Having now been in Palm Beach for four years, I have been taking some time here and there to get to know some of the other congregations and ministries in our diocese. I have had the chance to visit and have lunch with colleagues in Coral Springs, Plantation, Stuart, and Clewiston, for example, and will continue to get out and about when other obligations take me away from here during the week.

We are gifted with living and serving in such a rich and varied context in the Diocese of Southeast Florida. I find myself simply filled with joy when I get to see and hear about all the tremendous ministry happening throughout the diocese. Having these opportunities to get to know fellow clergy and some widely different contexts for ministry, I have re-learned some important truths about life in the Church.

First, there is no formula. Small and large congregations, high-church, low-church, and broad church congregations, urban and rural congregations, long-tenured clergy and brand-new clergy are all doing great things to share the love of God and care for God's people. The lively churches are not wasting energy comparing themselves to the church next door or down the street, nor simply importing some program that worked elsewhere. Rather these are the congregations who are really paying attention to the world in which they live, right here and now.

Second, God blesses and uses faithful people. God doesn't demand perfection; God calls out joyful service. It seems that churches doing the most effective work are the ones willing to adapt, to try something new, to risk failure, all while honoring their history. The leaders who are finding the profound joy of serving God are the ones who are not dwelling on past failures and obsessed with recreating past successes but are being prayerfully open to God's calling and leading, right here and now.

Third, the sand is shifting everywhere. Every colleague I talk with shares the challenges of leading the Church in entirely new contexts. Everywhere I have gone, leaders recognize that demographics, culture, economics, politics, and many other dynamics are shifting in ways the Church has not had to wrestle with in our lifetimes in this country. Most clergy share a mixture of nostalgia for our past and openness to a new future of ministry, usually sprinkled with a bit of trepidation. I find it heartening, though, to know that the discomfort with which we wrestle at Bethesda with all the shifting sand around us is not unique. I find it encouraging to know that fellow priests are ready, by God's grace, to move with the movement of God's Holy Spirit in this rapidly-changing world, right here and now.

Indeed, the world around us needs a Church that is deeply formed in Jesus' grace and love, a Church ready to get out of ourselves and care for the hurts and injustices around us. The world needs us to have a mission that propels us from rich worship, education, and fellowship to compassionate service—to make our parish life not just about serving ourselves but primarily about serving others. We can and will continue to experience God's transforming grace as we live out this kind of faith-in-service to the world, without fear, and through all the changes and chances of our ever-changing world. Right here and now.

The Rev. James R. Harlan, Rector
Our annual Vacation Bible School at Bethesda this year will be August 3–7. Our theme is Creating Creations. Each day of the week, children ages 3–9, will explore different stories of creating and building including the creation of the world, the Tower of Babel, Solomon’s Temple, the feeding of the 5,000, and the creation of the Church at Pentecost. After an engaging opening time with skits, music, and stories, children will explore each of the daily themes through various workshops that will allow them to use their imaginations to create their own projects, games, and even snacks.

This is a bit of a change from previous years where we have used pre-made Vacation Bible School curricula. One of the things we learned last year during the process is that we have some extremely creative teachers and volunteers, but we also have highly creative young people as well. So, we have developed our own program that has a little more flexibility for learning built into the program.

As always, Vacation Bible School is not just offered for children that are members of the parish—although we love to have as many of them with us as possible. It is also open to young people from and around our Palm Beach community as well. Every year we welcome several young boys and girls that are seeing Bethesda for the very first time and we are so excited to bear witness to what a loving and welcoming environment we offer them. In fact, we have had children who have started their educational journey at a Vacation Bible School before moving on to become regular members of our weekly Sunday School program.

Speaking of helping kids outside of our walls, the outreach project for VBS this year will be packing book bags with school supplies to share with the children who are a part of the St. George’s after school program. These are children that need access to basic school supplies and we hope to pack 50 bags to help them as the school year begins.

To register or to find out more about our Vacation Bible School program, call Greg Knight at (561) 655-4555 x114 or e-mail him at knight@bbts.org. There will be a $45 registration fee for the week.

For More Information

The Rev. Kimberly Still, Associate for Ministry Development | (561) 655-4555 x104 | still@bbts.org
Greg Knight, Director of Children and Youth Ministries | (561) 655-4555 x114 | knight@bbts.org
We announced in the May Bethesda Bulletin as part of the 2015 Ask & Inform feedback that we would provide regular updates on major decisions, staff changes, planned improvements, and the financial position of our parish. This is the first update for 2015 (the next will be in November).

**Finances:**
- Costs are running under budget (as at April 30) by $91,000.
- Revenue is less than we need to complete all our 2015 plans as illustrated in the two charts. *We need an additional $53,000 in 2015 pledges*; without these funds we will need to cut back in important ministry areas such as improvements to Adult Education.
- Our planned revenue also includes investment income which is reasonably secure, as well as unpledged gifts based on actual results in previous years that is less certain (though this amount is in line with what we have historically received); *we need a further $226,000 in unpledged (or preferably pledged) gifts* to ensure that we do not need to cut expenses by restructuring staff, deferring building repairs and maintenance, and/or altering plans for Christmas and Advent.
- Many of the improvements identified during the 2015 Ask & Inform initiative will need additional funds, and we will undertake those as giving increases.

![Sources of Budgeted Revenue](image1)

![Budget](image2)

**For More Information**

Fred Staley, *Associate for Administration* | (561) 655-4555 x102 | staley@bbts.org
Leadership

Leadership Changes: the only change to our leadership team since May is that Carol Stewart, Chair of Fellowship & Hospitality, and Amy McGowan, Chair of Education, have stepped down from their committees for personal reasons. The Rector will announce appointments shortly.

Vestry decisions:
- The Church Mouse and The Shoppe at Bethesda enjoyed a record year so we can continue to distribute 100% of the net earnings. Our Vestry approved an increase in Outreach spending to $451,000; this includes $264,000 in grants to local agencies and $184,000 for our education and feeding initiatives, as well as our annual support for St. George’s and the TRUE Fund.
- All work on the ongoing façade restoration has been funded in full to date, although we need a further $200,000 to complete the project this year.

Additional capital projects that have been approved by our Vestry include:
- Upgrading to the main electrical panel; this includes configuring it to accept power from a generator that is to be acquired to produce sufficient power in an emergency.
- Fumigating the church and other buildings for termites.
- Replacing the cooling tower component of our cooling system.
- Executing previously-approved projects which had been put on hold because of a shortage of funds; including renovation of the men’s restroom in the breezeway and replacement of the carpet in the Parish Hall.
- Accounting firm Holyfield and Thomas was appointed by our Vestry to complete an audit of our 2014 finances. We received an unqualified opinion.

Staff changes:
- Denny Lanier retired in January, and we restructured the sexton staff. J. R. Thompson is taking the lead role in a more team-oriented structure. Victor Maisonet has been hired to work evenings and Saturdays and handle hospitality functions for the church.
- Amie Casamassina is now working part-time handling special projects.
- Regine Reimann is now supporting worship and pastoral care ministries.
- Ayana Pineiro was hired to take the reception duties and to assist the Rector.
- Jessica Reed’s role has been expanded; we have added the Youth Ministries Coordinator role, assisting Greg Knight, to her responsibilities as Youth Choir Director.

Rector and Associates

The Rev. James R. Harlan
Rector

Harold E. Pysher
Associate for Music & Liturgy

Fred E. Staley
Associate for Administration

The Rev. Kimberly L. Still
Associate for Ministry Development

Non-Stipendiary Assisting Clergy & Staff

The Rev. Jeffrey S. Beebe
Rector

The Rev. Susan R. Beebe
Associate for Administration

The Rev. Clayton B. Waddell
Associate for Music & Liturgy

The Rev. Kyle A. Titcomb
Deacon for Spiritual Direction & Pastoral Care (Nov–May)

Greg Knight, Director of Children & Youth Ministries

Jessica Reed, Youth Choir Director
& Youth Ministries Coordinator

Regine Reimann, Worship & Pastoral Care Coordinator

Ayana Pineiro, Assistant to the Rector
Victor Maisonet, Sexton for Hospitality
Robert Mancuso, Sexton

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Wardens, Officers, and Vestry

Barbara Leek, Senior Warden
Frederick Broda
Barbara Callahan
Frances Fisher

Wendy Victor, Junior Warden
William Gee
Susan Keenan
Matthew Lorentzen

Gail Knisely, Clerk
Donald McKenna
David Paulson
Patricia Reichenbacher

William Atterbury III, Chancellor
C. Tanner Rose, Jr.
Patricia Reichenbacher

J. R. Thompson, Grounds Supervisor
Daisy Alvarez, General Manager for Retail Operations
Evaristo Riestra, General Manager of The Church Mouse
Jonathan Goodine, Employee of The Church Mouse
Ricky Manuel, Employee of The Church Mouse

141 South County Road, Palm Beach, FL 33480 | (561) 655-4554 | www.bbts.org
What are you thankful for? Are you thankful for the opportunity to worship in a beautiful church supported by magnificent music every Sunday? Are you thankful for a recent job offer, a new home, or the arrival of a new member to your family? Maybe you are thankful that the summer has arrived, and for a chance to relax, or for the chance to visit with a longtime friend and share some smiles.

The United Thank Offering (UTO) embodies a theology of thankfulness. Traditionally, this is practiced by individuals, through the daily gathering of coins (placed in the blue envelope) in acknowledgement of blessings received. UTO is neither a fundraiser nor a stewardship campaign, but a discipline to be sensitive to giving thanks with small tokens of gratitude. UTO is a ministry of the Episcopal Church Women (ECW), for the mission of the whole church. It is a commitment to “Expand the circle of thankful people,” through the funding of grant requests to create and support new ministries of the Episcopal church throughout the world. Twice a year, the ECW faithfully collects monies through Ingatherings. Bethesda’s next Ingathering is on Sunday, August 23.

Through UTO, we learn that thankfulness leads to generosity and with UTO 100% of the money donated is given away through grants. The ECW carry all administrative costs. The 2014 United Thank Offering awarded more than $1,300,000 through 36 grants for projects that address human needs and help alleviate poverty, both domestically and internationally. In general, as a result of those grants, kitchens will be renovated and appliances will be purchased to better provide hot meals to homeless, migrant, immigrant, and indigent persons; new spaces will be built and many old ones renovated, to provide safe and secure areas to spread the Gospel and provide education on a variety of topics; and research and training will occur to enhance mental and physical health initiatives in multiple communities. A complete list of 2014 grants can be found at www.episcopalchurch.org.

What are you thankful for? How do you acknowledge your blessings? Please consider acknowledging your blessings by placing ‘coins’ in the blue envelope (found in the pews) during the next United Thank Offering Ingathering on August 23. For more information, e-mail Amy McGowan, UTO Representative, at ecw@bbts.org.

For More Information
The Rev. Kimberly Still, Associate for Ministry Development | (561) 655-4555 x104 | still@bbts.org
Bethesda’s Port Ministry provides a special outreach to seafarers and maritime workers while visiting our Palm Beach ports. Many of the ships visiting the port are ships which often stay in port for 12 to 24 hours. The Port of Palm Beach is the 18th busiest container port in the United States and sees thousands of seafarers every year. These seafarers and maritime workers are responsible for transporting 80% of all the products used within the United States; and they spend months and sometimes years, away from home. Our Port Ministry lead by Deacon Clay Waddell is dedicated to greeting and caring for these seafarers coming from countries all over the world. This ministry to seafarers is one of hospitality, and though we do not seek to convert seafarers, we do attend to their spiritual needs which often, by request, include services with Holy Communion on the ships.

Bethesda’s parishioners participate in this ministry by knitting caps, collecting toiletries during the summer (known as Save Our Samples or S.O.S), writing and sending the seafarers cards, donating funds to pay for calling cards, collecting magazines and other reading material, purchasing white socks, and sending care packages while they are away during holidays. These gifts are not only powerful reminders that the community cares for them, but are also important necessities while at sea.

Every year Bethesda participates in the Harbor of Hope’s Blessing of the Fleet—a celebration of the maritime industry and the local community surrounding the Port. 2015 marked a special year for the seventh annual event because it represented the 100 Year Anniversary of the Port of Palm Beach. It also celebrated a 100 year old tradition, the blessing of seafaring vessels, and that aimed to raise awareness and funds for a Seafarers’ House—an establishment that will support Port visitors for the next 100 years. It was an amazing event and was a success because of Bethesda’s parishioners!

Would you like to help with Bethesda’s Port Ministry this summer? As you travel, remember to save the small soaps, shampoos, conditioners, lotions, etc. found in your hotel room. We will be collecting your items this fall and will use them to arrange 100+ gift bags for sailors who are at sea on Christmas Day. If you would like more information, please contact Deacon Clay.

For More Information
The Rev. Kimberly Still, Associate for Ministry Development | (561) 655-4555 x104 | still@bbts.org
The Rev. Clayton B. Waddell, Deacon of Port Ministry | (561) 655-4555 x130 | waddell@bbts.org
The Bethesda Youth Choir joins in making music, sharing in fellowship, and serving the Church in worship. We all serve Bethesda in our own unique way and the Youth Choir gives our young parishioners a place to let their voice be heard, literally! A joyful noise indeed.

Apart from healthy singing and breathing technique, our choristers boast a wealth of musical knowledge that comes with the territory of singing new hymns and anthems each week: sight-singing, ear-training, music history, notation, musical symbols, and general musicianship. Being part of the Youth Choir also offers a solid foundation in the rich tradition of the Episcopal Church and Bethesda-by-the-Sea, with all of its charm and beauty. Our parents are amazed at the way our Youth Choir can act as mini church docents, sharing their knowledge of the parts of the church and architecture, the importance of the church year, the symbolism of historical hymn texts, and famous composers hidden away in our own hymnal. Wow! Bach, Beethoven, Handel, Haydn, Holst, Schubert, and Mendelssohn wrote hymn tunes too? Who knew?

Jessica Reed, our Youth Choir Director & Youth Ministries Coordinator, always smiles when thinking about her young memories in the Youth Choir. Her colorful hair and make-up choices were accepted with love and laughter. Jessica’s thirst for musical expression was quenched with Bethesda’s vibrant acoustics and awe-inspiring organ. The depth at which she was able to explore and engage in musical experiences was quite profound even then—as a know-it-all teenager! Jessica says she has Bethesda to thank for being a part of her musical upbringing, which has since transformed into a Bachelor and Master in Music Education and a nine-year career teaching music. To Jessica, the Bethesda Youth Choir was more than singing notes on a page—it was the dedication to grow, the unending compassion, and the generous spirit for which Bethesda has come to be known.

The bright young singers of the Bethesda Youth Choir make all of their hard work look easy. Their dedication is truly astounding and they look forward to recruiting more voices for Bethesda’s upcoming season. They resume regular rehearsals beginning Wednesday, September 9; meeting each Wednesday 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sundays at 8:00 a.m. for the 9:00 a.m. service. For more information and/or to add your name to our roster, contact Jessica Reed at any time by e-mailing her at reed@bbts.org or by calling (561) 655-4555 x131.

For More Information
Harold Pysher, Associate for Music and Liturgy | (561) 655-4555 x103 | pysher@bbts.org
Daniel Koinis, Chair | worship@bbts.org
The Church Mouse Summer Hours
(located at 378 South County Road, Palm Beach, FL 33480)

Our Resale Shop is closed for the Summer.
We are open only for donations from
Monday—Saturday: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The Shoppe at Bethesda Summer Hours
(located at the Church)

Wednesday & Thursday: 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Sunday: 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

The proceeds from sales at The Church Mouse and The Shoppe fund Bethesda’s Outreach programs. In 2014-2015, we provided $452,000 to our community through direct grants to local non-profits, sponsored events, and program support. This much-needed funding would not be possible without our donors and volunteers. Through our retail ministries, we have raised more than $10 million to serve people in need over the past 45 years.

Volunteer opportunities include processing and pricing donations, stocking and merchandising, closings sales, cashiering, and other administrative tasks. While our need for volunteers is greatest when the resale shop is open during the season, we also need volunteers to help process and price donations during the off-season as The Mouse accepts donations year round. The Church Mouse especially needs knowledgeable and passionate volunteers to help research and price specialty donations including art, antiquities, collectables, and more.

Nancy Sleuman, who volunteers at The Church Mouse and serves on our Outreach grants team, shares her perspective on donating her time at The Mouse, “Volunteering at The Church Mouse has been a wonderful experience. Not only do we serve Bethesda and the community, but we get to meet many interesting people. Our managers Coy and Daisy and the staff and other volunteers are always pleasant and helpful with any small problems.”

“It makes you smile when you can help customers find bargains among the many treasures at The Mouse. We get many compliments about the attractive shop and the way everything is displayed so neatly. Customers come from all over and mention how clean and refreshing the shop is—not musty. It is a privilege and a pleasure to volunteer at The Church Mouse and also to shop and get some wonderful bargains.”

To find out more about available shifts—which average 3.5 hours—please contact Coy Riestra, Manager, or Daisy Alvarez, General Manager for Retail Operations at churchmouse@bbts.org or (561) 659-2154.

We are immensely grateful to all our volunteers, past and present, who enable our tremendous outreach: around the corner and around the world.

For More Information
Coy Riestra, Manager of The Church Mouse and The Shoppe | (561) 659-2154 | coy@bbts.org
Pat Rechenbacher, Chair | churchmouse@bbts.org
Bethesda Cares’ Flower Ministry is really two ministries—Flower Guild and Eucharistic Visitors—who join hands to spread the good news of Christ (and flowers) past our church doors and into the hands of those in need. It is a process that involves many people in the life cycle of the beautiful Bethesda’s flowers!

The first and most important part of this cycle begins with a generous contribution. Bethesda is blessed to have such amazing flower arrangements because people make a $100 contribution in memory of, in honor of, or in thanksgiving for a loved one. By making this contribution, the name of a loved one is included in the desired Sunday leaflet. These gifts help fund and provide for the flowers and altar adornments throughout the year. The altar flowers not only enhance our worship, they are symbols of faith, expressing joy and light, and especially beauty.

The next phase of this process is carried out by our wonderful Flower Guild. These creative individuals select, order, design, and create all the arrangements for the church. You will find 4 to 6 volunteers every Wednesday morning cutting and preparing the flowers so that Friday another 10 volunteers are able to begin creating 5 large arrangements needed Sunday—2 for the high altar, 2 for the chapel altar, and 1 for the niche. Friday is also the day that another set of volunteers re-use those flowers from the previous Sunday to make 6 to 10 small arrangements for our homebound and hospitalized parishioners.

The Eucharistic Visitors (EVs) complete the final step. EVs are parishioners licensed by the bishop to share the sacrament with members of the congregation who are unable to attend church because of illness or infirmity. They visit with members in their home, nursing facility, or hospital to administer communion and deliver a small flower arrangement. The arrangement comes with prayers and a card of best wishes from the entire church family. Each year approximately 400 small arrangements are delivered to those members, bringing smiles and some say healing power.

How wonderful to know these flowers which have been touched by the many hands of our volunteers, brought beauty to our weekly visitors, enhanced our worship, and soaked in prayers during our services, are then being reused to bring joy to others. Wouldn’t you like to be a part of the life cycle of Bethesda’s flowers? Join the Flower Guild, train to be a Eucharistic Visitor, or simply make a contribution for flowers. We hope you will consider making a special contribution to celebrate the holidays, birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, and graduations, or to remember/memorialize a loved one. You can go to our website, bbts.org, and click the red “Give Now” sliding image to contribute today and be a part of the life of Bethesda’s flowers!

For More Information

The Rev. Kimberly Still, Associate for Ministry Development | (561) 655-4555 x104 | still@bbts.org

Bobbie Leek, Chair | care@bbts.org
Evangelism & Communications

Make Bethesda “Your Church”

For Mary Allen, the president of the Episcopal Church Women (ECW), Bethesda-by-the-Sea isn’t just a place where she goes to worship on Sundays. It is so much more than that—it is “Her Church.” What she means is that she feels connected to it on a variety of levels. Bethesda is the church where she “has an amazing sense of belonging.”

Church wasn’t always a place where she felt especially connected. As a child she wondered why it was important to attend when there was so much of God’s grace to be found in nature. Surely it was just as worthwhile to worship under the trees on one’s own. Her father wisely told her that “(they) should support the people and places that teach the things we believe in.”

Attending a weekly service was always part of her family’s routine, whether they were in their hometown of Georgetown, Texas, or traveling during summers as her father lectured throughout Europe and Latin America. While she enjoyed the beautiful worship services, she never felt a strong sense of belonging in any of them.

While studying music at the University of Maryland, Mary worked as a staff singer for St. Paul’s in Rock Creek Park, D.C. After graduation, she sang professionally for the U.S. State Department, entertaining numerous heads of state at diplomatic functions. She continued to share her musical talent by singing in church choirs as well.

Her marriage to Coca-Cola executive Bill Allen took her to seven states and two foreign countries before they settled in Palm Beach County where she joined Bethesda’s choir. At first Bethesda was just another church to go to on Sundays.

When the older of her two sons was diagnosed with cancer, Mary reflected on her life and reevaluated what was important to her. When John lost his battle in 2003, Mary made a conscious decision to get involved as a volunteer at Bethesda—not just sing in the choir.

As she got more involved, she made friends with people who had always been there, but that she had never really known. She experienced a wonderful feeling of belonging that she had never felt before in the many churches where she had sung and been a member.

“Bethesda is a welcoming church,” explains Mary Allen. “I hear this all the time, but I had not opened my heart to let this welcoming in (before then). Our choir family had always been close, but now I have a feeling of total belonging and I am truly blessed. God’s grace is definitely at Bethesda, even under the trees! It just takes an open heart and mind, and His Grace flows freely. Thanks be to God!”

For More Information

Renee Boger-Cheifet, Communications Coordinator | (561) 655-4555 x111 | boger@bbts.org
Becky Myers, Chair | communications@bbts.org