

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church



ANNUAL REPORT

169th Annual Parish Meeting

January 28, 2024

ST. THOMAS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

OFFICERS. STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

Interim Rector: The Rev. Paul R. Briggs II
Deacon Emeritus: The Rev. Dr. Rosalee Glass
Senior Warden: Elizabeth Moran
Junior Warden: Donovan Bowley
Treasurer: Terry Mello
Clerk of the Vestry: Anne Rogers-Popejoy
Minister of Music: Clarissa Brown
Office Administrator: Kayla Clay
Sexton: Tony Coyne
Communications: Terry Mello
Office Volunteers:
Grayce Sivigny
Jan Lyle
Diane Kirkman

VESTRY

Outgoing Vestry Members:

Jan Lyle
Benjy Lowry (*completed two-year term*)
Kendra Watkins (*completed two-year term*)

Terms End 2025:

Sarah Groman
Anne Rogers-Popejoy

Terms End 2026:

Gwen Prosser
Jacqueline Recht

Nominees for Vestry:

Term Ending 2025:
Kendra Watkins
Term Ending 2026:
Haunani Wallace
Term Ending 2027:
Benjy Lowry
Cheryl Reif
Ron Zdrojeski

2023 PARISH STATISTICS

Communicants in Good Standing:

Average Sunday Attendance:

In-Person: 67

Online Viewing 2023:

Livestreaming:

Sunday: 29

Other: 35

Facebook:

Noonday Prayer: 19

Compline: 20

Marriages: 2

Burials: 4

Deaths in the Community:

Del Babb
Joan Bennett
June Dolcater
John Doncaster
Beryl Harron
Ann Montgomery

*Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord;
and light perpetual shine upon them.
May they, and all the departed,
through the mercy of God,
Rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Meeting Agenda Page 1

2023 Annual Parish Meeting Minutes Page 2

REPORTS

Interim Rector Page 4

Minister of Music Page 6

Senior Warden Page 6

Junior Warden Page 7

Financials

 Financial Review Page 10

 Statement of Activity Page 10

 Statement of Financial Position Page 11

 2024 Budget Projection Page 12

 2023 Results and 2024 Budget Page 12

Finance and Endowment Committee Page 13

Office Volunteers Page 13

Bible Study Page 13

Altar Guild Page 14

Flower Guild Page 14

Liturgical Ministers Page 15

Camden Area Christian Food Panty Page 16

Outreach Page 16

Loaves and Fishes Page 17

Memorial Gardens Page 17

MEET YOUR NOMINEES

Vestry Members Page 18

NOTES Page 20

MEETING AGENDA

1. Gathering and Call to Order
2. Opening Prayer and Necrology
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Nomination and Election of Vestry Members

Kendra Watkins '25	Haunani Wallace '26	Benjy Lowry '27
		Cheryl Reif '27
		Ron Zdrojeski '27
5. Election of Diocesan Convention Delegates

Anne Rogers Popejoy, Br. Donovan Bowley, Kelli McGuire Grayce Sivigny, Alternate

6. Elizabeth Moran, Senior Warden
7. Br. Donovan Bowley, Junior Warden
8. Terry Mello, Treasurer: Finances and Presentation of 2024 Budget
9. Interim's Remarks and Discernment Exercise
 - Find a relatively friendly stranger
 - Describe your best experience at St. Thomas'
 - Report back a highlight of what your partner said
 - Describe the particular mission you believe God is calling us to at St. Thomas'
 - Report back a highlight of what your partner said
10. Recognition of Outgoing Vestry Members
11. Installation of New Vestry Members
12. Question and Answer on any aspect of Parish Life
13. Motion to Adjourn, Blessing, and Hymn

2023 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

January 29, 2023

168th Annual Meeting

The Rev Canon Lisa Fry calls the meeting to order at 11:12am.

Meeting opens in prayer.

Rector's Report:

Highlights:

- Celebrating one full year of in-person worship. Next goal is to stream all services: spreading Christ's word is not just for the able-bodied who can attend on Sundays.
- Welcomed 13 new parishioners this year.
- We cannot yet update the by-laws: they are under review by the Diocesan lawyer. Will be approved at a later date.
- Mini-ministries make a significant difference in the life of the parish.
- An excellent Bishop's visit: well-received, proud of this parish and the number of children attending.
- St. Thomas has the most children attending out of any Episcopal parish in the area.

Upcoming:

- Hire a part-time administrative assistant (10 hours per week, \$20-\$25 per hour, will retain existing volunteers).
- Summer sabbatical: an opportunity to rest, reflect, recharge and study.

Senior Warden's Report: Elizabeth Moran

- Reminder regarding the need for an additional 20 prayer books.
- Thanks for support while her husband has been ill.

Junior Warden's Report: Edmund Hart

- Ending tenure on the vestry, but will support the new Junior Warden.
- The age of this building leaves many projects to be attended to.

Report of the Clerk: Shirley Fierro

Motion to approve the 2022 annual meeting minutes: Edmund Hart, second Gwen Prosser. Motion passes.

Financials: Phil Groman

Budget review:

- Donation and pledges are down;

- Underspent in salary and benefits in 2022, which helped us come in on budget;
- Facilities expenses are high because of utility n(oil and electric) and property tax increases.
- Administration expenses for 2023 are high because of paying supply clergy for Rev. Lisa's sabbatical, but were underspent in 2022.

Goodbye to outgoing Vestry members:

- A special thank you to this group for getting the parish through the worst of Covid –
 - Edmund Hartt, Dean Jackson, Eileen Morelli, Sarah Groman

Vestry Nominations:

Sarah Groman, Gwen Prosser, Jacqueline Recht, Br. Donovan Bowley (junior warden), Anne Rogers-Popejoy (clerk:appointed).

Motion to approve the vestry slate: Kate Johnson, second Corallie Murray.

Welcome new members: Phyllis Barry, Antonia Benson, Russ & Noreen Eagleston, Kellie McGuire, Anne Rogers-Popejoy and Jamie & Ronan Popejoy, Cheryl Reif, Steve Ruelke, Cheryl White, Ronald & Christine Zdrojeski

Delegates to convention: Br. Donovan Bowley, Keillie McGuire, Anne Rogers-Popejoy (alternate: Grace Sevigny)

Rev. Lisa's Sabbatical Discussion:

May to August 2023

- Option 1: one 9am service, alternating Rite 1 and Rite 2 each month.
- Option 2: 8am Rite 1 & 10am Rite 2 service

Discussion regarding positive and negative aspects of each. Some thought the 2 service option was good, many were more interested in everyone getting a chance to be together.

“Straw poll” nearly even 1st time, 2nd time: one service clear majority.

The decision will also largely depend on which priests are available for each option.

Chapel update:

- Replacing the roof – ongoing talks with the architect for options.
- Project is out for bid but has not been picked up by a contractor. Please refer any qualified contractors from within New England to Rev. Lisa.
- A comment made about how the parish needs to be kept in the loop regularly about progress or lack thereof.

Hymn suggestions: to Clarissa Brown

Please offer specific hymn names. We'd love to accommodate. Will have clipboard in both Narthex and Sunroom. Up to parishioners to give us suggestions. ALL hymns are “familiar” to Lisa and Clarissa.

Meeting closes with prayer led by the Rev. Canon Lisa Fry.

INTERIM RECTOR

*Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his Name; * worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.*

—Psalm 29:2

It is unusual for me to veer very far from the lectionary appointed for the day but I was taken by a phrase from the Psalm appointed for the First Sunday After the Epiphany (A.K.A. The Sunday of the First Big Snow of 2024). The second verse of Psalm 29 reads: *Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his Name; * worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.*

It was the Rev. Ralph Hayden, Rector of St. Thomas 'from 1919 to 1933 who was responsible for much of the physical buildings we now know as St. Thomas' Church. During his tenure, the present church was completed in 1924, one hundred years ago. The parish hall was added two years later and the Lady Chapel and bell tower were constructed in 1930. You have every reason to be proud of this architectural gem located in the heart of Camden. We literally *worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.*

Thanks to Chris Glass and others, the entire campus works today as a whole with the skillful melding of further additions incorporating the old rectory which now houses accessible classrooms, church offices, a two-bedroom apartment, and the creation of a cloistered garden area. The architecture and landscaping create a magnificent setting in a picturesque mid-coast community, long known for its fleet of windjammers, quaint shops, and stately homes. At times I do have pinch myself to be sure I am not on the set of a PBS television mystery.

We, indeed, have been given a great legacy by previous generations...and it has proven to be both an asset and a challenge to us as a congregation. In addition to maintaining a large physical plant, we still have not resolved the serious structural issues of the bell tower and chapel. We will need to come to some determination about the best path forward and my hope is that we can have a general parish meeting (with all stake holders at the table) at a date yet to be determined.

In this year of our Lord 2024, we also mark the centenary of the completion of the present church building in which we worship. I will be working with our vestry to prepare appropriate celebrations to mark this milestone in our history.

I commend to you the work of our Junior Warden, Br. Donovan Bowley, for the yeoman's job in keeping track of all the moving parts when it comes to our buildings and grounds. In the very near future, I anticipate that we will name a reinvigorated Buildings and Grounds Committee whose members will develop a master list of tasks with the oversight of the Junior Warden and then divide responsibilities among themselves so that all tasks will not fall on the shoulders of one individual. The repair, care, and cleanliness of our buildings is quite often a reflection of the spiritual health of any congregation.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

Perhaps it goes without saying, but I hope we are aware that the church ultimately is not a building. It is us, you and me, the people of God who are the church. Buildings have practical uses: they shelter and inspire but they are not an end in themselves. In every way, buildings should support the mission to which God calls us. Discerning and defining that mission is a top priority and gives us a lens to focus all our other plans throughout the year.

Some may be wondering where we are in the search process for a new rector. The short answer is that for now, we need to get ourselves sorted out before we can embark on such a venture. This will take time and I ask for patience. The Vestry will be engaging HolyCow! Consulting to help us develop a factual snapshot of where we are in our life together.

Another step towards greater congregational health is to develop clearer behavioral boundaries and norms. The Vestry and I will meet on retreat in March to work on a Covenant to govern our life together and we'll share that work with you as other groupings within the parish may want to adopt it's use.

At our gathering today, I am going to ask you to find a relatively friendly looking stranger and ask you to describe to them your best experience here at St. Thomas'. Be as detailed and specific as possible in describing that experience; use all five of your senses as you recall this time. If you are the listening partner listen carefully to what they say and please, please do not comment. You may however ask clarifying questions but do not discuss. At the end of the allotted time, switch roles. We'll then have a general report back to the whole group about what you heard your partner say. Next, speak with your partner and describe the particular mission you believe God is calling us to. Use as much detail as possible.

This, as much as anything else we do today, begins the process of discernment. As we begin to identify specifically where God is calling us then we will be better equipped to discern the leadership we'll need in our next rector. It's a process and let's take the time it deserves; it is holy work.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

I am grateful to parish leadership and especially members of our Vestry. 2023 was an unprecedented year which required tremendous devotion to this community of faith. I suspect it was a growing year, as you discovered strengths and weaknesses among yourselves. Thank you.

Thank you to Anne Rogers-Popejoy for being our interim administrator and to our office volunteers, Grayce Sivigny, Jan Lyle, and Diane Kirkman. I am thankful to Terry Mello for her organizational skills and attention to detail. Thank you for your tireless efforts on our behalf as parish treasurer and most recently for assisting with the methodical transfer of information and training necessary to bring our new administrator, Kayla Clay, on board.

The role of the Senior Warden is demanding and I am so very grateful to Elizabeth Moran for her counsel, wisdom, and perspective as a long time member of St. Thomas'. Thank you.

Finally, I want to acknowledge all of you because you make this community of faith what it is. I am grateful to you for trusting me to help us navigate a path forward with the eventual goal of discovering whom God has called to be your next Rector.

Think, for a moment, of all that will happen in the coming year – the decisions that will be made, relationships started (or ended), career changes, schools entered, illnesses endured, challenges surmounted, risks taken, adventures dared, love shared. So much will come along in the coming weeks and months. Some of it we may anticipate and be prepared for, and much of it we simply can't imagine. It can be daunting until we remember that God is with us through all of it. God is on our side. God will not abandon us but will walk alongside us, strengthening us, encouraging us, granting us grace sufficient to become the people God wants us to be.

*Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his Name; * worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.*

The Rev. Paul R. Briggs II, Interim
The Fourth Sunday After the Epiphany 2024

MINISTER OF MUSIC

I would like to thank all who worship at St. Thomas' for your welcome and for your support.

Things that have not changed:

- We continue to offer music at the 7:30 AM/Now 8:00 AM Rite I service.
- Our senior choir continues to gather at 9:00 AM on Sundays to prepare for worship.
- Senior Choir rehearsals are on Thursdays from 5:00 – 6:30 PM. We would welcome anyone who would like to join us. Please consider becoming a member of the choir! No auditions required—just come and sing with us!
- For Christmas Eve there were two services, the earlier family service at 5:30 with pageant, and the later one at 10 with special music, candle lighting, and full eucharist.
- Special anthem music is part of the mix—please let me know if you would like to contribute. Do you play an instrument? Are you part of an ensemble? Please consider joining our worship.
- I celebrate our Senior Choir members now with birthday parties about once a month. This is one small way to show my appreciation for the choir, who work extremely hard. They continue to sing almost every Sunday of the year. Even though the work can be challenging, it is so rewarding to be in creative fellowship.
- I continue to hold a Choir Dinner approximately twice yearly. We had a very successful gathering in fall of 2023 and look forward to having another in a few weeks.

Things that have changed:

DRUM ROLL!!!!

- The Choir division of the organ was repaired in time for 2023 holidays!! I am so grateful to the Vestry for their support. We now have 500+ extra pipes to add beautiful nuance to the organ music.

Thank you all for your kindness and encouragement. I am looking forward to the coming seasons with great anticipation.

Clarissa Brown, AAGO MM

SENIOR WARDEN

This past year was at first a year of uncertainty and change but one that eventually became a time when a new spirit emerged in the Parish. The Rector's sabbatical and subsequent resignation were unsettling. However with the Rev. Paul Briggs as our Interim Rector and a supportive and committed Vestry, St. Thomas' Church became stronger and united in our love for one another in the body of Christ.

A new spirit became evident with the Parish eager to revitalize familiar activities such as the Summer Fair, bake sales, pancake breakfasts or try new things like the fun-filled Epiphany party, the Advent Lessons and Carols and parish wide work sessions. With the Tower Project on hold, we began to look at areas that needed maintenance. A huge thank you to those who cleaned up the grounds with chainsaws and rose clippers or cleaned up inside the Church with polishing cloths and dusters. And to all who have stepped up and volunteered in other areas by joining the Outreach Committee, helping during the worship services, or in the office, or counting money or streaming our weekly services.

We are looking forward to the coming year when we define who we are through online surveys and parish profiles and we discuss where we want to go in the near future. A huge thank you to Paul who is gently guiding us and to all who offered their prayers and words of encouragement this past year. Our love for one another and for our Lord, Jesus Christ will guide us as we look forward rather than back and we enter this new chapter in the life of St. Thomas Church, Camden.

Praise be to God.

Elizabeth A. Moran
Senior Warden

JUNIOR WARDEN

In my 12 May 2023 report, I noted thanks to Chris Groman for clearing away much of the debris from winter, and to John Elwell for agreeing to mow our lawns; also, to Katy Jackson, whose planting of last year's Easter Altar Daffodils resulted in the two Wood Street planters full of bloom this Easter, and to Grace Sivigny for the Pansies in the planters at that entrance.

I spoke with Dean Jackson regarding a stove refurbisher who would be a likely purchaser of the "aged Vulcan" that seeks a new home. I'll contact that company as soon as I have the information from Dean.

Edmund Hartt is looking for a new door closer for the right-hand porch door at the Chestnut Street entrance. And Edmund took me on a "Junior Warden Tour" of our building complex.

I contacted Mike Hedstrom of Hedstrom Electric to determine the power supply adequacy and necessary installation provisions for two 220 electrical stove outlets preparatory to installation of the proposed two new stoves. After reviewing the electrical system, he advised me that the current electrical service from the panel directly below the kitchen is "maxed out" and that an entirely separate 220 power feed to the building would be needed. This means gas stoves would be the less costly replacement for the Vulcan.

While he was here, I also spoke with Mr. Hedstrom about the need for an outdoor power outlet at the front of the church, as well as installation of a sensor to turn the front sign lights on at dusk and off at dawn. He will follow up on that. There is a damaged "weather outlet cover" to the outdoor receptacle at the Wood Street entrance. I'll replace that myself as soon as I can match it with a new one.

As reported 19 June 2023, Chris Groman served as part time interim Sexton, and John Elwell mowed our lawns.

Horch Roofing replaced the shingles torn off the Rectory roof by the windstorm of the winter of 2022/2023.

I am began looking for a likely purchaser of the old stove. The consensus was that we purchase two new smaller gas stoves to replace it.

Edmund asked the contractor for the planned autumn construction to provide samples of shingles for the replacement of the slates on the church roof, to be reviewed by Vestry members.

Hedstrom Electric is aware of our need for an outdoor power outlet (for Creche and power equipment) at the front of the church and, also, has the installation of a sensor to turn the front sign and steps lights on at dusk and off at dawn on their job list. I'll follow up on the status of that work. Mike Hedstrom indicated that he has a very full task list this season.

I'll replace the "weather outlet cover" to the outdoor receptacle at the Wood Street entrance as soon as I am more mobile following last week's foot surgery. To solve the problem of the sticky door latch from Wood

Street vestibule to Parish Hall, I'll also replace the latch plate on the door between the Wood Street entrance and the Guild Room corridor.

Summer Fair employed the currently unused Nursery for accumulation of items for the fair – as in past fairs.

As of 7 August 2023, two new side-by-side 30-inch gas ranges with griddles and ovens were ordered from Kelsey's in Rockport. The old Vulcan stove was moved away from the wall by Jake of Willey's staff to prepare for a new gas line with 2 separate shutoffs to be installed and installed the gas line to serve both new stoves on Monday, August 14. Ryan and his crew from Hedstrom Electric set up the duplex 20 Amp. 110 electrical outlet for the non-gas features of the stoves on Tuesday, August 15. Kelsey's delivered and hooked up the new stoves on Thursday, 17 August and we were ready to cook. Our old Vulcan stove (“too old to be reconditioned and resold” according to C. Caprara who does that kind of work) was removed by Kelsey's.

Complicating factors in this long project were decisions on “one new stove or two,” gas stoves vs. electric, arranging removal of the old stove, scheduling tradespeople, my own and other pre-arranged vacations, Shakespeare, Maine Media Workshop, and Fair schedules.

Our Tenant in the old Rectory, Joan Mullaney, brought to my attention several sources of cold air intrusion into that apartment. This results in general loss of heat, and a very cold bathroom in winter. Separate issue #1: the oven in the stove needs attention because it will burn part of a pan of food and leave the rest of the food uncooked. Separate issue #2: the bathroom overhead moisture vent has an integral heater. She also mentioned that it would be helpful in winter to have a handrail on the outside entrance to that apartment.

After the autumn windstorm, a quick-moving work crew of Bill Freeman, Michael Moore, Jim Ebbert appeared and made quick work of removing downed branches, fallen leaves, and other debris around the property.

By January 2024: A parishioner has kindly offered to pay for replastering of plaster damage in the church (around the Great Window) and as well would like to pay for replastering in the Chapel and the adjacent arch in chapel and church – even knowing that the work in the Chapel will be temporary, awaiting final repair when the Tower problems are addressed.

A couple of Flower Guild members have tripped and fallen on the entrance to the Flower Room. I discussed this with Edmund Hartt and he suggested a simple step within that room to eliminate the problem. I'll move forward on that.

I am preparing a handrail for the front steps of the Rectory.

Our Treasurer, Terry Mello, noted an unusual amount of heating fuel being used, and has asked that *all* the doors to the Parish Hall be closed when not in use to conserve heat. She has also suggested and has discussed with P.G. Willey replacing the present thermostats with new ones which can be programmed to automatically turn down the heat to a pre-set level at a pre-set time.

We have had Sargent Lock re-key the inner Church door from the Wood Street Hallway, the Sacristy, and the Flower Room to be on a new, *single key* for improved security and the convenience of the users, who are often in and out of all three entrances while participating in the same activity. Right now, that key is still being kept in the usual place.

We also had Sargent Lock repair the latch to the door between the Wood Street vestibule and the Guild Room hallway so it operates smoothly, and have also had the lock adjusted so it is not possible to accidentally (or deliberately) engage the long-unnecessary deadbolt. That deadbolt was clearly a continuing source of frustration for many users.

We are planning to re-key all the outside doors and the Wood Street vestibule/Guild Room hallway door to be on the same key, issuing new keys to users. I'll be contacting Committee Chairs to determine how many keys are needed and who needs them.

In a related measure, I have contacted the Camden Fire Department about safe ways to provide emergency access and they have recommended a Knox Box key safe to be installed at the Wood Street entrance. It will contain the outside door key and the new inside key to the Church, Sacristy, and Flower Room. The only party with access to the Knox Box will be the Camden Fire Department.

We have approved a proposal from Hedstrom Electric for replacement of the nonfunctioning outside sign light, its underground cable and its connection to a light sensor. That will then automatically turn on sign lights and the light on the steps up from Chestnut Street.

In the couple of power outages we have had, it was clear that some of the emergency lights were either inoperable or dim – and I noted that there is no emergency light/exit sign in the church itself. Hedstrom has submitted and we have approved a proposal for battery replacement in those lights, and installation of an Exit sign and emergency lights at the Chestnut Street entrance.

One of the ceiling lights in the Parish Hall is out. We do not have a ladder tall enough to replace the lightbulbs in those fixtures and in the past have apparently called in an electrician to change lightbulbs. I would like to purchase or acquire a stepladder of sufficient height to be able to change the lightbulbs as necessary without calling in an electrician for that simple task.

We need to close, even temporarily, the hole in the stucco outside wall above the Sacristy, before weather creates major problems in that wall. (This was supposed to have been part of proposed autumn work.) As well, recently it was noted that there is a problem in the stucco dormer panel above the sunroom. This may be the source of the slight leak in that has happened in the Sunroom during heavy rainstorms.

A couple of clapboards on the Rectory, above the parish office reception area, need to be replaced. Many of the wooden quoin blocks on the rectory need to be caulked or replaced. After the recent windstorm, it was noted that a number of shingles have been ripped off the rectory roof on both the front side and the back. Horch Roofing has been contacted to replace these as they did in last winter's windstorm.

The stucco and wood on the sunroom and other areas where there is backsplash from roof drainage need repainting in the year ahead. The paint there is badly peeling, leaving the wood unprotected.

There is a roof gutter/drainpipe problem in the corner between Parish Hall and Wood Street Entrance which needs to be addressed. It has caused rot in the window well and window of the former basement classroom below and is a source of continual dampness in that room, rendering it unusable.

Respectfully submitted,

Donovan A. R. Bowley
Junior Warden

FINANCIALS

2023 Financial Review

As we begin our journey together in 2024, we want to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support of St. Thomas'. The St. Thomas' community, once again, has answered the call. Your support enabled us to send over \$5,000 to charities, ranging from the Camden Area Christian Food Pantry, Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen, and other special needs of our community. In 2023 we awarded scholarships totaling \$7,500 to two of our students to help with their educational expenses. At the beginning of the year, we projected a deficit of \$38,370 and I am happy to report our actual deficit was \$16,346. Our total income (not including the "Unrestricted Income used for Operations") was \$6,527 (3.62%) over what we budgeted, and our total expenses were \$10,497 (3.95%) lower than budgeted.

Following are two reports for your information— *2023 Statement of Activity* and *Statement of Financial Position (2023 and 2022)*. The *2023 Results and 2024 Budget* report can be found on page 12. As you can see, our financial position is healthy as we enter 2024. We would not be in this position without your support. I want to personally take to opportunity to thank Fr. Paul, Wardens, Vestry and the Finance and Endowment Committee for their support and trust you continue to provide to me. *"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."* – Helen Keller

Faithfully,
Terry Mello

2023 Statement of Activity

	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted
2023 Income Received (Excludes Capital Improvement Income)			
Total Operating Income	238,827.52	238,827.52	-
Outreach Donations	11,101.89	-	11,101.89
Weymouth Altar Guild Interest	448.55	-	448.55
Interest Received from Non-Operating Bank Accounts	1,533.90	-	1,533.90
Other Restricted Income (Bequests, Flowers, Music, etc.)	17,319.27	-	17,319.27
Total Income	269,231.13	238,827.52	30,403.61
2023 Disbursements (Excludes Capital Improvement Disbursements)			
Total Operating Expense	(255,173.37)	(255,173.37)	-
Outreach Disbursements	(9,812.27)	-	(9,812.27)
Scholarships from RI Thomas	(7,500.00)	-	(7,500.00)
Other Expenses (Flowers, Music, etc.)	(8,997.82)	-	(3,989.46)
Total Expense	(281,483.46)	(255,173.37)	(21,301.73)
2023 Capital Improvement Income			
Capital Improvement Donations	5,100.00	-	5,100.00
Interest Earned on Building Fund Accounts	4,984.64	-	4,984.64
Total Income	10,084.64	-	10,084.64
2023 Capital Improvement Disbursements			
Capital Improvements	(42,325.22)	-	(42,325.22)
Depreciation Expense	(51,646.21)	-	(51,646.21)
Total Disbursements	(93,971.43)	-	(93,971.43)
Net Investment Earnings/(Losses)	161,645.02	-	161,645.02
Total Income/(Loss) for all Activities	65,505.90	(16,345.85)	81,851.75

Statement of Financial Position
As of 12/31/2023 and 12/31/2022

	2023	2022
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
NonRestricted Accounts	48,711	45,022
Restricted Accounts	404,731	448,049
Investments	1,118,678	1,033,753
Account Receivables	7,167	8,326
Other Current Assets	2,468	8,519
Total Current Assets	1,581,755	1,543,670
Fixed Leasehold Assets (Net of Depreciation)		
Building	1,280,333	1,370,475
Other Property	100,000	100,000
Equipment	1,416	5,245
Total Net Fixed Assets	1,381,749	1,475,720
Other Assets		
Diocesan Supervised Investments	136,908	125,398
TOTAL ASSETS	3,100,412	3,144,789
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	2,210	7,697
Other Current Liabilities	27,038	25,995
Long-Term Liabilities		
Other Long-Term Liabilities	2,733	3,136
Total Liabilities	31,981	36,828
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted Net Assets	1,399,793	1,510,110
Restricted Funds		
Investment Accounts	1,069,807	978,673
Building Funds	279,813	311,985
Diocesan Supervised Investments	136,908	125,398
Restricted Funds	61,325	63,927
Restricted Donations	108,201	100,364
Outreach Funds	12,583	11,293
Total Net Assets	3,068,431	3,101,750
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	3,100,412	3,138,578

2024 Budget Projection

Each year the Treasurer, Vestry and Finance Committee work together to develop a reasonable budget for the current year. Our budget deficit for 2024 is projected to be \$20,060. As a means of transparency and understanding of what we can truly afford, the Vestry decided not to include “Endowment Income used for Operations”. If necessary, we will move the funds from the General Endowment Fund with Finance Committee and Vestry approval.

We will continue to do our best to be good stewards of our church finances. *“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”* – Luke 6:38

Faithfully,
Terry Mello

2023 Results and 2024 Budget

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
Operating Income			
Pledge and General Donations	147,700	151,949	159,500
Unrestricted Income used for Operations	44,000	49,000	-
Rental Income and Facility Use Donations	32,500	34,523	34,300
Fundraising Income	3,000	3,000	3,000
Other Income and Donations	100	356	140
Total Operating Income	227,300	238,828	196,940
Operating Expense			
Salaries and Benefits	160,370	158,644	99,450
Diocesan Allocation	26,800	26,767	35,100
Church Facilities Expenses	47,350	41,421	42,500
Administrative Expenses	27,900	25,886	26,350
Discernment Expenses	-	-	9,500
Other Operating Expenses	3,250	2,455	4,100
Total Operating Expense	265,670	255,173	217,000
Net Operating Income/(Loss)	(38,370)	(16,346)	(20,060)

FINANCE AND ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

Current members of the Finance and Endowment Committee are Phil Groman (Chair) and Bob Bannon. Ex Officio members are Paul Briggs (Interim Rector), Elizabeth Moran (Senior Warden), and Terry Mello (Treasurer). We thank Noreen Eagleston for her contributions during her time on the Committee. She and her husband moved to Hancock in August.

Meetings are held quarterly primarily to monitor our investments, review our financial reports, and assist in creating the annual budget. Via email Terry shares a detailed analysis of our finances on a monthly basis. For a short period, our financial health was looking glum but thankfully that changed as pledge income picked up.

Representatives from Allen Insurance Agency and Financial attend our meetings twice yearly in order to provide an update on the financial markets per their crystal ball, review our investment performance, and recommend changes should any be necessary.

It is imperative that we have two more voting members on this committee in order to meet Diocesan regulations. If this committee is of interest to you, please contact any member for further information.

Respectfully submitted,

Phil Groman

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

The office volunteers enabled St. Thomas' office to be open Tuesdays through Thursday, 9 a.m. until noon. This team (Grayce Sivigny on Tuesdays, Jan Lyle on Wednesdays, and Diane Kirkman on Thursdays)—with the welcome able assistance of the Interim Administrator Anne Roger's-Popejoy—worked to ensure that St. Thomas' was a welcoming church, and that parishioners and visitors had access to any needed information and services.

They opened the church when the office is open; answered the phone and emails; greeted visitors; proofed and edited Tidings; mailed Tidings and sermons to shut-ins without Internet service; proofed, posted, printed, and folded the bulletins; managed the service-assignment schedule; scheduled events; emailed readings and prayers of the people to readers; ordered supplies; made signs; kept the calendar updated and posted; helped the communications manager (Terry Mello) keep the website updated; assist the priest in a variety of activities; and performed all the other tasks that any office administrator might be asked to handle.

We are delighted that Kayla Clay has been hired as the church's Office Administrator, and we look forward to her providing needed continuity to the day-to-day running of the office.

BIBLE STUDY

We have been meeting entirely online by Zoom since early in the pandemic. Most participants join the meeting by computer. Those with smartphones and computers can see each other on screen; everyone can be heard. Our former parishioner, Paul Holman, participates from his new home in Michigan and has been my co-host for the Zoom, ensuring continuance if there is a local disruption in my connection. This year, by pre-arrangement via Terry Mello, our Communications Agent, he was able to host a session in my necessary absence.

Every Wednesday morning St. Thomas' Church sends out the log-in link for our meeting via Mailchimp. I also send it to several participants. We meet from 11 AM to noon on that day, for a very lively informal

discussion of the scripture readings for the coming Sunday. We encourage participants to log in a bit early, about 10:45, to allow for occasional log-in problems. All enter via the Zoom “waiting room.” The host or co-host brings each participant into the meeting from there. Come join us online!

Again, as last year, we’ve had about 10 regular participants. We do look forward to when we can resume our accustomed meeting around the St. Thomas’ conference table, with refreshments - but with the added ability to still allow folks to participate from wherever they are, via Zoom. The new St. Thomas OWL camera may make that possible. Whether coming from a distance or ill at home, folks can continue to participate.

If you are interested in Bible Study with us, please contact me.

Br. Donovan Bowley, BSG

ALTAR GUILD

Altar Guild is a parish ministry that is responsible for preparing the Altar for our worship services on Sunday and Wednesday. These past few months we have been working to re-vitalize this important group of “Holy Housekeepers”. After a get together tea in early November when almost 20 parishioners attended, we were enthusiastic to re-organize, to start training, to divide up the tasks and to start some preliminary work schedules.

We organized a “Clean for Christmas” session in December where we cleaned the church from the top of the reredos screen behind the altar to dusting, polishing and vacuuming everything in sight. Over 22 parishioners grabbed dusters and polishing cloths and everything shone. Many thanks to all who helped. If you are interested in joining us or learning more about what we are doing, please contact Elizabeth Moran or Susan Freeman.

FLOWER GUILD

2023 floral creations were the work of Connie Bock, Sarah Groman, Kate Jackson, Kay Lehr (summer months), Kelli McGuire, Corallie Murray and Grayce Sivigny.

The Flower Guild is responsible for the flower arrangements in the main part of the church, the Lady Chapel, and the Narthex. Using the Episcopal Liturgical Calendar as a guide which indicates the color to be used for the vestments eg white for All Saints' Day, bright red/orange for Pentecost, with more scope for variety during the long "Green" season of "Ordinary Time", we create arrangements which can be given in Thanksgiving, to the Glory of God, in Memory of a loved one or some other reason (birthday, anniversary etc) for which an offering of \$50 is suggested. It is an act of worship and praise and we love what we do. We have no altar flowers during Advent and Lent but donations of any amount are welcome at Christmas and Easter to fund the Christmas wreaths and greens, Poinsettias, Palms and Easter lilies and the names of those for whom the flowers are given will appear in the Christmas and Easter service bulletins.

The duties of the Flower Guild include purchasing, arranging watering, and removing the flowers. Sometimes additional arrangements are placed in the Sunroom or Parish Hall. All parishioners are invited to participate in this holy work and we welcome your suggestions, your contributions, participation and comments. Most of us have no training at all except what we have learnt from each other.

That having been said, we have hopes and dreams for 2024. How about a hands-on workshop for new volunteers? This would be an opportunity for those interested in learning as well as those with knowledge and skills to offer.

Are there any flower growers out there who could spare a few cut flowers for the church? If that is you, please do be in touch. Would it suit you better to arrange flowers at home? Do you want to help with flowers on an occasional basis only e.g. for Parish events?

If you wish to give flowers for a particular date there is a sign-up sheet in the Sunroom. Your contribution can be made by check, (indicate "Flowers" in the memo line) or online.

If you are interested in knowing more about the Flower Guild, please contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Groman

LITURGICAL MINISTERS

FIRST SERVICE:

The 8:00 service has a talented group of Lectors, which includes Pat Ayers, Pam Bardon, Clarissa Brown, Edmund Hartt, Jan Lyle, Sandy Lyle and Terry Mello. Our Ushers are also a hard-working group, Peggy Daniels, Edmund Hartt, Jan Lyle, and Carlos Mello. We also have two very reliable Lay Eucharistic Ministers. Pam Bardon and Sandy Lyle. Having these volunteers makes our Sunday services go smoothly and more meaningful. We have plenty of room for others to join us, just speak with any one of the people mentioned above. Thank you to our faithful Lector, Ushers and Lay Eucharistic Ministers.

Peace to all.

Jan Lyle

SECOND SERVICE:

Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers

The 10:00 service also has a very dedicated group of Lectors and Lay Eucharistic Ministers. Our Lectors are Br. Donovan Bowley, Jeff Conrad, Millie Crocker, Sue Foltz, Roy Gilley, Sarah Groman, Dean Jackson, Kate Jackson, Benjy Lowry, Gwen Prosser, Jackie Recht, Charlotte Watkins, Doc Wallace, Haunani Wallace and Sally Williamson. Our Lay Eucharistic Ministers are Roy Gilley, Dean Jackson and Jackie Recht. Thank you for your service to these ministries! If you are interested in either ministry, please contact the Parish Office or Fr. Paul.

Ushers:

Ushering at St. Thomas' is an easy way for parishioners to serve our parish. Over the years we have been fortunate to have a core group of volunteers for the regular 10:00 AM services and periodic special services. We are also thankful for a few summer residents who regularly serve when they are in town.

During 2023 we lost Joan Bennett, one of our most faithful members and one who embodied all the attributes of a St. Thomas' service volunteer. Joan was fearless and always eager to help. I remember when she broke one of her arms, and Lucy told me she would not be able to usher for a few months. I replied "Wait and see". Sure enough, when I saw Joan the following Sunday and told her that I would take care of finding replacements, she asked me why. "You only need one arm to usher" she said. Truth be told, she could handle the entire sanctuary by herself. We will miss her.

Our group during the year included Dean Jackson, Roy Gilley, Chris Groman (until he had to resign because of his work schedule), Phil Groman, Ed Williamson, Mike Moore, Chery Reif, Cheryl White and Lucy Ebbert. We were very fortunate to have the two Cheryl's join our ranks early in the year, although I confess to sometimes confusing one Cheryl for the other. We can still use a few additional volunteers and in 2024 would like to fulfill a missed 2023 goal of finding a junior or senior high school student.

If you or any of your children have ever thought of volunteering, please speak to one of us. You do not have to be asked to join our group. Ushering is not hard to do and is a wonderful way to serve our parish. And it comes with one bonus most jobs do not offer—no one is ever fired—although it does not pay minimum wage.

Thanks to all of my volunteers.

Sincerely,

Jim Ebbert

CAMDEN AREA CHRISTIAN FOOD PANTRY

St. Thomas' is one of the five churches supporting the Camden Area Christian Food Pantry. Others in the group are Chestnut Street Baptist, First Congregational, John Street Methodist, and Our Lady of Good Hope. During 2023, food and personal care items were provided to an average of 70 families each week living in Appleton, Camden, Hope, Lincolnville, Rockport, Seasmont, Union, and Washington. Our group of 40 dedicated volunteers spend hundreds of hours each month not only serving clients but also ensuring that menus are prepared, food donations are picked up, and shelves are stocked.

Additional details can be found on our website – www.camdenareachristianfoodpantry.org.

St. Thomas' is a very active supporter of the Pantry. During 2023 members of our congregation donated just over \$1,600 in cash as well as a considerable quantity of non-perishable groceries.

Each church is represented by three members on the Board of Directors. Many thanks are due to Vicki Boetsch for her valuable contributions and support to the Food Pantry during the past year. With her "retirement" we have a vacancy that urgently needs to be filled.

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Respectfully submitted,

Phil Groman and Rebecca Vogt

OUTREACH

The Outreach Committee got up and running in June. We were able to donate to Finding Our Voices, Midcoast Homeless Coalition, Trinity Jubilee Center, and Maui. We also sponsored a child who lived on the dump in Honduras for a residential school program that sees her through high school. We helped local people with car registration, eye care, and gifts for a newborn.

Christmas was fun. We got to donate bicycles to three families and sponsored a Ukrainian family. We also provided fruit baskets to shut ins.

Respectfully submitted,

Gwen Prosser

LOAVES AND FISHES

The community free lunch program that runs weekends at St. Peter's is continuing to thrive. The various teams that handle the Saturdays and Sundays have the choice to provide full coffee service with a sit-down luncheon meal and take out available, or if preferred only take-out and coffee service.

St. Thomas is able to provide a full meal, coffee service and take out, every third Saturday. Lately we average about nine guests sitting for a meal and sixteen take-out orders. Some of the "sit down" guests take home meals as carry out for house bound friends, veterans and neighbors.

Currently our team consists of two to three St. Thomas parishioners, and one St. Peter's helper.

Anyone interested in joining or aiding this ministry please contact Pamela Bardon at 236 2421 or email at pambardon@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Bardon

MEMORIAL GARDENS

The interim rector has appointed Bill Freeman, Lucy Ebbert, and Sarah Groman (Vestry liaison) to be members of the Memorial Garden Committee and invited Br. Donovan Bowley, Junior Warden, as an ex-officio member of the Committee. An initial meeting was held on January 9, 2024.

The immediate work of this reconstituted ministry will be to:

- Review the current policies and make recommendations to the Vestry for any necessary changes.
- Have the names of Anne Carey Edmonds, Jean Ruth Carver Harper added to the Memorial Garden Plaque and restore the plaque to the Lady Chapel.
- Determine who, if anyone, has reserved rights to burial in All Souls' Garden.

The committee is also considering what an appropriate outdoor marker might look like.

The Camden Garden Club has agreed to maintain the plantings of All Souls' Garden and the adjacent gardens of the courtyard extending to the outer edge of the chapel for the coming year. Lucy will be a liaison between the Committee and Garden Club.

MEET YOUR NOMINEES

VESTRY:

One-Year Term:

Kendra Watkins



Kendra moved to Midcoast Maine in 2002 and took the position of the first Assistant District Attorney to specialize in juvenile matters for Prosecutorial District 6. Soon thereafter she was appointed by the Governor to the Board of Visitors for the Mountain View Youth Development Center. She met her husband Jon Watkins in 2004 at Camden Harbor while he was serving as the First Mate of S/Y Sumurun. They married in 2007, and in 2008 Kendra left the DA's office to start a solo legal practice specializing in representing children in: juvenile defense, emancipation and as a Guardian ad litem. Jon

and Kendra have four children, Luke, Charlotte, Wolfe and Violet, whom they homeschool. The family began attending St. Thomas' when they moved from Thomaston to Camden in 2016. In 2018, Jon began his own company as a for-hire boat captain and property manager for private rental properties in Camden.

Two-Year Term:

Haunani Wallace



Haunani was born in Hawaii, and lived on the west coast of British Columbia with her family where she met and married Doc. They moved to the east coast in 1983 and were very active in St. James Episcopal Church in Farmington, Connecticut, where she and Doc served as a team - Haunani served as treasurer for several years while Doc served as Senior Warden. After a career teaching middle school in Connecticut and New York, she and Doc retired to Vermont, where they enjoyed travelling, skiing and gardening. In 2010 they moved to Sarasota, Florida to care for her mother, Ada who

was suffering from dementia.

Like many others in the midcoast, Haunani and Doc began vacationing in Maine in the 1980s. And, like many others, they looked forward to moving to Maine when life allowed. They purchased a condo in Rockport in 2013 to escape summers in Florida. In 2016, when Ada's illness became so severe that she needed 24-hour institutional care, they searched for and found a good memory care facility for her. A year later, they moved to Rockport, and Haunani travelled back and forth to oversee Ada's care.

They started attending St. Thomas' shortly thereafter. Haunani has served as a reader and served a one-year term on the vestry. A recent move to Camden has them living within walking distance of St. Thomas' Church. She looks forward with anticipation to the new spirit that is spreading throughout the St. Thomas community. A team again, She and Doc have recently joined the Altar Guild and are happy to serve in this capacity.

Haunani enjoys knitting, gardening, reading, kayaking, skiing and all that the mid-coast has to offer.

Three-Year Terms:

Benjy Lowry



Benjy has been a member of St Thomas' since moving to Maine in 2019. Most recently of New Orleans, Benjy received his undergraduate degree in medieval studies from Tulane University. His final course of studies focused on the Old English Gospels. After graduating he found little trade peddling knowledge of forgotten tongues and feudalism, so instead he took a position teaching high school English. After his one millionth time reading *Lord of the Flies*, Benjy chose to tack in a different direction and undertook medical studies, again at Tulane. Along the way, in microbiology if you can

believe it, he met Shelly, and recognizing her as a much kinder, smarter, and lovelier person than himself, he quickly proposed. Shelly had always wanted to visit to Maine, so they moved to Portland where Benjy finished his training in emergency medicine. After this northern exposure, they returned to New Orleans and started a family. But as the children started to grow, Benjy and Shelly realized how much they missed the opportunities afforded in the mountains and seas of Maine. Hoping to share with the children the many joys of the midcoast, Benjy took a position at Pen Bay hospital and they began looking for a church. When the children saw the Godly Play room at St Thomas' they fell in love, remembering fondly the youth ministry at their previous church Trinity in New Orleans. Since joining the St. Thomas' Benjy has served as lector and Vestry member. He remains especially committed to fostering a spirit of inclusivity and community within the church, both locally and at large. If he's not shuttling the children between activities or reading a book, Benjy can be found climbing mountains and skiing back down them. An amateur baker and even poorer theologian, Benjy likes to think that though man cannot live on bread alone, a little sourdough can't hurt.

Cheryl Reif



Cheryl was raised outside of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and spent the majority of her adulthood on the North Shore of Boston. She began vacationing in Midcoast Maine and in 2014, after retiring from a career in Graduate Medical Education at the Massachusetts General Hospital and Brigham and Women's Hospital, retired full time to her home in New Harbor.

An Episcopalian since college, while in Massachusetts, she attended Christ Church Hamilton/Wenham, where she was a member of the vestry, co-warden of the vestry, discernment committee, endowment committee, altar guild, and eucharistic ministry. At St. Thomas', she is on the altar guild, ushers, participated in last summer's fair, and joined the January 2023 Wayfinders group.

In her spare time, she is an avid tennis player, attempts gardening, quilts, and knits. She is a docent at the Farnsworth Museum in Rockland and a member of the Coastal Rivers Conservancy in Damariscotta.

Ron Zdrojeski



Ron lives part time in Lincolnville with his wife Christine. They are the parents of four adult children -Kate, Boomer, Max and George. When not in Mid-Coast, Ron and Christine both work as attorneys. Ron works as a trial lawyer and Christine works at The Hartford Insurance Company. Ron and Christine have been members of the St. Thomas community since 2020.

