



the  
**church** of the  
**atonement**

ANNUAL MEETING  
31 JANUARY 2021  
12:30 P.M.

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5749 N. Kenmore Ave.  
Chicago, Il 60660  
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## Agenda

- I. Call to Order and Prayers for the Parish
- II. Welcome, Appointment of Clerk and Parliamentarian, and Discussion of Zoom Logistics
- III. Approval of Minutes from 2020 Annual Meeting
- IV. Rector's Address
- V. Senior Warden's Address
- VI. Treasurers' Financial Reports
- VII. Elections
  - Vestry Members
  - Parish Delegates
  - Wardens
- VIII. New Business
  - By-Laws
  - Recognition of Outgoing Vestry/Warden/Treasurer
- IX. Open Conversation
- X. Closing Prayer and Adjournment

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## 2020 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

January 26, 2020

Episcopal Church of the Atonement Annual Meeting Minutes for 2020	
Time:	Sunday, January 26, 2020 11:33 – 12:41pm
Location:	The Episcopal Church of The Atonement Sanctuary, Chicago, IL
Presiding:	Mtr. Erika Takacs (Rector); Margaret Sullivan (Sr. Warden); Greg Bradley (Jr. Warden); Michael Trumbold (Treasurer); James Hawkes (Clerk)
Present:	Church Members and Visitors
Next Meeting:	January 31, 2021, 12:30 pm

1. Call to Order and Prayers for the Parish: Mother Erika Takacs called the 2020 Annual Meeting of the Episcopal Church of the Atonement to order at 11:33 am, followed by asking everyone to stand for an opening prayer.
2. Appointment of Clerk: **Motion** made to approve the appointment of a clerk, James G. Hawkes, as nominated by Mother Erika Takacs, to take notes at the current Annual Meeting. **Motion seconded. Motion passed.**
3. Approval of Minutes from 2019 Annual Meeting: **Motion** made by Tim Miller to accept the 2019 minutes. **Motion seconded** by Aron Dunlap. **Question? Motion passed.**
4. Rector's Address: Mtr. Erika kicked off the meeting by asking the audience to participate in an exercise. First, she asked all those in the audience that have been members of Atonement for at least one year to stand (majority of audience stood). This was followed by, for those with less than 2 years as members to please sit. She repeated this for increments of 5 years until the last person standing (Reta Kikutani) had attended Atonement for 56 years. Although an exact count was not made at each grouping asked to sit, it was a telling story as to how many new members and old alike represent the Parish population of Atonement.

This was followed by a review of the state of affairs at Atonement by Mtr. Erika, mentioning more baptisms and weddings this year; sixteen people confirmed or received into the Episcopal Church; having a great neighborhood turn-out for the 2019 Pet Blessing; as well as the new Summer Arts Camp in August welcoming 31 kids, with plans to expand this coming year. Also mentioned was the success of the stewardship new formation with over 40 new families pledging financial support in the fall, a new Sunday school class, and growing leadership and service across the church. Last November's Ministry Fair was successful in that it brought to the attention to both new and long-time parishioners the ministry guilds that are here at Atonement and what opportunities are available to parishioners in which to take part; it resulted in folks signing up for several ministries including Vestry. Mtr. Erika was looking forward to the next steps for the church moving forward with the help of all those present on this day, later on at this meeting.

5. Senior Wardens Report: Margaret Sullivan (Sr. Warden) discussed some of the strategic tasks being carried out by the Vestry, including last year's retreat, resulting in a brainstorming session, identifying and compiling a list of all the ministry leaders, and organizing a Ministry Fair to bring in front of the Parish to see what opportunities are here at Atonement for individuals to join and put their skills to work and help build the church community. Keeping the parish strong, and looking for ways to improve Atonement's effectiveness in the community is a key initiative for the Vestry. Also mentioned was the College for Congregational Development (CCD) program that Margaret, Mtr. Erika and Will Harpest participated in last summer. This was a learning program on building tools to help the parish move forward more strategically for the future. Atonement is currently underway creating bylaws through the By-Laws Committee. Overall, the Vestry and other church leaders are determining new ways to move Atonement to the future, with reference to Mother Erika's previous comments to the Parish above - more to come.

Mtr. Erika followed up with comments thanking her great team led by Wardens, Margaret Sullivan and Greg Bradley, who go well beyond their roles as Wardens in helping the church. She followed by introducing our Treasurer, Mike, to give an update.

6. Treasurer's Financial Report: Mike Trumbold addressed – 2019 started off rough, but ended well. He mentioned the successful transition from our former bookkeeping system of finances to QuickBooks online, which was a long and tedious process, but well worth the efforts making it easier for monitoring in the future. Mike mentioned that our old buildings maintenance was a large expense for 2019 (unexpected plumbing and leaking roof repairs, etc.), so was over budget. Catechesis also increased in 2019 with more money going towards teaching kids, but will remain close to the same for 2020. The upcoming 2020 budget, as reviewed by the Finance Guild and Vestry, will include a 1.6% cost of living increase for salaried employees; and an increase in money budgeted for the much needed building maintenance and repairs for 2020, to come from the Endowment. Most other expenses will remain close to the same as those from 2019. The 2020 budget also reflects a lower pledge total due to relocations or deaths from last year, although there is an actual increase in the number of new pledging units. Mike commented that a few days before this meeting, the 2020 budget was showing a deficit of \$7400, and shortly before this meeting 2 pledges just came in that covered that amount (applause). He thanked parishioners for their continued support to keep our doors open. Further finance details are presented in the annual report.

Following his report, Mike then announced his retirement after nearly 10 years as Treasurer of Atonement at the end of this year. He has enjoyed his time carrying out this position and is looking forward to involvement in other activities at Atonement.

Mtr. Erika thanked Mike for all his work and made a call to receive the financial report. **Motion** was Barbara Newman to receive the treasurer's report. **Motion seconded** by several parishioners. **Question?** Barbara Newman made a heart-felt thanks to Mike for a great job as treasurer over the years, and thanked him again for all his work (applause). **Motion passed.**

7. Elections:

- a. Electing Convention Delegates: Mother Erika introduced slate of candidates – Stephen Reineccius, Will Cronenwett, and Allison Tribble, with Joseph Gauss as alternate. **Motion** made to accept this slate by Brenda. **Seconded** by Liz. **Questions?** Discussion ensued, with some of the concerns highlighted below:
- How does the selection process of creating the slate of delegates work? What are the delegates' priorities? (Richard)
  - How are Vestry members selected? Parishioners should have bios of candidates ahead of time. Suggestion made for tabling the election. (Mark)
  - Concerns expressed on Bishop's election and needing more information / ensure diversity. (Rosemary)
  - Concern raised on having enough time to table the election. (Mike Twaddell)
  - **Motion** was made to table the election of delegate candidates' slate for Diocese Convention until such time people could review/meet delegate selection. **Question?** Joy Rogers expressed concern over such a last minute move with the understanding that leadership is open to additional conversation – Vestry must determine. After a great deal of deliberation, a vote was taken. By show of hand count, **Motion denied** by a narrow margin, 41 Yea, 46 Nay.
  - Follow-up comment that there needs to be a process for addressing such a close vote (Ted)

Mtr. Erika responded to each of the questions and comments above, and recognized individuals' concerns. She pointed out that this is the first time Atonement has brought this slate before the parish at an Annual Meeting, and that there has been an ongoing process for developing bylaws to help address these situations and provide increased transparency moving ahead. Mtr. Erika expressed her thanks for such open and spirited conversation, and ensured the parish that these concerns will be taken into serious consideration by Vestry and leadership for the future, as the bylaws of Atonement are being constructed. In the interim, efforts will be made to find ways for improved communication between the parish and their representatives in the upcoming electing convention for the Bishop of Chicago.

Back to the original **Motion** to approve the slate of delegates. **Motion passed.**

- b. Vestry Elections: Mother Erika announced the three Vestry members to be nominated for a 3-year term, including David Beil, Steven Britt, and Barbara Newman. She asked for a motion to approve these nominations. **Motion** made by Will Cronenwett to receive each of these candidates for 3-year terms. **Motion**

**seconded. Motion passed unanimously.** It was pointed out by some parish participants that in future years, they would like to see the slate of names in advance of the meeting. Mtr. Erika acknowledged these concerns, and once again assured folks that these issues will be addressed, as new bylaws are being formed. Mtr. Erika Takacs then congratulated the new Vestry members and expressed her well wishes to them and the parish for 2020 and beyond.

Margaret thanked the parish for their active participation at this meeting, and leadership and Vestry will take earnest note of the needs expressed at this meeting.

8. New Business: Mtr. Erika recognized the outgoing members, Helen Lambin, Beth Sharpe, and Kent Haag, and thanked them for their dedicated years of service.
9. Congregational Activity: Mtr. Erika explained the next activity for parishioner's participation in helping Vestry during the coming year in development of a long-term plan for Atonement. The activity involved parishioner's input on three questions about Atonement: 1. What has been most meaningful for you; 2. Where would you like Atonement to focus its energy; and 3. What is your greatest wish for Atonement. A guide sheet was handed out to the audience describing in more detail on how this exercise would work. Flip charts with various sub-categories were distributed around the room to help guide participants; comments would be recorded on post-its and placed under appropriate headings. Sub-categories included: adult formation, buildings and grounds / gardens, children's programs, EfM, endowment / finance / stewardship / Vestry, family ministries, music, outreach, parish life / community, ushers / greeters, worship, and other. Vestry members were available to help with any questions.

At the conclusion of this activity, Mtr. Erika thanked all the parishioners for their input. Results to be tabulated and shared. It will be invaluable to Atonement in guiding the directions in which it will take in the coming years.

10. Closing Prayer and Adjournment: Mother Erika adjourned the meeting in prayer 12:41pm. Luncheon followed for all in Montgomery Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

*James G. Hawkes*  
*Clerk of the Vestry*

**TREASURER'S REPORT** (Mike Trumbold, Outgoing Treasurer)

<b>The Episcopal Church of the Atonement</b>		
<b>2020 YEAR END FINANCIALS</b>		
	<b>2020</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>ACTUAL</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Building Use - AA, Garden Apt, Weddings	\$ 33,908.00	\$ 37,840.00
Catechesis - Adult & Children	\$ 1,055.00	\$ 3,450.00
<b>Fundraising</b>		
Chi-Town Jazz Fest	16,414.71	800.00
Gala - General Donations (Tickets not used)	\$ 2,212.59	\$ 38,500.00
Parish Life Events - New Year's Eve Party	3,010.00	1,500.00
<b>Total Fundraising</b>	<b>\$ 21,637.30</b>	<b>\$ 40,800.00</b>
Other Receipts - Parking, Flowers, Flowers, Candles, PPP Loan, Mineral Rights	\$ 77,077.45	\$ 27,775.00
Special Offerings - Special Envelopes & Holidays	\$ 8,519.00	\$ 10,300.00
Total Weekly Offering - Envelopes, Online, Open Plate	\$ 410,820.40	\$ 408,424.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 553,017.15</b>	<b>\$ 528,589.00</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
Accounting/Legal - Bank & Vanco Fees, Professional Fees	\$ 3,002.44	\$ 1,779.00
<b>Building Expenses</b>		
Building Maintenance Supplies - Janitorial, Kitchen, Office	\$ 4,060.30	\$ 8,000.00
Building Services/Repairs - Church & Rectory - Major Repairs	\$ 59,180.13	\$ 40,000.00
Commercial Insurance	39,569.00	39,569.00
<b>Utilities</b>		
Electric - Church, Parish House & Rectory	\$ 10,576.55	\$ 13,000.00
Gas - Church, Parish House & Rectory	\$ 20,863.40	\$ 20,000.00
Sewer	0.00	100.00
Water	823.49	650.00
<b>Total Utilities</b>	<b>\$ 32,263.44</b>	<b>\$ 33,750.00</b>
<b>Total Building Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 135,072.87</b>	<b>\$ 121,319.00</b>
Catechesis Expenses - Adult & Children (Summer & Fall Arts)	\$ 3,015.85	\$ 3,550.00
Diocese - Apportionment & Bishop's Visit	\$ 25,200.00	\$ 25,550.00
<b>Fundraising Expenses</b>		
Chi-Town Jazz Festival	12,645.80	0.00
Gala	0.00	17,500.00
Parish Life Events	513.12	1,500.00
<b>Total Fundraising Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 13,158.92</b>	<b>\$ 19,000.00</b>
Music - Choir, Library, Organ Repairs, Events	\$ 48,686.48	\$ 55,600.00
Office Supplies - Postage, Software/computer, Printing	\$ 10,418.51	\$ 7,675.00
Office/Parish Expenses - Copier Lease & Supplies, Coffee/Water Service	\$ 9,007.26	\$ 13,892.00
Outreach Expenses	24,714.07	25,000.00
Personnel - Salaries & Benefits, Payroll Service, W/C Insurance, Employment Taxes	\$ 299,864.68	\$ 322,978.44
Telephone & Internet - Land & cell phones, Equipment Lease & Internet	\$ 5,781.60	\$ 5,768.00
Worship/Altar Guild - Vestment Repairs, Altar Decorations, Wines/hosts	\$ 5,279.37	\$ 8,400.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 584,632.05</b>	<b>\$ 610,511.44</b>
<b>Net Operating Revenue</b>	<b>-\$ 31,614.90</b>	<b>-\$ 81,922.44</b>
Total Other Revenue - Endowment Fund Transfer, Designated Donations	\$ 58,000.00	\$ 88,000.00
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 26,385.10</b>	<b>\$ 6,077.56</b>

## **Narrative Financial Report, Mike Trumbold, Outgoing Treasurer**

We all agree 2020 is not a year that will be remembered fondly . . . except for the year-end financial position of our parish. As bad as 2020 could have been financially for us we were blessed by a very giving parish family and several new outside sources of income.

The Financial Statement is printed in this booklet so I will not go into detail here. I do, however, want to explain a little about our income and expenses.

The Chi-Town Jazz Fest was a new event which our parish supported in 2020. The total collected was \$16,414.71. Since there were very few expenses \$12,645. was donated to Ravenswood Community Services, Our Lady of Lourde's Church Soup Kitchen and Care for Real. Also, a few Gala tickets had been purchased (\$2,212.59) before it was decided a Gala could not be held and those individuals donated those funds to the Church.

We applied for and received a \$46,000 PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) loan which was subsequently forgiven by the US Small Business Administration (SBA). We also leased spaces in our parking lot which raised almost \$12,000.

Our Music Department received a donation of \$30,000 which, while not formally designated as such, was intended for special projects. The decision was made early in the days of the pandemic to use this gift to help pay for our choir; keeping our musicians employed was of primary importance. Most of this gift has been spent; our hope is that at some point we will be able to replenish this gift when our finances are able to do so.

We held our first virtual New Year's Eve party and, while not a fundraiser, we raised \$3,010 and with expenses of \$308.70 and netted \$2,701.20 to help support our Outreach programs.

Almost 80% of our income is generated by pledges from parishioners. One of my concerns in 2020 was the ability of members to continue to support us by their pledges due to the pandemic and the ensuing economic strain. Even in these very uncertain times almost 85% of those pledging were able to fulfill their pledges, and some were even able to donate above what they pledged. This speaks volumes about the dedication of our parish family who feel the importance of our many ministries and parish outreach programs.

Our total revenue for 2020 was \$24,428 over budget.

Many of our expenses were under budget last year due to the closing of our church doors - - utilities, Gala expenses, office/parish expenses, personnel, worship/altar (less wine and breads purchased), etc.

At last year's Annual Meeting we discussed transferring \$54,000 from the Endowment Fund in order to make much needed repairs to our buildings and grounds. This money was used to pay for repairs to rectory windows, replacing the fans in the church (one had fallen and all three were almost thirty years old and needed to be replaced), parking lot repairs and other outdoor work, i.e. replacing gangway concrete between the parish house and rectory, repair a church buttress,

replacing the front rectory sidewalk and commission a feasibility study so we will be better able to prioritize needed future maintenance and also study ways in which we can make more efficient use of our facilities.

2020 financially ended on a very positive note with Net Revenue of \$26,385.10 which was \$20,307.54 over budget. An amazing statistic given the very trying and difficult year.

Last year I mentioned at the Annual Meeting that, in keeping with good business practices, 2020 would be my final year as your Treasurer. I have had this role for around a decade and it has been very rewarding for me; however, no Treasurer should have an indefinite term. I also feel it is time for me to pursue other worthwhile activities in our parish. The Finance Guild and Vestry have found a very competent and qualified individual in Doug Wagner. As a CPA with considerable non-profit experience Doug will bring new ideas and a different fresh point of view to our parish. During this transition time I will work in the background as parish bookkeeper and support Doug and the Vestry in any way I can.



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**2021 Atonement Budget** (*Doug Wagner, Incoming Treasurer*)

	<u>Actual 2020</u>	<u>Budget 2020</u>	<u>Budget 2021</u>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Building Use (AA, apartment, etc.)	33,908	37,840	34,420
Catechesis (formation for children and adults)	1,055	3,450	1,675
Fundraising (Gala, Chi-Town Jazz Fest)	21,638	40,800	43,250
Other Receipts (parking, flowers, candles, etc.)	77,077	27,775	34,045
Special Offerings (special envelopes, holidays)	8,519	10,300	8,750
Weekly Offering (pledge, online, plate)	<u>410,820</u>	<u>408,424</u>	<u>312,700</u>
Total Revenue	<u>553,017</u>	<u>528,589</u>	<u>434,840</u>

**Expenditures**

Accounting/Legal	3,002	1,779	2,750
Building Expenses (repairs, supplies, insurance, utilities)	135,073	121,319	95,210
Catechesis Expenses	3,016	3,550	1,675
Diocese (apportionment, convention)	25,200	25,550	19,750
Fundraising Expenses	13,159	19,000	22,625
Music	48,686	55,600	41,700
Office Supplies	10,419	7,675	7,245

	2020 Actual	2020 Budget	2021 Budget
Office/Parish Expenses (includes media subscriptions - Zoom, Constant Contact, etc.)	9,007	13,892	19,134
Outreach Expenses	24,714	25,000	18,750
Personnel (salaries, benefits, pension, etc.)	299,865	322,978	321,346
Telephone & Internet	5,782	5,768	5,160
Worship/Altar Guild	<u>5,279</u>	<u>8,400</u>	<u>5,920</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>584,632</u>	<u>610,511</u>	<u>561,265</u>
Net Operating Revenue	(31,615)	(81,922)	(126,425)
Other Revenue			
Transfer from Endowment Fund	54,000	54,000	61,300
Other Ordinary Income	<u>4,000</u>	<u>34,000</u>	<u>30,000</u>
Total Other Revenue	<u>58,000</u>	<u>88,000</u>	<u>91,300</u>
Net Revenue	<u>\$ 26,385</u>	<u>\$ 6,078</u>	<u>\$ (35,125)</u>

## WRITTEN REPORTS FROM PARISH LEADERSHIP



### RECTOR'S REPORT

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*The Very Rev'd Erika Takacs*

*There is always light  
if only we're brave enough to see it  
if only we're brave enough to be it.*

[Andrea Gorman, *The Hill We Climb*]

I, like many of you I'm sure, was deeply moved by the poetry of Andrea Gorman, our National Youth Poet Laureate, at President Biden's inauguration. She is a master of her craft, and on this occasion, she harnessed the power of words to build, comfort, and inspire. The last lines of her poem were especially meaningful to me, falling, as they did, within these days following the Feast of the Epiphany. There is always light – a light to enlighten the nations – if only we're brave enough to see it, bear witness to it, and bear it into the world.

This year has been filled with challenges to that call to be the light. We began 2020 with the normal round of events – weddings, funerals, preparation for confirmation, recitals, interfaith programs, a pancake supper, and the first few days of Lent. But then, in what felt like a blink of an eye, everything changed. We as a nation suddenly realized that we could not treat this new disease as if it were just a bad flu. Our diocese wisely decided to close our church for public, in-person worship, and we all began to adjust to this new way of life, with masks, ordering all of our groceries, and working from home.

But, as we said from the first days of the pandemic in March, while the church building was closed, Atonement was still open. Atonement was still bearing the light of Christ into the world, increasing our opportunities for online worship, reaching out to each other and to our community, and proclaiming a message of God's mercy and love into a needy world. We told our neighborhood that we were praying for them. We encouraged neighbors to write messages of love and inclusion on our steps, proclaiming that Black Lives Matter and that every human being is a beloved child of God, filled with dignity and worthy of respect. We worked hard to create safe procedures for reopening our doors for in-worship and, when the time was right, we had several months of regular in-person Mass. We even had a bishop's visit, welcoming Bishop Lee to Atonement for his last official pastoral visit and holding a Mass outside to welcome new members into our church through confirmation, reception, and reaffirmation of baptismal vows. We continued to serve meals at Sarah's Circle, provided meals to essential workers, and supported local businesses. We continued to bear the light of Christ into the world in many and varied ways.

We have done so much this year – every single one of you who has joined us for worship, called a neighbor, served on a committee or guild, written a card or a word of hope on our parish steps, bought a meal to support a local business, or just taken the time to pray for someone on our prayer list. Our leadership team, including Wardens Margaret Sullivan and Greg Bradley, Treasurer Mike Trumbold, and the members of the vestry have worked incredibly hard this year and done amazing things to strengthen the mission of this parish. I am so honored and blessed to serve with such faithful, creative, and generous leaders.

None of this has been easy. All of this has required us to lean heavily upon our faith and upon each other. But we have proclaimed, again and again, that there is always light, the light of Jesus Christ, born into the world *especially* to shine in the kind of darkness we have experienced this year.

The question I have for us now is this: how will God inspire us to be brave this year? How will we share this light to our neighborhood and to the world in perhaps new and even more transformative ways? We know that there is great need in our city and in our nation. We know that this need isn't going anywhere. So how might God be inviting us to be bolder in our proclamation of the Gospel, in our sharing of the light?

In Christ, there is always light, if we are brave enough to see it, if we are brave enough to be it. Thanks be to God.



## SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

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*Ms. Margaret Sullivan*

In last year's report, I quoted this from our home page: "Whoever you are, and wherever you are in your walk of faith, you are most welcome here." As true and stirring today as in January 2020. But how challenging and strange our "walk" became! The pandemic and other crises upended so much, including the very idea of the "here" of Atonement—a real, beloved, and holy place, but one where we often couldn't attend Mass or exchange the peace of Christ with our sisters and brothers.



But we are still here. Atonement, wherever "it" is and serves, is still our church home, still welcoming, still praying together every day of the week, still out in the world confessing our faith. It's not been easy, but we've adjusted. And a major contributor, among many (as evidenced in the following reports) in the parish, in adapting to changing realities has been the efforts of an energetic, hands-on, faithful Vestry that was, through it all, intensely engaged, creative, and diligent on so many fronts.

When the pandemic hit full force, we agreed early on as a group to a guiding declaration for the parish: "connecting creatively and growing as a family in our faith, hope, and love." That meant supporting and connecting with others who faced a shocking, unprecedented lockdown; Vestry members began by leading an effort to call each parishioner. We conducted a retreat to focus on Atonement's declaration, values, and activities during the health crisis. Subsets of the Vestry met with leads in worship, families, music, and outreach in weekly coordinating meetings to identify activities to help the parish navigate through the pandemic and to integrate our efforts. The Vestry dug into additional working sessions, besides standing monthly meetings, to address and resolve our upcoming budget. And we made an extensive effort to draft and communicate formal by-laws, which clarify roles and responsibilities and church and financial governance. When there was an

opportunity for a limited church reopening this summer and fall, the Vestry was heavily involved in researching and implementing processes to train, staff, and guide greeters and ushers, so we could manage risk for our people.

I so deeply appreciate Mother Erika's spirit and leadership, and a stellar Vestry, Treasurer, and Secretary—all of whom were instrumental in meeting the challenges of 2020, most of whom are continuing to serve in 2021, connecting and growing Atonement as a faith community, no matter what. Greg, Dave, Steven, Natalie, Will, Marian, Aron, Bill, Barbara, Daniel, Mike, and Jim: I love you—who you are and what and how you've contributed.



### JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

*Mr. Greg Bradley*

As we all know, 2020 has been a year of challenges!! This has also been a year of new changes and opportunities!!

In writing this report, I am thinking of all the new words we have added to our daily vocabulary, such as ZOOM, IN PERSON and SOCIAL DISTANCING!!! All these have affected every single area of our lives together but none more than the word FLUID!! As part of the leadership team, we made decisions only needing to quickly change them, sometimes daily. We changed the date of our Gala 4 times, only to sadly postpone an in-person gala for the safety of all. Through all of this, I was amazed with the astonishing people who made all the needed changes possible and adapt to the hard times. For instance, we were able to structure our bylaws, form a new endowment guild policy, and start online worship services for the first time at Atonement.

For sure, there is a bright light at the end of a long dark tunnel!! We are on the dawn of new era!! We have an exciting year in front of us. Moving back to in person worship, inviting new people to join us, forming a path to balancing budgets, holding an in-person gala in September, and much more. I am so thankful for all the great people who make Atonement the extraordinary place that it is. God Bless!!

Looking forward to this coming year!!



### DEACONS' REPORTS

*The Rev'd Jason Elliott*

To the beloved community gathered at the Church of the Atonement,

I was privileged to continue to minister with and among the people of the Church of the Atonement in 2020, and, what a different experience this past year has been!

In 2020, through the Second Sunday in Lent, I kept my typical schedule of ministry: weekly deacon at the 9am mass and the 11am mass on Sundays, joining or leading the adult faith formation sessions, joining weekday masses, evensongs, and other events as possible. That all changed with the pandemic and has shifted to a virtual deaconing! I officiate Morning Prayer weekly on Facebook Live (an absolute joy to lead and something I always feel blessed to do), and I look forward to weekly Eucharist on Zoom at 11am. I've continued to preach and teach, both at Atonement and at a pre-pandemic in-person meeting (remember those?!) in February 2020 with the Community of the Mother of Jesus.

Outside the parish, I minister in my spiritual direction practice, with 5-8 directees; there is also a peer review group component of this ministry, as well. This ministry has shifted entirely online, and 8 had the opportunity to begin working with two new directees this past year, so 2020 has also brought an increase in ministry for me, which was a lovely surprise. Throughout the year, I also met together with the deacons monthly via Zoom (we have an awesome community of deacons in this diocese), then we joined all of the diocese during Diocesan Convention (more Zoom) and the Electing Convention (Zoom again). I am now helping on the Gifts Committee, as Bishop-Elect Paula Clark soon begins her ministry among us. Deo gratias!

This has been a year of new learnings and great blessings for me and for my family. Alberto and Nico and I have learned about teaching in a pod, we learned about staying safe and keeping our neighbors safe, and we learned that faith lived at home, though different, may be as life-giving as the in-person experience we've known all our lives. As many of you are aware, in my secular work I'm an epidemiologist and work as Vice President at HDMS, a health data consulting firm here in Chicago. The impact of the COVID19 pandemic has been enormous at work, and 2020 was a year in my career that challenged me more than any yet to date. I'm very blessed that Mtr. Erika supports and encourages me in my work-ministry-life balance, particularly as that balance was thrown into chaos this past year. I'm very fortunate and appreciative of the flexibility and kind words she and the community at Atonement offer as I have struggled in 2020 with the balances of being a bivocational deacon.

As I reflect on our collective ministry in 2020, I am comforted to recall that God unites all creation together through God's living, active grace. Though we are separated from one another for a time, God holds us in bonds of affection and prayer, just as the living are united with the beloved dead. We are blessed to be with you in prayer, united spiritually as we are separated physically, and look forward to being with you again and ministering among you once more in person, hopefully in a time in the not-so-distant future.



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*The Rev'd Charles F. Farrell*

Dear Sisters & Brothers in Christ:

While this year has presented numerous challenges, it has also offered opportunities to reimagine what Church is and how Atonement can do Church in new ways. For me I have been happy to serve as the deacon of the Mass on Zoom. I have also been part of a small group who have led Morning Prayer on Facebook live since last spring. When things eventually return to normal, I do

hope we keep MP online as we reach far more people this way. I am a member of the Outreach Guild which has continued to serve even, or perhaps in spite, of the times we live in.

I continue to be involved with Care for Real, volunteering as many Saturdays as my schedule allows. Care for Real has also adapted to the changing circumstances during this past year. I look forward to a time when more Atonement community members can get back to their regular volunteer roles, and when we can have groups from Atonement again volunteering at Care for Real.

## PARISH FOUNDATIONS

### FINANCE GUILD

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*Mr. Tim Miller*

I have had the privilege of being a member of this parish for over 25 years and serving on the Finance Guild for the past 2 years. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our treasurer, Mike Trumbold as well as the devoted members of the Finance Guild: Marian DeBerry, Gary Dillehay, Bob Remer, Louise Rohr and Meera Schlack. We are also supported by our Rector, Mother Erika and Atonement's Wardens, Margaret Sullivan and Greg Bradley. This was Marian DeBerry's last year serving on the guild. I want to thank her for all her support and service. She is a wonderful steward of this parish.

Each month the Finance Guild meets the Saturday before the monthly vestry meeting. This year has been a bit more challenging as we have met via Zoom. During each meeting our treasurer reviews the financial stability of the parish. The guild discusses trends and overall health of the churches' finances. This past year with the faithful support of our members and a PPP Loan received, we ended the year on solid ground.

During the last third of 2020 we began to turn our eyes to the 2021 budget. The Annual Stewardship Campaign and our individual giving is what shapes our budget. We have worked with the treasurer and have provided a budget to the vestry. Although in the red, we know that we are a sound parish and God will provide for us. The buildings of the parish that have graced the corner of Ardmore & Kenmore for over 125 years may be closed; utilities, maintenance and salaries along with our outreach and service to our members and community at large go on. This may be another challenging year and know that the Finance Guild will continue to look out for the best interests of this faithful community.

On a personal note, I want to acknowledge my dear friend Mike Trumbold, who is stepping down as treasurer, for the many years of service he has given to this parish. It has been an honor to work with him on this guild, the vestry, ushering and coffee hour just to name a few. He has always had the best interest in Atonement at heart. He is a true gentleman in every sense of the word.



## ENDOWMENT GUILD

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Ms. Peg Tomaszek-Witry

*You crown the year with Your goodness, and Your paths drip with abundance.*

Psalm 65: 11

This year in September the Vestry approved new bylaws and policy governing the activities of the Endowment Guild (“Guild”). This was the culmination of a process started by David Dalton, former chair of the Guild, and vetted by lawyers at both our investment advisor, the Episcopal Church Foundation (“ECF”), and the Diocese of Chicago. These new documents replaced those adopted ten years ago. The update included adding provisions to incorporate the ESG (environmental, social, governance) language of ECF and in accord with those of the Chicago Diocese.

Thanks for work on this goes to 2020’s Guild members, Jerry Mash, Timothy Fox, Richard Benson and Peter Benitez. We want to thank Peter Benitez and Richard Benson for the insights they provided in forming the policy approved, as they leave the Guild. Approved by the Vestry and joining the Guild are Kathryn Worthington for a three-year term and Ricardo Villota for a two-year term, who will help the Guild to increase awareness of the endowment and the benefits it provides to the parish community.

The year ended with The Endowment Fund of the Church of the Atonement (“Endowment”) having a balance of \$1,561,981.14. Without getting too technical, following the endowment guidelines for prudence, annually the Vestry will be able to use 3% to 5% of a 12-quarter ending Endowment balance for what is called spend. The new policy permits use of this spend for capital improvements, pastoral ministries, seed money for new ministries and one-time projects, outreach and for donor specified purposes. Currently, there are no donor restricted funds in the Endowment.

All uses of monies must be approved by the Vestry. Currently under consideration are the following uses: Outreach, building maintenance and repairs, and parish ministries.

I am retired, but at my heart, I am a not-for-profit banker. From my life experience, I know that this Endowment was wisely started years ago and carefully stewarded by Mike Trumbold, Treasurer, benefiting from contributions and bequests in faith and gratitude. Just as annual stewardship is important for paying the monthly bills, a not for profit, a church, with an endowment has a sustaining foundation that enriches the long term viability of the parish. It is evidence of the legacy of a faithful community living into abundance. This year \$126,000 was added to the Endowment via generous gifts and bequests of Phyllis Bermann, Robert Branham, Reverend Canon Miller Cragon, Jr., Gregorio Alvarado Schäfler, Daphne Daume, Suzanne Schaeffer, and the Right Reverend James Winchester Montgomery.





## STEWARDSHIP GUILD

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*Mr. Richard Benson*

The stewardship guild took on the challenge of our pandemic year away and creatively and prayerfully engaged the congregation to raise the 2021 budget.

Atonement is relatively new stewardship campaigns, so this year required extra planning. The guild crafted a detailed survey to understand how the Pandemic and economy affected parishioners. Upon reflection, the Guild chose the theme of “seeking the essential” to represent what we were asking the congregation to do. Each week, there was a question about what was truly essential in life, faith, and at Atonement. A diverse group of parishioners submitted video questions to begin online discussions on all of Atonement’s social media platforms and masses.

Finally, the Guild completed its work in December with a gratitude phase of thanking pledgers. In the end, Atonement had 122 pledging units - including 14 new pledgers - with a total of \$339,128.36 pledged. Thanks to Liz Sarnik, Nathan Walbert, Brenda Williams, and Peg Tomaszek Witry for sharing your wisdom and talents and being a wonderful small group this fall. Thanks for seeking the essential with us and please do begin to pay your 2021 pledges.



## BUILDINGS AND PROPERTY GUILD

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*Mr. David Beil*

The Buildings & Property (B&P) Guild convened several times in 2020 via Zoom. Here is a list of what we accomplished last year:

1. Signage: We commissioned a sign maker to make two signs for the Atonement Garden, which will be making their appearance this spring.
2. Ceiling Fans: We worked with Vestry on replacing the four ancient ceiling fans in the sanctuary.
3. Concrete Repairs: We recommended concrete repairs be performed on sidewalks, parking lot, and parish house balcony.
4. Window Repairs: We recommended repairs for the leaking rectory windows.
5. Request for Proposal (RFP): We assisted Vestry on approving an RFP to be sent to architectural firms in order to perform an evaluation of our buildings and property and to provide direction on immediate and long term repairs and upgrades. We hope to establish a relationship with the awarded firm in order to help guide our parish in improving space planning and accessibility. The RFP has gone out to two firms, and we await their proposals.
6. Checklist: We started creating a checklist for use by B&P members to record observations of the condition of our buildings and property. We will continue tweaking this once we are able to be back in the church on a regular basis.

And here are our goals for 2021, along with regular assistance with repairs, etc.:

1. Get back into the church! We look forward to being present with the parish in the coming months. This will give us the chance to test out our checklist!
2. Evaluate architectural proposals: We will compare and negotiate the two proposals and

hopefully move forward with a firm. This will likely lead to a prioritized list of repairs and upgrades at minimum.

3. Install the new garden signage.
4. Audio-Visual Installation: We will assist in the planning and implementation of new audio-visual equipment.

## WORSHIP

### LITURGICAL GUILD

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*Br. Ron Fox, BSG*

For the first time in years, I've not had to put out a monthly schedule for all who have faithfully served at our altar. Needless to say, with Covid-19, there hasn't been any need to have a full liturgical staff.

Even when the numbers were at the point where we could have in person worship, the number of people needed went way down. While we could meet in person, Joaquin Villegas was of great help in being able to serve at the 9 am Mass, along with deacon intern Andrea Billhardt.

While there were many occasions where things just didn't seem "right," there were a couple notable occasions. Last fall, on a cold October morning, Bishop Jeff Lee made his last "official" visit to Atonement for confirmation and reception, and we had a Mass on the north lawn. Many thanks to those who helped that day. Another liturgical highlight was Christmas Eve. While it was pre-recorded, the end result was outstanding. Chris Windle was singled out for his extraordinary efforts in putting everything together, so I'm noting his help once again in the "year in review." And additional thanks to Charlie Sega and our singers for providing us with excellent music in our long time away.

Our assisting priests, Fr. Gary Lawler, Mtr Anne Wrider, and Mtr Jackie Cameron, have been able to assist on numerous occasions during the pandemic. Our deacons, Charles Farrell and Jason Elliott, have been available to assist at our Sunday Zoom Masses. Barbara Newman has done a fine job organizing a lector/intercessor schedule, so a special thanks as well to all the lectors and intercessors, whether they have been at home or in person. Andrea has worked tirelessly Sunday after Sunday with very few breaks. Steve Reineccius and I alternate Sundays as thurifer at the 11 am Zoom Mass. Behind the scenes, Kate Mayer in the office has been a continuous source of help, along with our former communications person Aaron Leonard and now Christopher Drummond. Br Joe Gauss, BSG and Luis Garcia have frequently helped with altar frontal and candle insert changes. All of the work associated with an in-person Mass has to continue. Br Will White, CMJ, has done a splendid job getting the church ready for special occasions, especially Christmas. Reta Kikutani of the altar guild has always been willing to help out with vestments and linens.

Apologies to anyone I have missed. I know it's always dangerous to list names, but I think I've got everyone who has been a liturgical help on Sundays, or in preparing for Sunday.

Finally, thanks to our Rector, Mtr. Erika Takacs, for her guidance, pastoral care, and good humor during these trying times.

## LECTORS

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*Dr. Barbara Newman*

About two dozen people have faithfully carried out their ministry as lectors and intercessors—some reading live, others on Zoom—during our time of exile. We are grateful for their willingness to roll with the punches as in-person worship has come and gone, and to meet the inevitable technical glitches with good humor while proclaiming the Word of God and offering the Prayers of the People. As we move forward into more hopeful times, we thank all of these loyal women and men for their service. New voices are always welcome! If you would like to become a lector, whether or not you have ever done this ministry before, please contact Barbara Newman at [bjnewman@northwestern.edu](mailto:bjnewman@northwestern.edu).



## MUSIC

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*Mr. Charles T. Segal and Dr. Christopher Windle*

As an integral part of our commitment to the highest standards in Anglo-Catholic worship, the music program at the Church of the Atonement encompasses three ensembles which draw some of the finest professional and volunteer musicians in the region. This music ministry serves our community here in our parish, as well as Edgewater and the greater Chicago area—and now the World Wide Web—through glorifying our Lord in song.

For last year's combined mass before the annual meeting, we welcomed the Chicago Gargoyle Brass. We sang the Sewanee Service, a mass for organ, brass and congregation, as well as festive hymn arrangements with brass and organ. The morning concluded with the finale of Camille Saint-Saëns's monumental "Organ Symphony."

In February, we hosted the Chicago Chamber Choir for their annual benefit concert - this year's recipient was Care for Real. The concert featured David Lang's *the little match girl passion*. In March, with only one canceled Evensong, the St. Cecilia choir kept the Wednesday ritual and moved rehearsals and Evensong services to Zoom. Evensong (affectionately dubbed Zoomsong) continued with the preces and responses, psalms and canticles chanted by the choir, as soloists over Zoom. This wasn't what anyone signed up for, but everyone graciously and enthusiastically adapted to the new normal.

Anthems and choral masses by all three choirs continued to be offered at Evensong and on Sunday morning as "Virtual Choirs." The St. Cecilia Choir has created seven virtual anthems, and has more planned for 2021. One of their anthems, Jerusalem the Golden, was selected for use at the opening liturgy at the 2020 virtual Diocesan Convention. Likewise, the Schola quickly adapted to creating virtual anthems each week, and has now recorded over 25 virtual anthems and four virtual choral masses. What is a virtual choir? Due to the restrictions placed on us by COVID-19 for the health and safety of all, none of the choirs have sung together for 10 months. All of the singing you have seen online has been done from home. Through various apps and programs, we are able to recreate the appearance of singing together.

At Atonement, we have utilized two processes to create these videos. One of these processes begins with the recording of what we call a “backing track.” A backing track is an independent recording of the organ accompaniment or the choir part recorded by the piano; or sometimes both. This audio is paired with a video of the conductor; and when the restrictions on being in the church building eased, Chris and I were able to record these portions together, distanced in the loft. Each singer then – using two devices – record themselves singing their part. In practice, this means that while watching the conductor on one screen with headphones in, they are able to listen to the “backing track” and record their part on the other device. Each singer’s individual recording is then sent to the editor (Chris Windle) who syncs up the sound, sometimes note by note, and balances it with the organ and other singers. The video is edited separately to match. In practice, this means that Chris can spend upward of 20-30 hours editing the audio and video of each anthem using this method.

Another method we use to create virtual choir performances utilizes an iPhone app (the AcapellaApp) that similarly starts with the creation of a “backing track” by the Organist and choir director. This video and audio file is then added to the app. The app allows other singer’s audio and video files to be layered progressively overtop of one another. The final is then sent back to the editor for a mixing of the audio. This method has different positives and negatives to the former, but between the two we have been able to continue producing audio and video content with all the singers in the music program for the entirety of the pandemic.

The process of recording an individual choral part at home is enormously challenging for the singers. Between finding a time of day to not disturb the neighbors, to combating car horns and street noise, children and pets, to working around other professional schedules, each singer in every choir has shown remarkable resilience and tenacity. Additionally, the process of recording alone can be frustrating and defeating. Recording individual parts puts each singer under an unusual spotlight, and it requires an enormous amount of patience, grace, and vulnerability to listen to oneself, work through musical challenges that would be addressed in person normally, and to be on camera. We are indebted to the singers for their willingness to continue the musical and liturgical ministry of Atonement.

It is of note that, though the music we have chosen for this year is among the easiest that we sing, it still proves to be a challenging endeavor due to the medium. The process of recording from home is nothing like singing in person, in a group, even in the best of circumstances.

Using newly recorded virtual choir anthems, archival material, pre-recorded readings, and newly recorded material with organ and cantors, our annual Service of Advent Lessons and Carols continued, and premiered on December 13th through Facebook and YouTube. It currently has a combined 800 views.

The Christmas Eve Midnight Mass was also produced as a pre-recorded service and premiered on Facebook and YouTube and now has 1,100 views. The process of recording this mass included five different iPhones simultaneously recording the Christmas Eve liturgy the Monday before Christmas, as well as several pre-recorded portions including virtual choral performances. Additionally, we are very grateful for the collaboration with the Chicago Chamber Choir in using their virtual carols for this service, which they recorded for their virtual holiday concert and helped us sing hymns from home.

These pre-recorded services – in addition to all the virtual choir productions – represent an enormous amount of time put in by Associate Director of Music, Choirmaster and now Editor, Chris Windle. The total recording and editing process for each pre-recorded service represents well over 80 hours of work – cumulatively approaching 200 hours for these two services alone. Many thanks for his creativity and expertise which greatly added to our worship this season.

As many life events have transpired this year with little fanfare, we would be remiss not to mention the retirement of Anne Katzfey as a member of the Schola. She sang at Atonement for 10 years! We thank Anne for her musical contributions as soprano and the warm spirit she brought to the music community and parish. We will celebrate her in person when we are able to do so.

While the role of each choral ensemble varies, we have one common mission: to give glory and praise to God by enriching the liturgy and providing a unique community for parishioners and members of the community to practice good stewardship of their talent and time.

This coming year brings us many challenges: large budget cuts, technical gremlins, navigating re-entry phases, and a safe return to singing in person. Our musicians have shown great flexibility, patience, and determination and we are confident we can continue to uphold our musical offering.



#### ALTAR GUILD

*Ms. Reta Kikutani*

I want to thank all my devout members for their love and support through these difficult times: Brenda Williams, Gretchen Bates, Daniel Polley, Tim Miller, John Waters, Mary Kaye, Beth Fleckenstein, Rose Beal, Gale Luketich, Dennis Figura, Will Harpest, and Will White, who serve on Sundays, and Joachin Villegas, Eddie Schwartz, Catherine Mendenhall, Stephen Reineccius, and Kate Mayer, who serve on weekdays. Thank you to Eddie Schwartz and especially to Liz Sarnick who keep our linens beautiful, and to Br. Stephen Wetmore for organizing our vestments.

Also, I would like to thank my “right-hand man,” Br. Ron Fox, who keeps everything flowing smoothly and who also donated a lovely new Low Mass set of violet vestments this year, which we blessed right before the beginning of Advent. Thank you, too, to Mtr. Takacs and all our beloved priests for the privilege of serving God and you.



#### GUILD OF ST. ZITA

*Mr. Daniel Polley*

At the Ministry Fair in November of 2019, we created the Guild of St Zita. It is a volunteer clean-up crew which has existed at Church of the Atonement for some time, but we formalized last year. We chose St. Zita as our patron and namesake as the patron saint of housekeepers, chambermaids and domestic servants. She lived in Lucca, Italy and died in 1272. Her feast day is April 27.

Once we return to the church sanctuary space in person we plan to meet biannually. We do a deep cleaning of the church on a Saturday of Advent and another on the Saturday before the Feast day of Corpus Christi (2 weeks after Pentecost). We may have occasional detailing days with special projects. We will be planning a big day Silver/Brass polish and Murphy's Oil Soap before our grand return to the sanctuary.



This past year we have not been able to meet in person to clean and care for God's house as a large group. I would like to thank the members of the parish who have reached to me to offer.

During the pandemic, a group was formed to make safe decisions about re-entry into the church. Mtr. Jackie Cameron and I made formal assessments of the church space and made our proposals to a committee which included Mtr. Erika, Br Ron Fox, Charlie Sega, Chris Windle, Kate Mayer, Aron Dunlap. A special thanks to Michael Waltz, Steven Britt, and Michael Trumbold for your help taping off the church for social distancing. With Kate Mayer's help, we have removed all hymnals, prayer books, pencils and other items from the sanctuary that are often shared. We removed some of the extra church furnishings from the chancel and have removed cloth covered pillows and cushions. We roped off every other pew and made markings around church for social distancing and directional flow. With Dcn. Jason Elliott's help we did a deep cleaning of the chancel, pews, and sanctuary floor with hydrogen peroxide and Murphy's oil soap. We have hosted a "Come back" to the church visiting day for the parish to get a sense of safety and confidence in what we have done.

For your past work, I would like to thank Mtr. Erika, Br. Ron Fox, Dcn. Jason Elliott, Br. Will White, Charles Bonilla, Judy Thompson, Mary Kay, Anna Aronson, Reta Kikatani, Gale Luketich, Michael Waltz, Steven Britt, Fran Pryor and her daughter Jennifer. I would also like to mention in blessed memory Desmond Anderson, Requiescat in Pace. If I have forgotten anyone, please forgive me. We are a small but dedicated and friendly group who welcome newcomers. If you are interested in joining the Guild of St. Zita, please let Kate Mayer know in the church office at [office@atonementchicago.org](mailto:office@atonementchicago.org) or contact me Daniel J. Polley at [dannypolley@gmail.com](mailto:dannypolley@gmail.com), or 773-632-6800. May God bless us all in this new year.

## FAITH FORMATION

### CHILDREN'S FORMATION

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The big news in Children's Formation this year was the retirement of Carolyn Fisher at the end of the program year. Carolyn has been the foundation of our children's formation at Atonement for many years. She has been such a blessing to this community, and all of us are so grateful to her for her generosity and passion in teaching our students.

Once the church was closed because of the pandemic, our students did continue to meet online for Sunday School for several months. This fall, however, instead of restarting online formation, our parents decided to focus our attention on providing safe, monthly, in-person gatherings, which

Aron Dunlap describes in detail in his later report on Family Ministries. The only other formation we have done for children is that since the fall, Mother Erika has been recording and sending out weekly videos of “Family Morning Prayer” for our families, with a song, a bible reading, a children’s sermon and family activity, and prayer.



## ADULT FORMATION

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*Dr. Gregory Holmes Singleton*

We began the year with great plans for 2020 and had anticipated a number of Saturday one-day seminars as well as a variety of series for Sunday Mornings at 10 am. In March we decided to temporarily suspend our programs for obvious reasons. In the fall we decided to try Zoom sessions and began with a series on Advent. For those four weeks we had a small group of up to eight participants, with about 6 who were (and are) the steady core. This month we are meeting weekly on Saturday mornings at 10 am (as we did during Advent). Each session has a facilitator, but the majority of the time is given over to discussion. I have been impressed with the quality of the conversations and the ability to have everyone participate. Once it is safe to gather together again, we will return to the Sunday morning 10 am slot, as well as occasional Saturday one-day seminars. In addition, we will likely offer one or more smaller thematic discussion groups. Although we went to this format as an emergency measure, it has proven its utility and I believe this format could be a useful addition to our offerings.

I would like to thank members of the Adult Formation committee: Daniel Polley, Helen Klaviter, Jason Elliott, Sophia Twaddell, Nancy Taylor Porter, and Daniel Ricciardi. They have been so helpful during this difficult time. I look forward to working with them to plan for the future when there breaks a yet more glorious day.



## EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY (EFM)

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*Ms. Helen Klaviter and the Very Rev’d Joy Rogers (Co-Mentors)*

EfM is a four-year program that gives participants a chance to discover and explore God’s kingdom. During the school year 6-12 students meet with two mentors for 2-3 hours each week to discuss and reflect on the Bible, church history and tradition, and theology—and to consider their relevance in the modern world.

New students join the group in September. The meeting time and place are chosen to accommodate working adults – usually a weekday evening, but this year we have been meeting Sunday afternoons by Zoom. More information and registration for the 2021-22 year will be available during the summer.

EfM is sponsored by the seminary at University of the South in Sewanee, TN, which trains mentors and provides all materials (except Bibles). Tuition this year was \$375; Atonement provides scholarships and loans to those who need them.

## SUMMER ARTS CAMP

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*Mtr. Erika Takacs and Alison Barrington (St. James Cathedral)*

Last year, 2019, was our first ever Summer Arts Camp. This year our plan was to expand the camp, partnering with St. James Cathedral and inviting more participation for children of all ages. And, while 2020 changed the format of these plans, we were able to do just that! This year, we invited our older children to attend the St. James Cathedral Summer in the City program (which was all online this year), and Atonement and St. James partnered to produce our Summer Arts Camp at the end of July. We met via Zoom for a time of prayer, singing, storytelling and games (mostly involving Zoom scavenger hunts), and then we invited our children to go do some activities on their own. We provided an at-home craft and videos of a Godly Play story, a storybook reading, and a song for them to enjoy on their own. Then, after about an hour and a half, we gathered again for a time of show-n-tell, prayer, and singing.

The camp was a great success, especially considering the new format! We had a good number of children attend from Atonement and from St. James, and the families were so enthusiastic that we decided to continue the camp this fall and winter in a Saturday-morning, one-day format.

This summer, of course, it would be lovely to be together in person, but even if we are limited to online participation again, we know that we can provide a rich time of learning and sharing for our youngest disciples.

## OUTREACH

### OUTREACH

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*Mr. Wayne Mitchell & Mr. Russell Rossi*

*“In the same way, let your light shine before others,  
that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”*

Matthew 5:16

Outreach is a means of putting into practice what we experience in worship. Our wide variety of activities reflect the commitment and passion for ministry of those in our parish. And not only do we provide support those in need, but those who participate experience a deepening faith, a growing sense of community, and the joy of laboring in God’s kingdom.

2020 was a challenging year as the pandemic altered how we go about our daily lives. This was no different for outreach as the needs in our community and world were significantly affected by Covid-19.

This was seen in the dramatic increase in need like the growing number of people seeking assistance at Care for Real. Other programs had to change how services were offered. To continue providing monthly meals to homeless women, Sarah’s Circle reconfigured delivery in a way that ensured the safety of both residents and providers. Swift School determined that backpacks would not be needed in a distance learning environment, but children were still in need of supplies. In response we set up a supply store at Swift that children could access.



And while some activities were no longer possible, as when Epworth Men's Shelter limited outside services, other new opportunities quickly came into focus. We were able to provide support and encouragement to essential workers as they provided for others. As seniors in our neighborhood became increasingly isolated, we stepped in to reaffirm their value and worth. And when the pandemic was followed by a hurricane in Chiapas Mexico, we helped to establish a food pantry for the community.

Local businesses who have supported our parish in the past have also been negatively affected by Covid-19. In response we partnered with them in providing services, giving them support at a time of their need.

Finally, the pandemic did not stop our response to unplanned events such as the fires out west and numerous hurricanes in 2020.

In each instance we were able to re-engineer and recreate outreach in a way to meet the challenges 2020 presented – in doing so, we continued to be a light in Edgewater and the world. An email received this year sums this up: “Thank you for the gifts, but it isn't just the gifts we appreciate. It is the love that you show to us by providing them. Thank you so much!”

## FELLOWSHIP AND OTHER PARISH ACTIVITIES

### FAMILY MINISTRY TEAM

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*Mr. Aron Dunlap and Ms. Pauline Sachar*

Family Ministries has been, like many of our ministries, less active due to the pandemic. Since mid-March, we have only gathered together a couple times in person, and while we did hold Sunday School meetings virtually for a couple months, we found that having another Zoom meeting to keep track of for parents was more of a burden than a blessing. However, around the beginning of summer families started to meet together about once a month, usually virtually, and that has been an important part of maintaining our community. We had a movie viewing and a talent show; we gathered to collect trash around the church (or, to be perfectly honest, between the church and an ice cream shop that, once we found ourselves in front of, couldn't simply walk away from). We hope to continue these semi-regular meetings until we can gather again in person. Even though our ability to be in the same room with each other has been severely hampered by this situation, we have nevertheless had some very successful virtual events, including a week-long summer camp, a one-day fall camp, and our traditional Christmas cookie decorating party. We also had a very well-attended family Christmas Eve service, some fun games for kids at the New Year's Eve party, and are planning a winter arts camp in February, which, like the fall camp, Mtr. Erika organized with help from folks at St. James' Cathedral. We are, of course, eager to resume Sunday School and all the other activities that keep us connected.



## PET BLESSING

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*Ms. Marian DeBerry*

In October, to commemorate the Feast of St. Francis and honor our animal friends, Church of the Atonement held its annual Pet Blessing. Unlike previous years, this year's blessing was virtual and held on Zoom after the 11:00am Mass. While we would have loved a live event, the advantage of the Zoom event was that more cats attended. Mother Erika blessed close to 75 animals. The incredible Phebe Tinker once again solicited food donations from local pet stores. Kriser's on Clark Street donated several large bags of food, toys and treats, which we delivered to Care for Real's Pet Pantry.

In 2021, we hope to return to a live event, with blessings, food donations, and opportunities for adoptions. We appreciate your support of this event and look forward to seeing you and your friends in October.



## COFFEE HOUR

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This year, our coffee hours have taken on a much different shape! It's hard to remember that we did, in fact have coffee hours for the first two months of 2020, but we did get to share in that fellowship together before the pandemic closed our doors. In that time, the wonderful and dedicated Reta Kikutani announced her retirement from the 11:00 coffee hour. When we return to in-person coffee hours sometime in the future, we will need to find someone to coordinate the coffee hour scheduling for this Mass. Brenda Williams and Gretchen Witmer always do a wonderful job providing fellowship (often by the loaves and fishes method!) following the 9:00 Mass. In the meantime, we have continued to have weekly coffee hours on Zoom, which have turned into a valuable time for connection and conversation. More changes will happen with this ministry this year, and we will certainly need more leadership in this area in the coming year. If you are interested in helping with this ministry going forward, please be in touch with the Rector or one of the Wardens.



## THE GALA/NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY

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*Mr. Charles T. Segal*

When it became clear that we would be unable to put on a full-scale gala this year, there was a desire to have a parish event, with a fundraising component. The committee decided on a New Year's Eve party with entertainment and opportunities for interaction among guests. To raise funds for Atonement's outreach ministries, we accepted donations, sold charcuterie packages and held a wine raffle. The event netted 2,701.30.

There are many to thank for making this event a success. Our video contributors: Mtr. Erika Takacs, Meghan Murphy-Gill, Jeremy McElroy, Wayne Mitchell and Tony Chung, Aron Dunlap and Pauline Sachar, and Harry Watson of Watson Visuals. Wine raffle sponsors: Phoebe Tinker, Ricardo Villota, Greg Bradley and the Vestry. Charcuterie packages: Peg Tomaszek.

Administration and finance: Kate Mayer and Karin Gutierrez. Zoom Administrators: Chris Windle and Margaret Sullivan. The committee: Greg Bradley, Margaret Sullivan, Wayne Mitchell, Chris Windle, Peg Tomaszek, and Erin Watson. Special thanks to Erin Segal Watson for her creativity, organization and effortless on camera hosting abilities.

## NEW MINISTRY TEAMS AND GUILDS

### NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

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*Ms. Marian DeBerry*

Outgoing members of the vestry and other parishioners appointed by the Rector met to discuss and advance nominations for two three-year terms. Each year, three members of the vestry complete their terms. This year, two people, Aron Dunlap, and Marian DeBerry, complete their service. A third vestrant is filling the term of a member who left the parish. She expressed an interest in continuing her service for a full three-year term, and we added her name to the nominations list. In addition to nominating vestry members, the committee was also charged with considering delegates to the annual diocesan convention. The committee included Aron Dunlap, Marian DeBerry, and Joseph Gauss, BSG.

We considered several factors, including,

- Representation across all three Masses
- Representation from the widest variety of parishioners by demographics, for example, gender, age, parents with children in the parish, orientation, race
- Members in good standing, i.e., by canon, known to the Treasurer.

We solicited nominations from current vestry members, and we asked for nominations from the parish through the Atonement email bulletins and the Sunday announcements. Parishioners who were interested in joining the vestry were encouraged to nominate themselves for consideration. Through this process, we advanced seven names to the vestry for input. All were approved. Five names surfaced as convention delegates. With nominations approved, Mother Erika conducted her outreach to determine who would be available and willing to serve, and from those conversations, three individuals emerged for vestry service, and three as convention delegates.

The Nominations Committee appreciates your thoughts and input about these essential positions in the parish.

## RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

### BROTHERHOOD OF THE SAINT GREGORY

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*Br. Ron Fox, BSG*

Along with everyone else, members of the Brotherhood of St. Gregory had their travel curtailed due to Covid-19 in 2020. And, like many, went to social media to have some semblance of normal gathering. Last summer, we had a mini Annual Convocation via Zoom. Usually, brothers gather

from around the country, the Territory of Puerto Rico, and Australia, at Mt. Alvernia in New York for a week of fellowship, study, daily prayer and Eucharist, and many laughs. In January 2021, we gathered on Zoom again for two mini weekends of winter convocation. On January 23, Brothers Joe Gauss and Ron Fox were part of a panel presentation on “Sacred Spaces at Home.” On January 29, we added two new postulants to our membership.

The Chicago brothers are part of Province 5 of the brotherhood. Along with Brothers Joe and Ron, our other province brothers are Nathanael Deward Rahm, our provincial who works as the assistant to the rector at Church of the Ascension in Chicago and organist at Church of Our Saviour in Elmhurst; Gordon John Stanley, a deacon who is retired and divides his time between Chicago and Florida; and Francis Jonathan Bullock, a social worker and seminarian who lives in Richmond, IN. Joe works as a Clinical Coordinator/Registered Nurse at Evanston Hospital, and Ron is the assistant to the president at Bexley Seabury Seminary in Hyde Park.

We have two Province 5 brothers of blessed memory, Edward Riley, and Damian-Curtis Kellum, at rest in our Atonement columbarium.

The brotherhood, established by Brother Richard Thomas Biernacki on Holy Cross Day in 1969, currently has 45 members, and we are the largest men’s Religious community in the Episcopal Church.



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#### THE COMMUNITY OF THE MOTHER OF JESUS AND ATONEMENT PARISH ARCHIVES

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*Br. Stephen Wetmore, CMJ*

The year 2020 was a year that presented all of us with many challenges. My own 2020 began with a nine day stay in the hospital which left me with health issues to continue working on. Between that and the pandemic most of the year 2020 found me sheltered at home. For that reason, none of my plans for the parish archives were fulfilled this year. My hope is that once restrictions are lifted that I can bring together the volunteers who signed up to work in the parish archives for meetings to advance the cataloging of our holdings.

The Community of the Mother of Jesus had three quarterly day gatherings in 2020. One was a gathering in February, and the other two were held via Zoom. Our Annual Gathering in October was held for three days, again via Zoom. During that time, Br. Jonathan Wheat professed final vows. Br. Ricky Joe Cook from Oregon and Br. Dylan Stewart from Nova Scotia professed annual vows and received our profession habit. Br. Cody Elkins from Missouri entered our Novitiate. In Advent, Tom Sumney from New York became a postulant. We now have four brothers who have professed final vows, four brothers in annual vows, one novice, and one postulant.

This year our Community started a blog in connection with our website. We recently added a blog from a priest in Ohio who preached on our Rule of Life on the Fourth Sunday of Advent. Our website can be reached at [www.cmjreligious.org](http://www.cmjreligious.org).