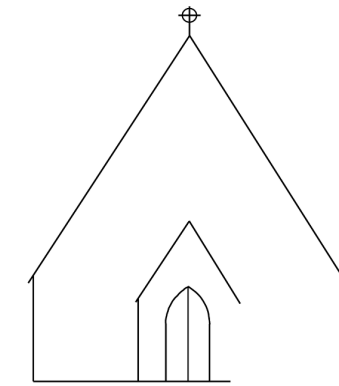


ST. MARY'S
A COMMUNITY OF *Belonging*

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY 2023



ST. MARY'S
A COMMUNITY OF *Belonging*

A few months ago, a friend and clergy colleague asked me, “How have you all been doing at St. Mary’s through all of this?” By ‘all of this’, of course, he meant these two long years of the pandemic. I shared with him the realization that in many ways the past two years brought out some of the best in St. Mary’s. As we begin to get some distance on the worst times of the pandemic, we are beginning to see that in these past two years, we discovered the gifts of belonging to this parish that matter most to us. One vestry member recently wrote, “We learned that

these gifts had not only sustained us during a challenging and isolating two years, but also are gifts that we hope will sustain us as a church moving forward.” ‘The best’ of who we are as St. Mary’s Church are gifts we have been given to move forward. In recent vestry conversations, we’ve begun calling these gifts: The People, The Place, The Worship and The Work. In this ‘Season of Stewardship’ these gifts are sources for deep gratitude and thankful hearts for this community to which we belong, and a future full of hope.



The People

St. Mary's Church has always known that the church is its people; it is us. And because we knew that, as we entered the time of the pandemic, we knew that we had to do everything possible to stay connected. So, in that time of endless uncertainty, we were certain that staying connected was the most important work we could do. And through that, we learned in profound ways that we need each other to sustain a living faith. Jesus's words that everyone will know that we are his by the



love we have for each other came true and kept us in deep companionship with him and with one another. Knowing that we belong to each other in Christ is a 'sure foundation' as we move forward.

As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." 1 Corinthians 12

The Place

We have long known that the very ground and place upon which St. Mary's Church is situated is sacred. It is a place of peace; a place of homecoming. And we learned this during the time of the pandemic in new ways. To begin with, the Place where our church is located has so much room! So, even during times of quarantine and isolation, we were able to gather together outside, in person, to baptize and marry and bury saints of the church. We had room to gather outside for Sunday morning and afternoon worship, for Sunday School, for Youth Group, for fellowship, for Outreach events. All of these things and more sanctified this sacred Place in new ways. This Place is a gift and a treasure for us to care for. It is holy ground where we know we belong.

'How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts to me!'





*O worship the Lord
in the beauty of
holiness!*



The Worship

The heart of our life together is the worship we offer day by day, Sunday by Sunday, season by season, that renews us as the Beloved Community of Jesus. We come together to pray, to sing our faith, to seek God's forgiveness and one another's, and are fed with the very life of Christ to strengthen our witness to his love. We know that we live in a deeply fragmented and divisive world. Our worship together offers the grace for us to belong to God's larger, loving, redeeming story for the world. We learned this in new ways in the past two-plus years. We have hearts to share this hope: the love of God that unites us is so much greater than what divides us.



The Work

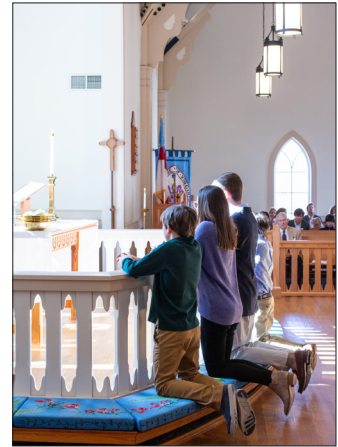


We know that we live in a world that is longing for healing and reconciliation. We live in a hurting world. A prayer in the Marriage Rite beautifully expresses the work God gives us to do in such a time. And that work is for us to make a life together through the power of the Spirit to be “a sign of Christ’s love for this sinful and broken world, that unity may overcome estrangement, forgiveness heal guilt, and joy conquer despair.” St. Mary’s Church is alive to the hope of this calling. These past years have made the brokenness of this world and in ourselves clearer. The call to be the Beloved Community of Jesus and to carry out his work of healing and reconciliation is clearer as well.

“All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.” 2 Corinthians 5:18

Pledging as a spiritual practice

Making a pledged monetary offering to St. Mary's Church is essentially a spiritual practice for Christians, just like saying your daily prayers, or being a part of a Bible-study group, or practicing works of mercy for those in need or coming to church on Sunday morning. So, it's different than the other good and important charitable giving we do. As a spiritual practice, pledging is a tangible means for us to say thank you to God – for our lives, for God's goodness, for the miracle of love, and for all the countless things that prompt your own abiding sense of gratitude. Making a pledged offering is one of the means through which we may trust God with more and more of who we are, and grow more deeply into the mind and heart of Christ.



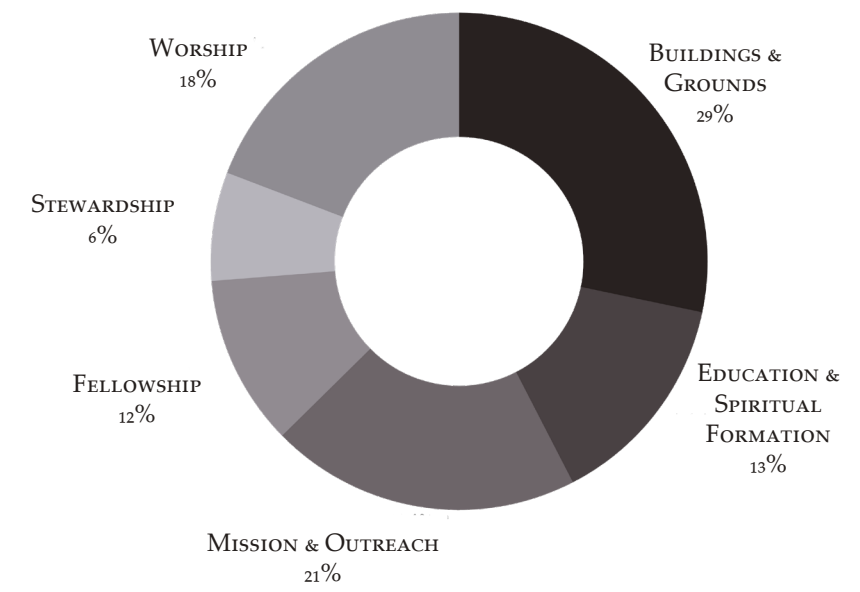
The Season of Stewardship

The Season of Stewardship this year begins on Sunday, September 25 and concludes on All Saints Sunday, November 6. Included with this brochure is a small book of prayers for each day of the week written by parishioners of St. Mary's. These prayers give thanks for the People, the Place, the Worship, and the Work that make our parish church a community of belonging. I invite you to pray these prayers during the Season of Stewardship to inspire your own prayers of thanksgiving. We hope these prayers will be an encouragement for you in your own prayers as you discern with God what you feel called to offer as your pledge for St. Mary's Church for the coming year.

OUR GOAL:
\$1.25 MILLION

In 2022, the people of St. Mary's pledged \$1,182,000 for the mission and ministry of Christ. In 2023, let's look forward with hope to reach \$1.25 million for Christ and his Kingdom.

EXPENSE BREAKDOWN (JANUARY 2022 - JULY 2022 EST.)



WORSHIP
Includes all resources for our worshipping life.



BUILDINGS & GROUNDS
Includes the means to care for our sacred grounds and buildings.



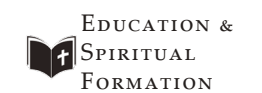
STEWARDSHIP
Includes the means to support our larger Episcopal family.



MISSION & OUTREACH
Includes the means to care for and support agencies and ministries beyond St. Mary's.



FELLOWSHIP
Includes everything we need to break bread together.



EDUCATION & SPIRITUAL FORMATION
Includes the resources we need to grow in Christ.

*All expenditures on staff salaries and administration costs are included in the percentages of the expense breakdown categories.

WAYS TO PLEDGE



Bring your pledge card to the church office during the week. We're open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday.



Return a pledge card by mail to 12291 River Road, Richmond, VA 23238.



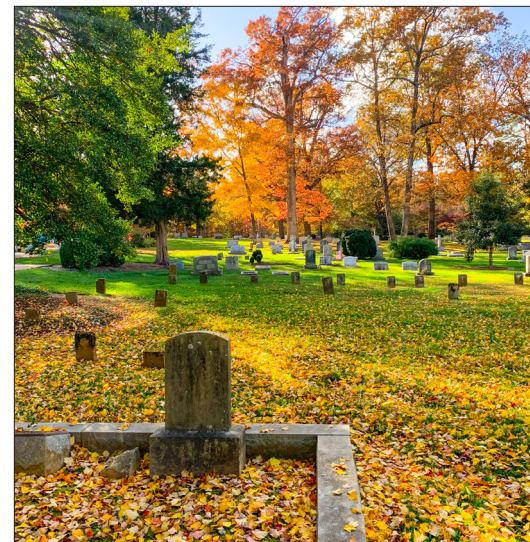
estarl@stmarysgoochland.org or
lclay@stmarysgoochland.org

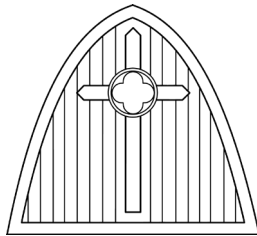


www.stmarysgoochland.org/pledge



(804) 784-5678 to speak with Elizabeth Starling or Lauren Clay.





ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

12291 River Road, Richmond, VA 23238

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