

ST. FRANCIS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH



**2024 Annual Report:
Deepening Our Roots**

2024 ANNUAL MEETING: DEEPENING OUR ROOTS

February 2, 2025

Agenda

10:30am	Prelude	
	Call to order	Vicar, The Rev. Laurie Anzilotti
	Establish a quorum	
	Open polls and name slate of nominees	
	Bishop's Committee: Tom Connelly, Jack Laules, Jackie Selle, Adriane Tilton	
	Diocesan Delegate Alternate: Kevin Senger	
10:40am	Let Us Pray—Eucharist begins	
11:30am	Deepening Our Roots	
	Approval of 2023 annual meeting minutes	
	Adoption of 2025 budget	Treasurer Jeff Rainbolt
	Elections of Nominees for Class of 2028	
	Bishop's Committee	
	Diocesan Delegate	
	<i>see photos on facing page</i>	
	Deepening our roots in the year to come	Parish ministry leaders
	Motion for admission as a parish in the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri	Wardens, Anna Mackey and Ryan Baskin
	Signing of petition to Bishop requesting admission to the Diocese	Parishioners present since founding of the mission

Recognitions

Staff Team

Ministry Leaders + Members

Bishop's Committee Members

Bishop's Warden: Anna Mackey

Junior Warden: Ryan Baskin

Outgoing: Ryan Baskin, Bethany Frost, Janet Houseman, Kathy Mester

All BC members: Tim Booker, Anna Mackey, Maddie Whaley, Megs Carter,
Carole Clary, Jerry Karr

Treasurers: Bob Schaefer (January 2024)

Mark Vago (Interim January—May 2024),

Jeff Rainbolt (June—December 2024)

Clerk: Jackie Selle

Diocesan Delegates: Outgoing: Tony Weaver;

Current: Ruby S. Downs + Donna Bernert

12:00pm

Sending hymn, dismissal and adjournment to lunch



Tom Connelly



Jack Laules



Jackie Selle



Adriane Tilton



Kevin Senger

MINUTES FROM ANNUAL MEETING 2023

The annual meeting was called to order at 10:30am. Ushers confirmed that we have a quorum. The slate of nominees for bishop's committee was introduced: Megs Carter, Jerry Karr, and Carole Clary, and for diocesan delegate, Donna Bernert. The floor was opened for nominations. Worship service began at 10:35.

The business portion of the annual meeting began at 11:20 a.m. Minutes from last year were reviewed. Michael Booker moved and Anna Mackey and Gina Nessel seconded. The minutes were approved.

Finances: Laurie reviewed finances for the past year and directed attention to the 2024 budget. Interim Treasurer Mark Vago briefly reviewed the information. He indicated that our finances are in good shape, and reviewed two key changes: one, we have a tenant in the childcare facility, and two, for the first time in our history we will not be receiving diocesan assistance for the year.

Michael Booker summarized St. Francis as a family-sized congregation in our early days. Then Deacon David Luckes outlined St. Francis as a team-sized church, including the formation of a pastoral care team. Past wardens Jack Laules and Sue Schmidt (Janet Houseman standing in) shared a personal message about transitioning to a team-sized church. Incoming Wardens Anna Mackey and Ryan Baskin also shared personal messages about future practices and goals for the congregation.

Laurie thanked outgoing leadership team members and ministry leaders for their service.

Bill Thompson moved and Jerry Smith seconded that the slate of nominees for the Bishop's Committee be approved. The motion passed.

Paul Jokerst moved and Mary Ann Kinder seconded that Donna Bernert be accepted as Diocesan Delegate.

Barb Sacco moved and Bill Thompson seconded that the meeting adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:47 a.m.

The service concluded and dismissed to share a potluck meal.



LEADERSHIP ROSTER

BISHOP

The Rt. Rev. Deon K. Johnson,
Bishop of the Diocese of Missouri

STAFF TEAM

The Rev. Laurie Anzilotti, Vicar
The Rev. David Luckes, Deacon
Lynne Glickert, Director of Music
Sue Pape, Business Manager
Leslie Heberlie, Director of Administration

THE BISHOP'S COMMITTEE 2024

Anna Mackey, Bishop's Warden, 2026
Ryan Baskin, Junior Warden, 2025
Treasurer, Jeff Rainbolt
Bethany Frost, 2025
Janet Houseman, 2025
Kathy Mester, 2025
Maddie Whaley, 2026
Clerk, Jackie Selle
Tim Booker, 2026
Megs Carter, 2027
Carole Clary, 2027
Jerry Karr, 2027

DIOCESAN DELEGATES

Tony Weaver, Class of 2025
Ruby S. Downs, Class of 2026
Donna Bernert, Class of 2027



STAFF

Also pictured: the Rev. Lindy Hardwick, friend and supporter of St. Francis', and Laura Eddington, past staff



CLASS OF 2025

VICAR'S REPORT

The Rev. Laurie Anzilotti

The images on the cover of the Bulletin and Annual Report, as well as the watermark inside the Report, connect the Annual Meeting to a new ministry launched in October of 2024: the Prairie Restoration Project. The Prairie has a lot to teach us about the way we have loved, worshiped and served in the past year and the way we will do that in 2025 and beyond.

The Prairie Project is sacramental; it is an outward sign of the inner reality of our desire to root ourselves as followers of Jesus Christ. The reality is that prairie flower roots do not dig into the earth at the depth of mighty oaks. Prairies draw their strength both from depth and the interconnection of the flowers as one springs up next to another and their roots become entangled. These intertwining roots hold the dirt in place in the event of torrential rains; they allow the prairie to spring back to life if it has been decimated by fire. No matter what disaster strikes, a strong network of intertwined roots ensures that life will go on. So, too, are we stronger in love, worship and service when we are intertwined as the Body of Christ here at St. Francis. We can do more and be more as a prairie than we can as individual flowers.

Throughout the pages of this Annual Report, you will read about the ways that our individual roots intertwine with one another. Our Junior Warden writes, "Throughout the past year serving as Junior Warden ...I simply could not have been successful in the role without the work of the many volunteers who stepped up in time of urgency to do what needed to be done to care for our building." The report of our Meal Ministry Chair points to the intertwining roots we are growing within our community. We served 1,429 meals with 11 community partners in 2024. After two years, she writes, "we now know our guests by name, taking time to talk with them as they become part of our St. Francis Meal Ministry family." An attendee of our monthly Spiritual Café describes the entwining of our spiritual roots: "I love that we have so many different perspectives in this group, yet we can come together and discuss our thoughts and beliefs respectfully. We may not always agree or reach a consensus, but I always gain a new perspective on what it means to be a follower of Jesus."

But rooting ourselves as followers of Jesus Christ requires not only interconnection, but depth: the kind of depth that Jesus summons people to throughout his ministry. He sees the disciples and invites them to drop their nets and fish for people. He thanks Martha for her service in the kitchen, but tells her there is more; soak in



my teachings. He feels genuine love for the Rich Man so he invites him to more than following the commandments. "Go; sell all your possessions; . . . Then come, follow me."

St. Francis is daring to go to greater depths to which Jesus calls us as we deepen roots in our Diocese, in our community, and to each other. In 1991, St. Francis became a mission of the Diocese of Missouri. Twenty-five years later, the congregation toiled to buy land and build a church proclaiming, "we are rooted here!" In 2024, we increased our commitment to ministry in this place as we had our first year without financial assistance from the Diocese, enabling us to become a Parish that is here to stay.

We also deepened our commitment to one another. We were present to each other in our grief at funerals for dear parishioners George, Justin, Rosie and Bob as well as Lori Scissor's husband Mike, and three others who were family members of parishioners. We were present to each other in loss as we expanded our Pastoral Care Team, and hosted a Care Giver Support Group and a Grief Group in the fall. We were present to each other with authentic questions of faith--bringing our real selves and wonderings about God's work in our lives--to places like Spiritual Cafe, Sunday Forum, and Pilgrimage classes.

Our Worship Committee intensified its work as it began to shape worship based on questions like, "What should our schedule of prayer and worship look like? Why? Who will be served by this schedule?" Our Music Director deepened relationship with our parish singers and musicians, and our fabulous team of guest cantors no longer feel like guests.

Depth is also built into our principles of Service and Justice Ministry. One of them reads, "We make longer-term service commitments because building relationships and gaining understanding take time." Time has deepened our relationship with Rockwood. They know us. Trust us, and as a result parishioner Carole Clary and I are working with them to strengthen ties between local clergy and the district; I also serve on the Strategic Plan Steering Committee. We deepened our work with Mera-mec R-III District, learning from their social worker



about the students she serves, providing 300 backpacks for Back To School Bash, and offering the first annual Kathleen McDonald Scholarship to a graduating senior who experienced homelessness.

Prairies require roots that are deep and entangled to be strong, vibrant and resilient. But the prairie as a whole can only be as strong as each individual flower. Thank you for being a flower in our St. Francis' prairie. Let us pray that we each root ourselves deeply in Jesus, the Christ.

STATS + DATA

Love

New parishioners:	23, including 1 birth
Losses:	16, including 4 deaths, 2 inactive, 2 transfers, 8 moved
Deaths:	Justin Donathan, George Vits, Rose Marie Benecke, and Robert Schaefer
Communications:	183 newsletter recipients (up from 160 in 2023) 322 Facebook followers (up from 273 in 2023) 91 Instagram followers (same as 91 in 2023) 194 YouTube subscribers (up from 161 in 2023)

Worship

Weddings:	1	Melissa Ponce-Teran and Donna Head
Funeral/Interments:	7	Justin Scott Donathan (funeral + interment) George Vits Rose Marie "Rosie" Benecke (funeral + interment) Katherine Ann "Kelly" Smith (funeral) Alfred Edwin "Bud" Goeke (funeral) Bernice Katherine "BC" Rubinelli (funeral) Robert Schaefer (funeral + interment)
Baptisms:	4	
Confirmations:	3	
Receptions:	2	
Names on our prayer list:	178	

NUMBER OF SERVICES HELD + ATTENDANCE

Sunday Morning Eucharists:	101
• Total number worshipping on Sunday:	4,296
• Average Sunday attendance:	83
• YouTube Sunday attendance:	10
Weekday offices:	107
Weekday Eucharists:	40
Total worshipping on weekday + Sunday:	5,594
Average weekly attendance:	108
Average weekday attendance online:	8
Eucharistic visits:	25

Serve

St. Francis Meal Ministry	
Meals served:	275 dine-in / 867 take-home 287 distributed to senior centers
Raised from outside:	\$3,742
Meal Host Groups:	11

2025 Stewardship Campaign	
Pledges:	66 (up from 60 in 2023)
Pledge campaign total:	\$209,507 (up from \$193,486 in 2023)



DEACON'S REPORT

The Rev. David Luckes

David Luckes is now in his third year serving as the Deacon of St. Francis', where he is appointed by the Bishop to serve. In addition to serving in a Deacon's traditional liturgical and pastoral care roles, David focused on building and deepening the work of the Service and Justice Ministry Team. See David's reports on Lay Eucharistic Ministry (p. 23) and Service and Justice (p. 28) for the many ways he worked to deepen these ministries in 2024.

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Anna Mackey

It has been a privilege to serve as your Senior Warden this past year. I'm looking forward to serving in this same role in 2025.

The year began tough with frozen pipes and a big project to update security on our main entrance. But in true St. Francis form, all problems this year were handled with prayer and patience.

Sadly we lost several beloved members of our parish in 2024 but gladly gain 23 new parishioners. We spent 2024 exploring "who is our neighbor." The Ministry reports in this report are divided into Love, Worship and Serve sections. Keen eyes will note that just about every ministry could arguably belong in two or even all three of these sections, because these values are so deeply ingrained in all that we do.



JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Ryan Baskin

We often hear that we can't be St. Francis without the work of the many volunteers who give of their time and talent to make us who we are. Throughout the past year serving as Jr. Warden, I have seen that this is not merely empty sentiment but a fundamental truth regarding the nature and character of our community. I simply could not have been successful in the role without the work of the many volunteers who stepped up in times of urgen-





cy to do what needed to be done.

My tenure as Jr. Warden began with the “recalcitrant adolescent,” as Jack Laules once described our building, once again demanding attention. The furnace servicing the daycare had frozen and become inoperable while water from its condensation pipe leaked from the ceiling into the front lobby and kitchen. Thanks to Bill Thompson, service technicians were soon on site. They spent many hours thawing the furnace, making necessary repairs, and suggesting modifications to prevent further failure.

After the freezing temperatures of winter, summer brought with it its own challenge in the form of heavy rains which, in the month of July, flooded our staff offices. By the time I arrived at St. Francis, Laurie+, Anna Mackey, and Jackie Selle were already there bailing water and Jackie had placed a call to a restoration team which was able to mitigate the worst of the damage. Thanks are also owed to Kevin Senger and Derek Vajda for their assistance moving furniture and especially to Brigitte Jung and all who volunteered with the grounds crew to make the necessary modifications to our gardens to prevent future flooding.

Other projects of 2024 included:

- Maintaining up to date building inspections
- Contracting with a local snow removal company to keep our parking lots and sidewalks clear of snow and ice
- Replacing the batteries in the building emergency lights
- Replacing windows shades that had fallen in the

sanctuary, a project led by Jack Laules

Finally, we have one project ongoing. We are working with a locksmith company to add locks to the sanctuary, storage closet, and vestry. We will also rekey the red doors leading in and out of the narthex. This project will help us to better utilize our space by giving us the option to rent our sanctuary or narthex to local community groups.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Jeff Rainbolt

2024 was a very big year for St. Francis! As many of you may recall, St Francis is one year into a two year process of progressing from a diocesan Mission to being a Parish. We have also welcomed many wonderful new people into our community, we have expanded our administrative team, and we began a significant upgrade to our Wired Worship Ministry.

Part of our journey to full parish status is that we have stopped accepting Diocesan aid and we instead support ourselves and our ministries with our own pledges and income. The Diocese of Missouri believes in us and has been happy to support us, but now we are coming into our own. We have also grown to the point of needing to expand our administrative staff. This is a good problem to have since it means we are doing many wonderful works, but it was a significant change.

Both of these steps have been made possible by our decision to get a tenant into the childcare side of this building. That rental income replaces the aid we had

been receiving AND covers the salary of our new administrator.

Ending 2024 with a surplus is an amazing feat made possible from the strong support of our long time members, the growth of new members, and generosity of people who simply believe St Francis is doing good works. Being our first year forgoing the aid, this could easily have been a year we spent more than we took in. I for one would have considered breaking even a win. Instead, the strength of our donations allowed us to make a pretty big move at the end of 2024.

When times are tough, when resources are scarce, it is wise to pull back and conserve what we have, but when times are bountiful, we must lean forward and do more with what we have been entrusted. At the end of 2024, the Bishop's Committee decided to use a part of that bounty to begin a major upgrade to the Wired Worship Ministry. We are upgrading our camera, sound, and streaming equipment, as well as making it blend more seamlessly into our worship space. They were able to make this investment because we ended 2024 with a surplus.

At St. Francis, a surplus does not mean that we took in more than we needed. It means we can do MORE. We can do more to support our congregation and our community. This year we used our surplus to grow our Wired Worship. I hope we get to continue to make big steps like that in the future.

Many of you may wonder why aside from small increas-

es to keep up with inflation, the 2025 budget looks quite similar to the 2024 budget, leaving an intentional surplus. Why have we not made a plan for every dollar we hope to get this year? That surplus number at the bottom is there for two reasons.

The first reason is if 2025 goes as planned and that money does materialize, St. Francis will be in a fantastic position to make more big steps. Getting a tenant allowed us to take the big step of starting our journey to becoming a Parish. The strong pledges in 2024 met our current needs and allowed us to expand Wired Worship. I can only hope and dream what wonderful project or ministry we will embark on next if this year is as fruitful as the last.

The second reason is that years don't always go as planned. Everything we do at St. Francis is based on the pledge promises we all made at ingathering. It is very natural and normal for members' plans to abruptly change. We want to leave room for that in our budget. In addition, a major source of our funding comes from a single stream: our tenant. If something happens to our tenant's business, this income could stop. If we plan to spend every penny that comes in, any disruption to our tenant would be an incredible disruption to our financial health.

By choosing to operate with an intentional surplus budget, we protect ourselves from the worst case scenario and we have the opportunity to do big things in the best case scenario. I don't know what our next step is, but I know the people at St. Francis. The people who



built this church and this community, who have poured their time and energy into this place, these people—both long time congregants and new—will always use our resources to love, worship and serve as Jesus did. We hope the rental income continues to facilitate our path to full parish status and fund our needed administration increases for our vigorous congregation and ministries. That way, we are free to use the generosity of our congregation to best serve each other and our community. Thank you for your trust and support as I do my best to

serve as Treasurer of our St. Francis family. Please reach out to me with any questions, concerns, or suggestions as we grow together in 2025.



2024 FINANCES + 2025 BUDGET

ST. FRANCIS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH STATEMENTS OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

	Actual 2024	Budget 2024	Budget 2025
Receipts			
Pledge payments	\$204,191	\$191,946	\$199,766
Prepaid pledges	0	0	0
Daycare rent	50,940	53,700	52,080
Unpledged Income	18,526	15,500	20,500
Plate offering	2,542	2,500	2,700
Diocesan Assistance	0	0	0
In-kind Donations	2,998	0	0
Other Income, incl. interest	6,733	6,720	3,200
Other Operating Income	2,716	1,500	2,000
Non-Operating Income	33,061	0	0
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Total Receipts	\$321,707	\$271,866	\$289,480
Disbursements			
Clergy Salaries and Benefits	\$99,933	\$105,265	\$106,673
Staff Salaries and Benefits	55,276	59,049	64,410
Liability Insurance	9,071	8,745	9,270
Repairs and Maintenance	18,309	17,750	17,700
Utilities	20,091	22,895	21,066
Office Expense	11,971	10,202	11,617
Marketing and Communications	669	2,000	1,000
Worship Expense	9,609	9,425	7,900
Congregational Life	4,718	3,960	5,125
Christian Education	1,390	1,600	1,600
Outreach	2,756	3,900	2,600
Diocesan Apportionment	24,984	24,994	25,652
Non-Operating Expenses	25,357	0	0
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	\$284,134	\$269,785	\$274,614
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Receipts over (under) disbursements	\$14,558	\$2,083	\$14,866

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION 2024

ST. FRANCIS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	Dec. 31 2023	Dec. 31 2024
Cash		
Lindell Bank	\$84,386	\$150,656
Custodial Account Held by Diocese	20,923	0
Diocesan Investment Trust	13,731	0
Property		
Furnishings	61,098	61,098
Playground Equipment	8,637	8,637
Daycare Assets	0	0
	<u>\$188,774</u>	<u>\$220,390</u>
Liabilities and Fund Balances		
Due to Discretionary Fund	\$0	\$0
General Fund	91,037	108,405
Memorial Garden Fund	11,456	14,209
Flower Fund	453	2,514
Grounds Fund	266	682
Meal Ministry Fund	3,142	3,833
Theology of Space Fund	165	165
Duke Leadership Grant	0	0
St. Clare Fund	9,207	9,080
Special Giving Fund	1,115	2,550
Joe Niemann Fund	2,196	2,296
Wired Worship Fund	0	8,412
Capital Improvement Fund	69,734	68,247
	<u>\$188,771</u>	<u>\$220,393</u>



MINISTRIES OF LOVE

Within St. Francis'

COMMUNICATIONS

Ruby Downs

The communications committee regularly posts to both Facebook and Instagram. Ruby Downs and Della Thompson along with the staff are in charge of the two social media accounts. This past year St. Francis had a strong social media presence with over 50,000 clicks on our posts. Additionally, in spring 2024 we published a new contact/pictorial directory with all new photos taken by parishioner Donna Bernert. Communication is our greatest tool for building relationships and extending our roots among one another and in our wider area.



CRAFTERS

Doris Schaefer

This year we once again made hats and scarves which were blessed by clergy before being distributed to those who can use them. This is also a social time for those attending, and anyone is welcome to join us on Wednesday afternoons after worship ends. Attendees often bring a lunch to eat or snacks to share in addition to their own crafting projects. While we're building relationship among those who attend on Wednesdays, we also deepen our relationships with Rockwood and Meramec R-III as our knit items go to Rockwood Cares and the Indian Closet at Pacific High.



GAME NIGHT

Tim Booker

Game night attendance has remained steady and has provided a great opportunity for intergenerational fellowship. We celebrated a "second birthday" for Game Night in May with a birthday cake made by Jackie Selle in the shape of a game die. Goals for the future are to keep Game Night going, and maintain a consistent attendance rate for each event.



HOSPITALITY

Jackie Dear

Hospitality is vital as a way to welcome everyone to our community. Coffee hour provides a "bridge" between people who attend our early service, forum, and the later service. It's especially beneficial when welcoming newcomers. This year we had 4 parishioner-sponsored continental breakfasts and 4 potluck meals in addition to weekly coffee hour. Our roots have been long established in hospitality and continue to deepen our relationships. Hospitality extends beyond Sundays into meals provided for Lenten and Advent evening programming, services like Blue Christmas, and programs like Godly Play Core Training.

MEN'S GROUP

Joe O'Reilly

Each month, 10-12 men from the parish meet up to enjoy dinner and often a drink. These regular dinners out are an opportunity to socialize and coordinate our support for current parish projects, like our projects at Wyman Center. We also often coordinate our efforts to be of service to one another, trading turns as drivers for doctors appointments or doing other helping tasks.

Additionally, the Men's Group runs the "Shrove Sunday" Pancake Brunch on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday, creating a fellowship opportunity for the entire parish and guests through our joint cooking efforts.

QUILTING

Sally Hader

The quilt ministry continued this year and provided beautiful handcrafted memory quilts to parishioners experiencing or celebrating life events. Many hands helped with this important ministry as we care for those around us.

WOMEN'S GROUP

Sue Schmidt

We get together for socializing and dinner at various restaurants on the second Tuesday of each month. Our evenings have been a way for us to get to know each other better, to let newcomers know us, and to welcome women who might be considering St. Francis as their church. Our group is growing, which is awesome, and now my biggest problem is finding restaurants big enough to handle our group—which is a wonderful problem to have!

Administration

HELPING HOSTS

Leslie Heberlie

In fall of 2023, we launched a ministry of volunteers called Helping Hosts, who warmly welcome building visi-

tors and assist with office and building tasks. This year, we celebrated the first birthday of the Helping Hosts with cake and lunch. Our hosts are Jackie Selle, Lori Scissors, Sue Schmidt and Janet Houseman, with Sylvia Ahmad (and Megs Carter) subbing in regularly. These Hosts significantly increase our administrative capacity which enables us to add projects that would not otherwise be possible. We have more mailings, more personally written notes and a more vibrant building because of their efforts.

PERSONNEL

Rev. Laurie Anzilotti

St. Francis was richly blessed in 2024 by its current staff, to add a staff member, and to increase staff hours and



volunteer administrative help. These things enabled the staff team to deepen our service to parishioners and the wider-community.

In September, the Rev. David Luckes completed his third year with St. Francis serving as Deacon. St. Francis is so fortunate to have him lead our Service and Justice Ministry and Lay Eucharistic Ministers. At every turn, David calls us as a parish to deepen our ministry. He invites us to the depth of living the Gospel “not only with our lips, but in our lives” as disciples of Jesus Christ (Prayer of General Thanksgiving, *Book of Common Prayer*, 101). He is an invaluable clergy colleague.

In July, Lynne Glickert completed her second year as Music Director at St. Francis. She has improved the quality of our music, the hymn selections, and the number of people participating in our music program in her years with us. We more fully connect to the sacred in our worship because of her talents and efforts. We were fortunate to be able to add hours to her position in July of this year. She is now at 20 hours a week.

Leslie Heberlie completed her fourth year as Administrative Director in mid-November. Leslie expertly juggles all of the balls of parish life! From communications to copiers, internet access to filing W2's, Leslie does it all. As she manages a million little pieces that are parish life, she brings warmth, laughter, and a pastoral heart. Without a doubt, she has played a big part in St. Francis' growth in the past four years.

St. Francis was so fortunate that the robust giving of our

parishioners allowed us to add another staff member in 2024. This new role focuses on three things: 1) tracking expenses and income, and reporting out those numbers to the Vicar, Treasurer and the Leadership Team, 2) spearheading all financial correspondence, 3) coordinating building rentals. In addition, it will provide backup for the Director of Administration in the event of an emergency. St. Francis hired for this role in late April of 2024; however the person unexpectedly resigned in November 2024. Treasurer Jeff Rainbolt and Vicar Laurie+ worked swiftly to fill the position. In mid-December, St. Francis was richly blessed when Sue Pape, a friend of the parish who lives in the Villas, accepted the position at 12-hours a week. Sue brings management and financial expertise to the role as well as a knowledge of St. Francis and the area we serve.

As the day-to-day tasks of finances were no longer the responsibility of Leslie Heberlie she requested to cut her hours from 20 to 24 per week. This request dovetailed with the Leadership Team's recognition that Music Director Lynne Glickert was working significantly more hours each week than she was being compensated for. Money budgeted for Heberlie's administrative salary transitioned to Glickert's salary enabling St. Francis to maintain its growth in music ministry.

In addition to these changes, Helping Hosts, volunteers who provide administrative support, increased hours and expanded the depth of their projects. They filled three three-hour shifts each week and took on projects that are critical to our functioning like calculating attendance for the Parochial Report and sending stewardship mailings.



Please see the Helping Host summary in this Annual Report for more details. Helping Hosts add critical administrative capacity to our parish.

At the start of 2023, between paid and volunteer administrative staff, St. Francis had 30 hours of administrative support. By the end of 2024, we had 41 hours, a 25% increase! These additional hours enable us to respond promptly to both parishioner and community inquiries, enrich our community life, and keep up with the growing needs of an expanding parishioner-base.

I lead a remarkable staff team. Each of them has been a leader in our region at various points in their careers. They bring their experience, passion, and expertise to our parish. It is my prayer that as the leader of this staff team, all of our efforts may glorify God and in some small way build God's Kingdom.

In the Community

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Sue Schmidt

We strive to have two St. Francis representatives attend each monthly meeting. We announce any upcoming event that's taking place with our church, and we have an opportunity to reach out to others in the Eureka, Pacific and Wildwood communities. At these meetings we have met other churches and various businesses who have partnered with us in our meal ministry. We also attend the Chamber's Annual Prayer Breakfast as a way to connect with the wider community.

EVENTS

In addition to the many events mentioned elsewhere, parishioners gathered formally or informally to participate in: Barn Party at Sue Schmidt's house; Hummingbird Party at Joe and Donna Bernerts' house; Parish float trip; Eureka Days Parade; Red Cross Blood Drive with Eureka Elementary PTA; Mammogram Van with Mercy; 2 vaccine clinics with St. Luke's, one at the Timbers; streaming new Presiding Bishop's installation; Philadelphia 11 movie screening co-sponsored by St. Francis and the Diocese; Harvest Moon Run; Camp Wyman MLK Day



Service Day; Voter Registration Drives; Our Community Listens event; Healing in the Heartland diocesan event; Zero Hunger Breakfast; Community Gospel Choir concerts; Pride St. Louis parade; Arbors of Rockwood chili cookoff; Ministry Scheduler Pro Training; Eureka Scarecrow Festival; Trivia Night; and more.

MINISTRIES OF WORSHIP

Formation

FORUM

Michael Booker

The Sunday Forum schedule combines a balance of material that promotes biblical literacy, community awareness and sharing our own stories. We meet most Sundays between the 8:00 and 10:30 services. Attendance has been quite solid this year – thanks for attending!

Some of our sessions included:

- A series reviewing the Baptismal Covenant
- A seven-part series on the Book of Common Prayer
- Our fourth year of “Who Is My Neighbor?”
- A seven-part series on The Way Of Love
- A series on 1 and 2 Samuel

We’ve also started a monthly cycle of “Flexible Forum” sessions with a mix of activities all offered between services for those interested in them.

GODLY PLAY AND FAMILY

Barb Sacco

Godly Play instructors this year are Linda Doolittle, Doris Schaefer, Bethany Frost and Barb Sacco. The addition of Elaine Booker, Craig Anzilotti, Sylvia Ahmad and Kathleen O’Reilly as helpers/door person has been great and we have seen between 2-7 children each Sunday! Doris Schaefer resigned from teaching and Janet Houseman took her place in late 2024. St. Francis hosted a Godly Play training session in October, open to all leaders in

the diocese, and Bethany, Janet, and Linda Doolittle attended. Without a doubt, this training helps to deepen Godly Play the roots we have established since beginning the program in 2021. We also extended the method of sharing Godly Play stories and wondering questions into the wider congregation through monthly Godly Play sermons in the summer. Mary Beth Tipton, Director of Children’s Education at St. Michael and St. George in Clayton, also led a Godly Play-based evening prayer experience for adults of the parish in May.

SPIRITUAL CAFÉ

Skip Moreland

The Spiritual Cafe had another wonderful year! We talked about Marcus Borg’s book, *Embracing an Adult Faith*, and then moved on to a deep dive into the spiritual practices of prayer and discernment, finishing up with a





behind-the-scenes look at the Eucharist. One of our group said it best: "I love that we have so many different perspectives in this group, yet we can come together and discuss our thoughts & beliefs respectfully. We may not always agree or reach a consensus, but I always learn something new or gain a new perspective on what it means to be a follower of Jesus." Looking forward to 2025!

YOUTH + FAMILIES

Rev. Laurie Anzilotti

St. Francis youth are full and active members of our church community! Week-in-and-week-out. The active participation of children and teenagers is vital to our worship services as they serve as either acolytes, lectors/intercessors, and ushers. Many of our ministries incorporate youth and families into their programs throughout the year.

In addition, 2024 included specific monthly activities for Youth and Families. In **January**, our high school teens and Deacon David planned an MLK service day with our ministry partner, Wyman Center. In **February**, families and youth gathered for a Lenten Messy Church, a Eucharist with an interactive Bible story and crafts which explore Lent and turning to God in the mess of life. Dinner followed the service. In **March**, our youth served others at our monthly meal ministry. In **April** and **May**, we

planned for a youth-led liturgy at Pentecost. Rev. Laurie presided at Eucharist, but the youth of St. Francis filled every other liturgical role, including preaching! In the **summer**, middle and high schoolers participated in S4: Summer Service, Scripture and Snacks where teens gathered to serve the community and spend time in reflection on scripture while sharing snacks. Summer also brought conversations about the future and direction of our Youth and Family Ministry. These conversations were ably led by parishioner Derek Vajda. Godly Play sermons were part of summer, too, on the third Sunday of each month. These sermons engage our youngest parishioners and also serve to connect the wider parish to the Godly Play ministry that happens every Sunday of the academic year. Finally, summer meant supporting youth throughout our Diocese as St. Francis hosted the staff of the diocesan summer camp for their staff training.

In late summer, St. Francis received word that we were selected as a participant in the *This Young Church Project* with the Diocese of Missouri. This project provides the support of the Rev. Erin Pickersgill, Ministry Developer for Children & Youth at Episcopal Diocese of Missouri, in moving forward our ministries to children and youth. Erin+ worked with two parishioners to think about bringing more spiritual and service activities to the teens of our parish.

Weekday Worship

BIBLE STUDY

Bill Thompson

What started off as a short study of the book of Matthew for the season of Epiphany has lasted for a year! We are a few chapters away from the book of Mark. Our group is small, but each person's life experience has offered a varied and enjoyable journey. We meet on Thursday mornings from 9am to 10am. Please call Bill Thompson at 636-795-2634 or pastoral-care@stfranciseureka.com with any questions. Biblical study and discussion have been an integral part of St. Francis since its inception and are a wonderful avenue for exploring our Biblical roots and their relevance in our daily lives.

MORNING PRAYER

Linda Carter

The Morning Prayer group continues to have Monday and Friday prayers at 8:30 am. Usually 3-5 persons attend. Morning Prayer is recorded and then posted on Facebook for those not early risers. It seems like a few people are taking advantage of it being on Facebook. Anyone who might be interested can use the link in the weekly newsletter. If you are having difficulty, you can contact me and I can walk you through the process. Linda Carter is available at 314-605-3033 or greyhead-ed1967@gmail.com.



WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

The Rev. Laurie Anzilotti

One of the most beautiful outcomes of the pandemic was the development of a Wednesday Worship at St. Francis. Those who gather appreciate the informal setting, shared turns reading, and a *lectio divina* sermon in which everyone shares a word, image or thought that speaks to their heart and life in the daily readings. Eucharist allows participants to bring joys and griefs to an intimate prayer setting. Many pieces of our communal life are blessed: holy water, prayer shawls, prayer beads, quilts, furnishings and more!

In 2024, Lay Leadership became an important piece of Wednesday noon worship. Previously, if Laurie+ was not present on a Wednesday, she would find a priest substitute or worship was canceled. However, in 2024, parishioners Linda Carter and Ruby Downs routinely led noon prayer in Laurie's absence. Their leadership provides stability for that worship community. It also points to a core truth that can be forgotten in our hierarchical religious structure: laity don't need clergy to gather as a group and praise God! Ruby and Linda's leadership points to a deepening of spiritual roots at St. Francis!

The Wednesday Worship is one of the sweetest and holiest times at our church. If you find yourself in Eureka at that time, take the chance to join us!





Worship Committee

The Rev. Laurie Anzilotti

The Worship Committee consists of the leaders of the: Altar Guild, Acolytes, Ushers, Lay Leaders, Greeters, Hospitality, Lectors, Wired Worship, Scheduling and Music as well as the Deacon. The Committee met seven times in 2024 and the meetings are FUN! The Vicar convenes the group as the person responsible for the worship life of the community. Since COVID accommodations ended in late 2021, the Worship Committee has focused on new patterns of worship in a building that was new to the congregation. In late 2024, it became apparent that the Committee had mastered many of the routines of worship and the liturgical cycle. This meant they were able to begin to ask questions like, “what should our schedule for Advent and Christmas prayer and worship look like? Why? Who will be served by this schedule? Who should lead these various experiences?”

Worship is the heart of our life together. In 2024, this team of people moved more deeply into thinking about how we worship and why.

ACOLYTES

Jeff Veenstra

The ministry of acolytes is weaved throughout our worship, with a history of almost two thousand years. The job of an acolyte is to serve the clergy however needed, to ensure our worship services flow smoothly. In fact, the word acolyte comes from the Greek word *akolu-*

thos, meaning “follower” or “attendant.”

At St. Francis, our acolytes fulfill multiple functions such as Crucifer (carrying the processional cross), Server (assisting at the Altar during the Eucharist), Thurifer (preparing and carrying the incense and the Thurible), lighting and extinguishing candles, as well as many other small tasks that assist the clergy and help our worship to flow smoothly.

Thank you to the following members who served as acolytes this past year: George William Baskin, Abby Jones, Rich Mayfield, Tatum McCart, Jerry Smith, Jeff Veenstra, and Madeleine Whaley. Also, please welcome our newest acolytes: Isaac Tenholder and Violet Tenholder.

ALTAR GUILD

Jerry Smith

Each Sunday the Altar Guild is charged with creating an environment in which all people can experience God’s love and be renewed. The Altar Guild cares for the altar, vestments, vessels, and altar linens of the church and prepares the sanctuary for services and cleans up afterwards. This work maintains the altar and sanctuary space for worship. We also decorate the sanctuary for liturgical holidays and events. The Altar Guild brings creativity to each liturgical season and to feast days as the members arrange flowers and plants or special items like the All Saints Day Altar of Remembrance. Their work is at the heart of our worship life. Thank you to each member of the Altar Guild!

GREETERS

Sue Schmidt

The work of Greeters is essential to our church. Their “hello and welcome” is the first step to inviting people into the warmth and hospitality of our community. From this start, people begin to lay down their roots at St. Francis. Our team of greeters has expanded and every person who comes to our church service is met with a smile and a welcome. If it’s a new person arriving, our greeter walks them to the ushers, indicating where coffee, restrooms, etc., are located.

LAY EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

The Rev. David Luckes

The Lay Eucharistic Ministry is licensed by the Bishop to distribute the consecrated elements of bread and wine at the celebration of the Eucharist in church and to those unable to be present due to illness or infirmity. Like serving as a lector or an Intercessor, becoming an LEM (Lay Eucharistic Minister) is a way parishioners help create the worship experience we share every Sunday. Lay Eucharistic Ministers who carry communion outside the walls of St. Francis also become part of St. Francis’ pastoral care team.

2024 was a year focused on deepening our understanding for this shared ministry and building the capacity of our Lay Eucharistic Ministers to conduct the ministry together.

The LEM program has ten licensed ministers who serve, primarily, at the 10:30am service to distribute the consecrated wine. These individuals are scheduled to serve along with lectors, intercessors, ushers, greeters, and the Alter Guild volunteers.

Lay Eucharistic Visitors (LEV) took communion to individuals who were homebound or in healthcare facilities complementing the visits Laurie+, our Vicar, and David, our Deacon, made to bring communion to individuals like these. Fortunately, the number of visits where LEV were needed was few in 2024 though we have a growing number of homebound parishioners or those living in Senior Care facilities. We are working to establish regular, monthly visits for these individuals.

In the Spring and Fall of 2024, Deacon David offered additional training for our current LEM and LEV volunteers that was also open to the wider community. These trainings refreshed our volunteers on the basics of serving in these roles and gave them an opportunity to share their personal reflections on how the ministry has impacted their own journey of faith. Both of these sessions underscored the two foundational aspects of who we are as a Christian community that are reflected in this ministry; (1) we are a Eucharistic Community, bound together as Christ’s Body through the sacrament of his Body and Blood, and (2) we care deeply for one another through acts of prayer, compassion, and services.

Those interested in exploring whether this ministry might be a good fit for you are encouraged to reach out to David or Laurie+.

LECTORS/INTERCESSORS

Ellen Ogier Kreisel

Proclaiming the Word is central to liturgy. This year we had a wonderful team of lectors who read from the Hebrew Scriptures and New Testament Epistles during our liturgies. We had another team of intercessors who lift our common prayers to God in the Prayers of the People.

With two concerted efforts in recruiting more parishioners into liturgical participation, the number of lectors and intercessors has increased this year. We now have teams of readers that reflect St. Francis’ generational diversity and wide range of ages.

Bob Schaefer served as the leader of readers and intercessors until his death this year. Mike Rohan has stepped into this role now and will lead this worship team forward. Thanks to all who prepare and proclaim during our liturgies! We could not be St. Francis without you.



MUSIC + ST. FRANCIS SINGERS

Lynne Glickert

The music department at St. Francis had an exciting 2024.

What started as a 'guest' cantor program in 2023 has now become a roster of regular cantors, supplemented by members of the St. Francis Community. The cantors continue to support our robust singing while also at times offering beautiful solos to enhance worship.

Instrumental music is appreciated and encouraged, and St. Francis is blessed to have contributions by both our parishioners and the broader community. Our keyboard instruments are tuned regularly and continue to support the needs of the congregation.

The St. Francis Singers reflect the current reality of busy households that appreciate fewer rehearsals in order to participate. The Singers sing a monthly anthem, with two rehearsals a month. We have a delightful hodge-podge of ages and abilities with the common denominator that all love to sing. This model allows for more singers to participate and choose month to month if they can join in due to their own schedules.

I am grateful to be both worshipping and serving in the St. Francis community of believers. This is truly the first church 'job' I have had that I can say that it's not just 'work,' I also feel like I have worshipped while I am here. I am grateful to God who has led me to this place.

USHERS

Bob Smith

I would like to thank all the members of the usher team, new and old, and welcome everyone who would like to join this ministry. Ushers make worship flow! They welcome congregants with a bulletin, pass the offering plate, direct people to communion, ensure the smooth flow to the communion table, and leave the church in good condition for the next service.

WIRED WORSHIP

Paul Jokerst

St. Francis launched the Wired Worship Ministry during the onset of COVID. Our beginning days included a webcam mounted to a stand directly in front of the lectern. Not the best, but this allowed our Sunday services to be viewed by our congregational family during this uncertain time. Following Rev. Laurie being called to serve at St. Francis, we made changes to the Wired Worship Ministry that included a moveable table and the creation of our own YouTube Channel. The table was originally moveable due to the parking lot services that were being held for our congregation during these times. In those early days, we were lucky to get over 50 registered YouTube users. Working with Rev. Laurie for months, we finally reached 80 users which allowed us to make changes to improve our YouTube Channel. Today, we are blessed to have 191 registered users on our chan-

nel! Without a doubt, the Wired Worship Ministry has had a profound effect on not only those within our congregation, but those who are simply searching for a new liturgical home. Since the start of the Wired Worship Ministry, we have added a small improvement here and there to try and make our streaming services even better. Improvements that were needed, but ones that will not turn St. Francis into a production studio as seen with other churches. Because the Wired Worship Ministry is being called to serve more than just Sunday Services (such as weddings, baptisms, and funerals), I made a proposal to Rev. Laurie and the Bishop's Committee to make some major improvements to our technology and the small corner of the church that we call home. I am pleased to inform the congregation the Bishop's Committee has authorized the funding for these much-needed improvements. Here are the changes the congregation will see at the end of February: 1. The black plastic table (in left picture) currently used will be replaced with a new, permanent sound booth. The proposed plan in this area will be on a slightly raised floor and will look similar to the renderings (below, right). Banners can be displayed on the front. 2. Two (2) additional Pan Tilt Zoom (PTZ) cameras will be added to the system. This is the larger camera mounted to the wall just below the painting of St. Francis. These cameras will improve the resolution (viewing quality) of our entire service. Additionally, the additional cameras will offer better quality during low light services such as Christmas Eve. 3. The upgrades will also include a new video mixer/controller that will allow the connectivity of more cameras and easier streaming capabilities. The new camera controller will also be more user friendly as users will be able to select cameras from a small touch screen versus remembering camera numbers to select. 4. To ensure the quality of this upgrade and

installation, St. Francis has contracted the services of Elite Enterprises, Inc. Elite was originally established in 1988 and from the very beginning, has focused on sound reinforcement systems specifically for churches. In fact, Elite was responsible for the design and installation of streaming equipment at St. Michael and St. George, Holy Communion, and even the Cathedral. 5. The upgrades will also include new microphones for both the piano and the organ as well as two suspended microphones to pick up the congregation. These new microphones will not only be a drastic improvement for those attending our online services but will also improve the recording of all services for better quality playback when desired. Piano Mic. (1) Organ Mic. (1) Congregation Mic. (2) 6. With this new upgrade, we will see an increase in performance and reliability, minimizing technical glitches that could disrupt our online services. 7. This upgrade will also future proof our investment as upgrading ensure we will be able to handle new platforms, formats and standards. 8. This upgrade will reflect the professionalism your Wired Worship team wishes to extend and help us build a stronger relationship with those attending our services online. While upgrading our equipment is extremely important, it's equally vital to use our funds wisely. I would like to thank Rev. Laurie and the entire Bishop's Committee for their approval of allocating the needed funds for this upgrade. I look forward to the many more years of streaming service this will provide for the members (and visitors) of St. Francis' Episcopal Church. As always, if anyone has any questions regarding Wired Worship or the upcoming upgrades, please contact me anytime at paul@jokerst.us.



MINISTRIES OF SERVICE

Within St. Francis

PASTORAL CARE

The term pastoral in Pastoral Care comes from the Latin *pastorem* which means “shepherd.” Embedded in the word is the idea of caring for the needs of the vulnerable. We do this at St. Francis through emotional, social, practical and spiritual support. Through the years, we have had many ministries to tend to our most vulnerable parishioners; however, in 2023 Laurie+ convened each of these ministry heads to form our Pastoral Care Team.

In 2024, this team deepened its roots in two ways. First, the team had two trainings. In March, the team and other parishioners gathered to discuss David Brooks’ article, *How Do You Save a Friend from Despair?* Reflection on this article helped the team be more aware of how to stay in relationship with and support someone who is suffering from chronic depression. In September, the team met with staff members from Provident Behavioral Health. Provident staff shared information about mental health resources in the metro area. Laurie+ invested in this relationship with Provident by serving as a guest speaker for them at an event they hosted in October. In 2025, St. Francis can expect the Pastoral Care Team to continue to deepen its relationship with Provident.

Second, the team welcomed a new member, Bill Thompson. Bill spent the fall in discernment about his call to serve as a Lay Pastoral Minister. He also studied with Laurie+ and began to connect to other lay pastoral care providers in the Diocese. The Bishop approved Bill’s appointment as a Lay Pastoral Minister in December. Bill will serve alongside Laurie+ and David in bringing Eucharist to those in hospitals and praying with and listening to those in time of despair.

The team, along with the entire parish, mourned the loss of Rosie Benecke who served as a member of the Pastoral Care Team until her death in May of 2024. Rosie’s memory is a blessing, and we feel her presence in all we do as a Team. She is our ever-present, but silent, partner in this work.

PASTORAL VISITS

Bill Thompson

Through prayer and the guidance of the Spirit, I discerned a call to serve as a Lay Pastoral Minister at St. Francis. I will help Laurie+ and David with visits and be a part of the larger Pastoral Care Team.

In preparation for this call, in the fall of 2024, I engaged a Spiritual Director, attended Lay Eucharistic Ministry training with Deacon David, served with Deacon David at a Eucharistic visit for a homebound parishioner, joined the St. Francis Pastoral Care Team, and provided spontaneous pastoral care in a variety of settings. My training will continue into early 2025 as I begin to serve the people of St. Francis throughout visits and scheduled times to listen and be in prayer with members of our congregation.

CARD MINISTRY

Sue Schmidt

Birthday, anniversary, and sympathy cards are sent by Sue Schmidt. We also work with our Pastoral Care Team to reach out to parishioners who might need a note or card to let them know that St. Francis’ is thinking of them. Some of the beautiful cards are handmade by Ann Widner, and Bill Thompson has painted gorgeous bookmarks with crosses that go into each card. Thank you Ann and Bill for sharing your talents with all of us.

MEAL CARE

Jackie Selle

This year many helping hands provided delicious meals as needed by parishioners and those around us. Volunteers prepared soups, casseroles, and entrees for friends who were homebound, welcoming new additions, or experiencing other major life events. Our outstanding cooks created many comforting dishes to share, and we will continue to care for each other in this very basic but meaningful way in the new year.

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS

Bill Thompson

Last year brought another year of blood pressure screenings most months. Della and I are able to complete 8-10 screenings on the second Sunday of each month in the narthex immediately following the 8am service. We want to say a big thank you to the parishioners who participate in this ministry.

GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Brigitte Jung

After the office wing of the church flooded for the second time in July 2024, the church decided to eliminate this problem permanently. The Grounds Committee developed a design to increase the size of the gutters and downspouts to receive the roof run-off and connect them to a new underground storm water drainage system that emptied into the existing town system. The contract for the work was awarded to Gullet Contracting in Pacific. Hard-working volunteers tore down the existing landscaping, and after the new drainage system was implemented, they rebuilt the landscaping.

The plan for spring 2025 is to eliminate the weed area behind the air conditioners, cover the area with landscape fabric, and add small decorative rocks. The decorative grasses in the parking lot island need to be separated and bi-annual landscaping is also planned. This work is our most literal way to deepen our roots!

MEMORIAL GARDEN

Barb Sacco

The Garden serves as a place of reflection. With the addition in late 2023 of a sidewalk linking it to the Church, it has become more connected to our liturgical life for funerals, All Saints Day, Palm Sunday and more. This year saw marked improvements to the environment of the Memorial Garden including 2 new benches. Plaques were placed to mark the dedication of those to Joe Niemann and of the trees to those who died of Covid. Additionally, a group effort among parishioners resulted in the placement of a plaque on the wall for Roger Shaw, who died several years ago.

PRAIRIE PROJECT

Megs Carter

In Fall 2024 we launched this project to reclaim 1/4 of an acre of land surrounding the Memorial Garden for prairie use, along with community partners.

This past year we:

- Secured local partners for the project
- Were awarded a grant from the Missouri Department of conservation and Quails Forever
- Finalized the footprint of the Prairie
- Launched the project within the congregation
- Began phase one of the project by clearing out existing turf



PRAYER SHAWLS

Doris Schaefer

Our handmade prayer shawls provide a tangible sign of St. Francis' prayer and concern by knitting prayer shawls for the sick. This year, the Pastoral Care Team shared more than a dozen shawls with those experiencing illness or loss.

STEWARDSHIP

Michael Booker and Della Thompson, Co-Chairs

Our theme for the 2024 Stewardship Campaign was "Sharing God's Gifts." Boy-howdy, St. Francis sure did that! We received a record level of pledges for the upcoming year and an enviable percent of households committing to financially support the work of our congregation. Our pledge total during the campaign was \$209,507, from 66 participating households.

The financial strength of the congregation is just one marker of the deep commitment that the people of St. Francis have to doing the work of God. It's that deep commitment that may mean that we will leave Mission status at the end of this year. Thanks to everyone who shares their time, treasure and talent to this holy work!

TELLERS

Suzanne Jones

During 2024, we recruited and trained several new tellers after a few of our long-time volunteers moved on to other interests at St. Francis. In case you are not familiar with what our tellers do, we spend 20-30 minutes after the 10:30 Sunday worship service documenting the financial contributions of parishioners, friends, and other supporters collected in the previous week. Serving once a month or so, we work with another parishioner to prepare the weekly bank deposit, which is a great way to keep organization, math, and basic bookkeeping skills sharp (with the help of a calculator, of course!). Reach out to Suzanne if you have questions or believe this essential ministry is something you are called to join at St. Francis.

Service + Justice Ministry Team

The Rev. David Luckes

2024 was St. Francis' first full year where our Parish's Service & Justice Ministry Team and our Service and Justice Ministry Principles guided our collective outreach and service efforts focused on helping us serve as Jesus did. Our primary focus was to live into what it meant to coordinate these ministries through a leadership team and live into our principles as we deepened our understanding of how existing ministries fulfilled them. We also sought to deepen our commitments to these ministries and those we served through them. A copy of these principles is attached at the end of this report.

The Service & Justice Ministry Team was established late in 2023. Its initial members included ministry leaders, Arlene Underwood, Janet Housemen, Anna Mackey, and Donna Bernert, all of whom continued to serve throughout 2024. Sue Schmidt joined the team early in 2024. This team's first responsibility was to develop our Service & Justice Ministry Principles that were approved in October of 2023. In 2024, the team met monthly to coordinate St. Francis' Service & Justice ministries and to assist its members in their leadership roles for specific ministries. Over the year the team developed a strong sense of community as we got to know each other personally and shared the ups and downs of leading and serving. We consistently used our Service & Justice Principles to guide the choices we made in planning, evaluating, and deepening these ministries.



Several of the Service & Justice Ministries we note in the following list may have individual reports in St. Francis' Annual Report, but many do not. St. Francis' two focus areas of hunger and education are clearly represented though it is also clear our Service and Justice Ministries are not exclusively focused in these two areas. We ask for understanding if in our attempt to offer a list of these ministries, from small to large, we may have missed something. Anyone who wants to learn more about these ministries or feels called to help with one of them in 2025, please reach out to any member of the Service and Justice Ministry Team or to Rev. David or Rev. Laurie.

- Fourth Annual "Who is our Neighbor" Forum Series – Four Sunday Forums beginning January 14th and ending February 11th. We heard from ministry partners associated with our two areas of focus within Service and Justice – Hunger and Education plus introduced the how deeply rooted the call to Justice is in scripture.
- Martin Luther King Service Day – January 20th. Our annual youth-led service day offered in partnership with our neighbor and ministry partner the Wyman Center draws students from Eureka High School and Middle School as well as many parishioners.
- Monthly Meal Ministry – typically on the Fourth Sunday of each month we're serving some 100 combined dine-in and take-out meals in partnership with numerous area volunteer, business, and community partners.
- Eureka Food Pantry – Weekly collection of non-perishable food and personal care items to support our community's food pantry.
- Trivia Night and Raffle – February 17th – joyous gathering that raised dollars to establish the Kathleen McDonald Memorial Scholarship.
- First Kathleen McDonald Scholarship Awarded – May – The scholarship supports Pacific High School student that is experiencing homelessness. Homelessness is defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

- Pride Parade and Festival – June 30th – St. Francis Parishioners joined with the Diocese of Missouri in marching in our region's annual Pride Parade.
- Forum with Rachel George, Educational Support Counselor, Meramec Valley R-III School District – July 28th on the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized families.
- Back to School Bash – Pacific HS – Meramec Valley R-III School District – August 3rd – donated 300 plus backpacks and volunteered for this district-wide event to help every family, regardless of their means, start the school year off on the right foot.
- Episcopal City Mission Sunday – August 4th – Rev. Deborah Burris preached and spoke at a Forum highlighting the needs and stories of regional youth who are incarcerated in the Juvenile Justice system. We donated notebooks and personal care items for these youth.
- Ice Cream Social for Eureka Elementary's Incoming Kindergarten Class and their Families – August 10th.
- Backpack Blessing Sunday – August 18th – Blessing of St. Francis Students, Educators, and Administrators along with their Backpacks as the Rockwood School District begins a new academic year.
- Flu and COVID Vaccine Clinics in Partnership with St. Luke's Hospital – September 22nd at Timbers of Eureka in conjunction with our Meal Ministry and on October 27th at St. Francis.
- 13th Annual Harvest Moon 5K Run and Walk – October 5th – St. Francis was a sponsor and members participated in this annual event to raise dollars and awareness for area service organizations addressing hunger in our community.
- Episcopal City Mission's 70th Anniversary Benefit – October 17th
- Mobile Mammogram Van in partnership with Mercy Hospital – December 3rd at St. Francis

Service + Justice Ministry Team Principles:

St. Francis' Divine Purpose: We believe that God loves all people, and that love compels us to worship and to serve as Jesus did.

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, St. Francis discerns our service and justice ministries will reflect the following principles:

1. Mindful of the needs of the world, we primarily serve our neighbors.
2. We embrace the need to focus our service and justice ministries in select areas, trusting God to take care of those we can't.
3. Without judgement, we serve the overlooked, those lacking the basics we take for granted, those struggling to shape a future for themselves.
4. We build relationships with those we serve by letting St. Francis' spirit of hospitality enliven all we do.
5. We make longer-term service commitments because building relationships and gaining understanding take time.
6. We speak up for those we serve. We advocate for them and seek to change systems that entrap or hold them back.
7. We bridge the divisions we encounter in our service, even when it makes us uncomfortable.

Service & Justice Ministry Team:

Donna Bernert, Janet Houseman, Anna Mackey, and Arlene Underwood

Our initial areas of Focus:

- Hunger
- Education

Service + Justice Focus Area: Education

EDUCATION

Anna Mackey

In 2024 we continued to build a relationship with Eureka Elementary. First, in February and September, we committed loose offerings to providing snacks to students who would otherwise not get them. Then, in a new initiative, we provided over 300 backpacks for their Back To School Bash. These were donated by individual members of our congregation. At Christmas, we adopted 2 families for the holidays from Eureka Elementary. Additionally, we had a parishioner build a Little Free Library for the neighborhood, providing books for the neighborhood and the daycare next to the church. Because of our close relationship with Eureka Elementary, our building hosted both a joint Red Cross Blood Drive with the Eureka Elementary PTA and the kindergarten class ice cream social. The staff reported that one of their favorite moments ever was when the entire first grade class from Eureka Elementary came to visit us and collect our offering. Students were overheard saying that they had never been to a church before.

After discussing with Eureka Elementary staff, it was decided to donate this year's "school bus" of supplies to the Pacific school district (so named because we collect our donated school supplies in a box decorated as a school bus). This project allowed Meramec School District to decide which schools had the greatest need, making our donations used broadly. We also donated hats, scarves and sweaters to The Indian Closet located in Pacific High School. Our new outreach was a \$1,000, multi-year scholarship established in the name of Kathleen McDonald at Pacific High School. This scholarship is intended for students who have experienced homelessness and is funded by our annual Trivia Night.

In the neighborhood, we opened our doors to weekly senior exercise classes and handed out slap bracelets at the neighborhood July 4th parade.

EPISCOPAL CITY MISSION

Janet Houseman

The Folks of St. Francis support the Episcopal City Mission (ECM) throughout the year on three fronts. Most recently, Carol Clary and Janet Houseman brought \$200 in gift cards to the Christmas Gift Wrap party. In October, tickets were purchased for staff to attend/support the ECM Gala. And in August, Reverend Burris celebrated Eucharist with us and received donations of Axe shower gel, playing cards, and journals. The mission of ECM is to work with young people who are currently detained by the justice system.



ADOPT-A-FAMILY

Kathleen O'Reilly

Adopt-a-Family helped 8 families in Pacific plus 2 families at Eureka Elementary school making a total of 18 kids. This was an increase from the number of families and individuals we have “adopted” before, meaning that we once again deepened our service.



ROCKWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Rev. Laurie Anzilotti

St. Francis' built on its relationship with Eureka Elementary and the Rockwood School District in 2024.

As St. Francis launched its Prairie Restoration Project in October of 2024, we invited our partners at Eureka Elementary and Rockwood School District to sign on as sponsors for our grant applications to Quails Forever and the Missouri Department of Education. Megs Carter, chair of the Prairie Restoration Project, and I are in conversation with these partners (as well as the St. Louis County Library) about ways that the Prairie could enhance science and character education curriculum for students.



The District invited Laurie+ to serve on their Strategic Planning Committee as a Community Partner. She will attend eight meetings over the course of the academic year to provide input on Rockwood's five-year strategic plan. She will also be part of the



continued community work for Belonging in a Culture of Dignity which engages school and community leaders in thoughtful dialogue and furthers their understanding and vision to honor dignity and nurture belonging in the district.

In the fall, parishioner Carole Clary and Laurie+ worked together with Superintendent Curtis Cane and Director of Communications Mary LaPak to improve Rockwood's Clergy Cohort gatherings. The district implemented St. Francis' suggestions in October. The result is a smaller group of clergy from across the District who will gather in 2025 to establish closer connection between religious organizations in support of students and families.

While Eureka Elementary, the Rockwood District and St. Francis have very different missions, we find our areas of common concern and work together there. At both the building and district level, we have built trust with each interaction. This trust enables us to move into deeper relationship to serve the community more fully.

Service + Justice Focus Area: Hunger

EUREKA FOOD PANTRY

Arlene Underwood

As you enter the red door from the parking lot it is convenient to spot the red wagon - sometimes empty, sometimes full...but always a nice smooth-wheeling helper — contributed by our beloved Kathleen McDonald several years ago.

The generous donations of non-perishable food items, along with soaps and toilet paper are transported to the Eureka Food Pantry located at The River Church on Central Ave. These gifts are so important for the people in and near our community who need these extras to help them get through each month.

This program is assisted by volunteers who sort incoming items and fill their large wagons as full as possible to bring them to the "neighbor's" vehicles.

St. Francis Church has been contributing for at least 25 years since this program was organized in Eureka. Your generous items — so easy to just set in the wagon — are all used and greatly appreciated. Thank you.

If you have any questions about this program feel free to ask Arlene Underwood.





MEAL MINISTRY

Donna Bernert

This is the third year St. Francis Meal Ministry has been successfully serving meals to those in need in the tri-county area. A total of 1429 free hot meals have been served to our guests in 2024. We have served 275 dine in meals, 867 take home meals and 287 meals have been distributed to Victorian Gardens and Hilltop Manor senior centers.

Our volunteer hosts include the Holiday Inn at Six Flags, The Hindu Temple Youth Group, The Turkish American Society of Missouri, LaSalle Retreat Center, Buren Chapel AME Church, Most Sacred Heart Family Volunteer Ministry, Eureka Police and Fire Department, Culver's Restaurants, The Knights of Columbus and The VFW Auxiliary Eureka #5468, and a new partner this year, Eureka Contracting and Roofing. Eureka-Pacific Elks Lodge #2644 will be joining our group of partners in 2025 making of total of 11 partners. Our goal is to have an inter-faith and interracial mix reflecting the idea that we are all one people here on God's earth helping one another.

Invitations to our guests in need are distributed at these locations: The School Districts of Rockwood and Mera-mec Valley, The Giving Box located outside the Eureka Police station, The Eureka Food Pantry, The Agape Help House in Pacific, Feed My People in High Ridge, St. Vincent DePaul, Circle of Concern in Valley Park and Healing Grace Free Clinic in Eureka. Our guests have come from these areas: Pacific, Villa Ridge, Catawissa, Labadie, Gray Summit, High Ridge, Ballwin, Robertsville, Fenton and Imperial. The St. Francis Meal Ministry has become

known in far reaching communities.

Funding for the ministry has been generously donated from multiple donors: the Task Force for Hunger from The St. Louis Episcopal Diocese for \$1,742.00; Walmart has donated \$2,000.00; and St. Francis has designated \$1,400.00 from our annual budget. These donations have allowed St. Francis Meal Ministry to purchase the supplies needed to serve the meals, including biodegradable plates and cartons, utensils, napkins, aluminum pans, chafing racks, Sterno, name tags, cleaning items and the printing of invitations. St Francis has also sponsored several meals throughout the year, especially the Christmas meal where we spare no expense to provide a festive year-end meal for our quests. Two of our guests volunteered their musical talents to play Christmas music for our Christmas dinner.

Over the last two years St. Francis has gotten to know our guests by name, taking time to talk with them as they became part of our St. Francis Meal Ministry family.

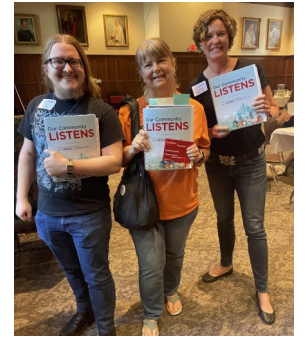
This year we have overcome the challenge of relocating to the Timbers as our venue for the dinner. This relocation has come with a minimal charge for monthly rent. We have also overcome the challenge of losing one of our good partners in addition needing to help two partners provide fried chicken to their menu. This was an additional charge to our budget.

The good news is that for 2025 we have a full roster of 11 partners that will be providing the food.

With the help from Deacon David Luckes we have moved forward to creating a better functioning system of serving the food on Sundays. The St. Francis Meal Ministry committee includes Mary Ann Kinder, Jackie Dear, Anna Mackey, Sally Hader and Ruby Downs. Nothing can be accomplished by a single person; it takes a team! We are blessed to have this wonderful, tireless group to bring about the success St. Francis Meal Ministry has experienced the last three years. With God's help we will continue His work through 2025!

Thank you to all the people of St. Francis Episcopal Church for supporting the St. Francis Meal Ministry! It not only takes a team; it takes a parish!







**602 Rockwood Arbor Drive
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www.StFrancisEureka.com**



ABOUT THE COVER ART

The images on the cover of the Bulletin and Annual Report, as well the watermark inside the Report, connect the Annual Meeting to our Prairie Restoration Project begun in October 2024.

The Prairie Project is sacramental; it is an outward sign of the inner reality of St. Francis' deepening roots in our Diocese, in our community, and to each other. It points to our desire to root ourselves as followers of Jesus Christ. The reality is that prairie flower roots do not dig into the earth at the depth of mighty oaks. Prairies draw their strength from the interconnection of the flowers as one springs up next to another and their roots become entangled. These intertwining roots hold the dirt in place, soak in torrential rains and provide homes for animals, birds and insects. So, too, are we stronger in love, worship and service when we are intertwined as the Body of Christ here at St. Francis. We can do more and be more as a prairie than we can as individual flowers.

In these pages, you will read about St. Francis' interconnectedness and of the depth and strength that results. Thank you for being a flower in our St. Francis' prairie.