



St. Anne's Episcopal Church

Newsletter May 2017

SERVING CHRIST IN THE WORLD

From the Rector

by The Rev. Lauren T. McLeavey

Dear Friends in Christ,

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! Happy Easter! Remember that Easter is a 50-day long season in the church and lasts until Pentecost. Resurrection, however, is ongoing and our mission as followers of Jesus never ends. As I preached on Easter Sunday, resurrection is change, and change can be hard. The first change is that our dedicated Sexton, Al, has retired after nearly 26 years (!) as our Sexton. We thank him for all his hard work and dedication!

As you may be aware after our special meeting, St. Anne's is having financial issues. (You will receive more information on this in a separate mailing and later in this newsletter.)

We need to think about how we can change and work towards the future. Doing the same thing over and over doesn't work. We have had a lot of great new ideas for fundraising and outreach, but we need your help!

Remember that this is OUR church and we all need to work together.

One way to help would be increasing your pledge. You don't need a

special reason or a special donation envelope to give more, just add some money to your weekly pledge, or give as you can. Or, you can minister by joining the Thrift Shop staff, the fundraising group, or the finance committee, to name a few. We also need to reach out to the community with more frequency and intentionality. While the ultimate solution is to get more members, this takes years. It takes a long time for people to feel comfortable in a parish and then much more time to get a pledge. Some people never pledge even though they have attended a parish for over 20 years.

The best way to attract people to church is you! Talk to your friends and neighbors, tell them what you love about God, Jesus, and St. Anne's. Invite people to come with you to an event. It isn't that hard. I can go meet everyone in town, what makes people love a church is the community. Let's get out there and show Billerica what a loving and wonderful community we are in Christ!

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Lauren

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Ed Giroux – Warden
Mark Komarinski – Warden
Sue Geen – Treasurer
Kathy Brewster – Clerk
Marie Figenbaum – 2018
John Kusnierz – 2018
Lucy Anne Young – 2018
Judy MacPherson – 2019
Carol Lazott – 2019
Jane Kotelly – 2019
Russell Bent – 2020
Andrea Jeffrey – 2020
Janet Lyna – 2020
Worship:
Sundays, 8am & 10am

From the Co-Wardens

Here is a summary of the special parish meeting that was held on April 29th based on notes from Andrea Jeffrey. A more formal summary will be distributed via email and the US Post office.

At the Special Meeting held on 4/29/17, Mark and Ed presented the state of financial affairs for the church, and we then opened up the floor to questions and ideas. It wasn't an easy meeting to plan, attend and we're sure the message was not easy to hear.

The meeting began with prayer and a special "Thank you" to Al Westerlund for his many years of service as Sexton here at St. Anne's. There is more detail later in this newsletter on this subject. In general, a summary of St. Anne's financial picture was presented. We presented a summary of where our income comes from and where it goes. Additionally, we presented some measures that have been taken to reduce expenses. For example:

- With Al's retirement, the position of Sexton is being filled temporarily with volunteers. If you'd like to volunteer and lighten their load, please see either Carol Lazott or Kathy Brewster.
- The wages and hours of our parish secretary have been reduced.
- We have contacted National Grid and renegotiated our electricity supplier reducing our electric bill.
- Cut contributions to Rector's Discretionary Fund (the payments were unnecessary)

These savings help, but are only a small part of the solution. Mark, Ed and Sue have been reviewing bills looking for other savings, but our expense budget is very lean. The overall theme was that our projected income is not sufficient to cover our expenses.

Fundraisers:

Several new ideas were discussed in terms of fundraisers. You may have noticed that there has been no announcement regarding our annual golf outing this year. Unfortunately, this fund raiser, although successful in the past, is very labor intensive and time consuming to plan. As a result, no one has the time to devote to planning and running it. So we are attempting to introduce several new, smaller fund raisers that require much less work.

Of course, the simplest way to increase income is for each pledging unit to increase their giving by a certain amount. We need as many ideas as possible and are asking the people of St. Anne's to think outside the box and come up with some creative new ideas too.

Other Topics

How do we make St. Anne's more visible in the community? The overall goal of the church is to spread the Word of God to the community. Some ideas discussed included holding parish events at a venue such as the Mason's Hall as we have in the past to bring awareness; forming an advertising committee to come up with new ways to inform the community that St. Anne's is a vibrant and important part of Billerica. These and other ideas are needed to help increase the congregation at St. Anne's in the long term. Enthusiasm is good for fundraising, but we need to learn ways to utilize the talents of this church. We need to spread the Gospel of St. Anne's beyond these "four walls".

But the biggest question in my mind that was brought up on Saturday was: Where are the young families and how do we reach out to them? Without them, what does the future of this (or any) Church look like?

Communication

It's important to note that we have access to funds that will sustain us for the short term. But once these funds are spent, they are gone forever. We simply can't continue to rely on one time sources of income for recurring expenses.

To that end, we will schedule another meeting in a month or two to discuss what progress has been made. Discussion took place as well, regarding publishing unpaid bills in the newsletter and bulletins along with financial status.

All these topics and more are routinely discussed at monthly Vestry meetings. These meetings are where the Vestry makes financial and other decisions. They are open to the congregation and announced in the bulletin and at Sunday services.

Generally, they take place on the third Monday of each month at 7pm. Please attend and listen to the discussion and don't be shy; Please share your ideas.

Tech Day!

We talk about time talent and treasure at St Anne's; well let me tell you about four gentlemen who have all three.

Our own Bob, Ron, Mike and Mark (photo order) gave off their time to show off their talents and added to our treasures.

On Saturday April 29th a Tech day was held at St Anne's to help people of the community with technology issues. Not only did they wipe out viruses, clean and organize files but they helped retrieve protected information when passwords were forgotten.

This is a great example of thinking outside of the box while helping others. Be creative with your talents and you too can create treasures.

Thank you gentlemen!



FUNDRAISING!

Ken MacPherson is selling these beautiful, hand-made (by Ken himself) crosses as a fundraiser for the church. They are only \$7.00 each! Contact Ken if you would like to purchase a cross (or many!).

Call Ken at 978-667-7734 E-mail him at kmacp1@verizon.net



Yankee Candle (and more!) Fundraiser

We are holding a Yankee Candle fundraiser, where 40% of profits go directly to St. Anne's. For every \$25 worth of sales, St. Anne's gets \$10.

There's two ways to support us...

-You can purchase directly online by going to

<https://www.yankeecandlefundraising.com/store.htm>

and enter group code **999968569**

-You can place an order with the catalog - orders are accepted through May 14, and delivered the first week of June.

Coins for the Church

We are also holding a fundraiser called "Coins for Church"

Bring in your loose change to donate....the bottle will be in the Office during the week, and will be brought out for collections on Sunday.

We will collect and put the money into our Fundraising account.



Strawberry Festival – Save the Date!

Strawberry Festival Save the Date - June 17 - we are holding our annual Summer event with the Gardening Angels providing their world famous Strawberry Shortcakes, as well as Vendors on the lawn selling a variety of items. Table rentals are available, please see Andrea Jeffrey, or call the church.

New Sextons

As you may have heard, Al Westerlund has retired as sexton and we thank him for his many years of hard work and dedication! His replacements are volunteers. Kathy Brewster and Carol Lazott, and members of the Vestry head the team of volunteers who will be cleaning the church. There are many other volunteers and we would love to add your name to the list.

Our first task has been to figure out what needs to be cleaned and how often it needs to be done. We are actively working on that now. Starting in June, we will strip the tiled floors (kitchen, Bixby Hall, hallway, bathrooms). We will seal them and compose written care directions for maintaining them. We will then be asking for volunteers to do a particular task, or a particular week of cleaning.

Until then we ask:

1. After coffee hour on Sunday, please leave the floor clean so that the nursery school can meet there on Monday morning. Please empty the trash after coffee hour.
2. If you use the kitchen, please leave it clean. Empty the dish drainer and put away all your supplies. Take any unused food with you.
3. If you have a meeting, please empty the trash cans and take the trash to the dumpster. We have mice who visit...
4. If you need to reach the sexton team:

Kathy Brewster: 978-663-5270, dandkbrewster@comcast.net

Carol Lazott: 978-828-5422, lazott@aol.com (on vacation until May 16)

From the Thrift Shop:

There is a need in the community for more thrift shop hours, but we cannot ask more of our present staff. This past winter, three of our staff underwent surgery and no one outside regular staff stepped up to cover. The average age of our helpers is 71.

We realize that those who work cannot cover the hours we are currently open, but if we could get a few people to commit to a Tuesday evening or possibly even Sunday, noon to four, we could solicit additional outside help from the COA or the high schools. But we need parishioners to be in charge of opening and closing and running the register. Rev. Lauren is OK with both Tuesday and Sunday.

Preliminary discussions with some parishioners as well as some vestry members, have made it clear, most do not want the shop "open for business" on Sunday – the Lord's day – a day of rest. We fully understand and respect their feelings. However, even to be opened on Tuesday evening, will require additional help not only while the shop is open, but beforehand.

Last week on Friday, there was a family emergency for 2 staff members. We had sufficient coverage on Friday so the shop could remain open, but we could not get coverage in time for Saturday (which would have been a work day for those volunteers) so the shop had to be closed. Scarce Saturday coverage is why we have to closed during the summer.

On Sunday, April 23rd, the shed was completely emptied between services; by Monday morning the shed was nearly full again. All these donations need to be sorted out before the shop opens on Wednesday because the main floor of the shop must be free of obstacles for safety as well as visual reasons.

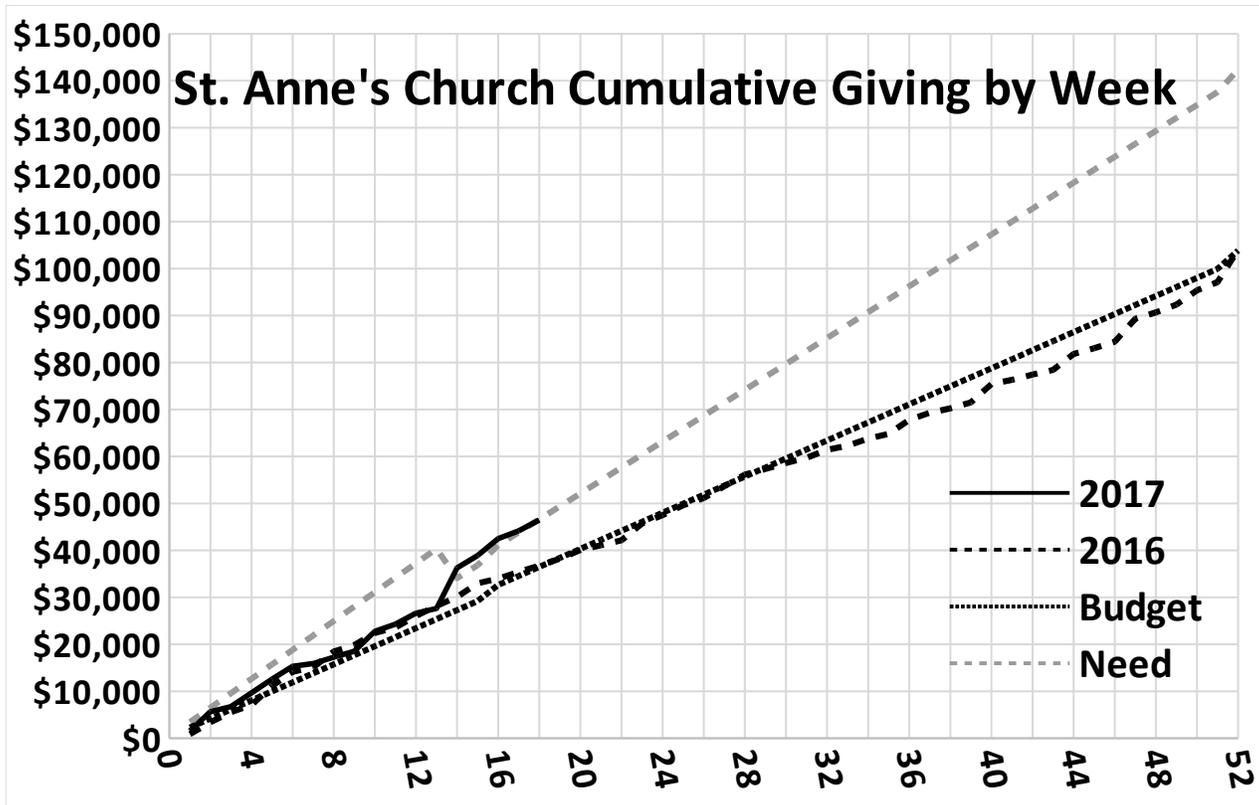
If we want to open on Tuesday evenings, and we don't want to be "open" on Sunday, perhaps a few hours help sorting on Sunday afternoon would be a compromise.

We are asking all to think and pray about this. It is not anything we will be doing before September, but we need firm commitments in order to undertake this.

In Christ we pray,

Thrift Shop Staff

From the Pledge Treasurer:



The plot shows the budgeted giving, the giving up to now (week 18) and that needed if the deficit given in the annual report were to be made up with just extra money. The need and the giving were diverging rapidly in the first quarter, both accurately predicted by the budget. The vestry took action to enable us to pay our bills. First it transferred a substantial sum from our savings, something it cannot continue to do for very long. Second it made some drastic cost-cutting decisions, not hiring a replacement on the retirement of Al, our sexton, reducing the hours of Stacey, the office administrator, and re-negotiating our electricity supply. At week 13, the effect of these can be seen in the down-tick of the need line together with some reduction in its upward slope. At the same time we were given an unexpected, very generous donation which can be seen as an up-tick in the giving line.

The result is that we are, for now, just meeting our bills again. However, without further help we will soon be again in similar difficulties. The slope of the need-line is still greater than the slope of the monetary giving line. In order to make these run together would need a possibly unrealistic increase in monetary giving. But even a little extra would help. We should look at how much St. Anne's is worth to us as a spiritual haven of peace and fellowship in this hectic world. If we can afford it then surely we should increase our donations.

Fortunately, there are also other ways in which we can contribute if money is too tight. Volunteering to help keep the thrift shop open one evening in the week would make an enormous difference. Enough people helping on a thrift shop rota once a month, like the coffee hour schedule, would do the job. We need help to replace the functions Al used to do in the background. As well as the cleaning crew, we need a buildings and grounds coordinator, not to do the work but to act as a contact person and organizer. Also, we need someone to shop for supplies like plastics-ware, kitchen foil, paper goods and the like. Speak to a vestry member if you think you may like to help in one of these ways. All this was said by Mark in the special meeting of the parish, with comments on fund-raising and stewardship together with an appeal for further ideas from anyone in the parish.

Respectfully Submitted by John Geen, assistant treasurer for pledges.

Upcoming Events

May 2017

May 15th: 7:00pm Vestry

May 17th: 6:30pm Deanery Meeting
at Trinity in Haverhill

May 27th: 9:00am Ladies Breakfast
at Stelio's

9:00am Men's Breakfast
at Deli King

Ongoing Activities:

Mondays: Al-Anon 7:30pm

Tuesdays: Bible Study 10am
Bible Study 7:30pm

Wednesday: AA 8:00pm
1st, 3rd, & 5th

Craft Group 10am

Saturdays: 4th Men's & Women's
Breakfasts

Sundays: Choir Practice 11:45am

Announcements

Annacreons

The Annacreons is a social group that is open to everyone at St. Anne's for fellowship and fun.

Prayer List

Submit the names of your loved ones. Please do so by e-mailing the office

stannesbillerica@gmail.com,
calling the office, 978-663-4073.

Thrift Shop

The Thrift Shop hours are as follows:

Wed: 2-6pm

Thurs: 10am-4pm

Fri: 10am-2pm

Sat: 10am-2pm

Thrift Shop Ph: 978-667-6268

We are always looking for volunteers, so drop by and sign up to help out!

Tuesday Bible Studies

Please consider joining us.

There is one study at 10am in the conference room and another in the evening at 7:30pm.

Morning meetings are ongoing.

Evening meetings continue with a study of Handel's "Messiah."

Please speak with Mike Hopkins if you are interested.

Men's Breakfast

The Men's breakfast takes place on the 4th Saturday of the month at 9:00am at the Deli King restaurant located at 885 Mains Street in Tewksbury. The men's group is simply anyone who wants to show up for a good breakfast and little socializing. Everybody is welcome.

Women's Breakfast

Ladies – Let's get together for breakfast on Saturday, January 28th at 9:00 at Stellios in North Billerica. It's a good time to reconnect and plan activities. Please come.

Choir

Our choir meets from 11:30am-12:30pm on Sundays. Feel free to contact Peter Morelli at [\(617\) 480-9775](tel:6174809775) or at morellimail@msn.com.

Pastoral Visits

Rev. Lauren warmly encourages visitations at home or hospital bedside. You don't even need to be a member of St. Anne's. But, you need to take the first step and invite her. Please give Rev. Lauren a call at 718-440-0811 or e-mail at

rector@stannes-billerica.org, and we will arrange for a visitation at a place and time of your convenience.

Altar Flowers

If you wish to donate altar flowers to Saint Anne's, please fill out one of the flower request forms and return it to Stacey in the office. Suggested donation is \$25 per arrangement.

St. Anne's Craft Group

St. Anne's Craft Group meets the first, third and fifth Wednesdays of the month from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in the Nichols Room. Then we go to lunch nearby. Most everything we make is for the Christmas Fair. One does not have to know how to knit, crochet, or any other type of needle work. Just come and gab with the rest of us. Please contact Marie Figenbaum (714-585-9744, cell, or 781-275-7294 home.)

Administrative office

Administrative office hours are Tuesday 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. and Wednesday 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Bulletin Announcements

Announcements for the weekly bulletin must be submitted to the office by the Tuesday before you wish the announcement to appear. Please include details such as contact person and phone number/e-mail, dates and times, as well as the end date for the announcement. Please submit announcement to Stacey at stannesbillerica@gmail.com.