This fall we undertook our first congregation-wide assessment. Rector’s Warden Sally Hillman Redman discusses it in greater detail elsewhere in this issue of our newsletter, but it is an understatement to say we had very good results. Our areas of strength are clearly hospitality, social justice ministries, and pastoral relationships all rooted in our understanding of how to live faithful lives, and we have some room to grow in the depth of our spiritual formation and small group education and fellowship opportunities, but on the whole we came through this assessment as a small but mighty community of Christ. Our number one concern across all demographics was how to spread the word about what a special place St. Mary’s is and increasing the size of the congregation. The only effective way to do this is simple— we must invite our friends and neighbors to join us, and share why this place is the heart of our lives as Christians. Give it a try!

And we have lots of opportunities coming up over the next few months that you can invite your friends and neighbors to: on December 1st after mass Deacon Barbara will lead us in making Advent wreaths for our home devotions throughout the season, on December 15th at 5PM we will have our annual Advent Lessons and Carols service, extra heavy on congregational carols this year, followed by cider and cookies, and throughout the Sundays of Epiphanytide the clergy will be leading a discussion of the Gospel according to John, as part of our participation in The Good Book Club project. Your rector first came to The Episcopal Church through a simple, moving campus Ash Wednesday service, and we will have three of our own on February 26th at 7:30AM, 12PM, and 7PM. There is real vulnerability in making an invitation to church, and not everyone will be interested, but for the one who is, you have possibly started a process that will change their whole life. What greater gift can we give?

Fall at St. Mary’s has been unusually busy in terms of physical plant, program, and partnerships. We participated in a Schuylkill Deanery-wide Anti-Gun Violence Awareness Program that included installing the Memorial to the Lost in front of the sanctuary. This was the second time we have hosted the memorial, which is made up of t-shirts with the names, ages, and death dates of those killed by illegal guns in the city of Philadelphia in 2018 written on them, displayed on frames for a visually and spiritually powerful witness to the human cost of this epidemic in our community. We also have been involved in more joyous activities in our parish, notably collaborations with outside organizations like our three concert series in October, November, and December with Partners for Sacred Places, Astral Artists, and Play On Philly. As part of this endeavor we are a pilot site for the new Playing and Preserving Program of Partners for Sacred Places, which is dedicated to the preservation of historic pipe organs in Philadelphia. We have received a matching grant through this program that will help us complete the second phase of our organ restoration process, this work will take place in early 2020, and you will be hearing more about it as the work gets scheduled! We continue to work on the renovation of our Parish Hall, existing bathrooms, and addition of an accessible bathroom. This work has taken longer than we expected as those
(cont’d.)
of us on the committee for this project get bids from contractors throughout the city and navigate the
process of renderings, engineering specs, and L&I! St. Mary’s own Sarto Schickel has been incredibly
generous with his time creating architectural drawings for us, and shepherding us through the pro-
cess.

Stay tuned for more news about this project in the New Year! May God bless you as you continue to do
the good, hard work of living out your faith in everyday life, and

The Rev. Mariclair Partee Carlsen | rector@stmarysatpenn.org

O God of Elizabeth and Mary,
you visited your servants with news of the world’s redemption in the
coming of the Savior: Make our
hearts leap with joy, and fill our
mouths with songs of praise, that we
may announce glad tidings of peace
and welcome the Christ in our midst.
Amen.

Taken from Revised Common Lectionary Prayers, 2002.
All are invited to join us for Advent wreath making on Sunday December 1st in the parish hall after Mass!

Advent is the church’s liturgical season that begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. The first Sunday in Advent is the beginning of the Christian New Year.

The word Advent means coming and refers to the coming of Jesus into our world and our lives on Christmas. Advent is a penitential season, a time for preparing our hearts for the coming of Jesus.

One way of preparing for Advent is by making an Advent Wreath the center of your life and/or your family’s life for the four weeks in Advent.

The idea leading to the Advent wreath began before Jesus was born. During pre-Christian pagan times in Germanic areas, December was cold and dark, up until the Solstice on December 21st when the day started lengthening again. The people made wreaths from greens and lighted fires as signs of hope for spring to come. In Scandinavia, candles were placed on the perimeter of a horizontal wheel and lit; the wheel was turned as prayers were made for the earth to turn back towards the sun.

During the Middle Ages, Lutheran and Roman Catholic Christians in Germany adopted this tradition by using the wreath with lit candles to tell of their hope in the coming of Jesus as the everlasting light. The tradition was passed on in the 1930’s by German Lutherans who came to North America and Anglicans seemed to have adopted the tradition in the 1960s.

The wreath is made of 4 candles standing in a circle of evergreens. The circle symbolizes eternal life and/or the crown of Jesus. The evergreens represent the hope of eternal life brought by Jesus Christ. The candles represent the light of God coming into the world through the birth of Jesus Christ. Three candles are blue (or violet) and one is pink. Blue symbolizes royalty (Jesus the Prince of Peace) and repentance. Pink is lit the third Sunday in Advent, known as Gaudate Sunday from the Latin word meaning “to rejoice.” This Sunday is a pause from the penitential spirit of Advent.

At home, the candles are lit, one candle each night the first week, two the second week, three the third week (when the pink one is lit) and four on the fourth week.

During the lighting, a section of scripture is read and prayers are said. Adults can read Advent prayers from the Book of Common Prayer starting on page 211. There is one prayer for each Sunday in Advent which can be read each night. (They are also found at www.bcponline.org under “The Collects.”) Prayers for children will be handed out during the wreath-making and other activities for younger children.

May you all have a peaceful and blessed Advent as you prepare for the coming of our Savior.

Peace and blessings,

The Rev. Deacon Barbara Tobin  |  deacon@stmarysatpenn.org
Welcome to the Winter 2019 issue of the St. Mary’s Newsletter! Winter has always been a time of thanksgiving and fellowship for me, personally. I often find myself taking inventory of everything that brings me joy and, despite the frigid temperatures outside, making more of an effort to get out of the house to revel in new experiences and rekindle friendships with folks I’ve missed. Perhaps what prompts me to bundle up and head outside is the warmth of people’s kindness and mutual joy: The ones we love harbor a sort of indestructible Springtime that keeps us cozy all year round. Thank you, St. Marians, for being Springtime all of the time!

If you’re like me and enthusiastically bundle up to weather the cold to go adventuring, the St. Mary’s newsletters are a wonderful resource to find other information on all of our upcoming events and outreach opportunities, scholarly articles on St. Mary’s history and service music, spiritual reflections and calls to action, and even delicious recipes! There is something for everyone! Another great way to engage with the St. Mary’s community is to contribute to our newsletter. We'd love to hear from you! After all, there wouldn't be a St. Mary's newsletter without the voices of St. Marians! Please feel free to direct any content suggestions and submissions to Sally Hillman Redman, sally.h.redman@gmail.com by our next deadline, November 15th.

I invite you to take a glimpse at all of our upcoming community events and opportunities for outreach this season. There are so many chances to engage!

Have a blessed and abundant Winter, St. Marians. Happy reading!

Brittany Holdahl | administrator@stmarysatpenn.org
I thought an Advent Poem was in order—
I hope that you all have time for the work of preparation in the Season ahead!

CHRISTMAS hath darkness
Brighter than the blazing noon,
Christmas hath a chillness
Warmer than the heat of June,
Christmas hath a beauty
Lovelier than the world can show:
For Christmas bringeth Jesus,
Brought for us so low.

Earth, strike up your music,
Birds that sing and bells that ring;
Heaven hath answering music
For all Angels soon to sing:
Earth, put on your whitest
Bridal robe of spotless snow:
For Christmas bringeth Jesus,
Brought for us so low.

Before 1886. Source: The Poetical Works of Christina Georgina Rossetti, with a Memoir and Notes by William Michael Rossetti (1904)

Vanessa Albert Lowry | LowryV@gtlaw.com

St. Mary’s Sunday School and Nursery is available from 10:45 AM to 12:45 PM for young children ages 0-12 years to engage in age-appropriate Christian education and play.

It is located in the classrooms on the second floor of the Parish Hall; please ask an usher if you need assistance.

Children of all ages are welcome in worship at St. Mary’s! The nursery is available as a convenience for parents and caretakers who would like a break.

A soft space with quiet toys, books, crayons, and activity sheets is available in the back of the sanctuary for little ones looking for a space to stretch out!

Activity: Color the candles of the Advent wreath on this page!
As a survey skeptic, I was really unprepared for how informative and moving the results of our Holy Cow Survey proved to be. Thank you for taking the time to respond! The results and the interpretation provided to the Vestry at a special webinar on November 12, 2019 and included an analysis based on how our responses compare to those of other parishes. It was this analysis that really helped me get a fuller idea of what makes us the Parish we are and what energy and interests should be shape our life and work together going forward.

We learned that, as a group, respondents are generally satisfied with the way things are going and have energy to help the Parish and its ministries grow and develop. We are small but mighty. The Vestry is charged now with considering how best to employ the energy we have in order to further God’s work here. We learned that respondents of all ages want the Parish would be open to developing and implementing Parish growth strategies making changes needed to attract families with children and desire us to create more opportunities for the members of the Parish to strengthen their relationships with one another. We also learned that both the long-term and newer parishioners want more opportunities for Christian formation and that young and old support developing ministries serving those in need.

The Vestry must now take, reflect and respond to this information. We ask for your prayers and continued support and engagement as we work to respond to the call embodied in the information we received. We invite you to join us as we prepare for the next century of the Parish’s life.

Vanessa Albert Lowry  |  LowryV@gtlaw.com
It has been an eventful fall, and winter is shaping up to be just as active. The Playing and Preserving concert series concludes on December 21 at 2pm with organist Greg Zelek, soprano Chrystal E. Williams, cellist Thomas Mesa, and the Play On Philly Symphony Orchestra. In November this series featured Zelek and Mesa playing with the Play on Philly Cello Ensemble, while in October I was featured with the Project Fusion Saxophone Quartet and the Play on Philly Wind Ensemble. So far the turnout has been great, the concerts well received, and maybe we’ve even cultivated a few new fans of pipe organs, especially those in sacred places.

On December 15 we will have our annual Advent service of lessons and carols followed by a reception. Also, on Sunday, December 29 we will be having a service of Christmas lessons and carols in place of Mass that morning. Both these events will give us a chance to sing some of our seasonal favorites.

We have been graced by the addition of our new choral scholars, Elle Rothermich and Tise Ogunmesa, to our choir. We are also trying to find tenor and bass choral scholars for the spring semester. Please contact me with any leads you might have.

Over the years St. Mary’s has been laudably dedicated to the upkeep of its historic pipe organ. We are now preparing for the next phase of work, which involves the restoration of the Swell division. It is my understanding that the other divisions of the organ will be playable while the work goes on, so we should still get to hear it for our Masses and other liturgies.

As always, I would like to thank everyone who helps with the music in any way whatsoever, most especially our choir members, whose dedication is key.

Michael Lawrence  |  music@stmarysatpenn.org
Choral Scholars
at St. Mary’s, Hamilton Village
The Episcopal Church at Penn

We are currently auditioning candidates for our 2019-2020
Class of Choral Scholars at St. Mary’s!

Scholars...
• Are undergraduate, graduate, or professional students
• Are strong amateur singers capable of leading their voice part
• Meet for 9:30 AM rehearsal every Sunday for 11 AM mass
• Sing at alternating Thursday 8 PM services and one concert or Evensong a semester
• Receive a stipend for their participation.

Interested?
Contact Michael Lawrence, Organist and Choirmaster,
at music@stmarysatpenn.org.

3916 Locust Walk | Philadelphia, PA 19104
www.stmarysatpenn.org
A Trio of Christmas Delights!

Well, it’s that time of the year, and I have been encouraged to concentrate on the upcoming holiday season and the sweeter side of life. Indeed most of my columns have concerned entrees, but do not be misled; I can make desserts with the best of them. So here come two treats we had every Christmas time, and if you’re lucky, I’ll have room for a third favorite!

First comes my mother’s heavy-duty, New York-style cheesecake. For the crust, you need one package of graham crackers, ¼ cup of sugar, and ¼ cup softened butter. Blend all three well with your fingers. Grease a 9” springform cake pan with softened butter to help the crumbs adhere, and distribute the mixture evenly on the bottom and sides of the pan. For the filling cream, 3 packages of softened cream cheese (8 oz. each) with 1 cup of sugar. Add three eggs, one at a time, and mix thoroughly, then add one tsp. of vanilla. Pour batter into crust and bake in a preheated 350-degree oven for 1 hour. Remove cake from the oven and increase the temperature to 500 degrees. Mix: 1 pint of sour cream, one tsp. of vanilla, and 3 Tbsp. of sugar. Pour over cheesecake, return to oven, and bake at 500 degrees for 5 minutes. Remove and let cool, then refrigerate overnight or longer to allow the cake to set up. Top with drained crushed pineapple, and if you want to get fancy, put a maraschino cherry in the middle. Bake the cake on a rimmed baking sheet; invariably, butter melts out of the pan and onto the oven floor, and nobody wants that!!!

Next up are Viennese Crescents, which my mom made every year until she delegated the cookie baking to me more years ago than I care to remember. First, prepare the sugar: chop ¼ of a vanilla bean (they now cost a fortune!!!) and pound it in a mortar or blender with 1 Tbsp. of confectioner’s sugar. Mix with the remaining 1 cup of confectioner’s sugar; cover and let stand preferably overnight.

For the cookies, preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Cut 1 cup of walnut meats into tiny pieces and pound to a paste using mortar and pestle. Or use a food processor to make the paste. With a wooden spoon, fingers, or pastry cutter mix the walnuts, 1 cup of softened butter, ¾ cup of granulated sugar, and 2 ½ cups of sifted all-purpose flour to a smooth dough. Shape the dough a teaspoon at a time into small crescents about 1 ½ inch on diameter. Bake in an ungreased baking sheet until lightly browned 14-15 minutes. Cool one minute; while still warm roll the cookies in the prepared vanilla sugar.

Now for a quickie: Oreo Truffles. You’ll need one package of Oreo cookies, 1 (8-ounce) package of softened cream cheese, and 2 (8-ounce) packages of Mrs. Baker’s semi-sweet chocolate. Crush 9 cookies in a food processor and reserve. Crush remaining cookies with the cream cheese until well blended. Roll into balls dip in melted chocolate and roll in reserved crumbs. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

Bon appetit!

Martin Bodtmann  |  marbodt@aol.com
While Thanksgiving is ten days away as I write this article, this is not about the big day with turkey and our family.

On November 12th, the Vestry, Deacon Barbara, and Mother Mariclair reviewed the entire C.A.T. Assessment with Emily Swanson from Holy Cow, the company that developed and evaluated the results from the survey. As the president of Holy Cow, she has tremendous experience with all kinds of churches who have taken this anonymous survey. We may have been the smallest church to work with Holy Cow. Yet many times, she pointed out that we had gone off the charts with our answers. St. Mary’s is unlike any other church in so many positive ways.

Emily described St. Mary’s as:
Progressive, adaptable, social justice-focused, welcoming, inclusive, exceptional in both quality and spiritual content, having representative leadership, hospitable, compassionate, and more!

Her description spoke to me about the kind of church we hope that we are. My reaction to the results was one of thanksgiving. I am so grateful that I found St. Mary’s, Hamilton Village five years ago. Yes, I lived next to the church, and I am an Episcopalian. So, it was an easy decision to attend. But the values that came through in the survey and that we live out day by day, keeps me coming back!

I give thanks for every one of you at St. Mary’s Hamilton Village. You have enriched my life. While we can always do more, I believe that we are trying to follow Christ, love each other, and serve those in need around us.
Before the Tower

In the Winter 2018 issue was a contemporary account in 1907 on the completion of the bell tower from *The Churchman*, an Episcopal Church weekly magazine. In the archives I found several photographs of the church building taken before the tower was erected that give us a sense of the evolution of the building.

Here you see the church as it was built in 1873. At the west end is only the narthex or vestibule, and there is an entrance on Locust Street and stone steps but no stone retaining wall. There is a “hairpin” fence where the present sidewalk between the cloister and the parking lot begins and trolley tracks on the street.
This is a view of the rectory and the church after the retaining wall was added. The Locust Street entrance wing has a flat roof so that a bell tower could be added. Note that there was a spire at the peak of the roof above the altar and its resemblance to the spire of Notre Dame Cathedral that was lost to fire in April.

In this view we see the new entrance to the cloister. The pointing on the stonework looks very new.

And here we see an image of our tower today, standing tall, one hundred and twelve years later!
Mark Your Calendars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, December 1st</td>
<td>The First Sunday of Advent, followed by Advent Wreath Making in the Parish Hall, led by Deacon Barbara Tobin Jazz Sanctuary, 3 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, December 5th</td>
<td>Final Compline of the Fall Semester, 8 PM</td>
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<td>Friday, December 6th</td>
<td>West Philly Square Dance, 7:30 PM</td>
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<td>Saturday, December 7th</td>
<td>University of Pennsylvania Chorale Concert, 8 PM</td>
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<td>Monday, December 9th</td>
<td>Penn Collegium Musicum Concert, 8 PM</td>
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<td>Wednesday, December 11th</td>
<td>ECS Christmas Drive Deadline, 2 PM</td>
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<td>Friday, December 13th</td>
<td>Piffaro, the Renaissance Band Concert, 7 PM</td>
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<td>Sunday, December 15th</td>
<td>Third Sunday Brunch following Mass Advent Lessons and Carols at 5 PM</td>
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<td>Tuesday, December 17th</td>
<td>Final Rosary and Low Mass with Healing Prayer and Anointing of the Fall 2019 Semester, 11:45 AM Vestry Meeting, 7 PM</td>
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<td>Saturday, December 21st</td>
<td>Playing and Preserving Concert, 1:30 PM</td>
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<td>Thursday, December 24th</td>
<td>Office Closed Christmas Eve Mass at 10 PM</td>
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<td>Friday, December 25th</td>
<td>Office Closed Christmas Day Mass at 11 AM</td>
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<td>Sunday, December 29th</td>
<td>Christmas Lessons and Carols with Eucharist 11 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, December 31st</td>
<td>Office Closed</td>
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<td>Saturday, December 21st</td>
<td>Rosary Prayers Resume, 11:45 AM Low Mass with Healing Prayers and Anointing Resume, 12:15 PM</td>
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<td>Thursday, January 23rd</td>
<td>Candlelight Compline Resumes, 8 PM</td>
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<td>Tuesday, January 28th</td>
<td>Vestry Meeting, 7 PM</td>
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<td>Wednesday, January 29th</td>
<td>Annenberg Performing Arts Presents Dunedin Consort, 7 PM</td>
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<td>Sunday, February 1st</td>
<td>Jazz Sanctuary, 3 PM</td>
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<td>Tuesday, February 24th</td>
<td>Vestry Meeting, 7 PM</td>
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<td>Wednesday, February 25th</td>
<td>Ash Wednesday Masses, 7:30 AM, 12:15 PM</td>
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<td>Wednesday, February 29th</td>
<td>Annenberg Performing Arts Presents Dunedin Consort, 7 PM</td>
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<td>Wednesday, March 2nd</td>
<td>Jazz Sanctuary, 3 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, March 3rd</td>
<td>University of Pennsylvania Chorale Concert, 8 PM</td>
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Worship Guild Opportunities
You can help make mass happen! Are you interested in helping with services as a lector, intercessor, acolyte, usher, or member of the altar guild? Please contact Brittany at 215-386-3916 or administrator@stmarysatpenn.org if you would like to help!

Sponsor Altar Flowers
We invite you to sponsor the Sunday altar flowers in memory of loved ones or in thanksgiving for life events! We suggest a donation of $40 which can be arranged through St. Mary’s. If interested, contact Brittany at administrator@stmarysatpenn.org

Find St. Mary’s on Social Media
St. Mary’s Facebook: www.facebook.com/stmarysatpenn
St. Mary’s Twitter: www.twitter.com/StMarysatPenn
St. Mary’s Instagram: www.instagram.com/stmarysatpenn

Are you interested in helping out with our spectacular Sunday coffee hour? Contact Pattie Duncan at 215-472-2014 or at pattiedd@gmail.com.
# December 2019

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| 1 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM  
Sunday School 10:45 AM  
11 AM Mass  
Advent Wreath Making  
Jazz Sanctuary, 3 PM | 2 | 3 11:45 AM Rosary Prayers  
12:15 PM Low Mass with Healing Prayers and Anointing | 4 | 5 UCHC Dinner  
Thursday Night Candlelight Compline 8 PM | 6 | 7 UCHC Sandwich Lunch  
Penn Chorale, 8 PM |
| 8 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM  
Sunday School 10:45 AM  
11 AM Mass  
FaSoLa Shape Note Sing, 5 PM | 9 Penn Collegium Musicum, 8 PM | 10 11:45 AM Rosary Prayers  
12:15 PM Low Mass with Healing Prayers and Anointing | 11 ECS Christmas Drive Donations Due, 2 PM  
Carols by Candlelight 5:30 PM | 12 UCHC Dinner | 13 Piffaro, 7 PM | 14 UCHC Lunch, 11 AM  
March for Our Lives, 2:30 PM |
| 15 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM  
Sunday School 10:45 AM  
11 AM Mass  
Advent Lessons & Carols, 5 PM | 16 | 17 11:45 AM Rosary Prayers  
12:15 PM Low Mass with Healing Prayers and Anointing  
Vestry Meeting 7 PM | 18 | 19 UCHC Dinner | 20 West Philly Square Dance Social, 7:30 PM | 21 UCHC Lunch, 11 AM  
Playing & Preserving, 1:30 PM |
| 22 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM  
Sunday School 10:45 AM  
| 29 Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM  
Sunday School 10:45 AM  
Christmas Lessons and Carols at 11 AM Mass | 30 | 31 Parish Office Closed |   |   |   |   |
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11 AM Mass | 4  | 3 11:45 AM Rosary Prayers  
12:15 PM Low Mass with Healing Prayers and Anointing | 4  | 5 UCHC Dinner  
Thursday Night Candlelight Compline 8 PM | 6  | 7 UCHC Lunch, 11 AM |
| 8   | Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM  
Sunday School 10:45 AM  
11 AM Mass  
FaSoLa Shape Note, 5 | 9  | 10 11:45 AM Rosary Prayers  
12:15 PM Low Mass with Healing Prayers and Anointing | 11 | 12 UCHC Dinner  
Thursday Night Candlelight Compline 8 PM | 13 | 14 UCHC Lunch, 11 AM |
| 15  | Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM  
Sunday School 10:45 AM  
11 AM Mass | 16 | 17 11:45 AM Rosary Prayers  
12:15 PM Low Mass with Healing Prayers and Anointing | 18 | 19 UCHC Dinner  
Thursday Night Candlelight Compline 8 PM | 20 | 21 UCHC Lunch, 11 AM |
| 22  | Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM  
Sunday School 10:45 AM  
11 AM Mass | 23 | 24 11:45 AM Rosary Prayers  
12:15 PM Low Mass with Healing Prayers and Anointing | 25 | 26 UCHC Dinner  
Thursday Night Candlelight Compline 8 PM | 27 | 28 UCHC Lunch, 11 AM |
| 29  | Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM  
Sunday School 10:45 AM  
11 AM Mass | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

**February 2019**
Arts and Culture at St. Mary’s

For decades, St. Mary’s has been a place where people from all walks of life can gather to share in the joys of creativity. We proudly host several creative groups that live out their mission under our roof. Today, we have the pleasure of providing space for rehearsals and auditions in our Parish Hall and our sanctuary is often transformed into a concert space and a stage for theatrical productions! We are dedicated to supporting the Arts in University City and West Philadelphia.

A huge congratulations for the **Bearded Ladies** for taking home the coveted **Barrymore Award** this year! The Barrymore Awards for Excellence in Theatre are a nationally recognized symbol of excellence for professional theatre in the Greater Philadelphia region, honoring local artists and theatre companies while increasing public awareness of the richness and diversity of our city’s thriving theatre community. The Beards won the Outstanding Outdoor Theatre award for their original production, *Contradict This! A Birthday Funeral for Heroes*. The General Manager of the Beards, Brandi Burgess, won the Barrymore for Outstanding Leading Performance of a Play for her brilliant work in Simpatico’s production of *Cry It Out*. From the entire St. Mary’s community: Bravo, Beards!

Our in-house theatrical swordfighters, **Argent Combat**, had a very busy Fall! This September, instructor J. Oliver Donahue and his students closed a 16-week certification course in longsword (broadsword) for aspiring actor-combatants and enthusiasts. The class culminated with students taking the Society of American Fight Directors’ Skills Proficiency Test which, when passed, certified them in the longsword discipline. Argent Combat was also spotted at the 20th Annual Philadelphia Stage Combat Workshop (affectionately known as “The Cheesesteaks”) this past October at Temple University’s Mitten Hall and, in celebration of **Philly Theatre Week** (February 6–16, 2020), will be hosting an class of introductory unarmed stage combat and theatrical swordplay on February 15th titled *Heart of Violence*. For the adventurous types interested in bringing their sweetheart (or just a close friend) for a rousing, post-Valentine’s Day theatrical duel, enrollment for this class will open on January 9th at theatrephiladelphia.org. Argent Combat will also be conducting several introductory workshops for beginners throughout the winter and a certification course in unarmed starting in January. These are great opportunities for folks curious about stage combat to give it a try before committing to a full certification course. St. Marians who would like to embrace their inner Errol Flynn can use the code “gladio” for a special discount at argentcombat.eventbrite.com. To learn more about Argent Combat, visit www.argentcombat.com!

This November, we had the pleasure to welcome a new event happening the first Sunday of every month from now until June: **Jazz Sanctuary**! This partnership between Penn Music, Drexel University Westphal College of Media Arts & Design, St. Mary’s, and The Jazz Sanctuary offers college-aged music students a place to improv jam with the House Band composed of instructors from Penn and Drexel (the Jazz Sanctuary showcases some of the most accomplished Philadelphia Style Jazz musicians from the area) and an opportunity to gain the education and experience of playing with professionals. There is no cost and all are welcome to either listen and enjoy the music or to participate and play the great American music invention Jazz! To learn more, visit www.thejazzsanctuary.com.
UCity West Coast Swing will continue to beat the cold by meeting Wednesday nights in our Parish Hall. UCWCS offers beginner and advanced lessons, and periodically brings in professional teachers and DJs. Their goal is to create an environment where everyone can learn this amazing dance and have an excellent night of dancing, regardless of their skill level. They are also an open-role degendered dancing community, so regardless of which role you prefer, you are welcome to join! A typical UCWCS event is an hour of lessons and two hours of West Coast swing dancing! Show up for either their newcomer-friendly fundamentals series or their advanced-beginner/intermediate class! Their beginner series is a sequence of four classes that build on each other to get you out on the dance floor! First class is free! For more, visit www.facebook.com/groups/UCSwing!

Another Wednesday night favorite are the fine martial artists of Youth Martial Arts of Philadelphia, whose mission is to increase personal and physical development for youth in Philadelphia by offering a safe place for physical activity and personal growth through the traditional Chung Do Kwan style of Tae Kwon Do at little or no cost. They seek to remove economic barriers to youth martial arts and to ensure inclusiveness. For more information on how to enroll and about class policies, please contact instructor Dave, dave@youthmartialartsphilly.org.

The Gatherings, an ongoing series of Space, Ambient, Electronic and Ethereal music performances, provide a rare opportunity for Spacemusic enthusiasts to mingle with each other and to experience this music performed live. Hotel Neon and Guitar Pilots returned as co-headliners to The Gatherings Concert Series this November. Hotel Neon is the ambient drone-guitar/synth trio consisting of Michael Tasselmyer, Andrew Tasselmyer and Steven Kemner. Their music is characterized by blissed-out, gently moving forms and slowly evolving atmospheres. In understated works for processed electric guitars and droning synths they entice the audience into a dreamy, wordless state. Emphasizing texture and mood, Hotel Neon provides an open-ended sonic environment meant for optimal being. As contrasts in sound reach the mind’s eye through the body’s ears, the movement of mood from dark to light stirs the listener’s soul. Guitar Pilots is the spacemusic duo featuring guitarists Art Cohen and Harrison McKay. Their music features lengthy structured improvisational pieces which transport the listener to the depths of space, all the while focusing on each precious unfolding moment. Cohen's sequencer-like echoing guitar figures provide rhythmic propulsion, while McKay's breathing chords and sub-octave rumblings build a foundation for both musicians to rise in melodic flights. Singing glissando blends seamlessly with plucks, twangs and blasts of an interstellar beam. Following the trail blazed by Pink Floyd, The Grateful Dead, and the Berlin School, Guitar Pilots carve out their own unique sonic territory that is both organic as the ground underneath and as far-reaching as a distant pulsar.

Local Electronic duo Alesi & Sieber provided an opening set. For information on 2020’s upcoming performances, visit www.thegatherings.org.

Starting in February 2020, St. Mary’s will welcome the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society for their monthly meetings every second Friday! PSFS was established in 1936 and is the second oldest extant group in science fiction fandom. It hosted what is considered by some to be the first science fiction convention. Anyone living in the greater Philadelphia area and interested in science fiction, fantasy, horror, whether written or on TV or in the movies; SF, fantasy, and horror art; gaming, board games or video games; comic books/graphic novels; and related arts is welcome!
The Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts will present several artists over the course of the coming year! Belgium-based Vox Luminis is one of the foremost vocal ensembles specializing in “intensely dramatic and colourful” (The Independent) performances of Renaissance and Baroque music. Led by Artistic Director Lionel Meunier, the Gramophone-winning Vox Luminis made its Annenberg Center debut at St. Mary’s on Friday, November 1st in a celebration of the Italian Baroque, featuring works by Claudio Monteverdi and Domenico Scarlatti, including Stabat Mater, the signature work that inspired the group’s founding.

On January 29th, St. Mary’s will host another ACPA debut: Scotland’s Gramophone Award–winning baroque ensemble, Dunedin Consort! Acclaimed for their joyously vivid music-making, the Dunedin Consort and featured mezzo-soprano soloist Meg Bragle promise an inimitably fresh performance of “Bach at his most ravishing.” (The Independent) Under the direction of the preeminent Bach scholar John Butt, Dunedin Consort is recognized for its inquisitive approach, shining new light into some of the best-known pieces of the Baroque repertoire.

This autumn, St. Mary’s welcomed Astral Artists, an early career incubator for classical musicians, working with Partners for Sacred Places on the music in community portion of their Playing and Preserving organ restoration project in Philadelphia. St. Mary’s has been selected as a pilot project site for site-specific programming that engages the local community in preservation through music. Astral Artists has organized a series of performances and events which will highlight our historic Aeolian-Skinner pipe organ in ways that juxtapose and combine genres and styles of music such as gospel, jazz, classical and others. In October, we welcomed Project Fusion saxophone quartet, Play On, Philly! Wind Ensemble, and our very own organist and choirmaster Michael Lawrence for an evening of performances. Just before Thanksgiving, we were treated to performances by Thomas Mesa (cello), Greg Zelek (organ), and the Play On, Philly! Cello Ensemble. To ring in the Christmas season, Chrystal E. Williams (mezzo-soprano), Thomas Mesa (cello), Greg Zelek (organ), and Play On, Philly! Symphony Orchestra will perform in our sanctuary on December 21st. To learn more, visit www.astralartists.org and sacredplaces.org. All concerts are completely free to the public and, 30 minutes before performances begin, young families can enjoy the Experience Stations organized for young, aspiring musicians to learn more about our organ!
For the academic year 2019-20 the University of Pennsylvania Music Department community is reflecting on its theme, Migrations, through performances, creative endeavors, teaching, and scholarship. St. Mary’s will have a very busy first weekend in December hosting two performances: The University of Pennsylvania Chorale on December 7th and Collegium Musicum on the 8th!

![Image of Elizabeth Braden]

The Penn Chorale is a newly formed choral ensemble, making its debut in the 2019-2020 Academic Year. The Penn Chorale will perform a variety of choral music, but with a special emphasis on repertoire written in 21st and late 20th centuries. This new ensemble will be led by conductor Elizabeth Braden (pictured left.) This musical program, inspired by the coming Winter Solstice, touches on elements of love and death, day and night, hope and dread - and finding and experiencing these emotions in both the darkness and the light. The concert features music by Penn Graduate and Philadelphia composer Melissa Dunphy, as well as music by Samuel Barber, Stephen Paulus, and John Taverner.

Penn Collegium Musicum is a select chamber choir that specializes in music from the Medieval, Renaissance and early Baroque period. The choir has a special interest in historically informed performance practice. Led by Meg Bragle (pictured right), Penn Collegium Musicum performs two concerts per year with occasional run-out performances around the Philadelphia area. This December’s concert is entitled Journey of the Magi, befitting of both the season and departmental theme.

![Image of Meg Bragle]

On December 13th, Piffaro, the Renaissance Band, will be performing 15th-Century English pieces to celebrate the Christmas season. Grammy Award-winning tenor Karim Sulayman (Best Classical Solo Vocal Album) and soprano Nell Snaidas join Piffaro’s musicians in a reverent and raucous exploration of the Christian and pagan traditions of Christmas in merrie old England. Piffaro performs “highly polished recreations of the rustic music of the peasantry and the elegant sounds of the official wind bands of the late Medieval and Renaissance periods. Its ever-expanding instrumentarium includes shawms, dulcians, sackbuts, recorders, krumhorns, bagpipes, lutes, guitars, harps, and a variety of percussion — all careful reconstructions of instruments from the period.” Our sanctuary is one which is ideal for experiencing atmospheric music across all genres, so we eagerly anticipate Piffaro transporting us back several centuries! For discounted tickets, St. Marians can enter the code “SMHV” at checkout online.

If you are interested in learning more about upcoming events or would like to explore hosting a performance, workshop, or reception in any of our spaces, please feel free to reach me at the email address below or by calling our office at 215.386.3916!

Brittany Holdahl | administrator@stmarysatpenn.org
Travel back in time to the golden age of English caroling! Grammy-winning tenor Karim Sulayman (Best Classical Solo Vocal Album of 2019), soprano Nell Snaidas, and lutenist Mark Rimple join Piffaro’s renowned period instrumentalists. Like the most enduring holiday traditions, this is music reverent, raucous, and always full of joy!

Each half of the concert will open with part of the Christmas Story told through religious carols and motets by English masters like William Byrd and Thomas Ravenscroft before moving on to lively instrumental numbers from the Henry VIII Songbook (containing music performed at the king’s court) and popular songs & ballads from the 15th, 16th, and early 17th c. The bill of fare includes include Green growth the holly, The Shropshire Wakes, or Hey to Christmas, The Old Yeare now away has fled, and much more.

“Vivid and indelible performances...a true holiday gift” – Broad Street Review

Tydings Trew: Caroling in Early England

FRI • 12/13 • 7:30PM
St Mary’s - Hamilton Village
PIFFARO.ORG • 215-235-8469
Thanks to everyone's dedicated stewardship, we are in great financial shape. Compared with last October, we have a bigger surplus due to lower expenses. I am confident that we will end the year in the black.

### St. Mary's Hamilton Village, Operating Budget, 2019 Actuals

#### Statement of Revenue and Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2019 Budget</th>
<th>YTD</th>
<th>As % of 2019 Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>REVENUE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Congregational Giving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plate (not 1st Sunday)</td>
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<td>Occasional/Designated</td>
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<td>Reimbursements/Copier</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>121</td>
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<tr>
<td>Altar Guild Income</td>
<td>2,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other - Surplus/Grant Support</td>
<td>2,505</td>
<td>2,505</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td>268,510</td>
<td>223,296</td>
<td>83.2%</td>
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#### EXPENSES

<table>
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<th>Category</th>
<th>2019 Budget</th>
<th>YTD</th>
<th>As % of 2019 Budget</th>
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<tr>
<td>Outside Giving</td>
<td>13,840</td>
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<td>Financial Expense **</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>1,146</td>
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<tr>
<td>Altar Guild Expenses</td>
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<td>1,043</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>268,425</td>
<td>201,650</td>
<td>75.1%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### 2019 YTD Balance (Deficit)

21,646
Present: Jonathan Ashton, Mariclair Partee Carlsen, Frank Innes, Vanessa Albert Lowry, Sally Hillman Redman, Sophia Reeder, Karen Stachelek, Barbara Tobin, Aaron Todd

Absent: Robin Foster-Drain

Spiritual Practice – Mariclair

Information

Approval of June minutes – Vanessa moved to approve. Jonathan seconded. Unanimously approved. Thank you, Frank, for a job well done!

Rector’s Update – 8/24 New Student Welcome & Voter Registration table on Locust Walk went well. A beautiful day. Met many folks, handed out voter registration info.

August/September Events
- 9/8 Welcome Back Cook Out volunteers needed (Scott and Martin away day of). Stan and Karen volunteered to bring their grill and get the grilling started. We will ask Holman to bring his grill as well. Email Mariclair if interested in providing food.
- Book Bag/School Supplies drive for NSC prepacked bulk bags. $639 raised so far. This will provide about 80 school-supply-filled backpacks. Sunday will be the final call for donations. We will likely bless them on Sunday, 9/15.

Nursery and Sunday School will be combined and start up on September 8 along with the choir.

Anti-gun violence meeting. Mariclair and Barbara recently met with Heeding God’s Call. We are installing another memorial on October 19 at 10am. The Sunday church service on October 27 will be co-hosted with University Lutheran. Mariclair will reach out to the other members of the Religious Communities Council to participate as well.

Deacon’s Update – Barbara asked Sara Forrest to coordinate letter writing with Al Holland regarding gun violence. She requested donations of flowers for tables at the Thursday UCHC dinners. The Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) will be involved with the next deanery health event here on the afternoon of September 28. The Cathedral will have an event on grief. Our follow-up meeting with the Anti-Gun Violence Committee of the diocese to discuss the Memorial to the Lost installation hasn’t been organized yet, according to Mariclair.

Sunday, September 28, 1-3PM – Philadelphia Corporation for Aging is coming to St. Mary’s to discuss caregiver support

Saturday, October 12, 9:30AM-3:30PM – the Episcopal Cathedral is hosting a Mental Health First Aid Training
Vestry Minutes

Discussion

Vestry Resource Guide Chapter 6 discussion- Stewardship

Stewardship is more than an annual campaign. It should be a year-round discussion.

Stewardship is more than just money, it’s your time, talent, and treasure. The vestry guide gives an example of a church that developed an annual stewardship statement in the form of a prayer. Homework for next vestry meeting: bring Resource Guide and develop a stewardship statement. It’s important to offer some results of what stewardship has accomplished from the previous year. It’s up to the vestry to decide how the church’s fundraising is used and have policies.

St. Mary’s is great at using its physical footprint to generate revenue. Every inch is used! We should explore raising the fee to rent the church for wedding ceremonies.

Brittany has been an incredible asset in helping St. Mary’s re-strategize and capitalize on its physical space by renegotiating fees. Thank you, Brittany!

Sally attended another church that had a timeline. We should explore creating.

Mariclair is exploring doing a congregational assessment provided by Holy Cow, a consulting company. It’s a digital survey. They compile a report and then provide a 2-hour interpretation webinar. This would be helpful to us to determine where the congregation’s energy lies with regard to future growth and what the church is especially passionate about. The cost is $780 total for the assessment and the interpretation. We would begin to advertise the C.A.T. in September and send out the survey in early October as part of our stewardship campaign. Our 200th anniversary is coming up. Mariclair is due for a sabbatical next year.

Frank moved that we move forward with a congregational assessment provided by Holy Cow for $780. Sally seconded. Unanimously approved.

Action

Treasurer’s Report- Frank provided a report through July. Vanessa moved to approve, Jonathan seconded. Unanimously approved.

Finance Committee Overview- Penn workers fixed the steam pipe. The church’s insurance should cover the damage the broken pipe caused to the parish hall and bathroom floors.
October 26th Playing and Preserving Fundraising Training 10/26 9AM-2PM - need commitments. It will take place at a church in the city. Scott Wilds will attend. Others are welcome to attend. Frank Innes will likely go. Sally is possibly available to attend. Mariclair will ask Michael to attend.

Closing Prayer – Mariclair

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
September 24, 2019, 7 – 9:10 PM

Present: Jonathan Ashton, Mariclair Partee Carlsen, Frank Innes, Vanessa Albert Lowry, Sally Hillman Redman, Barbara Tobin, Aaron Todd
Absent: Robin Foster-Drain, Sophia Reeder, Karen Stachelek

Information

Approval of August minutes – Sally moved, Frank seconded. Unanimously approved.

Rector's Update -

9/8 Welcome Back Cook Out: Very successful. Thank you to all who volunteered to prepare food and organize

Book Bag/School Supplies drive for NSC - $770 raised. $860 spent with the remainder coming out of Mariclair’s fund. Karen Jackson delivered half of the backpacks. Frank will deliver the remaining backpacks.

Diocesan and Deanery Anti-Gun Violence Events – October 19, installation of the memorial to the Lost at 10AM. Sunday, October 27. Starts at UniLu with a march that ends up at St. Mary’s for a final prayer service. There will also be an event at Hillel. The Chaplain’s office is participating. Take down on November 9.

Tuesday, October 29. Healing Mass – Special service for ending gun violence.

Organ Restoration- Partners for Sacred Places pilot program playing and preserving. $37,000 raised to restore the organ so far. Hopefully we will get an additional $50,000 from Partners for Sacred Places. Part of this program is a series of 3 concerts called Playing and Preserving featuring the St. Mary’s organ. October 25, 6PM is one of these concerts and the Vestry is encouraged to attend. Michael Lawrence is playing on this date.
Parish Hall Renovation - Committee met a few weeks ago. Sarto has put together a very professional bid package and is currently soliciting bids. We hope to have the new ADA compliant bathroom/entertainment wall over Christmas break. And then in Summer 2020, the existing bathrooms will be refreshed.

Holy Cow survey will go out on October 1. Once the results are in, Mariclair will schedule one-on-one visits with Vestry members to discuss.

Deacon’s Update

Sunday, September 28, 1-3PM – Philadelphia Corporation for Aging is coming to St. Mary’s to discuss caregiver support. 13 people have signed up so far. Hoping for some walk-ins.

Saturday, October 12, 9:30AM-3:30PM – the Episcopal Cathedral is hosting a Mental Health First Aid Training.

Thursday, October 24, 8:30AM-3PM – Episcopal Community Services Forum on Justice and Opportunity at WHYY.

Saturday, November 16, 1-3PM – Panel discussion at the Episcopal Cathedral. Speaker doctor from violence prevention 1-3pm to discuss gun violence and PTSD.

Sunday, December 1 – intergenerational advent wreath-making after the service.

Discussion

Stewardship Prayers – Vestry members took turns sharing prayers they had written/selected.

Sally shared a prayer from the Book of Common Prayer. Ephesians 3:20-21. “Glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask or imagine by his power at work within us; glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus for all generations, forever and always. Amen.”

Frank: “God maker of all things and ever present, all that we are and all that we have comes from you. Reflecting on all you have given us, we are moved to share a portion of what we have received. Be it money, talents, or time. To seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you. Amen.”

Jonathan: “God of abundance, we give thanks to all the things you have provided us to better serve you and your people we ask for your guidance in the allocation of our time, talents, and treasures. Help us see where you are calling us to do your work and grant us courage to do the work you require of us. God we pray that we will do all we can to glorify you and help our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. In you name we pray, amen.

Barbara: “Gracious and loving God, we are grateful for the abundance of our lives, for your son Jesus who showed us how to be disciples and for all of our gifts as a community. Help us to embrace those gifts and share them with others: our time our talents and our resources. Help us to be faithful disciples in sharing the good news with all those who come here and all those outside our walls, especially those who are marginalized and despised. Keep us humble in acknowledging that you are the creator and giver of all that we have and all that we are and all that we shall be. Amen.”

Discussion buzz words/phrases:

Abundance
All that we have is God’s and is from God “God of Abundance”
Discipleship
Courage
Time, talent, and resources

**Stewardship Prayer structure:**

**Giving Thanks**- Gracious and loving God who provides infinitely more than we can ask or imagine, we give thanks to you for your abundant love made manifest in our lives and the world around us.

**Our Mission (doing it with courage)**- You call us to be a loving, diverse, and inclusive community, working toward a world of compassion and justice. You challenge us to lift up and advocate for the marginalized and despised. Give us courage to be faithful disciples to discern and do the work you require of us to bring about your kingdom here and now.

**What we need/Call to action**- Help us to respond to your call by sharing generously of our time, talent, and treasure, always seeking justice, loving mercy and walking humbly with you. Amen.

**Full Prayer:**

“Gracious and loving God who provides infinitely more than we can ask or imagine, we give thanks to you for your abundant love made manifest in our lives and the world around us.

You call us to be a loving, diverse, and inclusive community, working toward a world of compassion and justice. You challenge us to lift up and advocate for the marginalized and despised. Give us courage to be faithful disciples to discern and do the work you require of us to bring about your kingdom here and now.

Help us to respond to your call by sharing generously of our time, talent, and treasure, always seeking justice, loving mercy and walking humbly with you. Amen.”

**Spaghetti Fundraiser** offer by Juan Ocampo to benefit St. Mary’s mission and Dorian Relief. We will strive to do this in November.

**Action**

**Treasurer’s Report** - Frank provided a report through August. Aaron moved to approve, Sally seconded. Unanimously approved.

**Finance Committee Overview** – Vanessa provided an update on the state of the church’s endowment.
Stewardship Campaign/Stewardship Moments – Mariclair requested individuals to volunteer to speak for 3-5 minutes on a Sunday in October about why they give of their time, talent, and treasure to St. Mary’s. Mariclair will reach out individually for volunteers.

Fall Parish Work Day to be discussed next Vestry meeting. Hedge clippers needed. Aaron will rent some from the West Philly tool library.

The November Vestry meeting will be moved to Tuesday, November 12, so as not to conflict with Thanksgiving travel plans. The November meeting will consist of business from 7-7:30, and CAT interpretation from 7:30-9:30. If we need more time for business we will meet after mass on the following Sunday, November 17.

Closing Prayer – Mariclair

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
October 22, 2019, 7 – 8:15PM

Present: Robin Foster-Drain, Frank Innes, Vanessa Albert Lowry, Sally Hillman Redman, Sophia Reeder, Barbara Tobin, Aaron Todd

Absent: Jonathan Ashton, Mariclair Partee Carlsen, Karen Stachelek

Spiritual Practice – Sally

Information

Approval of September minutes – Frank moved, Sophia seconded. Unanimously approved.

Rector’s Update (Sally provided in Mariclair’s absence):

Parish Work Day, Saturday, November 23, 9AM – 1PM

2020 Pledges - Please submit your 2020 pledges if you haven’t already.

Stewardship - The vestry thanks those who have participated in the 2019 stewardship drive by sharing their stories.
The vestry also discussed how it is challenging to hear the microphone from the choir pews and that it would be helpful to add a speaker behind the choir pews.
**Organ Restoration**- $50K granted from Partners for Sacred Places for use in restoring the St. Mary’s organ. We need to raise additional funds for wiring issues. The plan is to get the work started in January and completed by April. It must be finished by June according to the grant rules.

**Parish Hall Renovation**- Sarto contacted a contractor for the parish hall renovations this week. He feels we’re on track to complete the work during the St. Mary’s Nursery School’s Christmas break.

**Congregational Assessment and Interpretation Meeting Nov 12th** – The Holy Cow survey is now live through October 31. We’ve only had 17 responses so far. We need at least 30 for accurate results. The vestry will discuss the C.A.T. results during its meeting on Nov. 12th. The parish will discuss the results on November 17 during Third-Sunday brunch.

**Deacon’s Update:**

**Saturday, November 16, 1-3:30PM** – Traumatic Grief and Community Violence in Philadelphia Neighborhoods Panel Discussion at the Cathedral. Flyers are available in the office. Eventbrite sign up. Really great speakers, someone from Uplift Center for Grieving Children, a CHOP doctor, and more.

**Sunday, December 1** – intergenerational advent wreath-making after the service. Pruners are needed.

**Discussion**

**Spaghetti Fundraiser** offer by Juan Ocampo to benefit St. Mary’s outreach ministries. Scheduled for November 15th, 6PM. Everyone should try to bring five people. Volunteers are needed as kitchen helpers, servers, and to check people in at the door. Need to confirm some details with Juan and Mariclair re: timing, food prep, and possible sale of alcohol.

**Sign up here if you are able to volunteer:**

**Christmas Carol Performance**- Vanessa has a friend who is a professional actor and is interested in performing a one-man show of A Christmas Carol. This would be a community event w. 1st and second week of December would be an ideal time. On a Sunday afternoon. December 15?

**December Vestry meeting**- The vestry meeting normally would fall on December 24. We should consider moving the meeting to a different date so as to conflict with Christmas. Possible dates include December 10 and 17. Sophia and Jonathan are unlikely to attend due to student and travel responsibilities.

**Ecumenical Lessons and Carols**- Frank mentioned that the Ecumenical Lessons and Carols service will be on December 11, 5:30PM at St. Agatha St. James. Some members of the choir are participating.
Vestry Minutes

Action

**Treasurer’s Report**- Frank provided a report through September. Aaron moved to approve, Sophia seconded. Unanimously approved.

**Finance Committee Overview**- Vanessa provided an update from the October 15 meeting of the Finance Committee.

Vanessa discussed our self-audit deadline. The Episcopal Church designates a self-audit as a sanctioned practice for a church of our size. Robin shared that she does not support a self-audit and expressed her strong preference that we pay for a professional audit as this is the practice of her organization. As a compromise, Vanessa suggested that we contract an accountant review, which would be less costly, and that we could possibly budget funds for a professional audit next year. Robin supports an accountant review this year so long as we budget for a professional audit next year, which would cost an estimated $10K-$15K. As the vestry is responsible and liable for all financial matters of the church, Robin feels she would have to rotate off the vestry if a self-audit is what we continue to do in the future. Vanessa will look into pricing of a professional audit as well as an accountant review. Deacon Barbara will reach out to Mary Campbell (accountant friend) who has experience with church audits. Sophia is contacting, Michael Scagluso, an accountant acquaintance.

**Closing Prayer** – Sally
Christmas at St. Mary's

Advent 4, Sunday Dec. 22 at 11 am
Christmas Day, Wednesday, Dec. 25 at 11 am
Christmas Eve, Tuesday, Dec. 24 at 10 pm
Christmas Lessons & Carols, Sunday, Dec. 29 at 5 pm
Did you know that you can make a donation to St. Mary’s online safely and securely?

Go to www.stmarysatpenn.org and click on the “Support St. Mary’s” tab to make a one-time or reoccurring donation!

A Prayer for Winter

Shepherd of Israel, may Jesus, who is Emmanuel and son of Mary, be more than just a dream in our hearts. With the apostles, prophets, and saints, save us, restore us, and lead us in the way of grace and peace, that we may bear your promise into the world. Amen.

Taken from Revised Common Lectionary Prayers, 2002.