,645	129%	Underestimate of need: small \$ amt
5120 · Pension Contributions	\$28,709	\$28,709	100%	
5130 · Insurance (Staff)	\$20,571	\$18,976	108%	
5140 · Payroll taxes (FICA)	\$5,994	\$5,866	102%	
5160 · Auto Allowance	\$230	\$500	46%	Amt requested was paid
5170 · Payroll Fees	\$1,985	\$2,000	99%	
5180 · Rector's Hospitality Fund	\$1,519	\$1,500	101%	
Total Salaries & Benefits	\$238,512	\$234,739	102%	
Buildings & Grounds				
5230 · Insurance	\$18,403	\$13,880	133%	Property reappraised mid-year
5240 · Utilities	\$8,901	\$10,000	89%	Bills lower than expected
5241 · Utilities - Rectory	\$4,280	\$5,000	86%	Bills lower than expected
5250 · Cleaning/Maintenance	\$7,495	\$8,600	87%	Bills lower than expected
5251 · Lawn Service		\$1,000	0%	Funds not needed
5260 · Fire/Security	\$3,981	\$5,100	78%	Bills lower than expected

5270 · Routine Maintenance					
5270.1 · Elevator Maintenance	\$5,402	\$8,200	66%	Bills lower than expected	
5270.2 · Routine Maintenance	\$7,734	\$5,000	155%	More repairs than expected	
Total - 5270 Routine Maintenance	\$13,136	\$13,200	100%		
5280 - Transfers to Fund #3 Major Maintenance	\$0				
Total Buildings & Grounds	\$56,196	\$56,780	99%		
Parish Administration					
5320 · General Office Expenses	\$9,221	\$7,500	123%	2nd yr of overrun: needs review for '24	
5330 · Telephone Expense	\$2,118	\$2,160	98%		
5331 · Telephone Expense - Rectory	\$1,068	\$1,100	97%		
5340 · Postage	\$670	\$750	89%	Funds not needed	
5350 · Administrative Services	\$18,596	\$18,000	103%		
5360 · Debt Service	\$10,000	\$10,000	100%		
Total Parish Administration	\$41,673	\$39,510	105%		
Christian Education					
5410 · Church School	\$724	\$750	97%		
5420 · Adult Education	\$2,003	\$2,250	89%	Funds not needed	
5440 · Clergy Continuing Education	\$1,450	\$2,000	73%	Funds not needed	
5460 · Arts and Faith	\$1,128	\$1,000	113%	Underestimate of need: small \$ amt	
Total Christian Education	\$5,304	\$6,000	88%		
Parish Activities					
5510 · Hospitality	\$6,106	\$2,500	244%	Anniversary brunch	
5520 · Music & Choir	\$3,330	\$3,000	111%	New music for new staff	
5530 · Communications	\$3,981	\$1,800	221%	Fee increase + pmt for 2 years	
5540 · Senior Youth Group	\$359	\$500	72%	Funds not needed	
5550 · Diocesan Council Meetings	\$834	\$1,000	83%	Funds not needed	
5560 · Vestry/Annual Meeting	\$167	\$500	33%	Funds not needed	
5570 · Altar Guild Expenses	\$758	\$1,000	76%	Funds not needed	
5580 · Shrine Mont Scholarships	\$3,000	\$3,000	100%		
Total Parish Activities	\$18,535	\$13,300	139%		
Outreach & Mission					
5620 · Diocesan Pledge	\$24,433	\$24,433	100%		
5630 · Transfers to Fund #26 Outreach	\$33,397	\$33,397	100%		
Total Outreach & Mission	\$57,830	\$57,830	100%		
Total Expense	\$418,050	\$408,159	102%		
Net Ordinary Income	\$6,901	-\$38,689			



ST. MICHAEL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH ARLINGTON, VA

1132 North Ivanhoe Street • Arlington, VA 22205

stmichaelsarlington.org • 703.241.2474

