

# Church of the Good Shepherd



## A Modified Annual Report for 2020

## Rector Report



*Jesus said, “This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you. I will not leave you orphaned. I am coming to you.” (John 14:17-18)*

On the sixth Sunday of Easter, 5/17/20, we heard these words in our gospel reading. That Sunday would have been our Annual Meeting. Our yearly gathering for hospitality and fellowship, for electing new leaders and thanking outgoing ones, for listening to the people of our community share their reports, and uplifting the good news of what we are doing in the world and how we are being church.

And yet. There was no Annual Meeting on 5/17 or even a worship service, at least not like any we are used to. In person worship has been suspended in our Diocese since 3/15/20 to “flatten the curve” of COVID-19, and as of this letter we do not know when regathering for worship will resume.

We have adapted. Since 3/22/20 The Church of Good Shepherd has live-streamed worship, pre-recorded services and led Morning Prayer on the Zoom platform. The events of our world have thrust our church, along with many others, into the new world. In last year’s report I lauded our presence on Facebook, YouTube and the web, never dreaming we would have our Sunday services live and online by now. I am grateful and inspired by the way we have been able to adapt so readily.

The Annual Report is also a time to reflect and look back. This year all of us, myself especially, were blessed to have the Rev. Van Gardner join us as a Pastoral Associate. This quarter-time position was intended as a “clerical bridge” with the intention to seek a full-time Associate Rector. I was most grateful Van accepted my invitation to take some time out of retirement to serve with me on the altar, share in preaching and be the primary clergy for Outreach, specifically, our relationship with St. Luke’s Youth Center (SLYC). He has been a gift in these areas and a supportive colleague.

The present circumstances of our world, the light that COVID-19 has shined on the disparities in our communities leads me to believe our deepening relationship with St. Luke’s Youth Center (SLYC) is most certainly the work of the Holy Spirit. And in addition to the ministries of worship and pastoral care, the most vital ministry of our community at present and in the year to come.

SLYC began as a ministry of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, Carey Street in Baltimore. It is now a separate non-profit (I serve as President of the Board) working with the Diocese with the purpose to “create a center that prioritizes serving the youth and families of

Franklin Square & Poppleton neighborhood.” While the mission of SLYC is thriving, the congregation of St. Luke’s church is inactive. Like Paul’s Place in Pigtown, which started as a soup kitchen in St. Paul’s Church, the mission and ministry, (i.e. the good news) created something new. We envision and pray for a similar manifestation of God’s presence in Franklin Square neighborhood.

The Good Shepherd community has been greatly enriched through our relationship with SLYC. I know this from all of you. You tell me the ways in which you are moved, encouraged, inspired through after-school tutoring, Christmas Café’s and Camp Imagination. The ways in which we have shared our financial support, our campus, our gifts and talents and hearts is a testament to the caring and compassionate community we are. One that through relationships, makes a difference in people’s lives, including our own.

In the gospel for the sixth Sunday of Easter we hear Jesus remind us of two things. First, there is a Spirit of truth that the world cannot see, but followers of the Good Shepherd can. The truth is that all children are beloved of God, no matter the color of their skin. The truth is that all children deserve to be afforded the opportunities of education, no matter the color of their skin. The truth is that we know Jesus does not leave us, or anyone else, orphaned. And we are called to share this truth through the hearts and hands of those of us who see beyond disparity to the reality that is possible: God’s kingdom come.

Jesus said, “I will not leave you orphaned. I am coming to you.”

As we move into the summer, a time when there is “less” church in more typical years, I pray we prioritize staying connected. I pray we cultivate a new and refreshed rhythm to our common life and at least attempt, even though it can be hard to embrace, new technologies and ways to support each other and support our faith. I pray we have the courage to have bring God’s dream into reality, one step, one heart at a time.

I am most grateful for sharing in leadership with Tina Thomas, Sr. Warden; Harry Andrews, Jr. Warden; Dick Reid, Treasurer; Cynthia Fraser, Registrar; as well as our Vestry. The commitment and engagement of this group has surpassed expectations this year, I assure you. I hope their example encourages all of us to engage in support of our community. I look forward to the ways the Spirit will be at work in all of us to stay compassionate, stay connected and continue to be church so we can continue to make a difference; building up the common good in our world.

With love and peace, Arianne+

## Pastoral Associate Report



My primary focus since joining the staff has been: 1) To support the worship life of the congregation as both celebrant and preacher as scheduled by the rector.

2) To help Good Shepherd consider our mission to serve in the wider community. With the leadership of Mabeth, the Outreach Committee has examined our existing commitments looking to see that our financial support for various programs represents the places in which our people are involved. We want to make sure we have a real, person to person, relationship with these ministries. We have expanded and deepened our relationship with St. Luke's Youth Center (SLYC) and we look forward to helping this effort to grow and prosper.

3) We have established a Creation Care mission group to consider our stewardship of the environment and help educate the community as to the needs and opportunities for service. Our plans for this spring, including a "Creation Care Sunday" had to be postponed due to the COVID situation but we hope to resume when possible.

I have been attending regular staff meetings and helping to coordinate various parish programs, sitting in on vestry meetings, and, from time to time, helping with some of the pastoral needs of the congregation. Since Easter, I have been conducting a weekly service of Compline on line.

I enjoy my work with this community and feel very blessed to have met so many generous and caring people.

Van

## Senior Warden Report



To the Family of the Church of the Good Shepherd,

I am starting by addressing you as Family as that is what we really are. I found these two quotations and I am struck by how much they apply to us.

“To some the true meaning of family means a group of people related by blood or ancestry. To others, it has nothing to do with genes and everything to do with love, compassion and support.”

“Family isn’t always blood. It’s the people in your life who want you in theirs; the ones who accept you for who you are; the ones who would do anything to see you smile and who love you no matter what.”

During the pandemic, I have been struck by how often I think about my priorities. It all seems to boil down to FAMILY. My family of blood, my family of friends and my family of the Church of the Good Shepherd which is YOU! Like any family there are ups and downs and ins and outs but essentially has everything to do with love, compassions and support. I am not just talking about the last three months but day in and day out, year after year.

Now onto this particular year, I want to lift up and give thanks for all that we have done together to support ourselves and our community.

Fifty-two plus Sundays since our last Annual Meeting

Meetings: Vestry; Executive Committee; Finance Committee; Outreach Committee

Vestry Phone calls to Congregation- for stewardship and to check-in when stay at home orders started.

Monthly meetings and Christmas dinner with Sarah Lemon, GSS Director, Vestry and Day School Board

Thanksgiving Baskets and food collection for ACTC

SLYC after school tutoring, last year’s Camp Imagination and Christmas Cafe

Laurie Borne & Mark McGrath Audit review

Newcomer’s Party at Brooke Riegel’s

Chili & Church Dinner at my house

Outreach Dinner at the church

Meetings with past Senior Wardens: Clai Carr, Snowden Stanley and Ellen Brinkley

Pancake Supper and Advent Wreath making with the Church of the Holy Comforter

Daily Bell Ringing to give thanks for healthcare workers (which made the local news!)

Online gatherings for worship, hospitality, meetings, classes every week since March 15

What a lot of wonderful work done by so many hands. After three months plus of social distancing, hand washing, Zoom meetings and live and recorded services, I can tell you I miss coming to our beautiful church and seeing everyone in person. However, I think that given the circumstances, our church has been moving forward and growing and changing in the most marvelous ways.

The Rev. Arianne Rice, our rector and The Rev. Van Gardner, our assistant have consistently and continually given us words of hope and wisdom and made it possible for all of our parishioners to hear the word of the Lord every week and even on weekdays.

Wim Cassard, Bill Nesbit, Kevin King, and others helped to bring us together on Sunday mornings and make us feel connected.

Our Junior Warden, Harry Andrews, has been relentlessly seeing to the maintenance and upkeep of our beautiful church and school. You will see in his report, the second phase in roof replacement is finished and the entire school and parish hall is covered with a brand new slate roof which we are told should last for many decades.

Our treasurer, Dick Reid, has kept our finances in good form and continually reports that the Church's Finances are in a good state largely due to your pledges.

Our vestry has continued to stay connected on a monthly basis through ZOOM.

Our bell ringing task force consisting of Rebecca Williams and Cynthia Frasier have had our bells ringing in honor of all the frontline workers during the pandemic every day at 7:00pm. They also connected dozens of churches and schools in the greater Baltimore area to do the same.

We face as a nation and an interconnect world family, a truly remarkable time where we need to dig deep into the weeds and wounds of racism. We need to ask extremely hard questions and have difficult discussions about race. I hope you all have downloaded the WAY OF LOVE provided on the website by the Outreach Committee. They have provided an incredible list of resources to use to use during this watershed moment.

I hope everyone stays safe and healthy. If you feel a call to support the work of the church in the time, please be in touch. We need leaders in our flock to support our stewardship and guide us into the future of our community. I am looking forward to seeing how our church will adapt and grown in this unsettling time.

Respectfully submitted, Tina Thomas, Sr. Wardern



## Junior Warden



Greetings, Good Shepherd family,

I trust that you are weathering out 2020 as best you can.

While the life and times of a Junior Warden during pandemic is modified, our building and grounds continue to age and grow at their own pace. We started the 2019-2020 church year with a much-enhanced organ, a Parish Hall roof in the midst of replacement, and a summer of housekeeping.

We entertained bids to install a modern Audio-Video system, initially to allow service-viewing from various remote in-building locations. The Lord works in mysterious ways, and while underway, we modified our requirements to address our projection needs over the internet. This installation is underway.

The Day School undertook developing a playground and picnic area on the Boyce Ave lawn. And, we continually repair electrical and plumbing systems, undergo various inspections, and maintain the janitorial hygiene of the building.

Fast-forward to this spring: Through the generosity of two parishioners, we spruced up the planting beds around the Carrollton Ave. steps. Phase Two of the roof replacement is nearly complete. And, our recently formed Building Usage Task Force- a joint effort of church and school- is addressing all issues relating to preparing for the re-opening of our doors to the public in a safe and practical way.

Long story short: the physical representation of the spirit by our building is a powerful element of worship and cannot be ignored nor neglected, but our recent challenges reveal to us the true meaning of Church.

+ Peace, Harry Andrews, Jr. Warden.

# Outreach Report



Dear Good Shepherd friends,

The past several months of the pandemic healthcare crisis have taken a toll on everyone, especially those who are the most vulnerable. At the same time, our country and communities are reckoning with racial injustice suffered by our brothers and sisters of God.

In these challenging times, each of us is invited into what our Presiding Bishop Michael Curry calls “The Way of Love”: to give generously, to love and serve others, and to go beyond our circles of comfort, crossing boundaries to heal our hurting world. Working together, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are called to walk in the Way of Love.

## **In the months ahead, the Outreach Committee will be exploring how to:**

Continue to be in supportive relationship with the **SLYC (St. Luke’s Youth Center)** community. SLYC serves the children and families of the impoverished neighborhood of Franklin Square. This year Camp Imagination will be held virtually given the COVID-19 restrictions. We will find innovative ways to support SLYC during the camp and beyond.

Better support **Assistance Center of Towson Churches (ACTC)**. ACTC provides emergency assistance for our neighbors in need in Baltimore County and Baltimore City. With so many unemployed due to the pandemic, the needs have increased dramatically. [Download this to learn more.](#)

Seek healing, reconciliation, and justice through “**Walking the Way of Love, One Step at a Time.**” We have compiled a list of resources to help us learn, listen, and engage during this time of reckoning. Please [download this list](#) and choose from these many resources. Stay tuned to be part of small group discussion groups.

Strengthen our **Creation Care ministry**, which tends our relationship with Earth.

Thank you to everyone for being part of our vital Outreach ministry. The Outreach Committee meets on the first Tuesday of most months from 6:00–7:00 pm. Are you curious or intrigued about how to get more involved? *We welcome you!*

**A special thank you to these dedicated Outreach Committee members:** Missy Adams, John Bonn, Alex Fisher, Cynthia Fraser, Gretchen Garman, Ellen Hoitsma, Margie Long, Stephanie Bartal Lubitz, Wim Cassard, Hillary Shaffer, Rev. Van Gardner, Rev. Arianne Rice, Mabeth Hudson (Chair)

Mabeth Hudson



## Treasurer's Report



As of the Fiscal Year End 12/31/19, the Church of the Good Shepherd was in sound financial condition. A review of the Statement of Financial Position identified that bank accounts, including various investment funds, totaled nearly \$1.54 million. At the same time, total liabilities amounted to only \$104,000 – of which \$86,000 was listed as prepaid pledges. Please note that at the beginning of the current year 2020, prepaid pledges converted to income and disappeared as a liability. Accordingly, the Church at yearend was in a good liquid position, with little debt, and after adding in fixed assets, total equity amounted to nearly \$2.6 million. Again, a healthy condition.

Despite our liquidity and financial strength, we do have a number of identified challenges confronting the Church:

**The Coronavirus Pandemic.** Beginning in February 2020, with the onset of the Pandemic, the Church has transitioned from physical Sunday services to “virtual” services. Aside from the potential spiritual disruption and loss of fellowship, another financial worry was the possible impact it might have on congregation giving and the operations of the Church. Fortunately, thus far, through the close of April 2020, congregation giving is on pace with last year at this time. In addition, please be aware that the Church did apply and receive a CARES Payroll Protection Plan loan through M&T Bank and the Small Business Administration. The amount of the loan was \$41,400. The loan amount represents two months of the Church’s payroll, benefits, and utilities expenses in concert with the CARES Act requirements. The purpose of the Act is to provide small businesses and non-profits with incentive to maintain their employees by subsidizing their payroll and overhead. If the loan is used properly, the loan amount will be forgiven. If any portion of the loan is not used in accordance with requirements, then that amount has to be repaid over a 2-year period at 1% interest. So, the Church has made every effort to protect both our staff and the financial health of the Church during these unusual times.

**Stewardship/Congregational Giving.** The second challenge is our pattern of total giving. For the past four years total giving has been on a decline. The approved operating budget for 2020 projects a net cash flow deficit of nearly \$44,000. This is after 2019’s operating deficit of some \$39,000. Fortunately, this past Fall our Stewardship Campaign reversed the trend with an uptick in pledges. Thank you all! But going forward we will need more. Had it not been for unexpected personnel changes providing lapses in salary expense, the operating deficits would have been much larger. This is not a sustainable operating model. We need to find a way to

increase giving or deriving other income to support both the Church and our important outreach missions.

**Pending Capital Projects.** Our building is nearly 100 years old and needs attention. Accordingly, a number of capital projects have been recently completed, or are underway, or are being contemplated. Two years ago we replaced the heating system. Last year we renovated the organ. We are now in the midst of our roof repair/replacement project. Phase 1 of the roof repair totaled some \$140,000 and was completed last summer. Phase 2 is just now getting underway with a total cost of some \$182,400 with completion expected by July. The remaining roof replacement will be scheduled this coming year with an estimated cost ranging as much as an additional \$500,000. We are currently implementing a new A/V system to provide a better sound system, as well as to be able to video and/or broadcast services and music to our congregation. Further, we still need to shore up the Church Spire and Bell Tower, and we will need to replace the air conditioning system – along with a series of other smaller projects. Although we do not have final estimates for the cost of all these projects, they will certainly exceed \$700,000 to be phased in over the next 3 years. Obviously, we have investments/liquidity that can fund some of these expenses, but we certainly do not want to fully deplete our reserves and put ourselves in jeopardy for the future. This situation calls for a capital campaign in the near future.

Finally, I would like to count our blessings. We have a dedicated, resilient and resourceful Clergy and Staff that continue to find ways, despite the obstacles, to support the Church and our Congregation, and to deliver the comforting words we all need to hear. We have an exceptional Choir. We have a strong Vestry that provides us needed leadership in these troubled times. We have a beautiful Church, Spirit and grounds.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Dick Reid

# Music Annual Report



One year ago we were celebrating the return of our Moeller Pipe Organ to our worship services. We updated the console with solid-state electronics and added seven more stops to beef up the pedals and create more versatility in the selection of voices. We thank the congregation for their generosity and patience while this work was done (and re-done).

Our parish choir continues its leadership in the church services: leading hymn singing, utilizing Anglican Chant to sing the Psalms, and singing the appropriate anthems to underscore the lessons of the day.

## **SOPRANOS**

Faith Okkema-Boruke

Renee DeLisle-Butler

Grace Belkot

Suzee Dentry-Meny

Bettye Orr King

## **ALTOS**

Ginny Arey

Ellen Hoitsma

Mary Braman

Hilary Sargeant

Paula Schauble

## **TENORS**

Bill Nesbitt

Kevin King

**BASSES**

John Bonn

Mark McGrath

Since the “sheltering-in-place” has begun, Arianne has been selecting and singing the hymns. Bill Nesbitt has been a constant presence in our “live-stream” services as a reader and singer of hymns. Kevin King has been playing the piano for these services, as well. Ginny Arey has “zoomed” a solo from her home. We hope to have organist Jane Miller back at the console for several Sundays this summer.

With God’s grace, we will be back....we will await the Bishop’s directives for a safe return.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin King - Choirmaster

# State of School Report 2019–2020



The 2019-2020 school year was one to remember on so many levels. It started out with 134 students on the first day of school and we rose to 141 by October. The tours for the following school year began on October 1st and the stream of new families visiting GSS continued into the beginning of March. We now have 144 registered students for the 2020-2021 school year and we have been closed for four months which shows that the Good Shepherd School is known for delivering a solid preschool program no matter the circumstances. Outside of the Extended Pre-K, all of our current programs are currently full with 24 new ul community.

Our Parents' Association was led by Katie Melnick and Erin Link. They did a fantastic job of leading a team of volunteers to organize many fundraising and community building events such as Fire & Ice, Fall Festival, Greenspring Station Sip & Shop, the Annual Dinner and Auction at L'hirondelle and more. They raised 168% of the budgeted goal in spite of being unable to hold any of the spring P.A. events. This is an amazing result that reflects the hard work and dedication of our P.A. Co- Presidents and their loyal volunteers.

Our Kindergarten program added a community outreach element to their curriculum. It was an opportunity for me to work closely with the student leaders of our school and share ideas of how to help others who are experiencing different life issues than we are. The Kindergartners organized and ran the first annual Children's Book Drive to benefit the preschool students at Franklin Square Elementary, collecting over 500 books. They collected and counted all the school-wide food donations for the Thanksgiving ACTC Food Drive. They made cards for children who were hospitalized over the Christmas holidays. These school leaders organized and ran our first Hat and Mitten Drive to benefit St. Vincent De Paul of Baltimore and the shelters they serve, collecting over 150 hats and mittens to donate. They made Valentine's Day cards for the residents of Arden Courts, a memory care facility on Bellona Avenue. The staff was overjoyed by the numerous creative cards the children made for their "neighbors". The children took great pride in their outreach efforts. The discussions that took place while we explored each new opportunity to help people was a magical experience for me to witness and be a part of. We had several other community outreach ideas to explore together but that will have to wait for the incoming class of Kindergartners. I hope to work with them in this new way.

For the 2019-2020 school year, Good Shepherd consisted of 15 individual classes offering 10 different programs not including the myriad of afternoon programs for our 2s, 3s and

Pre-K students. Our teachers worked hard to build strong relationships with their students as well as their families. They were dedicated to bringing out the full potential of each child through one-on-one instruction and hands-on exploration and instilled in them a zest for curiosity and a love of learning. It is no surprise that when our doors were forced closed by COVID-19 with little warning on March 13th, our teachers were able to seamlessly switch to distance learning on all program levels. The relationships they had forged throughout the year made it that much easier and effective to connect virtually with the children and families in their classes. It was an amazing effort to watch as a team of teachers and staff rose to the unprecedented challenge of delivering the GSS experience virtually day in and day out. Curriculum was provided daily in a variety of age appropriate ways, Specials classes (Music, Chapel, Art, Library and Creative Movement) were delivered through YouTube videos for all families to enjoy on their scheduled days and class Zoom calls provided a needed social outlet for some of our older students. The teachers never wavered or complained (except for technical difficulties!) using their personal laptops and devices in their own homes and many times with family members as the film crew. It was an impressive effort that was repeatedly praised by our parents as going above and beyond in their duties as preschool teachers.

The school year ended with our students losing an average of 25% of their in-person learning time. The GSS School Board felt a tuition refund was the right thing to do and a way to support our families in this difficult time for all. Every Good Shepherd family received a refund for half of the in-person time missed due to COVID-19, averaging 12.5% per student.

At the end of school, teachers drove in separate cars to deliver their students' belongings and End of Year items to their homes where they were able to see and wave to their families from a distance. Every teacher I spoke with said it was the highlight of the year to see them all again. Bettye King, one of our amazing Pre-K teachers, said it was the highlight of her career (20 years) to experience individual deliveries with each family and to see how excited the families were to see the teachers even if from afar. The Kindergarten had their Graduation Certificates, traditional GSS hats and GSS Kindergarten keepsakes delivered by the Kindergarten teaching team who arrived at each home to form a small parade of cars. The next day, the Kindergarten students and their families, the teachers and I came together on a Zoom Video call to recognize and celebrate each individual Kindergarten student and their achievement. It ended with a fun yet moving slideshow capturing from the first day of school to how they grew together even when they were apart. It was wonderful ceremony.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 shut our Summer Camp doors even though the planning by our Summer Camp Director, Alicia Connor never stopped in an attempt to be ready if things improved. To the dismay of our loyal camp teachers and our disappointed families, we

decided to cancel all summer camp sessions to focus on preparation for the fall. The good news is the roof replacement was made possible during the summer closure and it looks wonderful!

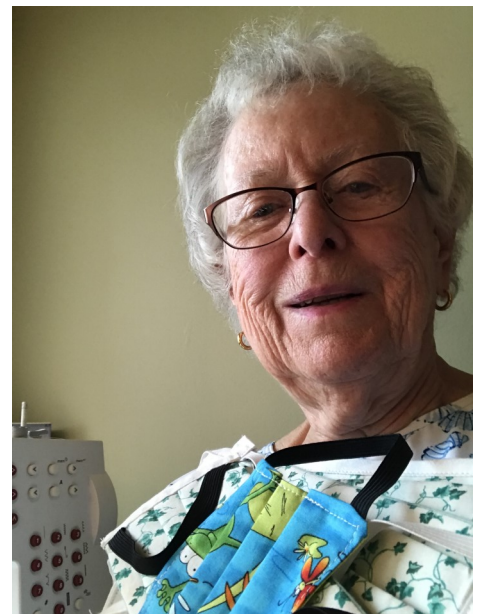
Currently, we are working hard behind the scenes to prepare for the possible scenarios facing us in the fall. As MSDE restrictions continue to loosen, we are hopeful to provide in-person learning in September. The greatest value of the preschool experience is found in the social and emotional aspects of in-person learning. It is the experience of sharing, following a routine and classroom rules, working and playing with friends, listening to peers and teachers, taking turns, and so much more that is vital in the preschool years. We are prepared to offer distance learning to our older students in Pre-K and Kindergarten but it is still far from ideal as parents will need to work individually with their child while caring for other children and/or working themselves. Distance learning does not effectively translate to our younger students only allowing us to provide a limited offering of the curriculum to our families. Because of this, our families and our enrollment are almost completely dependent on in-person learning. It is our hope and intent to open our doors once we have been approved to do so by The Office of Child Care and the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland.

We have a committee of teachers that meet regularly to navigate the changing guidelines of opening safely and to develop strategies for effectively implementing all new procedures. This COVID Committee is also responsible for testing various distance learning platforms and researching options for all age level programs. We have formed a Parent Panel that will meet regularly to offer feedback from a parent perspective as we move closer to the beginning of the school year. The school will be sending out a Parent Survey this week to measure parents' responses to various possibilities including in-person and distance learning offerings, new guidelines and their overall comfort level of returning to campus should it be open. Our School Board will meet next Tuesday to review the survey results and make plans accordingly to respond to the needs of our families as best we can. Our work this summer will continue to prepare us for both virtual and in-person programs with the flexibility and possibility that we may experience both over the course of the year. We will be prepared to deliver the Good Shepherd experience to the best of our ability in any situation we face. Our amazing GSS Team will again go above and beyond to connect with our families and provide a palpable sense of community in these uncertain times.

Sarah Lemon



## 2019-2020 at Church of the Good Shepherd





## 2019-2020 at Church of the Good Shepherd

