Bethesda’s Mission is to experience the clear and strong presence of God and to understand and spread Christ’s teachings through collective worship, learning, and service.
From the Rector

What a popular refrain I hear dozens of times each Sunday and throughout the week: we love Bethesda. We love the music, worship, Christian education, fellowship, and so much more. Our ministries thrived in 2019, including both an adult and a youth pilgrimage, profound retreats, a glorious Christmas concert, and tremendous outreach ministries. This love makes me, like many of you, want to protect and nourish everything that is so good about Bethesda.

Unfortunately, I also see, week in and week out, quite a dissonance between our expressions of love and appreciation for our parish and our collective commitment to support and protect it. In fact, we ended 2019 with a significant operating deficit. Building expenses, insurance costs, and storm damage repair costs all pushed our expenses higher in 2019, and you will see that more clearly in this report. At the same time, while the number of pledges went up in 2019, our total annual giving rose far less than our expenses.

We need to channel the love we feel for this parish into substantive action in stewardship. In order to ensure that 2020 is not remembered as a time of shrinking ministries and deferred building maintenance, I ask your help to safeguard Bethesda today, so there is a flourishing Bethesda tomorrow.

Something must change this coming year. We have a challenge either to radically reduce our expenses to match our resources or significantly increase our annual giving. I hope that all of us will share my challenge and find a way to take it on personally, rather than hoping someone else will fix it. The time has come that we all step up, to find our own place of gratitude in our parish life and then to actually, generously support this parish out of that gratitude. We can no longer sustain a life in which the majority of us live off the largesse of the minority of faithful communicants in good standing.

Our worship, education, outreach, pastoral care, evangelism, and fellowship—indeed all our ministries—provide each of us with tremendous opportunities to grow in our faith and service. I hope that each of us will look deep within for the greatest opportunity to grow: being a communicant in good standing by making a meaningful, substantive financial commitment. When we all do this, we will not only experience even deeper gratitude, we will have the joy of being fully a part of God’s work at Bethesda.

As we start a new decade, I invite you to join me in taking a step forward towards a closer relationship with God, as together we seek to address the challenges facing us today.

God bless,

The. Rev. James R. Harlan, Rector
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From the Senior Warden

Leadership and Governance Sub-Committee, Chair

I feel joy and gratitude as I report to you that 2019 has been a year of successes in our many ministries. There are so many areas in which Bethesda has done something important and good that no other institution would do, or could do, that I can’t recount them all. So, I will mention just a few—not necessarily the best or the most important, just a few that come most immediately to mind.

In 2019, attendance at Sunday worship services, which is our essential mission, has increased by more than eight (8) percent over attendance in 2018, from about 22,500 to over 24,400. In an era when church membership in the U.S. is declining, Bethesda is bucking the trend in a pronounced and exemplary way. One contributor to this increase may be that our Clergy, responding to comments from parishioners, have further refined the format of 9:00 AM church services, and 9:00 AM attendance is definitely up. (Participation in adult forums also seems to be up.) Another may be that we enhanced Sunday worship for children and their “Little Way” participation on our Wednesday-night Middle Way program. But the greatest contributor has to have been our renewed focus on evangelism and particularly our Newcomers Program, which has yielded 60 new members of Bethesda’s congregation this year.

(I know evangelism is a word that makes some people cringe. If the images it evokes in your mind are embarrassing or worse, here’s a reminder: At Bethesda, evangelism does not mean confronting the wicked with disdain and warnings of eternal suffering, nor reciting scripture as if it were a proof, nor even telling people how they should feel about God or about anyone else. Evangelism means lowering the barriers that discourage people from joining our community. The foremost of these barriers are their feelings—for we will disapprove of their beliefs, anxiety that they will be embarrassed in worship because they are unfamiliar with our rituals, pessimism that time they spend at Bethesda will not yield joy, or even satisfaction, but will be time wasted. Evangelism begins with our showing strangers that we want them among us, just as they are. I’m pretty sure you are very comfortable doing that. There are many words for this. You don’t have to call it as evangelism.)

But back to Bethesda’s successes in 2019: Among the richest experiences that Bethesda offers are pilgrimages. In 2019, Bethesda organized two: In May, 25 parishioners made a Celtic pilgrimage to Scotland and northern England, led by the retired Bishop of Oxford, John Pritchard. And in June, 22 young people and chaperones made a Franciscan pilgrimage to Assisi, Italy. The people, young and old, who joined in these trips can speak more eloquently than I about the experience. Just ask them. What all their perspectives have in common is that these journeys show that there is a lot of common ground between spirituality and fun.

One of the best things that Bethesda does for its parishioners is to bring their talent and treasure, collectively, to bear on helping those who are most unfortunate in our community. In 2019, our mentoring program provided guidance to 20 young people. One example is a young man whom we began to mentor as a 15-year-old high school student. His mother, an immigrant from Haiti working as a cleaning lady, has raised him alone. Theirs was a hard life, made harder when they were left homeless by a fire. With Bethesda’s guidance, that young man is now a junior at Vanderbilt University on a full scholarship. His life went from homeless and hopeless to promising and proud. Another important program we support is Opportunity Inc., which provides daycare and education to young children in the heart of one of West Palm Beach’s poorest neighborhoods. Bethesda provides science education to Pre K and Kindergarten children. These are children who, without this early help, would likely
be left behind by public education: anxious and discouraged in school, abandoned to semi-literacy, and denied the American promise of equal opportunity for all. We should all be all thankful that the Church Mouse is so successful in raising money for our Outreach programs. I hope you are gratified knowing that you are part of the Bethesda community, which makes the world a better place in these, and numerous other, small ways. You should be.

We continue to make substantial progress toward the goals of the most recent strategic plan. The plan is broad and covers numerous aspects of Bethesda, so let me cite just a couple of milestones. One key strategic performance area is preserving and enhancing Bethesda's buildings and grounds, both as facilities for our other ministries and as ministries in themselves, providing a place of beauty and peace, to the glory of God. A key goal, now completed, has been to prepare a five-year major maintenance plan. Another strategic performance area, of course, is Outreach. A key goal in this area, also now completed, has been to develop a two-year plan to expand and improve Outreach activities and operations. These steps, being abstract, may not arouse the same warm feelings as the work in some of our ministries, but having a plan and carrying it out are vital to Bethesda's vitality and its long-term viability.

Unfortunately, not everything at Bethesda worked out in 2019 as one would wish. As the Rector has said elsewhere in Bethesda's Annual Report, this year has also brought us face to face with financial challenges. In recent years, the Annual Campaign, along with other operating revenue like wedding fees, has proved sufficient to pay for Bethesda's day-to-day operation. (Bethesda has had to look beyond its Annual Campaign, soliciting special gifts and relying on its reserves, only to fund major capital repairs and improvements.) In 2019, for the first time in many years, the Annual Campaign has proved insufficient. While the 2019 deficit is small compared to Bethesda's total financial resources, no deficit is sustainable for long.

The Vestry and the Rector are addressing this challenge forthrightly and undauntedly. Still, if we cannot enlist greater support from the Bethesda community, then fiscal responsibility will require that we cut back some of Bethesda's ministries. We remain hopeful (and prayerful) that we as a body of parishioners will rise to the challenge. That being so, it is too early to say which ministries would be cut back. But whichever ones they must be, it will make all of us unhappy.

Thus, one of Bethesda's most important strategic imperatives is to increase the fruits of our Annual Campaign, so Bethesda can continue to do all it does, and to increase our endowment funds, so as to relieve future generations of some of the burden of maintaining our facilities. In this area, the Rector and our internal Stewardship team have been working with outside advisors who are experienced, and have been successful, in helping other churches to increase financial giving. You will see the fruits of their efforts in the coming weeks and months. To me, it is a new ministry, a kind of pastoral ministry, helping people to see how they make the world a better place thru Bethesda, and helping people to find joy in giving their financial support to the Bethesda community of which we are all a part.

I feel blessed to be part of this parish and the work that we are doing. I feel blest to be served by Bethesda's clergy and staff, with their energy and dedication. I feel blest to work with Bethesda's Vestry and the many, many dedicated volunteers who give so generously of their time and talent, planning, leading, and carrying out our ministries. In these times, particularly, I thank all who support Bethesda financially, making it possible for Bethesda to serve our congregation and our neighbors in need. And I hope that this year, you will stretch a little and increase your gift.

Before closing, I'd like to say something particularly to those among you who only attend one or two worship services per year. You may not feel that you are part of Bethesda. You may feel that you are only a visitor, maybe a bit of an intruder. You may feel that you are more closely connected to another
chapel elsewhere. You may feel that no one really knows you when you are in church here and no one will miss you when you leave. You may feel that your brief presence here doesn't matter much to the rest of us.

You are so wrong!

The number of people who attend Christmas and Easter services at Bethesda is many times the number who attend on an average Sunday. This means that an enormous fraction, probably a majority, of those in Church on Christmas and Easter do not attend at other times of the year. We are here for you, and all those people like you. We who attend more often find joy, or satisfaction, or contentment, or some good feeling—mild or strong—in mind or heart. We wish you could feel as we do, and maybe you do, elsewhere. In any case, it’s okay with us if you want to come once or twice a year. If you feel like going to church only once a year, we want to be the church you come to. We welcome you. We are glad you join us when you do. In fact, we wish we knew you better, not so we can snare you, but because we think we would like you.

Whether or not we ever get to know you better, we need you to lend your hand to keeping Bethesda to be the church that you want to attend, whenever you want to do so. Here are some figures that are food for thought: Bethesda’s annual spending is around $3 million. The total number of attendances, that is, the number of tickets we would sell, if people had to buy tickets to come to church, is about 25 thousand. Divide one figure into the other, and you find that tickets would have to sell for about $120 for the Bethesda to get by on ticket sales alone, about the same (in South Florida) as good tickets to an opera performance or tickets to a rock concert by a not-too-famous band. We estimate that there are about one thousand families that attend Bethesda at one time or another during a year. If our annual funding were provided only by memberships with annual dues, the dues for a family would have to be about $3,000 per year. Of course, we aren’t selling tickets or collecting dues, and even if you can’t or won’t make any financial commitment to Bethesda, we still want you to come to Bethesda, and we still wish we knew you better. But if you can make a meaningful gift, we will be grateful, and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that Bethesda is the way it is, and does the good things it does, because of you.

Finally, I can’t help but share with everyone, both every-Sunday people and once-a-year people, something that is not in Scripture, but which I am sure is a lie that the Snake in the Garden of Eden whispered in Eve’s ear: “Someone else will pay for it.” This false promise has bedeviled mankind’s efforts to act collectively for good, from time immemorial. And it is just as great a temptation, just as beguiling a proposition, today.

With blessings and love, and hoping you don’t believe the Snake,

Zachary Shipley, Senior Warden
From the Junior Warden
Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee, Chair

2019 has been a year of restraint and reevaluation dictated by an annual budget limited in amount and availability. Although projects have been redesigned or delayed, needed physical maintenance and basic repairs to our aging building have been addressed. Our historic structures and gracious grounds are in proper order having received conscientious care by our faithful staff and skilled leadership.

Three lightning events in the early six months caused over $50,000 in damage. A study is under way to evaluate a lightning suppression system installation this spring. Promising results have been reported locally. The exterior façade water-proofing continues.

The Rectory has received extensive electrical rewiring and awaits a newly constructed front door with security system. The guest bathroom was given an air conditioning update and mold treatment. Garage roof replacement has been completed.

Our main interior church lighting fixtures are now equipped with LED technology, which will provide a cooler and more sensitive atmosphere. Hal Phsyer’s guidance and expertise was most valuable here and with the sound system improvements.

Our grounds, fishpond, and walkways are in the excellent care of Keith and our skilled sextons. Flowering plants will be added.

Routine maintenance procedures have been evaluated.

Bethesda must receive our dedication as faithful servants and grateful members of her congregation. God’s house is remarkable resource and gift of love to all. I am honored to serve and deeply appreciate the outstanding work of our general contractors, committee sextons and administrators who support this vital ministry, its education and celebrations.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Constance N. Purcell, Junior Warden
Rector, Wardens, Officers, and Vestry

The Rev. James R. Harlan, Rector *

Wardens, Officers, and Vestry

Zachary (Zach) Shipley, Senior Warden * (2022)
Constance Purcell, Junior Warden * (2021)
Charles (Chuck) Hagy, Jr., Clerk * (2021)
Robert (Bob) Diffenderfer, Chancellor *# (2021)
Matt Lorentzen, Treasurer *# (2021)

Arthur (Sandy) Burdett (2020)
Paul Coombs (2020)
Michelle Diffenderfer (2020)
Peggy Johnson (2020)
Raphael Clemente (2021)
Tanner Rose * (2021)
Richard Crone (2022)
Becky Myers * (2022)
Maury Wolfe (2022)

* Member of the Executive Committee
# Not on Vestry

Vestry term expires at the Annual Meeting of the year indicated.
Vestry Nominations
Nominating Task Force—Beth Cole, Chair

Vestry Nominees
Serving the Vestry Term 2020—2023
The Vestry presents all four nominees for Parish consideration to fill the four expiring Vestry positions.

At their December meeting in 2015, the Vestry approved a resolution presented by their Leadership and Governance Subcommittee to amend the By-Laws. This amendment, passed unanimously by all members present (17 of 19) will reduce the size of the Vestry to 13 members (12 elected members plus the Rector). This reduction will happen by nominating and electing only four new members to the vestry each year from now on, so that, in 2016, the Vestry will be 17 members, in 2017, 15 members, in 2018 and thereafter, 13 members.

This decision came primarily out of some continuing work with a consultant to help the Vestry to work more effectively through its regular meetings, through the Executive Committee, and through its four subcommittees.

JOHN BRIM is Co-Chair of the Finance Subcommittee. He is a retired investment banker, having worked over 40 years in New York and London in Corporate Finance. John and his wife Elena moved full time to Palm Beach in 2015, although they have attended Bethesda since 2009. John is currently a private investor. He is a graduate of Yale University, and he received an MBA from Harvard. John and Elena have been married for over 35 years and have three young adult children, Jamie, Liz, and Sarah. John is an avid racing sailor and was a trustee of the New York Yacht Club.

SARA GRIFFEN has been a member of Bethesda since 2016, joining soon after she and her husband Tom moved to Florida from New York’s Hudson Valley. At Bethesda, she serves as head of the Ambassador Program, co-chair of the Planned Giving Committee, steering committee member of the Flower Guild, and member of the Evangelism Committee. After graduating from Duke University, Sara held positions in banking and state government before finding her “life’s work” as CEO from 1996-2015 of The Olana Partnership, dedicated to the preservation of the 250-acre estate of the painter Frederic Church in Hudson, NY. Sara and Tom have two children, Steve and Emily, who live in Atlanta.
JOHN SORY was raised in Palm Beach and baptized, confirmed, and married at Bethesda. He received his BA from Vanderbilt University and MBA at Dartmouth College. John is currently the President of a national physician network based in South Florida and previously held executive positions at Pfizer in New York, and the University of Miami Health System. Returning to Palm Beach in 2010, he rejoined Bethesda where today, John is an usher, active in the Boar’s Head Festival, and with his wife, June, honorary co-chairs of the 2020 Empty Bowls Committee. He also contributes time to the Venture Mentoring Team in Broward County. Altogether, John and June have five grown children – Jack, Kate, Philip, Christopher, and Will.

KATIE WANDOFF a member of Bethesda since 2004, has been involved in many of its ministries including Sunday School, Boar’s Head, Lector, Empty Bowls, St. George’s, Girls of Grace, Women at the Well, 2019 Celtic Pilgrimage and serves on the Grants Committee and the Flower Guild Steering Committee. After graduating from The University of Michigan, Katie and her husband, Rick, lived in Chicago where she worked at Sanford C. Bernstein as a Financial Advisor. While in Chicago, she volunteered and mentored a child in Big Brothers Big Sisters. Katie relocated to Palm Beach County in 1998 and was actively involved on the Parent School Council and various committees at Palm Beach Day Academy where her children, Benjamin, Abigail, and Sophia attended school.

*Vestry Nominees were selected by the Nominating Committee after an exhaustive review process that at times included the consideration of more than thirty-five church members. The slate of four is presented to the members at the Annual Meeting for consideration to fill the open positions. Vestry members are elected by members in good standing. Persons eligible to vote must be sixteen years of age or older, regular in attendance, and contributors of record. One-third of the vestry is elected each year for a period of no more than three years. A person is eligible for re-election after one year has elapsed. A vestry member appointed to fill an unexpired term may be elected at the end of that term to serve a full term.*
2019 was a year of minimal change in the personnel area. At the beginning of the year we moved Ayana Pineiro into the position of Worship and Pastoral Care Coordinator. She is proving to be very valuable in this role. This move left a vacancy at the front desk. It took some time to find the right person for this. Priscilla Reynoso started at the end of September as the Rector’s Assistant and Office Coordinator. She is learning the job quickly but could use our patience as she learns Bethesda’s people and processes. Finally, Joann LeBarca left us in August, as she decided to move north to be closer to her grandchildren. We have not replaced her at this time.

The Evangelism Committee has made great strides in its second year on making us aware of evangelism in liturgy, prayer, and communications. We now recite as a congregation every week a welcome collect. The Ambassador Ministry, under the direction of Sara Griffen, is working at an exemplary level. The committee is working to establish a ‘Welcome, Invite, Connect’ program and has established a robust ‘Welcome’ and will work to strengthen the ‘Invite’ and ‘Connect’ areas in the next year. We had 60 new people join our parish in 2019. Finally, the Evangelism Committee took ownership of and laid the groundwork for the Spiritual Renewal program called Renewal Works that kicks off this week when we are all asked to complete an online Spiritual Life Inventory.

This year The Church Mouse has achieved higher levels of success due to our efforts to improve efficiency and productivity. We have strategically targeted timely replenishment and the selection of merchandise in order to increase sales. We maintain customer service levels by training and supporting our volunteers and staff. This helped sales at the Mouse increase 7% over the previous year to $1,011M. In the future we will continue to build on our past success through clear communication and strong leadership.
From the Associate for Music and Liturgy

Our Sunday services continue to run smoothly. We've settled into a good pattern for our 45-minute 9:00 service, and the 8:00 and 11:00 services maintained their customary identities. There are many people—staff and volunteer, visible and invisible—who made our services run smoothly.

The Altar Guild, under the leadership of Holly Breeden and Linda Greenberg, continued work that is vital to our worship life. They dedicated many hours in preparation for all our services—not only those that we all experience on Sundays and at Christmas and Easter, but our regular weekday services, weddings, funerals, and many other services throughout the year. We continue to struggle with not enough members of the Altar Guild, so some are having to serve much more often than seems fair. Altar Guild members are invited by the Rector to serve. We are working to increase membership, so if you have interest in serving, please contact Father James.

The Flower Guild, with over one hundred members and under the direction of Maury Wolfe, continued to provide beautiful and lovingly-executed arrangements that immeasurably enhanced our services. While many particularly noticed their handiwork at Christmas and Easter, they were responsible throughout the year for exceptional arrangements in the church—not only on Sundays but also for weddings and funerals.

Our Lay Readers continued to read lessons and prayers at our Sunday services, as well as at other services, weddings, and funerals. We had a number of new readers who were trained and joined with those already serving.

We had a small but faithful group of people serving as Acolytes and Crucifers at our services. We always need more people for this important work, so, if you are interested, please contact staff member Ayana Pineiro or me.

Our usher corps was once again coordinated by Jim Goodner and led by a faithful group of head ushers. We are always in need of additional ushers, so please let Jim or me know if you are interested.

Our Vergers assisted in all areas of worship and were a great help in coordinating those worship ministries so that everything ran smoothly in our services. They also were essential in providing leadership at the training sessions for those who served in various worship capacities. We had one Verger step down, and several new Vergers were trained and joined our veterans.

We have a very dedicated, but small, group of folks who operate our sound and/or live-streaming systems during services. These positions are crucial to the smooth operation of our services. If you have interest in being trained for either of these, please contact me.

The ever-popular Boar's Head Festival is our gift to the community, as well as a way for many members of our parish family to work together on a large-scale project. The 2019 performances were well received by appreciative audiences.

The Bethesda Choir continued to provide music for our 11:00 a.m. services, and a quartet of those singers helped support the hymns and service music at our 9:00 a.m. services. Concerts and choral services during 2019 included our continuing series of First-Sunday Evensongs, each preceded by a half-hour recital. Other highlights included a Service of Advent Lessons and Carols, the annual Christmas Concert and Community Carol Sing, and a Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harold E. Pysher, Associate for Music & Liturgy
As ever, I am humbled to serve among the Associates and congregation of Bethesda-by-the-Sea. We are blessed with such dedicated disciples such an abundance of gifts, that the work of the Gospel is a blessing in this thin place, and Christ’s love and grace are the qualities that characterize our work.

Suzanne Crawford and Michael Smyser remain co-chairs for Bethesda Cares. The Shepherd program is increasingly strong, and they do their work quietly and behind the scenes, assisting the clergy in providing care for parishioners as needed. The meal ministry continues, under the guidance of the Shepherds, as do an array of ministries created and maintained in order to care for the members of this community and beyond. The Daughters of the King has returned to Bethesda under the leadership of Georgie Skover, Suzanne Crawford, and The Rev. Cecie Titcomb, and they continue to go from strength to strength in providing a community for women of faith who are committed to praying for and building up the Kingdom of God in this place. I am grateful for all those who minister beneath the umbrella of Bethesda Cares and am humbled by their dedication to the Gospel.

The past year has been another rich and active year in Christian formation for Bethesda. Greg Knight has tirelessly led a year of activities and wonderful experiences for children and youth, assisted by a strong team of volunteers. We have maintained a full and varied schedule of Sunday morning forums for adult formation, and The Middle Way has gathered its own rhythm and remains strong and deep, feeding body, mind, and soul in the middle of our various weekly activities. The Rt. Rev. Robert C. Wright, Bishop of Atlanta, led our Lenten Retreat, where he asked us to lead like Jesus led, and Robin Bradley Hansel, Veriditas-trained labyrinth facilitator, led our Advent Retreat in December, in which she guided us in walking pilgrimages, including the canvas replica of the Chartres Cathedral labyrinth that Bethesda owns and rolled out for the retreat weekend. Lois Clemente ably chairs the Formation Committee.

Outreach at Bethesda continues in earnest. Funded by the hard work of the staff and volunteers at The Church Mouse, our outreach to the community around the corner and around the world is allocated in the three areas of education, food, and shelter, and totaled $611K in 2019, including $246K in grants. Feeding in February was a rousing success, raising $82K to benefit the Palm Beach County Food Bank and gathering nearly 400 bags of non-perishables for True Fast Ministries. The mentorship program at Lake Worth High School continues to better the lives of young people, and we have added deserving students at Glades Central High School, under the leadership of Jodie Payne and Laura Schlett, for a total of 28 students in the program altogether. Bethesda generously gave $50K toward the Bishop’s Appeal for Relief after the devastation of Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas. Our feeding ministry at St. George’s Center and our volunteers at Opportunity, Inc. involve dozens of Bethesdans, and their work has been tireless and generous. Outreach, the human-to-human, practical exercise of spreading the love of Jesus, remains a priority for us at Bethesda-by-the-Sea, and I am grateful for the prayerful dedication of so many in making Jesus’ love known.

I am so blessed to build the Kingdom of God in this place and ask your prayers as we continue to our ministries together.

Respectfully,

The Rev. Burl Salmon, Associate for Christian Education, Pastoral Care, and Outreach
I've now been at Bethesda for more than a year and a half. I'm grateful to all who have helped me to grow into this wonderful and challenging vocation, and to all those who have invited me into their lives. I can't imagine a better place to start my work as a priest.

As I looked back at 2019, I reflected on the sheer number of things we do in a year. There's the regular rhythm of our life together: Sunday Eucharists and monthly Evensong, funerals and weddings, confirmations and baptisms, Sunday forums, weekday Eucharists, and Wednesday nights at Middle Way. There are the special events: the blessing of the animals, Advent and Christmas, Boar’s Head, Empty Bowls, Lenten lunches, Holy Week and Easter. And there is the unexpected: hurricanes and lightning strikes and the sudden tragedies that parishioners sometimes face. And always there are people working behind the scenes to make it all possible, setting the altar, feeding the hungry, proofreading leaflets, planning events, and doing the hundreds of other things that undergird our church and our work in the community.

It’s an honor to play a role in the daily life here at Bethesda. I’ve had at least some involvement in everything I listed above. I’m also responsible for our biweekly services at Noreen McKeen, which are small and simple, and always a joy.

As we move into 2020, I’m most excited about the 50th Anniversary of the Church Mouse, which we’ll celebrate on March 14th. The Church Mouse makes possible most of the outreach work that Bethesda does, and it has been doing its work for half a century. From 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. on the 14th, we’ll celebrate with food and music, activities for kids, and a few surprises. Be sure to save the date!

The Rev. Margaret McGhee, Curate
From the Director of Children and Youth Ministries

I was reminded at our recent baptisms on the first Sunday after the Epiphany that we are the products of a loving, life-giving God. The water that we use at baptism symbolizes that life-giving nature that we are called to. We are renewed by living water. We are sustained by living water. The water of baptism calls us to our essential character as Christians, a new creation beloved by God who seeks to serve that loveliness in others.

We have spent quite a bit of time in our Children and Youth programs this year talking about who we are as a community in relationship to the images of water that surround us. In our younger classes we have been learning more about the stories depicted on the stained glass windows on the north side of the nave like Jonah and the whale, Peter walking on water, and the disciples filling their nets with fish. Our high school youth have been working on a mission project that’s all about making connections between our ministry context “by the sea” and our brothers and sisters who live on the San Antonio River, a very different “by the sea”.

To help teach these lessons we have a great group of teachers beginning with Bobbie Martin who works with our 3 & 4 year old Pre-K Class. Our Lower Elementary (Kindergarten-2nd Grade) Class is taught by Madie Anderson. Finally, our Upper Elementary (3rd Grade-5th Grade) Class is taught by Ashley Fogwell. Our curriculum is rotation-based meaning children learn one story over the course of a month through various learning styles including art, science, cooking, and games.

In addition to our children’s offerings we also feature a 6th/7th Grade Pre-Confirmation Class taught by Raphael Clemente and Kirsten Plymel that asks tough questions of faith and life. Our 8th Grade Confirmation Class, taught by Beth Cole and myself, builds off of those questions by engaging the beliefs of our young people. And our 9th-12th Grade Mission Group mentioned above is led by Cody Fogwell, Lois Clemente, and Kelly Ogiesoba. Together, this group works on seeking and serving Christ in others culminating with a summer mission trip to San Antonio, TX where they will serve at a special needs center for children, work with the parks department to beautify the headwaters of the San Antonio river, and work with homeless families looking to get back on their feet.

In addition to our Sunday offerings for children and youth we have the Little Way for Kindergarten through 5th Grade on Wednesday evenings led by our Children and Youth Ministries Coordinator, Jessica Hitchcock, where children learn more about what it means to be an active participant in the worship life of our community and our Bethesda Youth Group, a fellowship offering for our 6th through 12th graders. Together, Jessica and I also lead a children’s worship time during the Liturgy of the Word at the 9:00 am worship service. And, of course, we have our traditional fun event offerings for all ages including our Christmas Pageant, Spring Carnival and Easter Egg Hunt, Mardi Gras, Trivia Night, Peanut Island Camping Trip, Vacation Bible School, and more.

It can be said that when it comes to Christian life, water is thicker than blood. That is because our unity in the loving, life-giving community of God connects us not only by this sea but by every sea.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Knight, Director of Children and Youth Ministries
2019 Necrology

Tamara Tula Bennatti
Elda Mary Digiuni Chisholm
Louise Griffin Collins
Kenneth Avril Forde
James Addison Garrison
Carol Elsie Gesner
Isabelle Johnson Channer Hill
George Albert Kasprzyk
Marcia Quale Chellis Kay
John MacGregor Kindred
Michael James Lazzaro
Kathlyn Swartz Maguire
Samuel William Meek, Jr.
Eleanore Jane Micelli
Willfred Jack Noble
Donna Sandra Browning Skeen
Malcolm Van de Water
John Charles Wain
Mary R. Weinberger
Allen West Whittemore

2019 Bequests

We give thanks to God for the generosity of these beloved members of our parish family who this year provided for Bethesda’s future life and ministry with a legacy gift:

David Cluett and Nick Kindred

2019 Services

Baptisms .................................................. 27
Confirmations, Receptions .......................... 14
Marriages ..................................................... 11
Burials .......................................................... 21
Holy Eucharists ........................................... 254
Holy Eucharists (Private) .............................. 129
Morning Prayers ......................................... 20
Complines .................................................... 26
Stations of the Cross, Good Friday ............. 1
Evensongs .................................................... 7

Transitions

Baptism ............................................................ 27
Confirmation ................................................... 14
Transferred In ................................................. 60
Transferred Out ............................................. 0
Lost by Death .................................................. 20
Income Statement

2019 total operating revenue was $3.49 million, an annual increase of $228,000 largely due to increased restricted gifts for outreach, including Bahama relief. Annual fund campaign gifts totaled $2.09 million, an increase of only $40,000 and $244,000 short of our fundraising goal.

2019 total operating expenses were $3.66 million, an annual increase of $280,000 including an increase of $144,000 in outreach. Total operating expenses were $28,000 below budget. The total net actual operating deficit was $171,000, as compared with an operating deficit of $46,000 in 2018.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUMMARY STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Church of Bethesda-by-the-Sea - Operating Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Period Ending December 31</td>
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<td>($ thousands)</td>
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<td>$2,001</td>
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<td>Building Endowment Draw</td>
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<td>136</td>
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<td>127</td>
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<td>Other Revenue</td>
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<td>595</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>613</td>
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<td>2,879</td>
<td>2,855</td>
<td>3,035</td>
<td>3,311</td>
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<td>1,496</td>
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<td>1,156</td>
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<td>3,277</td>
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<th>NET OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</th>
<th>106</th>
<th>163</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>68</th>
<th>34</th>
<th>-46</th>
<th>-170</th>
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<td>Prior year adjustment</td>
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Net
Balance Sheet
Total endowment and other investment funds increased by $1.77 million (10.3%) to $19.05 million in 2019. Bethesda’s financial position remains strong despite an unfavorable year in operations. Previous surpluses and good investment growth offset the loss. However, increased revenue will be necessary to maintain the programs and ministries in the long run.

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<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
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<td>328</td>
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<td>922</td>
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<td>Other Current Assets</td>
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<td>439</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>448</td>
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<td>1,530</td>
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<td>Restoration &amp; Preservation</td>
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<td>27,048</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23,821</td>
<td>23,660</td>
<td>24,280</td>
<td>27,048</td>
<td>24,697</td>
<td>25,983</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Mrs. Dwight Miller
Mr. and Mrs. Peter A. Miller
Mr. Wilfred Mills
Mr. Jim Miragliotta
Ms. Michelle Miragliotta
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Ms. Doreen Mogavero
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Mrs. Martha Beck Moore
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Ms. Tina Morgan
Mr. and Mrs. John Morris, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Mulroy
Dr. Sandra Munoz
Ms. Patricia Munson-Duncan
Mr. James B. Murphy III
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Murphy
Ms. Stephanie Murphy
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Murry
Mr. and Mrs. Harry Musikas
Mrs. Loren S. Myer
Mr. and Mrs. James L. Myers, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth G. Myers
Ms. Robin Neary-Fitzgerald
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Nelson
Mr. and Mrs. Warwick Neville
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Newbery
Mrs. Patricia Nix
Mr. Thomas A. Norris, Jr.
Mrs. R. Kendall Nottingham
Mr. and Mrs. Robert O'Brien
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas G. O'Brien III
Mr. and Mrs. Warren O'Brien
Ms. Pamela Fannning O'Connor
Ms. Ite O'Higgins-Young
Mr. and Mrs. Dennis O'Kain
Ms. Clare O'Keefe
Mr. Aaron O'Neill
Mr. and Mrs. Patrick O'Neill
Mr. and Mrs. Chris Ordway
Mr. Robin Owens and Mrs. Anne Obolensky
Mr. and Mrs. John Pangborn
Mrs. William G. Pannill
Mr. and Mrs. Ernest C. Papas
Mrs. Monique Pardo and Mr. Shay Pope
Mr. and Mrs. Ellis J. Parker III
Ms. Shelley A. Parker
Mr. Richard Parks
Ms. Judith Pate
Dr. and Mrs. David F. Paulson
Ms. Diana Paxton
Mr. and Mrs. Bruce L. Payne
Mrs. Josephyne McC. Payne
Ms. Carrie Pazda
Mr. and Mrs. Howard Perkins
Mr. Thomas Perry III
Mrs. Gayle Petersen
Mrs. Sally Petito
Mrs. Christine Philips
Mrs. Sallie Phillips
Dr. Margarita and Mr. Robert Pinkos
Ms. Kirsten Plymel
The Rev. Robert Pollard III
Mr. David Porges
Mr. Knox Porter
Mr. William C. Powers
Ms. Nancy Prall
Mrs. Malcolm S. Pray, Jr.
Mrs. Ailene Price
Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Prior
Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Prosser
Mr. Horton R. Prudden, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Louis C. Pryor
Mrs. Constance N. Purcell
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Purnell
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Purrington
Mr. Harold E. Pysher
Mr. Gary Ramsay
Ms. Celeste Jones
Mr. and Mrs. Dietmar Reichenbacher
Lady Susan Willis Reickert and
Mr. Erick Reickert
Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Reighard
Lt. Col. and Mrs. Charles Reilly, Jr.
Mrs. Robert Rewey
Mr. and Mrs. Robert R. Reyes
Mr. and Mrs. C. Brooks Ricca, Jr.
Mrs. Carl H. Richter

Dr. C. Michael Ridgdill
Mr. and Mrs. Louis Rini
Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Ritman
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Roberts
Mrs. Sara Hornor and Mr. James Roberts
Ms. Jean S. Roberts
Miss. Taylor Roebuck- Hayden
Mr. and Mrs. Herb Roemmele
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Rogers
Mr. and Mrs. C. Tanner Rose, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Walter M. Ross
Mr. and Mrs. Charles M. Royce
Mrs. Stanley Rumbough
Mrs. Kristine Runco
Mr. Maurizio C. Russo
Mr. Jack Rutherford
Mr. and Mrs. John C. Sallee
The Rev. W. Burley S. Salmon and
Mr. Robert C. J. Henkel
Ms. Denise A. Sandell
Mrs. Sarah Sappenfield
Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Sargeant
Mr. and Mrs. John D Sayer
Mrs. Frances Scaife
Mr. and Mrs. Kyle Schlett
Mr. and Mrs. Albert P. Loening
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Schorr
Ms. Aniko Schott
Ms. Marijane Schrader
Mr. George and Mrs. Debbie Schram
Mr. and Mrs. John H. Schuler
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Schumacher
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Scott
Mr. Donald Scott, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Scott, Jr.
Mrs. Douglas Seaman
Mr. and Mrs. David K. Semadeni
Ms. Carol Sewell
Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Shafer
Mrs. Jonathan Shafer
Ms. Carol Shannon
Mr. John W. Shannon
Dr. Arun Sharma
Mr. Sanjiv Sharma
Ms. Carol Anne Sharp
Mr. Douglas Ian Shaw
Mr. and Mrs. Leif Sheehan
Mr. and Mrs. Rob Sherwood
Mrs. Francis A. Shields
Mr. and Mrs. Zachary K. Shipley
Ms. Janice Shoobridge
Miss Clare Shore
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Silva
Mr. F. Scott Fitz Simmons
Ms. Cynthia Simonson
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald L. Skates
Mr. Frank Skeen
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas M. Skelly III
Ms. Georgiel Skover
Mrs. Frank H. Sleuman, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Smith, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Don Smith
Mr. and Mrs. John Smith
Mrs. David S. Smith
Mr. Michael Smyser IV and Mr. John Varga
Mr. Dairell Johnson Snapp
Dr. and Mrs. James Snyder
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Sober
Ms. Janice E. Soergel
Mr. and Mrs. Jared Soper
Mrs. Bailey Sory
Mr. and Mrs. John B. Sory
Mrs. William Soter
Mrs. Arlene Sparks
Ms. Mary Speer and Ms. Victoria Van Pelt
Mr. John Sperry and Mr. Patrick Workinger
Mr. Henry Spiller
Mr. Roy L Spring
Mrs. Peter B. Stachelberg
Mr. and Mrs. Charles M. Staehle
Mr. and Mrs. Fred E. Staley, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Lee Stanfield, Sr.
Mr. Michael C. Stanley
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Steele, Jr.
Mr. Michael Steetle
Mrs. Andrea Steinwender
Mrs. John Stepan
Ms. Sherri Stephenson
Mrs. Sandra Sterren
Ms. Arlene Stevens

Mr. Campbell Steward
Ms. Carol Stewart
Mr. Douglas A. Stockham
Mr. and Mrs. William E. Stout
Mrs. Phyllis Strain
Ms. Marion H. Stratton
The Rev. Canon Dr. Gregory Straub
Mrs. Brenda Neubauer Straus
Mr. Ivars E. Strautmanis
Mrs. Christine S. P. Strawbridge
Mr. A. Michael Sullivan, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Sullivan
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Sullivan
Mrs. Ann Summers
Mrs. Carol Ann L. Sutton
Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Swanson
Ms. Robin Sweet
Mrs. Lisa Swift
Mr. and Mrs. Trent Swift
Ms. Greta Sybert
Mrs. Glenn Tagatz
Ms. Charlot Taylor
Ms. Margaretta Taylor
Miss Mariette Taylor
Dr. and Mrs. Paul J. Taylor-Smith
Mr. Thomas Thaler
Mr. and Mrs. David Thayer
Mr. Alfred Thompson
Mr. and Mrs. Joe B. Thompson
Mr. Robert C. Thompson
Ms. Patricia Clary Throckmorton
The Rev. Dr. Cecily J. Titcomb and
Mr. E. Rodman Titcomb, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. William H. Told, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. John Trent
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Treuhold
Mr. and Mrs. Luis Treutel-Guiterrez
Mrs. Benita Trinkle
Mr. and Mrs. Timo Turkki
Mr. Gregory Turner
Mr. Robb Turner
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Turner, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Wallace R. Turner
Mr. and Mrs. William Tylander, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Michael E. Tyler
Mrs. Ava Van de Water
Mr. and Mrs. Frederic Van der Grift
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Van der Grift
Mr. and Mrs. Cornelis van Hoek
Mrs. Charles B.P. Van Pelt
Ms. Susan Van Pelt
Mr. and Mrs. William Van Wyk III
Ms. Constance Vanvalkenburg
Mr. and Mrs. Royall Victor III
The Rev. and Mrs. Clayton Waddell
Mrs. Yvonne Wagner
Mr. and Mrs. William Walde
Mrs. David Walker
Mrs. Nancy Walker
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Wandoff, Jr.
Cdr. and Mrs. James G. Ward, USN (Ret.)
Ms. Rachel Ward
Mr. Andrew Watson
Mrs. Susan Watts
Mr. and Mrs. R. John Wean III
Mr. David A. Webster
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Webster III
Mrs. Flonell Wentz
Mr. John H. Wert
Dr. Graham Whitfield
Mrs. Allen Whittemore
Mrs. Beverly Wilbur
Mr. and Mrs. William Williams
Mr. and Mrs. George Williamson
Mr. Peter S. Wilson
Mr. and Mrs. Ricky Wilson
Mr. William Wing
Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Winseck
Mr. and Mrs. William R. Wister
Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Witzenberger
Mrs. William Wolbach
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Wolfe
Dr. Linda Cox
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wood
Mr. and Mrs. Watson Wright
Mrs. Clinton R. Wyckoff
Mr. and Mrs. James C. Wynns
Mr. Ivan Yager
Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Yaw II
Mr. Charles O. Yoder
Ms. Diane Yost
Mr. Mark Young
Ms. Neely Young
Mr. and Mrs. Philip Young
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald F. Young
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas E. Zacharias
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Zingaro
Mr. Fred Zrinscak, Jr.
Call to Order................................................................. The Rector
Opening Prayer and Necrology............................................. The Rev. Margaret McGhee
Acceptance of Minutes....................................................... The Rector
Election of New Vestry Members...................... The Rector and Beth Cole, Nominating Committee Chair
Finance and Stewardship Report ................. Matt Lorentzen, Chair, Finance Sub-Committee
Junior Warden’s Report ................................................. Constance N. Purcell, Junior Warden
Rector’s Address ............................................................... The Rev. James R. Harlan
Other Business................................................................. The Rector
Closing Prayer and Blessing............................................... The Rev. Burl Salmon

Tellers

Bill Cini, Marcia Cini
Jethro Hurt, Malcolm Lax
Minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting

Call to Order: The Rev. James Harlan called the 130th annual meeting to order at 9:15 a.m., noting that there was a quorum present.

Acceptance of Minutes
Motion: A motion to accept the Minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting included in the packet for the 2019 Annual Meeting by Pat McGill second by Jim Myers. The Motion passed unanimously.

Vestry
Outgoing Vestry: Father James thanked the Outgoing Vestry members Beth Cole (Senior Warden), Kitty Lanier, Charles McGill and Jodie Payne. Zach Shipley is stepping down as Treasurer as he has been nominated to the Vestry. Thanks to Wendy Victor who has stepped down from the Vestry. Wendy’s remaining term will be fulfilled by C. Tanner Rose. Ongoing Vestry members Connie Purcell, Peggy Johnson, Sandy Burnett, Paul Coombs, Raphael Clemente, Charles Hagy, Jr. and Michelle Diffenderfer.

Beth Cole presented the Nominating Committee’s recommendations for Vestry.

Election of New Vestry Members
Vestry Nominations: Motion to Elect New Vestry Members Richard Crone, Becky Myers, Zachary Shipley and Maury Wolfe by Raphael Clemente and second by Warren Chase, the Motion was unanimously approved by the meeting attendees.

Motion: Beth Cole presented the nominations for delegates to the Diocesan Convention as Bill Cini, Jan Shoobraidge, Michael Smyser and Sandra Coombs as Alternate. A Motion to accept the nominees by acclamation was made by Becky Myers, second Mike Victor, unanimously elected.

Finance and Stewardship Report: Father James gave an overall financial report that showed contributions totaled $2.08 million. Total expenses around the same as 2017. New line items added to budget for evangelism ministry, to continue with support of Fellowship through Sunday breakfasts and Middle Way dinners and the enhancement of staff benefits to include family health coverage. 2019 budget of $3.56 million summarized by program. 2018 Capital Expenditures included Facade Restoration, sound system, HVAC electrical feed, lighting, bell control and the Rectory Courtyard door. Presentation of the investments and endowments funds - total of $14,705,000.

Stewardship Report: Paul Coombs thanked everyone who pledged and gave in 2018. In 2018 we had 528 households pledge up from 424 in 2017. Last month of 2017 had the biggest giving. In 2018 with the markets down that was not realized to same extent. Need more work in planned giving. Want to increase our budget from $3.1 to 4 million over five years for 2019 we are at $3.56 million. Showed the funds as they come in over a year. Reminded everyone to put pledges in at the 11:00 a.m. service and asked for everyone to increase their giving this year.

Buildings and Grounds Report: Father James gave an update on the projects that were completed in 2018 and those that are underway for 2019.

Rector’s Address: Father James addressed the Meeting. He discussed the Celtic Pilgrimage and St Francis of Assisi youth pilgrimage. Discussed the criteria to be a Communicant in Good Standing. Father James Want to recognize three people who Bethesda would not be the same without. Father James then said he was presenting the Rector’s Cross to these three people who know what it means to be communicants in good standing Mike and Wendy Victor and Edie Dixon. Discussed Feeding in February programs. Discussed the Church Mouse receipts of over one million dollars this past year, recognized Pat Reichenbach and Jodie Payne. Discussed Evangelism and thanked members for their support. Father James thanked Beth Cole and Connie Purcell and the members of the Vestry and Officers. Father James thanked Hal, Fred, Burl and Margaret. Father James also thanked Cecie, Elizabeth and Clay for being assisting clergy. Thanked all the Committees for their work. Father James also thanked Eli and Hannah.

Adjournment: The Rev. Margaret McGhee gave the closing prayer and blessing. Meeting was adjourned by Father James at 10.19 a.m.
Bethesda’s Mission is to experience the clear and strong presence of God and to understand and spread Christ’s teachings through collective worship, learning, and service.
Clergy and Staff

Rector and Associates
The Rev. James R. Harlan, Rector
Harold E. Pysher, Associate for Music & Liturgy
The Rev. Burl Salmon, Associate for Christian Education, Pastoral Care, and Outreach
Fred E. Staley, Associate for Administration
The Rev. Margaret E. McGhee, Curate

Non-Stipendiary Assisting Clergy
The Rev. Canon Elizabeth R. Geitz, Assisting Priest
The Rev. W. Frisby Hendricks III, Assisting Priest
The Rev. Dr. Cecily J. Titcomb, Deacon for Spiritual Direction
The Rev. Clayton B. Waddell, Deacon for Port Ministry

Staff
Program Director
Greg Knight, Director of Children & Youth Ministries

Coordinators
Turia Roebuck-Hayden, Outreach & Development Coordinator
Jessica Reed Hitchcock, Children & Youth Ministries Coordinator
Douglas Kwoka, Communications Coordinator
April Lawrence, Evangelism, Fellowship & Membership Coordinator
Ayana Pineiro, Worship & Pastoral Care Coordinator

Administrative Staff
Priscilla Reynoso, Office Coordinator & Rector’s Assistant

Sextons
Robert Mancuso, Sexton for Liturgical Support
Keith Risley, Sexton for Grounds
Jonathan Rivera, Sexton for Hospitality
William Thompson III, Sexton for Building Preservation & Lead Sexton

The Church Mouse and The Shoppe Staff
Daisy Alvarez, General Manager for Retail Operations
Evaristo Riestra, General Manager of the Church Mouse
Rosie Cartagena, Seamstress
Jonathan Goodine, Receiving Specialist

The Church of Bethesda-by-the-Sea
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