

# **2022 Annual Parish Meeting**

January 29, 2023 12:00 P.M.

## **AGENDA**

- A. Call meeting to order and opening prayer**
- B. Approval of agenda for the Annual Meeting**
- C. Approval of the minutes of the 2021 Annual Parish Meeting held on February 6, 2022**
- D. Reception and Approval of the 2022 Treasurer's Report (separate document) – Rick Johns**
- E. Approval of By-Laws**
- F Report of the Senior Warden with Nominating Report – Lucinda Brunner**
- G. Election of new members of the Vestry with Jennie Cummings standing for Senior Warden, Freya Rasmussen-Johns standing for Junior Warden, Michael Wise standing for Vestry Member**
- H. Nominations and election for the delegates to the Diocesan Convention- November 2023: Jennie Cummings, Freyja Rasmussen-Johns; standing for Alternate, Marilyn Cleland**
- I. Nominations and election for new members of the Endowment Committee, Terry Dickow and Maureen Gerrity**
- J. Reception of the Reports from the Subcommittees of the Vestry and Ministries of St. Paul's**
- K Thank you: 2022 Convention Delegates, Lucinda Brunner, Jennie and Bill Cummings. Thank you to outgoing Endowment Committee members, Dick Downen and Jamie Stubblefield. Thank you to outgoing Vestry Members Lucinda Brunner and Marilyn Cleland. Special thanks to Lucinda for serving as our Senior Warden**
- L. Adjournment and closing prayer**

The Episcopal Church of St. Paul  
DeKalb Illinois  
Minutes of the 2021 Annual Parish Meeting  
Sunday February 6, 2022

Mother Barbara called the meeting to order (in person as well as via zoom) at 12:12pm with an opening prayer. It was determined a required quorum was present. The meeting was then led by Senior Warden Gretchen Schlabach.

Donna deOliveira moved to approve the minutes of the 2020 Annual Parish Meeting held on January 31, 2021; Rick Johns seconded and was approved by acclamation.

A motion was put forth by Rhys Prall to receive and file for audit the 2021 Treasurer's Report.

The 2022 budget was reviewed in detail at a Q&A session on January 30<sup>th</sup>. The vestry has approved the budget.

Treasurer Rick Johns presented the following highlights of the budget: There will be increased expenditures due to inflation in areas such as insurances, utilities and snow removal. Snow removal was underestimated for 2021 mainly due to the retirement of the long-standing previous snow removal company which charged the church a minimal amount for this service. The 2022 budget reflects vestry approved staff raises as well as an increase in the rector's discretionary fund. Rick encouraged people to continue to donate to this fund. Starting this year, St Paul's will no longer receive monetary support from a long-time major donor. This support has been very much appreciated over the many years. On a positive note, Rick states the number of pledging units has increased. A 7% increase in the allocation of funds from the endowment fund for the 2022 budget was approved by the vestry and the endowment committee. Rick encouraged parishioners to approach him with questions regarding the church finances at any time. He was thanked for all his diligent work as the treasurer. Jennie Cummings motioned to receive and approve the 2022 budget and was seconded by Pat Brown. The motion passed by acclamation.

The By-laws were approved in 2020 so did not need approval at this meeting. The heading on the By-laws (in the written packet for today's meeting) does not reflect the March 2020 approval date; the header reads approved in January 2015. There were a few suggested changes to the by-laws which are due to be reviewed by the 2022 vestry in March. Pat Brown suggested changes in verbiage to reflect accounting terms. She suggests changing *income* to *receipts* and *expenses* to *disperse* or *payments*. Rick Johns suggested changing *Building Fund* to *Capital Fund*.

Senior Warden Gretchen Schlabach thanked the parish, vestry and Mother Barbara for supporting her in the position of Senior Warden. She expressed how compassionate the congregation is about what we do at St. Paul's. She praised the vestry for their hard work which included some challenging conversations, while showing concern and support for each other. She spoke of the change made in the budget preparation process, increasing the involvement of the full vestry. Gretchen stated she was proud of the vestry's participation in the budget (starting in October 2021) which included many weekly meetings in order to accomplish this.

Gretchen Schlabach, Lucinda Brunner and Peg Newby were on the nominating committee; a committee reduced from five to three members (the change was motioned in November 2021 by Gretchen and approved by the vestry). Gretchen presented the new members of the vestry for election: Lori Judkins, Jennie Cummings, Pat Brown, and Rhys Prall; with Lucinda Brunner standing for Senior Warden and Jennie Cummings standing for Junior Warden. Donna DeOliveira motioned for the election of the above nominees. This was seconded by Marilyn Cleland. The motion passed by acclamation. A motion was put forth by Dick Downen for the nomination and election for the delegates to the Diocesan Convention in November 2022: Jennie Cummings, Lucinda Brunner; standing for alternate, Bill Cummings. This was seconded by Rick Johns.

The motion passed by acclamation. Bill Cummings motioned to nominate Mary Lincoln to serve another term on the Endowment Committee. Rhys Prall seconded and motion passed by acclamation.

Gretchen Schlabach called for the reception of the reports from the subcommittees of the vestry and ministries of St. Paul's. These written reports are found in the annual meeting packet, along with the Rector's, Senior and Junior Warden reports as well as the treasurer's report. All parishioners are encouraged to read these reports.

Marilyn Cleland spoke expressing the need to examine our intentions; desire to provide additional ministries at St. Paul's. Throughout 2021 several programs were planned, but not well attended whether due to Covid or lack of interest or other reasons. She encourages all parishioners throughout the year to contemplate who we are and where we are going as a parish so we can come together and share our thoughts.

Gretchen Schlabach thanked the outgoing vestry members and delegates along with welcoming the new vestry members and delegates. Gretchen was thanked for her role as the Senior Warden and at the 10:30 service was presented with a metal cross adorned with a piece of the cornerstone from the original church building. This type of cross is traditionally given to the outgoing Senior Warden and was made by Rhys Prall.

Pat Brown added thanks for all those who serve in St. Paul's ministries; Peg Newby for leading the new and now completed Sound and Vision Committee, the Treasurer, Altar and Flower Guilds and "all who make the church work". Peg Newby thanked the Sound and Vision team for their many, many hours of work. Although the committee's work is completed and the committee dissolved, work continues in tweaking and monitoring the system including in the parish hall. Lorraine Langer was thanked for all her guidance and continued commitment to this endeavor; now known as the "Streaming Ministries".

A motion was made by Jennie Cummings and seconded by Pat Brown to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 12:55pm by Mother Barbara.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jocelyn Prall; Clerk

## ***COMMITTEE AND PROGRAM REPORTS (attached)***

- **Rector's Report**
- **Senior Warden's Report**
- **Junior Warden Report – Building and Grounds**
- **Altar Guild Report**
- **Building and Grounds Report**
- **Endowment Fund Report**
- **Episcopal Church Women Report (narrative)**
- **Fellowship Report**
- **Flower Guild Report**
- **Garden Report**
- **Grace Place Campus Ministries Report**
- **Music Ministries Report**
- **Signs and Wonders Committee**
- **Streaming Ministries Report**

## ***FINANCIAL REPORTS (separate document)***

- **Annual Budget for 2023**
- **Treasurer's Report for 2022**

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## Rector's Report

To God's Beloved at the Church of St. Paul, DeKalb,  
Grace to you and peace.

This past year, 2022, was a "catch up" year with pastoral issues carried over from the year before when the COVID pandemic was still rampant. Most notably, Patricia McMahon and Jan Bach both passed into the greater life in God in 2021, but we celebrated the Eucharist along with their good lives in the Spring of 2022. We also celebrated the life of our beloved Betsy Pool last year.

With the help and support of our Streaming Ministries team (formerly "Sound & Vision") we've been able to continue with virtual (Zoom and live You Tube) worship for the several who are immunosuppressed who would rather not join the congregation for fear of transmitting COVID to others or catching it themselves. Until last Autumn, we were not allowed to use a communal chalice at celebrations of the Eucharist, so consecrated wine was offered in individual serving cups and still is into 2023. We also begun intinction with the consecrated wafers in a communal chalice, so perhaps working our way back to sharing a common cup as before the pandemic, or maybe not. We've continued through the year with an average of about 30 people a Sunday, including the Zoom congregation.

We've opened our doors to welcome the Bread & Roses Women's Chorus and Grace Place Campus Ministry generally on a weekly basis. Last June we were blessed again by the presence of the 4K for Cancer bicyclists from the Ullman Foundation. I anticipate being able to continue our ministry with them through the coming year.

We had three "in person" book studies, all by scripture scholar Amy Jill Levine. We undertook, "Signs and Wonders: The Miracles of Jesus," "The Difficult Words of Jesus," and "Witness at the Cross." I also offered Christian contemplative prayer at noon every Wednesday but after offering it most of the year, canceled it for want of congregational participation.

The Deanery underwent some dramatic changes. After Dean Gloria Hopewell retired, another took up the role but became ill and resigned the post. Deanery meetings were "on again, off again" for awhile. Near the end of the year the Reverend Mike Dwyer took up the ministry of Dean. As a consequence, I didn't attend many deanery meetings.

I attended the consecration of our new bishop, The Rt. Reverend Paula Clark in September.

We had planned to resume monthly Taize worship at the beginning of last year, and then again in Lent but were prevented by personnel conflicts. We began with Taize again in October, 2022.

We said good-bye to treasured colleague and Director of Music, Lorraine Langer, in October. This difficult situation required a considerable amount of my time and for all of us through September and October.

I announced my intention to retire this coming August and we are now making preparations for that event. I continue to be grateful to the congregation of St. Paul in DeKalb for the opportunity to serve Christ with them for the past four years and wish you all God's best.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev'd Barbara A.T. Wilson,  
Rector

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## Senior Warden's Report

2022 for your vestry was a year for renewal and decisions about our future. Renewal in that we were pretty much back to operating as we had pre-covid. Decisions about our future centered around two main factors: The budget and deciding how to proceed upon Mother Barbara's impending retirement from full time priesthood.

We did have to vote on whether to ask for an increase in our allowance from the endowment from five percent to seven percent. This decision was not taken lightly and it is taken with the understanding that this cannot be a permanent request. We need to find a way to increase our receipts to match our budgetary needs so that we can return to only needing the five percent that has been allocated so that the endowment will continue in perpetuity thereby ensuring the future of St Paul's. I don't need to explain in depth to all of you what that means. We all understand that we either need to increase our congregation size or reduce our expenditures. The size of the physical asset we are responsible for is substantial. We are blessed to have the property we have but it is expensive to maintain and to heat/cool. Due to some of the repairs that could no longer be put off we opted to ask all of you to assist us with a capital campaign. You all came through with your pledges to help us fulfill our goal of raising \$50,000 in three years. A huge thank you to all of you for those commitments. This enabled us to repair the gutters that were damaging our roof and causing damage to the ceiling with the water pooling on the roof. We also needed to spend money on replacing some of the furnaces which were over 20 years old.

In our efforts to increase membership and community exposure and accessibility to St Paul's we have opened our facility to Bread and Roses a local singing group. They had a fabulous concert at the end of 2022. We also made a commitment to the ROE program called BASICS to offer our facility when they are ready to use it. BASICS is a program to help young mothers with the tools to use with their baby which with daily use and interactions will foster growth and development of the brain.

Thanks to Marilyn Cleland and a poetry group she is involved with we were able to host a fundraising poetry reading for Ukraine with several local poets reading theirs and other poems related to the tragic war in Ukraine. This event was very well attended and those in attendance deeply appreciated the performance and venue.

We were able to resume our Taize services which thanks to the hard work of Mother Barbara and Lynn have been wonderful services with great inspirational readings and music. This is a unique and ecumenical experience. Each service is highly attended by numerous members of the community.

We also have had the pleasure since September to host the Wednesday evening Grace Place service and meal that is geared towards NIU students. As a congregation we have participated in the weekly service and by providing meals as we did in the past.

Truth be told this is not enough and it is up to each person to actively and proactively come up with ways to increase membership to St. Paul's. As a vestry we are committed to being as creative as possible in exploring how we can further involve the community. We are hoping to reconnect with the music department at NIU and see how we can meet their needs as well as ours.

Our second big decision was the decision to explore our options about hiring a new full time and or part time priest. We initially started by having Strategic Planning meeting with Tim O'Brien a consultant from the Diocese to discuss our future and the best way to proceed. After a few meetings Tim advised that it would be best to separate the decisions of our future from the most pivotal one which was and is our need to know who would be leading us. Did we want a full or part time priest; did we want to continue with Mother Barbara, or did we feel that at this point we needed to expand our search to include someone else. We met several times as a vestry and Jennie and I also met with Sierra (the diocese transition consultant.) We then very prayerfully considered what we felt was best, and while this was a hard decision to make, we decided to open the position up to other priests. This will be complex and time-consuming journey. While a large majority of the congregation still want a full-time priest it should be noted that will require us to continue taking more than 5% from the endowment unless we grow exponentially, therefore this decision should not be taken lightly. Two important parts of the decision to have a full-time priest versus a part time priest are the fact that the diocese dictates the salary based on the years of experience and size of the congregation. Additionally, health insurance is astronomical and costs us more than \$20,000 a year. These are the budgets largest expenditures.

I apologize in advance for not minimizing some of the information in here, but I feel strongly that for us to make the best decisions for our future we all need to be informed about how our decision are going to affect the long term prognosis of this wonderful church.

Why do we keep coming back and why are we so reluctant to acknowledge the very real future for St. Paul's if we don't make any comprehensive and significant changes. For sure it is the people that keep us here. The warmth that we exude towards each other. We are very blessed in so many ways.

Lastly, I ask each of you to consider those who are less fortunate and how we as a congregation can come together and create an impactful community ministry. This truly is what needs to happen if we want to fulfill our mission. God needs us to be his hands, feet, and heart in DeKalb. That is the reality of his expectation. We need to do more than just come on Sunday. Since we are small it needs to be one thing, we can all agree to do to. A simple yet great idea (in my humble opinion) would be to have a chess afternoon/night for the youth, once a month or twice a month. With the Vestry's support I sent a letter to the mayor telling him that we want to be part of the solution and in our demonstration of this we have agreed to send \$2000 to the Youth Services Bureau. But this needs to be the beginning of our commitment to the community and the future of these underprivileged kids. We can be a positive light in their life which would lead to them making better decisions for their future.

It is a fact that ONE PERSON can change a person's trajectory. A SINGLE positive or negative relationship is all that is needed. I have seen firsthand the power of mentoring and I am deeply driven to imploring all of you to help me with this concept. Please let me know if the Chess idea is something you feel you could commit to or if something else would be more appealing to you. We CAN DO THIS!!!!!! Thank you all for your prayerful consideration.

Lastly, please support your new Senior and Junior Wardens as they make tough decisions during 2023.

Lucinda Brunner  
Senior Warden

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## Junior Warden's Report

Celebrating a Lifetime of Ministry is time worth celebrating. Four years ago, we excitedly prepared and worked very hard to paint, clean, and get the rectory ready for a new priest and her family to as much as our budget could manage. We joyfully installed a tree in their honor, installed a requested koi pond, and put on a full community installation service.

It has been a positive time and time of growth in many ways. We pulled together during covid creating online church from the nothing. Monthly community Taize events are offered and embraced. Book studies and educational classes challenged us and continue to. Our new Reflection Pathway Ministry is well received and a bench added. Our Go Green Garden Ministry has provided fresh vegetables to local shelters & those in need. Our Durning Memorial Garden was cleaned & expanded to a lovely quiet area. Numerous community needs were met quietly without fanfare some from the Discretionary Fund & some beyond that, each on an individual basis. We have appreciated sermons, priest led services with communion, counsel & prayer. We have been heart-warmed during Fellowship Time in our parish hall & local restaurants. The annual bonfires were well attended. We hosted Bikers Against Cancer with food & lodging. A local music group regularly practices in our space where we are invited to concerts. We have embraced Campus Ministry within our space and supported them with meals & attendance & board members.

All of this has been with our Priest Mother Barbara Wilson. I have learned and I have grown with her leadership and kindness and knowledge. I have been challenged as I had and have much to learn. I look forward to 2023 for her continued leadership. I am a better person and leader with the challenges we have faced and met together. Thank you, Mother Barbara, for your love, heart, kindness, education, insight, thoughtful, and spirit. You have done a good job for St Pauls & you are appreciated. You have been good to me. I wish you joy and all things good in this next year and beyond.

I hope to work out a way to celebrate you and your lifetime of many good works.

Jennie Cummings  
Junior Warden

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## Altar Guild Report

The Altar Guild members help prepare our worship space for Sunday, weekday, and special services. Their ministry is carried out under the direction and guidance of the rector. In addition to preparing the altar, the group cares for the sacred vessels, linens, vestments, and candles. Hymn board posting is another responsibility.

With the general guidance provided by the diocese along with discussion with and direction of Mother Barbara, the Altar Guild continues to make adjustments related to covid issues; mainly related to communion.

The Altar Guild met on November 1, 2022 to discuss items that are needed for Sunday services and special occasions. Some of these items include small linens that are used at communion, oil candles for Sunday use, a new paschal candle and a new brass torch. These items, some of which are still awaiting arrival, are being purchased through donated memorial money designated for altar guild use. We are very grateful for the generosity of this support from the Joan Graham and Pat McMahan memorial fund.

We will continue to purchase other items with memorial money as we continue to evaluate needs for replacing worn out items or new items.

We also are replacing some of the disk-shaped wax drip catchers for altar candles. Rhys Prall has been able to make some which is much less expensive than the catalog offerings. Peg Newby's husband Al has done a temporary adjustment to the processional cross and will evaluate to further correct its problems. We purchased a long handled rechargeable battery-operated carpet sweeper for use by altar and flower guild to enable small vacuuming jobs without setting up extension cords for a regular vacuum. This has been purchased using a small amount of our altar guild budget money.

Thank you to parishioners who served in this ministry during the past year----Peggy Newby, Jane Nenonen, Jocelyn Prall, Pat Brown, and Freyja Rasmussen-Johns. Also, thanks to Donna DeOliveira for helping out when needed.

Anyone wishing to participate in this ministry on a rotating or occasional basis, please see Jocelyn Prall

Submitted by Jocelyn Prall

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## **Building and Grounds Report**

2022 was a busy and expensive year. We replaced one of the two heating and cooling units on the parish hall roof, replaced our ice damaged gutters, painted the exterior wood on the sanctuary, updated our lock and key system and updated the parking lot lights as well as replacing bulbs in the roadside sign.

The grounds are up to us to keep up. Many parishioners helped keep the grounds neat by picking up the large amount of garbage that collects on our property. Yard work was done for the Durning contemplative garden and for a pollinator garden surrounding the vegetable garden. Thank you to all who helped with yard work. Also, thank you to everyone who donated roses and to Mary Short for directing and looking after them.

Please see Rick Johns for the cost of the projects. All in all our building is in pretty good shape. As to the future, we have a lot of work to do in the rectory to prepare for a new rector. This promises to be expensive. At the same time we still need to maintain our capital funds to be prepared in the event of another furnace malfunction.

Submitted by: Rhys Prall

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## Endowment Fund Report

St Paul's Endowment Fund - 2022

Beginning Value 1-1-2022. \$2,448,372.35

Assets added to Account \$280.00

Assets withdrawn from Acct -\$157,000.00

Fees and Charges -\$18,355.62

Change in Value - \$389,856.14

Ending Balance 12-31-2022 \$1,883,440.59

Three years ago, the value was \$2,167,304.33

Our 5 yr annualized rate of return is 3.81%

Our 3 yr annualized rate of return is 2.28%

You can see from the above information that the decline in the Stock Market this year has really impacted our Endowment Fund. Year to date the rate of return has been -17.33%. This past quarter the rate of return has been 5.72%. Hopefully it will gradually increase again, but forecasting what will happen is not in my toolbox.

The Endowment Fund Investment policy worked out by the Trustees with input from Edw. Jones, is balanced, flexible, and conservative. In late November 2022 we had a joint Zoom meeting with Matt Myre from Edw. Jones, Vestry Members, Trustees, and the Church Treasurer, Rick Johns. Matt gave us his prospective on the future investment outlook and basically said we are in this for the long term and there will be ups and downs.

We did not need to withdraw as much from the Fund for operations in 2022 as we had budgeted which is due to the diligence of our Treasurer. If you have more questions about our Endowment Funds, Rick or I will attempt to answer them to the best of our knowledge and/or ability.

The Trustees of the Endowment during 2022 were Dick Downen, (Jan 2023) Jamie Stubblefield (Jan 2023,) Pat Brown, (Jan 2024) Vince McMahon,(Jan 2024) and Mary Lincoln, (Jan 2025.) Numbers indicate year and month terms end. New members to be elected this year (Jan 23) will be Maureen Gherity, and Terry Dickow, whose terms will last until Jan 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Brown, temporary chairperson.

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## Episcopal Church Women's Report

ECW members met in January 2022 to approve disbursement of the remaining proceeds from the 2019 boil (the last year that the boil was held) to local charities. The following disbursements were approved:

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| DeKalb County Community Coordinate Childcare (4-C) | \$536 |
| Family Service Agency                              | \$536 |
| Hope Haven Homeless Shelter                        | \$536 |
| Voluntary Action Center                            | \$536 |

St. Paul's Annual Lobster Boil was canceled in 2022.

The ECW checking account balance as of December 31, 2022 was \$9,517.70.

Maureen Gerrity, ECW Treasurer

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## Fellowship Report

How great it was to be able to return to a somewhat “normal” fellowship life! Thank you to everyone who pitched in to provide post-service coffee hours. They are so important to our parish life and it is obvious people enjoy them. The sign-up sheet for hosting coffee hour is on the bulletin board in parish hall. Hope you’ll sign up to help!

Other fellowship events held at St. Paul’s and other locales were: Easter Brunch Breakfast at Sycamore Café in May; Dinner at the Junction in May Dinner at Sorrento’s in June; Patio/Firepit fellowship/meal in July Bonfire by the garden/meal in October (with accordion music!)

St. Paul’s also provided hospitality for many events in 2022 (some, but not all, involved food):

Funeral/memorial receptions for Jan Bach, Pat McMahon, Betsy Pool, and Rosemarie Ostberg. We also provided support for Pat Brown’s birthday party. The Taize gatherings resumed, and hospitality was provided at those events. Parishioners provided support for the Ukrainian Poets Readings Benefit and the Bread and Roses concert in early December.

In June, St. Paul’s hosted the Uhlman Bikers 4K for Cancer group for the second time. Bikers were provided with snacks, a dinner meal, overnight accommodations, breakfast, and packaged food for their long road trip. This event requires many hands but is well worth our efforts.

Another special event was the “watch party” for the consecration of The Rt. Rev. Bishop Paula Clark. In addition to those present from St. Paul’s, we hosted two parishioners from St. Peter’s Sycamore.

I am submitting this report, but want to acknowledge all the willing and helpful hands that go into making our events successful. I would especially like to thank Jennie Cummings for her efforts at resuming our fellowship events.

Peg Newby

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## Flower Guild Report

The flower guild consisting of Jane Nenonen, Mary Lincoln, Marilyn Cleland, Mary Short and myself have been continuing placing flowers on the altar. I tried to buy poinsettias for Christmas however, they froze from Lowes to the Church so for Christmas will be ordering from Kar-Fre. Easter I will try to buy the flowers from Lowes (Hoping temps will be above 0).

Lori Judkins  
Chair

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## Garden Report

The 2022 growing season at St Paul's was very successful. In all, the vegetable garden produced over 550 lbs of fresh, organic produce for our participating local food banks. The vegetables included collards, kale, many varieties of tomatoes, pole and bush beans, peppers, squash, zucchini, summer squash, cucumbers, beets, garlic, carrots, and asparagus. Rabbits got into the vegetable garden this year, making it necessary for us to make improvements in our fence and garden gate this coming season.

The pollinator garden did very well. Milkweed, borage, chrysanthemums, zinnias, and different varieties of sunflowers were raised to attract and sustain pollinators. The Green Team hopes to expand the pollinator beds and continue growing beneficial perennial and annual flowers.

The Memorial Garden was extensively improved and expanded by the addition of new garden beds, with several rose bushes being established there.

In the coming growing season, we plan to plant an apple tree on the church grounds, graciously donated by our Master Gardener, Kris Borre. We also hope to add a simple irrigation system to the garden beds, in addition to a new fence and gate.

Our biggest concern for the coming year is having the support of more helping hands for The Green Team, as we struggle to balance vacations schedules, medical needs, etc., of the 5 members who provide this ministry to our community. We will be alerting members throughout the season when this need is most critical.

The Green Team will continue meeting at 8 am on Mondays and Thursdays, and as needed. Anyone who has questions or would like to help in the gardens should contact Kris Borre.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jo Plenger-Schulz

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## Grace Place Campus Ministries Report

Who/What is Grace Place?

*“Grace Place Campus Ministry at Northern Illinois University has a rich history of ministering to the NIU community in DeKalb. Beginning in 1957, Lutheran Campus Ministry began meeting with interested students at a property near campus for weekly bible study and fellowship time. From there, Lutheran Campus Ministry worked in partnership with area campus ministries and parishes to minister to the staff, faculty, and students at NIU. After purchasing our current property, Lutheran Campus Ministry opened their facility for several campus ministries to use, Canterbury House not only utilized our facility but shared in programming dating back to 1988.*

*In February of 2008 there was a campus shooting that killed 5 students and injured 17 more people. Within a few days Lutheran Campus Ministry became a place of refuge. Our building was open around the clock for students and community members to begin the process of healing. Outside of the building 6 crosses were erected, one for each of the victims plus one for the shooter, these crosses stood as beacons inviting everyone to come and begin the process of healing. It was in the following months that the leaders of Lutheran Campus Ministry and Canterbury House began conversations about how they were able to do more together in a formal partnership than as separate ministries.*

### *Reconciling In Christ Welcome Statement*

*As a community we firmly believe that God loves everyone and creates us with our own unique gifts. In celebration of God's radical love, we welcome everyone of any sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, and walk of life. Recognizing that we are all born into sin, we are committed to doing the work of being an anti-racist community, learning how we can better serve our neighbors.”*

<https://graceplaceniue.org/about-us/>

St Paul's, in rotation, provided several meals: St. Paul's provided two meals during the 2022 spring semester, coordinated by Donna deOliveira and Jocelyn Prall. During the fall semester on October 5<sup>th</sup>, Peg Newby and Donna deOliveira hosted, with Pizza Villa pizzas thanks to generous donations from the St. Paul community/family. Mary Short provided the homemade sugar cookies. Fresh fruit was also provided to eat or take along for later nutrition and enjoyment.

On November 30<sup>th</sup> a meal was prepared by a member of Grace Place with Jennie Cummings as sous chef. in celebration and culmination of Pastor Mack's ministry with Grace Place. With final exams about to begin; “care bags” were distributed thanks to generous donations from the St Paul community/family with an artistically designed note of encouragement and wishes for the holidays designed by Marilyn Cleland. Each bag included fresh fruit and an assortment of packaged nutritious snacks.

Visitors are always welcome for worship with communion at 6 PM and the 6:30 meal.

Submitted by Donna DeOliveira

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## Music Ministries Report

### Music Ministries Report 2022

- St. Paul's is blessed to have a wonderful group of singers including Freyja Rasmussen-Johns, Donna de Oliveira, Lucinda Brunner, Kris Borre, Jocelyn Prall, Kelsey Crawford-Scott, Roy Mason, Rick Johns, and Tom Skuzinski. Up until August of 2022, the choir was also privileged to have the participation of George and Robin Taylor.
- In addition to regular Sunday services, St. Paul's resumed Taizé style gatherings in October which we continue to have on the first Friday of each month. In preparation for the Taizé style services, we have rehearsals on the Thursday prior to the service. The choir and alto recorder, played by Lynne Jacobson, have done a beautiful job in leading the congregation in these meditative services.
- We incorporated a "pop-up" choir on several Sundays throughout the summer.
- St. Paul's had Celebration of Life services for Betsy Poole, Rosemarie Ostberg, and Pat McMahon. Our organist (Kathleen Johnson), pianist, and choir members led the music for these services.
- Dr. John Novak who is a wonderful pianist, accompanied the choir in July and performed a prelude by Claude Debussy and a postlude by J.S. Bach.
- Although we have had a smaller number of choir members, the choir continues to consistently provide beautiful and meaningful music that enhances our services.
- Overall, the musicians at St. Paul's Episcopal Church had a successful year in 2022, bringing joy and inspiration to the congregation through their musical talents. We look forward to another wonderful year in 2023!

The maintenance of our **musical instruments** include:

- The Sanctuary's Pipe Organ was tuned on 5/25 and 11/23.
- The Sanctuary's Grand Piano was tuned on 2/4 and 10/4. Due to fluctuating temperatures in the Sanctuary, the Grand piano will likely need to be tuned within the next few months.
- A cover for the grand piano was purchased in October to help preserve its exterior.

Hannah Buckle, Director of Music

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## Signs and Wonders Report

The Sign Path Ministry to Students

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

DeKalb, Illinois

Report to the Vestry of St. Paul's

January 14, 2023

History of the Program.

The program of the sign path was conceived during the summer of 2021 in conversation with the program committee (Rev. Barbara Wilson, Rector; Lynne Jacobson, Sandra Lee, and Marilyn Cleland, parishioners). Thinking about uses for St Paul's Church path, a thoroughfare for NIU students between Normal Rd and Garden St, major campus streets, we imagined the path as an avenue of communication from St. Paul's to the students, our ministry to them, as the Rector called it. A parallel in the Anglican Communion is the devotional path along the way to Canterbury Cathedral, which some remember as dramatized in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales).

### Goal and Messages.

It was decided to have five signs across the path, each sign containing an image along with a text, all signs connected by a theme. Five frames for the signs and posts for the sign were purchased, after bids, from Banner Signs of Sycamore for between \$250.00 -- \$300.00. Our message overall has been, we at St Paul's are thinking of you, students, and praying for you. We welcome students when they come each fall and spring semester and celebrate their graduations in May with them; we recognize their concerns and anxieties, using light humor in at least one sign each sequence as well as poetry and relevant passages. A sequence consists of five signs connected by a theme. We acknowledge the seasons, especially the seasons of the church, always including at least one signs that explicitly speaks to matters of the faith. We take care to show only students only that St Paul's Episcopal Church is thinking about them rather than overtly seeking them as members of the church. All signs are reviewed by the Rector.

### Materials Development.

We have tried, especially since the fall of 2022, to use only open source material, while also using some poetry and texts by local poets and artists. So far we have developed twelve sequences (we do not post during the summer), with 60 signs. The last sequence was posted in time for the opening of the spring semester, 2023. The development of the signs, by parishioner Marilyn Cleland with assistance by Church Administrator Susan King, consists of identifying a theme (welcome to the students, examination anxieties, winter, graduation, etc); finding relevant images on line, especially ones with artistic value; and choosing text — and also writing texts — that match the image. The signs themselves are developed in MS word by Susan King and then the signs placed in the frames (cleaned before and during the process) by parishioner Cliff Cleland. This process with all of us working takes about 25 – 35 hours p/ sign period.

### Special Ministries.

One sequence, March 2022, was devoted to the war in Ukraine, coinciding with St. Paul's fund-raising program of public readings of Ukrainian war poetry. Another sequence, welcoming students back for the spring semester, acknowledges the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. with an image of Dr. King's life and acknowledgment of his gifts through appropriate words. Currently, the plan is to go for the path ministry forward to the end of the spring semester, 2023. If the Rector approves and the Vestry of the Church, we can create signs for this semester identifying regular worship times as well as special programs along with more explicit invitations to the church. These would be placed within and be relevant to the themed sequence.

### Assessment.

The goal of the ministry as conceived in the summer of 2021 was to communicate to the students our acknowledgement of them and their concerns within the context of academic and church time. We spoke of hopes that the presence of the sign path might bring students to St. Paul's. We hope we have succeeded in our goal to communicate to students. Our hope of bringing students to St Paul's has been disappointed.

### The Future of the Path Ministry.

The church needs to consider whether it wishes this ministry to continue and, if so, how. The ministry has required a substantial and routine time commitment, especially in developing the signs themselves.

### Alternatives.

There might be other ways to continue, ways to involve the students and the community at large. St. Paul's could extend invitations to university artists and writers as well as those in the community to develop work in responsive to themes identified. Perhaps there could be paths developed only for special themes or special occasions. Since St Paul's wishes to reach out to NIU as well as to the larger community, the path ministry might be one way to do so.

Report by Marilyn Cleland

Sign Path Committee

January 15, 2023

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## Streaming Ministries Report

### Streaming Ministries Report 2022

- Our ability to stream the 10:30 service live via YouTube and Zoom have been a valuable tool for parishioners, allowing those who are unable to attend in person to still participate in the worship services. All of our services are recorded through Youtube which allows us to easily link our services including Mthr. Barbara's sermons to the website.
- We have additional equipment in the Parish Hall including:
  - Microphone connectors
  - 2 dynamic microphones
  - 2 boxes of Mic Jacks and 2 round base microphone stands
  - 2 hanging mics-ambient sound for streaming
- We also had additional equipment installed in the Sanctuary including:
  - Wireless Microphone System (2 hand-held wireless microphones)
  - Reprogram system (signal processing to accommodate new inputs).
- We are so thankful to have Peg Newby, Hannah Buckle, Rick Johns, and Katt Scott who assist with our streaming. Rick Johns has recently joined our Streaming Ministries team and has been a great help in operating the cameras and zoom. Katt and Kelsey have recently welcomed a new addition to their family, so Katt has not been able to assist with streaming as of right now.
- Some instances have occurred where the system briefly shuts down, but we have been able to quickly re-boot the system without our Zoom or Youtube live stream being disrupted.
- A new Apple USB-C Digital AV Multiport Adapter will need to be ordered in order to decrease any future issues with displaying the camera views onto Zoom and Youtube.

Hannah Buckle, Director of Music

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**Financial Reports are in a separate document**