



St. Cross

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1818 Monterey Boulevard · Hermosa Beach, CA 90254 · 310.376.8989 · www.stcross.org

109th Annual Meeting
January 27, 2019
11:30 a.m.



Current Vestry Members

with the number of years remaining for their term of office

Seth Barnes	2
Eileen Mathews	2
Konrad Schreier	2
Marilyn Young	2
Sharon Holmes	1
Troy Konis	1
Kathy Shinkle	1
Jack Tedford	1
David Charlton	0
Peter Coote	0
Al Dickinson	0
Barbara Harris-Holdrege	0



Agenda

- Opening Prayer
- Appointment by the Rector of the Clerk of the meeting
- Approval of the Minutes, January 28, 2018
- Report of the Nominating Committee
- Introduction of Nominees
- Nominations from the floor
- Election of Vestry persons, Delegates to Diocesan Convention and Endowment Committee
- Rector's Report
- Recognition of outgoing Vestry Members
- Review of the 2018 Budget and Presentation of 2019 Budget
- Outgoing Sr. Warden's Report
- Parish Reports
- Announcement of 2019 Vestry
- Closing Benediction



Minutes of the 108 Annual Meeting January 28, 2018

The meeting was **called to order** in Parker Hall at 11:35am by the Rev. Rachel Nyback. Then the Rev. Robin Denney gave the **opening prayer**. Patsy Brierley was appointed secretary for the meeting.

Approval of the **minutes** from the 2017 Annual Meeting was moved, seconded and passed.

Nominating Committee – Vestry

It was announced that at the January Vestry meeting Peter Coote was approved by the Vestry to complete Linda Harmon-Butts final year on the Vestry since she and George have moved to Boise, ID. Nominated for 3-year terms are Marilyn Young, Konrad Schreier, Seth Barnes, and Eileen Mathews. Bill Soper nominated Bruce Dolph from the floor. Ballots were then passed out so an election could take place.

Diocesan Convention

Nominations were taken from the floor for delegates. Nominated were Marilyn Young, Dan Wilson, Robbin Ladd, Patsy Brierley, Susan Tsutsumi.

Nominated as alternates were Barbara Harris-Holdrege, Walt Young, Laura Geisel. The slates for delegates and alternates was moved, seconded and passed.

Endowment Committee

It was moved, seconded and passed to re-elect Scott Gauch and Mike Spitzer to three year terms.

Rector's Report

The Rev. Rachel expressed thankfulness for everything – she has an almost totally new staff. She updated us on the Celina Maldonado case – St. Cross will probably recoup \$28,000 of the \$32,000 taken from St. Cross. We will also be reimbursed for all fees (audit and legal). Unfortunately Temple Shalom will not be able to recover as much because their insurance is different in regard to Celina not being their employee. Each instance of theft was handled separately, thus incurring deductible for each. At this time, they have asked and the Vestry has granted \$8,000 relief in rent to help Temple with their losses. Total taken from both congregations was over \$70,000.

Vestry's Vision – “I stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord. Renew them in our day, in our day make them known.” Hab. 3:2
Our **Capital Campaign** will include refurbishment of the church's exterior and the Christus Rex window (known as the “Jesus” window to some people), redo of the organ including a new console, updating of the Education Bldg including a lift, and, if money remains, improvements to the kitchen. The campaign calls for \$1.5 million to be paid over a 3-year period. So far we have commitments for \$882,500 and we need to raise \$617,500 more. The tentative budget includes:

Architect	\$30,000
Ed Bldg.	275,000
Church structure	400,000
Church interior	15,000
Storage	15,000
Organ	300,000
Windows	80,000
Kitchen (??)	125,000
Interest, fees, etc.	(unknown at this time)
<u>Change orders</u>	<u>100,000</u>
Estimated Total	\$1.5 million

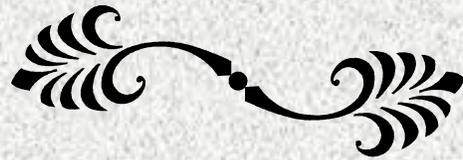
Vestry election results – new Vestry members are Seth Barnes, Eileen Mathews, Konrad Schreier, Marilyn Young.

Treasurer's Report – Jim Sullivan is our treasurer, although he is not on the Vestry, and he fielded budget questions about clergy salaries 2017 v. 2018 – difference in people; parish life -- \$10,000 contributed to Bp. Bruno retirement dinner; Capital Campaign; Special Repairs –was used for rectory in 2017; insurance being re-evaluated; finally filing claim for organ fire; outside usage of facilities – donations are made by most groups according to their situations; Temple Shalom pays a fixed amount.

Closing benediction given by the Rev. Will Stanley.

Meeting adjourned at 1:15pm.

Respectfully submitted, Patsy Brierley, appointed secretary



**Reports by
Clergy
and
Senior Warden**

*Our vision is
a community transformed
through the Holy Spirit*

Senior Warden

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. This past year at St. Cross has certainly been a roller-coaster ride.

- We completed an incredibly successful Capital Campaign, then we discovered water damage to both the church and the education building beyond what we had anticipated.
- We gained Rev. Nathan only because we lost Rev. Will.
- We were able to assist refugees Lana and Artem partially because our long relationship with 1736 House came to an end.
- We finally got a new organ, but—in the worst of the worst—our beloved organist and choirmaster John Tveit, who had “made do” for so long and then shepherded the project, died unexpectedly before he could play it.

Although lows may help us appreciate and savor highs, my sincere wish for 2019 is that the ride be less precipitous.

Much of The Vestry’s work this year focused on the nitty-gritty of the Capital Campaign and then the building project. In particular, the organ and the elevator generated fervent debate before decisions were reached. Other Vestry committees this year worked on making the St. Cross campus a center for the entire community (A new rental contract was developed.) and on continuing to improve communication (A revised parish directory was ready by St. Cross Day.). And, of course, we continued to meet the urgent need of parishioners for fresh doughnuts, especially maple bars, every Sunday.

Thank you to Junior Warden Sharon Holmes, Treasurer Konrad Schreier, Clerk Marilyn Young and the other Vestry members—Seth Barnes, David Charlton, Peter Coote, Al Dickinson, Barbara Harris-Holdrege, Troy Konis, Eileen Mathews and Jack Tedford—for their deep caring and hard work throughout this tumultuous year.

Thank you also to the members of St. Cross for all that you do in the parish and in the wider community, and to our dedicated staff—Trudy Bush, David Dawson, Judi Kelly, Merrill Whatley and Cameron Johnson—for making everything run smoothly.

And, finally, very special thanks to Rev. Rachel, Rev. Robin, Rev. Nathan and Rev. Patti for making St. Cross a very special, very sacred place where God is glorified and Christ’s love is shown in work and play and where, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we can endure and grow through the best and the worst of times.

Thank you,

Kathy Shinkle
Senior Warden

Rector Report

1 Corinthians 16:13—*Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong.*

This past year has been one of challenges, both expected and unexpected. And yet, as we are St. Cross, I know we have stood firm in our faith, have been courageous and have been strong.

In staff meeting we always start with people and pastoral care first. So I will start with changes to our staff. In May the Rev. Will Stanley left us for All Saints', Beverly Hills. He had talked with me about the move and I thought it was the right move for him, even if the timing wasn't terrific for St. Cross. I started to search for an associate throughout the summer months, but most graduating seminarians already had jobs. Nathan Biorstad was hired the end of August. He comes to us with three years of ordination, yet we were his first full time parish position. Then the unexpected happened on All Saints' Day when we learned of the death of John Tveit due to a sudden heart attack. John served 22 years as our musical director and has been dearly missed. After John's funeral a committee was formed to develop and follow a process to select St. Cross's next musical director. On a happier note, our parishioner Laurel Coote was ordained to the transitional diaconate and started to work at St. Francis, Palos Verdes.

In January we settled the amount owed to us by Celina Maldonado as a result of her theft from us during her employment. Temple Shalom is still working out their case with the DA and her lawyer. Additionally, we started banking with Farmers and Merchants Bank, which is local and wants to work with churches and non-profits in the area. We moved our accounts and took our construction line of credit from F&M.

We wrapped up the capital campaign in August and raised over \$1,577,000. You can read the details in the Capital Campaign and Improvements report. We began construction on the church and education building. The new organ console was installed and was first used at John Tveit's funeral. We will work on the elevator, stained glass windows and kitchen in 2019.

In June 1736 House told us that after 40 years, they were breaking their lease as they had built a new building in Mar Vista that better suited their needs. This house has had few infrastructure improvements over the past 40 years. A committee is developing options for the building and will present its findings to the Vestry in 2019.

At the August Vestry meeting a member of the Diocesan staff was present and mentioned the need for two refugees to have a place to live, an address, so they could be released from the Adelanto Detention Center. The Vestry immediately realized we could house someone temporarily in the 1736 building. Rev. Robin and Rev. Patti led a team of cleaners and fixers to make the house somewhat more livable and cleaned it top to bottom. Furniture and furnishing poured in from the congregation. Lana Samokhina was released in late September. Artem Lagutin, her husband was released in late October. They continue to reside at 1736 until the Vestry decides about what to do with the building. A support team of St. Cross members has helped them with appointments and working on getting jobs. We have partnered with the IRIS, the Diocesan refugee resettlement program, to help with other needs such as filing for government assistance while waiting for work permits to come though.

Rector Report (Continued)

We have continued our mutual relationship with Temple Shalom and this year signed a five-year contract with a further five-year renewal. The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Los Angeles approved this contract. Thank you Jack Tedford for taking the lead on the legal side of updating our contract with his counterpart from Temple Shalom. Our Vestry met with their board for the first time in summer. And we joined Temple Shalom for their Shabbat service after the gun violence that took place at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. We look forward to more shared events and service projects. Rabbi August and Rev. Rachel will co-teach this year's Lent Program.

I must once again thank the Vestry, which has worked very hard, diligently, and methodically to make decisions concerning staffing, capital improvements, raising money, stewardship, sponsoring refugees, rental property improvements and more. I appreciate their dedication to seeing the mission and ministry of St. Cross move forward.

Last, but not least, thank you to the amazing St. Cross Staff: Rev. Robin, Rev. Nathan, Rev. Patti, Trudy, Dave, Merrill and Judi for your ongoing teamwork and support to make St. Cross a spiritual home and springboard for outreach and ministry in our community. You are a pleasure to work with every day.

Yours in Christ,
Rachel+

Capital Campaign and Improvements

In 2017 St. Cross Vestry voted to embark on a capital campaign to rebuild the organ, refurbish the stained glass windows, make structural repairs to the church and education building, install and elevator, and update the kitchen to meet the needs of those who work in there.

VIP Consulting was hired in 2017 to help with the campaign and we reached our goal of \$1.5 million in pledges in the middle of 2018. We worked with Farmers and Merchants Bank to secure a line of credit up to \$1,000,000, as needed for construction, over a one-year period. Many parishioners have paid pledges up front, so the hope is that we will not need to go even remotely that far into the line of credit.

Van Crest construction, which did the work on the church 10 years ago, gave a bid and, based on our prior experience with them, was hired to make the repairs on the church and education building. They were to take out the brick where the rebar rusting had split it, clean the rebar and replace the brick. This has happened. As the work started, we discovered three major unknown structural issues. The first was that the gutters along the roof line of the education building never had flashing that went under the roof tiles, so the wood that held the roof was rotted a foot or so up from the edge and had to be replaced. Concurrent with this was the fact that the beams that support the upper deck had not had flashing installed to keep the water out, were completely rotted and weren't actually bolted to each other, which explained why the deck was sagging. ALL beams were replaced, along with the handrails along the deck. On the church it was discovered that the brick (two layers with rebar in-between) had delaminated from one another, making our structure unsafe in the long run. In a twist of luck, thanks to technology, there are "hex screws" that can bind the brick back together. Additionally, the roof over the front entrance had been leaking copiously for years and was storing water in an opening above the entrance. All of the additional work resulted in change orders, most of which has been covered by our budget line item for overruns and change orders.

Sean O'Neal was hired to build and install a new console for our organ and revoice the existing pipes. The old console was removed after St. Cross Day and the new one, including all new wiring to meet updated electrical codes, was installed.

Bids for the kitchen continue to be a challenge. Van Crest has finally bid and in the early part of 2019 Dave Dawson, our facilities manager, will be working with the coffee guys, chefs, and kitchen caretakers to make sure the final work is prioritized by need.

We put off the refurbishing of the stained glass windows due to the extra construction worked needed. Work on restoring, refurbishing and securing all our stained glass will begin this February..

We are working to get city permits for the elevator. Construction should finish in 2019.

The Rev. Dr. Rachel Anne Nyback+

Associate for Pastoral Care

At one point in the life the Christ, Jesus turned to his followers and said, "Come to me, all you that weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11.28). This verse of Scripture can provide uncommon comfort and reassurance of God's involvement in our lives. At St. Cross, the hallmark of the Pastoral Care Ministries at St. Cross, which I have the privilege to oversee, is focused on communicating Christ's love and care for us and those around us.

When I joined you in mid-August of 2018, I was delighted to be a part of your community of faith. As I met with many of you, whether during Coffee Hour or in your homes, your compassion and care was touching. You shared with me your concerns about what was going in your life and what was happening the lives of those that you loved.

It was this level of sharing and transparency that I appreciate most at St. Cross. I felt like when you shared with me your burdens and your struggles that, together, we were lifting them up to God. It was in our being present together that Christ's love was expressed. I believe that you are also inviting others into the inner realms of your interior world so that you can be known and know others, just as Christ knows us and fully loves us.

One of the things that has struck me the most during my time at St. Cross is how many great people are involved in the various ministries that I either am involved with or oversee. Whether working with the Lay Eucharistic Visitors, Listening Hearts group, Sociable Seniors, Neighbor 2 Neighbor, Take Them A Meal, Family Promise, or Laundry Love, each group is filled with caring and loving people. If you are looking for an opportunity to deepen your relationships with other and to express God's unconditional love, come and talk to me.

As I consider what 2019 holds for St. Cross, I am excited. I am looking forward to continuing to develop and deepen my relationships with you. I am also looking forward to continued opportunities to preach on Sunday, teach a Bible Study, and celebrate the Eucharist.

Christ is continually beckoning us to come near, to be known, and to trust him (with our burdens or joys or whatever else we might be experiencing). It is my delight to help facilitate increasing our awareness of God's presence, God's work in our midst, and God's work in the community in which we live.

Rev. Nathan Biornstad

Associate for Christian Formation

In 2018, I celebrated my one-year anniversary of coming to St. Cross, and my one-year anniversary of ordination to the priesthood. This community has helped form me as a priest. You have given me feedback on my ministry and preaching, and you have invited me into your lives. What a gift it has been!

It has been a blessing to work with such an amazing team of Sunday School teachers who dedicate not only their time, but also their care and their prayers for the children and youth of this community. They take time to get to know the children, and to support them. They practice lesson plans and stories, they support youth through chaperoning events, and talking with them about their lives. They have inspired me, as I have seen them through their time and their passion invest in the program and grow it this year.

The team that put on our VBS program this year was so dedicated and creative, the week was bursting with beauty, fun, wonder, and delight. The week was a wonderful success for our children who participated, and it was also a time of deepening faith and wonder for the adult and youth volunteers!

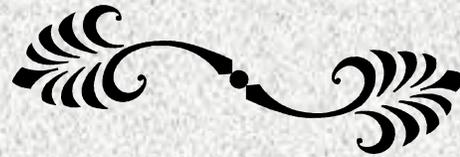
I've also been inspired by the parents of St. Cross this year, as I have seen them dedicate time and energy to come together and to share about their hopes and their lives, deepening connections between them, and building up our church community.

Our adult formation team this year, began a theme of "The Way of Love" offering programs not only to the group that traditionally gathers at 9am Sundays, but to the wider congregation in the form of book studies, and discussions. We also engaged in special study series introducing the bible, and connecting human rights to the Way of Love. The women's bible study has used a combination of poetry and scripture to deepen their creative reflection.

I am thankful for the way in which each of you participate in this community, giving of your time, your talent, and your resources. You come to meet God in this place, to learn, to deepen your relationship with God and with one another, and for strength, solace and inspiration to go out into the world each week and live your faith.

I pray in the coming year, we continue this journey of creativity, of faith, of hope, and of love in building up and serving our community.

Peace,
Rev. Robin Denney



Reports by Groups and Guilds

Core Values:

- *Enjoy a casual atmosphere with a traditional setting*
- *Nurture spiritual development of all generations*
- *Express Christ's love through hospitality and play*
- *Glorify God through serving others*
 - *A sacred space to be you*

Acolytes

Acolytes are an integral and important part of life and worship at St. Cross. It is a ministry that has continued through the centuries, part of almost two-thousand-year-old tradition and expression of service – to God and to the church. With acolytes throughout the world, our St. Cross Acolytes share a common history, common vestments and common duties. Their call is to assist the priest to prepare the mystery that is the Holy Eucharist.

There are many ways in which an acolyte services within a worship service: Crucifer (the one who carries the lead cross and also serves as lead acolyte at the table); Torch Bearer (the two who carry the lit candles); the Gospel Bearer (the one who carries the Gospel book); the Clergy Cross (the one who carries the second of two crosses); Server (one who assists with offering collection, assisting parishioners, carrying banners and other duties); Thurifer (the one who carries the censer which is a metal container that houses incense). Acolytes serve primarily at Sunday worship services, but also on feast days, at weddings, baptisms and funerals. They are integral to the motion and flow of the service and help parishioners know what to do and what is coming next.

All youth from 5th grade (age 10) and older are welcome to participate in our Acolyte ministry. Important skills are learned such as teamwork, listening, attention to detail, and the satisfaction of helping to make our worship services cohesive and meaningful. No previous knowledge of the ministry is required, and we hold two training sessions each year, as well as hands on teaching throughout the year from our Acolyte leaders. In addition, youth begin to recognize and value their own place within our worship as they learn important vocabulary and the symbolism found within our traditions, our actions, and the items that infuse our worship service.

This past October, five St. Cross acolytes and two leaders had the privilege of attending the National Acolyte Conference in Washington DC at the National Cathedral. There they came to realize that they are but a part of a wide expanse of young people who serve in the church, and also had the opportunity to learn and hone their already existing skills.



Acolytes (Continued)

Additionally, each summer when our youth acolytes take hiatus, we offer the opportunity for adults to engage this beautiful ministry by serving as summer acolytes. An abbreviated hands-on training and guidance is offered so that you may step in and experience our liturgy through a new lens.

Prospective acolytes are encourage to sign up for this fun yet serious ministry by contacting Peter Coote (pac@pacbell.net or 310-562-5746) or Rev. Robin Denney (rdenney@stcross.org or 310-376-8989).



Acolyte Prayer:

O God, whose throne is surrounded by angels who serve you day and night, bless with your Holy Spirit your acolytes of your Church, that serving in front and around your earthly throne they may do so with reverence, true holiness and joy, to the honor and glory of your name, through your son Jesus Christ the Lord, Amen.



Respectfully submitted, Peter A. Coote

Altar Guild

Have you ever thought about why our church looks so inviting? Aside from the beautiful architecture, stained glass windows, organ pipes, handsome wood....what catches your eye?

You might notice the flowers, or the beautiful embroidered paraments (hangings) and clergy vestments. Or maybe the polished brass candles draw your attention, or the sanctuary lamps – the red, blue or white candles hanging near the altars or in the back of the chapel.

It isn't obvious to everyone who attends our church, but the Altar Guild is responsible for all of these things. We maintain and prepare the traditional sacred items used in worship at Eucharist, baptisms, funerals, and weddings. We beautify our church in a traditional manner according to the colors (green, blue/purple, red or white) and seasons of the liturgical calendar. It is our privilege to provide decorations for the very important Easter and Christmas celebrations.

Each Saturday a team of 5 – 6 people sets the 'table' for Eucharist for 2 Sunday services and one on Wednesday evening. We are responsible for helping to maintain the traditions of the Episcopal church while also making our worship inviting to those unfamiliar with them. We do this with feelings of reverence and joy.

In addition to our weekly service, we hold 2 semi-annual meetings and 2 'cleaning' days prior to Easter and Christmas, where we tidy the church, cleaning, polishing and generally making our space look its very best.

We set out the sacred vessels for the bread and wine, fresh linens, flowers, candles, and vestments according to the liturgical calendar. Altar Guild members attend both Sunday and Wednesday services, assisting with Eucharist supplies as needed. Afterward, they clean the vessels, take home linens for hand laundering, and carefully store the vestments.

Each week, Judy Soper, Katherine Crockett and Mary Malone create small bouquets from the previous Sunday's altar flowers. In 2018 these dedicated volunteers delivered 155 bouquets to shut-ins, those in hospitals and care facilities, to the newly baptized, and to those who have made flower dedications for various reasons. In addition, they place flowers around the church for parishioners, office staff and outside groups using our space to enjoy. Other members, talented with sewing skills, mend our linens and vestments and help create beautiful new ones.

While all the sacred objects seem to magically appear, our able supplies chair, Susan Tsutsumi, keeps us supplied with wine, candles and candle oil, palms and other items necessary to fulfill our mission.

In 2018 we were privileged to serve the families at 10 funeral/memorial services. While Rev. Rachel celebrated one wedding in 2018, it was not in the church, so we missed being able to assist Marge Lyons, our wedding directress.

In 2018 we had one of our very long-time members retire from active participation. Wanda Arcos served with dedication for many, many years, and will be missed.

2018 Altar Guild members: Wanda Arcos, Donna Cheslick, Laurie Dodson, Betty Farrand, Sheril Farrell, Debora Fisher, Bea Floyd, Laura Geisel, Kathy Gonzalez, Virginia Green, Barbara Harris-Holdrege, Sharon Isaac, Ruth Krusic, Kim Larsen, Diane Loughbom, Marge Lyons, Bonnie McNaughton, Lenora Nicholls, Kathi Selindh, Judy Soper, Judy Spragg, Linda Sutherland, Cyd Thornton, Susan Tsutsumi, and Patricia Woolley. Mary Garrett serves as a substitute when needed.

If this ministry is of interest to you – please contact me! We love new members and I think you will love us as well.

Laura Geisel, Altar Guild Directress

Blood Drive

As an ongoing commitment to serve our local community, St. Cross, in partnership with the American Red Cross, hosted a blood drive on June 3, 2018. This ministry has been in place at St. Cross for many years now with at least one and often two drives scheduled during the year. The blood drives help replenish shortages of blood in the South Bay community and give our ill or injured neighbors a chance for recovery and improved quality of life.

St. Cross is a community transformed by the Holy Spirit, and by continuing to partner with the Red Cross, we are selflessly giving the gift of life to our local community. The Red Cross counts on healthy people to give an hour of time and one pint of blood to make a difference, and the generosity of our parishioners and neighbors who schedule appointments is a huge contribution to the Beach Cities.

Keeping the blood drives on Sundays encouraged walk-in appointments, and the Bloodmobile's regular presence in front of our church shows our neighbors that our parishioners are embracing our Core Value of serving others by making a positive contribution to the well-being of South Bay residents.

The Red Cross continues to make improvements to our drive to minimize challenges or frustrations for our donors. This year the bloodmobile was ready 30 minutes early which made a big difference and helped to keep the schedule on time. A couple of breakdowns included a shortage of enough staff members to collect the blood, and there was no volunteer to work the registration table. Lastly, we are not able to accept walk ins unless there is an available appointment slot.

We had 25 scheduled donors, 21 total units collected and two first time donors! And we potentially saved up to 63 lives that day.

Watch the newsletter and bulletins for the date of the 2019 drive. I thank all of you donors for your ongoing commitment to support the blood drives. If you have any questions about donating blood or would like to be added to my donation email list please let me know.

Kathy Gonzalez

Building and Grounds

Membership in the Building and Grounds committee (B&G) is an opportunity for parishioners to use their skills and experiences to support Christ's love.

B&G serves St Cross by overseeing much of the necessary work to maintain and repair the Church and parish grounds. The committee also advises on renovation; budgets yearly maintenance expenses and provides expert help to oversee projects and/or renovations.

2018 was a busy year for B&G. Besides the usual repairs and minor upgrades, we assisted the Vestry's Capital Improvement planning and implementation. Work began on October 9th on that major effort combining structural restoration with upgrades to building accessibility, utilities and finishes. Our input helped flesh-out many facility usage needs and maintenance concerns being addressed now.

With the hiring of a Facilities Manager, we have additional on-site attention to our operations, while hopefully relieving repair burdens on individual committee members. This position will be responsible for monthly reporting and effecting repairs and vendor work between quarterly meetings.

That being said, we could not have accomplished all we did without the help and wisdom of the following committee members:

Al Dickinson, EMERGENCY PLANNING, VESTRY LIASON

Brian Wilcox, PAINTING CONTRACTOR

Bill Soper, ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT

Dave Garrett, GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Lloyd Kirschbaum, LEGAL COUNSEL

Sarah Ferris, PRIOR CHAIR (-2018), DESIGNER, MOTIVATOR

Sharon Pierce, PRIOR SCRIBE (-2018), HOUSEKEEPING LIASON, ACTIVATOR

As ever, thanks go out to all current and past members, and an open invitation is made to all who wish to donate their talents in the future.

Dave Dawson (Facilities Manager) and Sarah Ferris

PS My personal thanks to Sarah for mentoring me with patience and humor. Dave

Chapel Columbarium

In 1993, The Chapel of St. Cross was the respected and quiet area in our church to receive the gift of a 32 niche Columbarium, the gift of Sara (Sally) Zana Reznichuk, in memory of her late husband, Dr. Cyrus G. Reznichuk. Upon approval of the Vestry, Father Steven Giovangelo forwarded our order to Armento Liturgical Arts in Buffalo, New York. Upon receipt of the internal structures and exterior solid bronze plates, Ralph Colbert began to assemble the niche frames. Upon completion of the framework, Ralph, using his talents as a craftsman, proceeded to finish the exterior in vertical oak paneling. Miniature crosses appear at the top of the Columbarium and a carved religious symbol is placed in the lower area of the installation. Sally's gift also included the hanging Perpetual Light lamp, the bronze flower urn and the black marble shelf. The Columbarium was dedicated on November 30, 1993, by The Reverend Paul. D. Lawson.

In February, 1994, it was evident the Columbarium was indeed wanted by the St. Cross parishioners as only three niches remained of the original 32 spaces. Again, with the approval of the Rector and Vestry, The Alpha and Omega Columbarium of 64 spaces was dedicated by Suffragan Bishop, Chester Talton.

In 1998, with approval, Ralph again shared his expertise with the St. Cross parishioners by placing The Chi Rho addition, containing 48 niches on the Chapel west wall. Upon completion of The Chi Rho addition, Ralph then continued by placing another set of 48 niches beneath the stained glass on the Chapel north wall and these are, Jesus in the Carpenter Shop, The Reverend Canon Richard I.S. Parker, DD Memorial and Jesus in the Temple.

The newest additions to the Columbarium were dedicated by the Reverend Gina Benson, and bring the total to 192 Columbarium niches. As of this report, we have 73 inurnments, 78 reserved and 41 open niches.

For 2018 the following were inurned:

Nils Johnson

Columbarium Committee members and ushers are:

Michael Welch	Deacon Patti Angelo	David Garrett	Bill Soper	Stephen Miller
Al Dickinson	Judy Soper	Marilyn Young	Lee Spivey	

Respectfully submitted

Michael Welch, Deacon Patti Angelo, and Stephen Miller
Columbarium Chairs

Christian Formation - Adult Ed

“Adult Ed” is a program at St. Cross for adults of all ages which provides opportunities to explore the Bible, to learn more about our Anglican tradition, and to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be a Christian in the world today. Adult Ed takes place each Sunday from 9-9:50 AM in the Guild Room from September through June of each program year.

The theme for January of 2018 was “Church History”. The theme for February and March was “Ethics and Christian Life”. April’s was “Acts of the Apostles”. May’s was “Pilgrimage”. And the theme for June was “Following Christ”. During the month we focused on Pilgrimage, we studied the book *Pilgrimage – The Sacred Art: Journey to the Center of the Heart*, by Rev. Dr. Sheryl A. Kajawa-Holbrook. Dr. Kajawa-Holbrook was a guest speaker.

September of 2018 we began with a showing of Bishop Curry’s rousing General Convention sermon introducing the “Way of Love”, the theme the program year. Copies of Bishop Michael Curry’s book, *Crazy Christians*, were also made available for a parish-wide book study.

The “Way of Love” is a way of talking about how we live out our faith and love of God and neighbor in the world in practical ways. Each month, we focus on one of steps of the Way of Love: turn, learn, pray, worship, bless, go, and rest.

On Sunday, October 28th, Rev. Br. Dennis Gibbs, was a guest speaker. Brother Dennis is the Founder of both PRISM, our diocesan reconciliation and prison ministry, and The Community of Divine Love, a new Benedictine monastic community within the Episcopal Church in our diocese. On Sunday, November 4th, we had another special speaker, Diana Butler Bass. Diana is an award winning author speaker and independent Scholar specializing in American religion and culture. She challenged us to think about the impact of gratitude on our spiritual lives and the lives of others.

Adult Ed supports St. Cross’s mission of being a dynamic spiritual home where all are welcome by creating a sacred space of learning for all. Through our study together we become more aware of God’s presence as we face the challenges of being a Christian in an increasingly secular world. This makes Adult Ed a wonderful place to delve deeper into what means to belong to a Christian community. It is also a place where all opinions are respected and there is no “on-size-fits-all”. Both those who are new to St. Cross and those who have been there a while find something there for them.

As we learn and grow together we feel strengthened in our resolve to live more fully into our Baptismal Covenant of continuing in the Apostles teachings and fellowship. Programs like this can help us to know Christ better and what it means to follow Him. So come. There are no advanced reading requirements. Just bring a cup of coffee and drop by.

Rev. Robin Denney, Susan Tucker, and Sister Patricia Sarah

Christian Formation - Children and Youth

The heart of our Christian Formation program for youth and children happens during the 9am hour on Sunday mornings (during the program year: Sept-June). We had 82 children and youth in our Sunday School this year. Events outside the formation hour include outings, trips, and service events.

Nursery Care

Nursery care was provided for babies and children under three, throughout the year on Sundays from 9am to 11:30am. In December, due to requests, the nursery began operating during the 8am service as well.

Godly Play

We had eight teachers volunteering in our two Godly Play classrooms this year, Atrium 1 for three year olds through kindergarten, and Atrium 2, first through third grade. Seven teachers, Rev. Robin and Rev. Nathan participated in a 3-day Godly Play training in October. Godly Play is a program in which children hear bible stories and are encouraged to wonder and ask questions, and then are invited to be creative, using the story figures, art, or play to engage with the stories and their faith.

Kids Next Door

This year our 4th 5th and 6th graders were in the "Kids Next Door" class. Five teachers have volunteered with them this year, using a curriculum called Connect, which encourages children to engage with the bible, ask questions, look for nuances, and express themselves. They also participated in an outing to play mini golf, as a class.

Rite-13

Rite-13 is a two-year long program. 2018 spanned the end of year one, and beginning of year two. So at the close of the year the class included 7th and 8th graders. We have a group of seven volunteer teachers for this class. Rite-13 helps middle schoolers transition to thinking about how their faith can be applied in their lives.

Journey to Adulthood

J2A is a two-year program. 2018 included the end of year one, and beginning of year two for the same class. The J2A are planning their pilgrimage to Scotland for the summer of 2019. We have three experienced volunteer youth leaders who run the J2A program. The J2A curriculum progresses from the Rite 13 curriculum, and focuses on the areas of: Self, Society, Sexuality, Spirituality, and Prayer. The J2A youth and parents staffed two parking lot fundraisers in 2018, to raise money for the J2A pilgrimage.

Confirm not Conform

Confirm not Conform is also in their second year as a class, at the end of 2018. We have three experienced volunteer youth leaders who run this program. CNC exposes our youth to the core faith of the church, as well as other faiths, and encourages them to think deeply about their beliefs and their lives, in preparation for Confirmation in 2019. They are preparing for a mission trip to El Salvador in July 2019. In 2018, they hosted a dinner for the seniors of the parish in June, called "Senior to Senior", with a Western theme.

Christian Formation - Children and Youth (Continued)

The Upper Room

Upper Room was the monthly youth group gathering, which took place in the first half of 2018, finishing in June. Meetings included a mix of social gatherings and outings.

Vacation Bible School

Michelle Weissenberg and Erica Lynett led our VBS program this year, with 15 adult volunteers, 23 youth volunteers, and 54 participating children from our congregation and the community. The theme "Rolling River Rampage" taught children that God was always with them even in difficult times. There were activities, crafts, songs, dancing, snacks, videos, and bible stories. There was amazing creativity and dedication exhibited by our volunteers who brought the program to life with amazing decorations, t-shirts, skits, and activities. "Romper" the otter puppet mascot of VBS reached beloved rock-star devotion by the end of the week.

Bishop's Ball

In January, St. Cross youth attended the Bishop's Ball at All Saints' Beverly Hills.

Christmas Pageant

68 youth and children and 42 adult volunteers produced a wonderful Christmas Pageant this year, following the great tradition of St. Cross. More than 200 people attended to sing along, and to see the story of Christ's birth unfold dramatically.

Thank you to our volunteer Sunday School Teachers and Youth Leaders of 2018!

Diane Ballard, Samantha Barnes, Eugenie Baumann, Darren Beckford, Sonia Beckford, Cecily Bray, Peter Coote, Toni Consolo, Malinda Difley, Vicki Fahrenholz, Candace Ford, Kristin Fredricks, Amy Hanrahan, Kimberly Holmes, Kimberly Konis, Erica Lynett, Mary Malone, Eileen Mathews, Bonnie McNaughton, Corinne Sanchez, Casey Sheahan, Sarah Sheahan, Courtney Shott, Becky Sims, Judy Spragg, Anne Tittle, Brett Tittle, Michelle Weissenberg, and Alison Wilcox.

Rev. Robin Denney

Coffee Guys

We make coffee.

We're a good group of guys.

We would love to have more St Cross men join us in serving the congregation.

Feel free to contact anyone of us if you would like to help.

The Coffee Guys: Art Castillo, Halim Dahdah, Lloyd Kirschbaum, Dave Lutton, Steve May, Lee Spivey, Jim Sullivan, and Jack Tedford.

Community Garden

The Community Garden project has changed somewhat over the year, as the garden itself has a new manager who has brought in other non-profit organizations to do some of the pieces that had been scheduled by the 20%ers. We are happy for the help! The 20%ers at St. Cross continue to do the watering and maintenance of the interior beds, and some of our team have also committed to being sure the compost is turned and used efficiently. We have donated over 100 pounds of organic produce this year to the meal program at First United Methodist Church in Redondo Beach, the daily boxes given out by House of Yahweh in Hawthorne, and Meals on Wheels at the Salvation Army in Redondo Beach. We continue to have 8 people from St. Cross actively involved in the garden, and community members from Hermosa Beach are also part of our team.

Recently, a master gardener who works with trees has started to provide help to our "Tree Mamas" who have been working on the exterior trees; and Palos Verdes School Gardens have brought some Hermosa Beach children over to plant the west exterior, so volunteers from their group have joined our social and work days whenever they can.

This is truly a wonderful, satisfying community event, which includes getting to know our Hermosa neighbors, and we welcome everyone who knows how to work with plants, or anyone who would like to learn more about gardening!

Submitted by,

Judy Soper 310-941-1143

Margy Harrell 310-372-0571

Connections Coordinator

After coming off a year serving on Vestry, I was officially hired as the Connection Coordinator in January 2018. This is the position that was previously titled Newcomer Ambassador and had been filled by Jennifer Hamm who moved away in the summer of 2017.

From February 2018 to December 2018, I contacted 75 individuals or families who signed the Guest Register book with some contact information. They were contacted either by email or personal note. In addition, these visitors were invited to the Newcomers' Cafes held in February, June, and September. I helped connect newcomers to the leaders of ministries to which they expressed an interest. Thank you to the ministry leaders who graciously invited and welcomed those who were new to St. Cross.

I assisted in coordinating the Shrove Tuesday Mardi Gras party as well as St. Cross' participation in the Hermosa Beach St. Patrick's Day parade. Thank you to all the volunteers for both these events that make the fellowship at St. Cross so special, and who help to make our presence known in the community.

I spent a good amount of time assisting in updating the St. Cross Directory by sending emails and making calls to confirm membership and check on phone, email, and address changes.

With a few members of vestry, I attended an Invite, Welcome, Connect seminar conducted by Kay Parmer at All Saints, Beverly Hills. We all came away with some new ideas on how to make sure we are not only welcoming visitors when they come into St. Cross, but actually inviting people to attend and then making sure they connect with a ministry or fellowship group that fits their interest and lifestyle. I hope to work with our Communications Coordinator in the coming year to develop an online survey that will make it even easier for new members to participate in various ministries.

I assisted Rev. Rachel and Rev. Robin in developing a vision and format for the first Wednesday evening bible study sessions.

I coordinated a "staff development day" which included a horseback tour near Griffith Park and the Hollywood Sign, and lunch out at Roscoe's Chicken and Waffles. It was an excellent way for the staff to bond in a fun and relaxing manner (although, who is really relaxed when you're trying to ride a horse?)

I helped coordinate St. Cross Day festivities including "Take a Selfie with Nathan". I updated two bulletin boards in Parker Hall, including one for Music at St. Cross and one for St. Cross in Our Community.

I continue to feel blessed to be part of a community that is doing God's work in the world. I hope that my efforts on behalf of the St. Cross community to welcome and connect all visitors and members have been and will continue to be fruitful.

Respectfully submitted, Cameron Johnson

Eat, Drink and Be Merry

aka EDBM

EDBM began as a “community” building event to welcome newcomers, parishioners and their guests to a wonderful, fun filled evening of gourmet food and fellowship. In cooperation with local restaurants, St Cross “foodies” cook, serve, and enjoy a restaurant quality dinner prepared “in house” under the direction of a chef. Our team members range from teens through 90+.

This year’s dinner, in October, was under the direction of Jean Cordero, owner of Entertaining Friends, a catering company in Torrance. Jean planned a delicious 7 course French meal.

Volunteers from Laundry Love, aided by several others, helped serve the dinner in a very professional manner. Kudos to all who helped set up, prep, serve and clean up. It’s a joy to work with so many dedicated volunteers.

EDBM exemplifies the spirit of St Cross because it is an inclusive expression of God’s love through the hospitality of preparing and cooking a meal together. The guests, whether cooking or simply enjoying the meal, savor a delicious dinner and a chance to meet others while enjoying the embracing hospitality of St Cross.

Russ Lesser and Elizabeth “Bitsy” Lutton

Ecclesiastical Sewing Group

The Ecclesiastical Sewing Group meets to keep alive the old traditions of making linens and vestments. We also mend and repair damaged church goods, and share our skills and knowledge with other parish altar guilds. We design and make processional banners for St. Cross and send no longer used items to missions and/or needy parishes. We finished the Christmas/Epiphany banner this year and it hangs in the church for all to enjoy. (It was hung out last year, but needed some finishing touches which we did *this* year).

We have made many linen purificators, corporals, and lavabo towels. Somehow these items seem to disappear from the sacristy. There is now a good supply in the drawer.

The group meets most Tuesdays at 10 AM in the Parish Hall for stitching and fellowship. We have continued a tradition started by Connie Harley of "taking a tea break". There are a number of parishioners that stop by to have tea with us and share whatever we have to offer. Everyone is invited to take part and join in the discussions which could be on any subject.

We would like to have anyone interested in making items for the church join us. We can teach you if you have never done this kind of sewing. We would love to have stitchers that could spare some time for this ministry. If you are busy on Tuesday mornings you could take something to work on at home.

Please talk to anyone in our group: Patsy Brierley, Alice Feys, Bea Floyd, or Laura Geisel, about our sewing projects.

Submitted by Beatrice (Bea) Floyd

Education for Ministry

Education for Ministry is a program of theological education at a distance administered by the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee. In the Diocese of Los Angeles, EfM is considered one of the cornerstones of our adult Christian Formation and Education Programs. St. Cross is the host of one of the many active groups in our Diocese.

Lay persons face the difficult and often subtle task of interpreting the richness of the church's faith in a complex and confusing world. They need a theological education which supports their faith and also teaches them to express that faith in day-to-day events. As the emphasis on lay ministry has grown, EfM plays an important role by providing a program that develops an informed and knowledgeable laity. Participants in the EfM program study the entire sweep of the Christian tradition from the earliest period to the present. Participants learn the disciplines of biblical exegesis and interpretation, systematic theology, church history, ethics, and liturgics. Through study, prayer, and reflection, EfM groups move toward a new understanding of the fullness of God's kingdom.

The EfM program does not evaluate or recommend individuals for ordination. Many people think that one must be ordained in order to be "a minister." The fact is that all baptized Christians are called to be active participants in the church's total ministry. This total ministry is nothing less than the exercise of the church's vocation to continue the ministry of Jesus. He reconciled the world to God. We are called to incarnate that reconciliation in our own time and in our own place through worship, service to others, and by proclamation of God's Word to all people.

EfM is preparation for the ministry to which we all are called. It is that vocation for which we pray at the end of the Eucharist: "Send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord."

EfM is a four-year curriculum. Each "year" is a nine-month cycle of study. Students enroll for one cycle at a time. The current seminar group has 9 enrolled students, mentored by Susan Tucker and Cameron Johnson. Alumni can now enroll to take any year. Our 2018 graduate is Rhonda Woodfine. The group expects to have openings for September 2019—if you are interested, please let Susan, Cameron, or one of the clergy know of your interest!

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Tucker, Mentor

Emergency Committee

The Automated External Defibrillator in Parker Hall continues to be maintained, and we will hold another all-congregation training in 2019. It is our hope that the next installment of our “What to do...” series will be approved for ushers in 2019. This installment is, “What to do if there’s an active shooter in church,” and although it is fraught with emotion, it is, unfortunately, a necessary part of our society now.

We plan to present a mental health first aid class during 2019. This class will deal with such topics as depression, eating disorders, drugs, and suicide.

The skeleton of the emergency binder remains available in the church office.

Mervis Reissig and Becky Sims

Endowment Fund

Christian stewardship involves faithful management of the blessings God has given us including financial resources. These resources are given in the form of annual pledges and as gifts throughout the year to support the long-term work of the church.

Thanks to the vision and generosity of parishioners who have remembered St. Cross in their wills or made gifts specifically to these funds, St. Cross has been able to grow our two endowment funds--the Mission Endowment Fund and the General Endowment Fund. The two funds are in balanced investment vehicles to provide both growth and income and are administered by Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC.

Mission Endowment Fund: \$440,604 as of 12/31/2018

The Mission Endowment Fund, has been making grants since 2010 when its balance reached \$200,000 and triggered the ability to distribute fund investment earnings to outreach activities. Each year, grants can total up to 50% of the fund's earned income. In 2018, the Mission Endowment Fund disbursed **\$9,085**.

Based on Mission Endowment fund performance, the fund can distribute up to **\$10,275** in 2019.

Permitted expenditures include financial support via grants and scholarships. Priority is given to first time applicants with consideration given to a repeat applicant, as funds are available. The individual or organization seeking funds must complete each application personally. 100% of Funds will be sent directly to the organization not applicant. Grants are available for ministries in the Christian community, local communities and for programs or projects of service at St. Cross. We give special consideration to local projects that include hands-on participation by parishioners. We will also consider new initiatives at St. Cross (such as a new education program or initiative within an existing ministry). Scholarships for active parishioners and their offspring are available. All scholarships require the applicant to be enrolled or accepted to an accredited or recognized program, including but not limited to: continuing education, trade school, college, seminary, nursing or graduate school for one year.

Completed applications are due Monday, March 11, 2019. Application forms will be available in the church office and via this link <https://www.stcross.org/endowment-fund-application-available-online/> starting **February 3, 2019**. Please submit paper copy to the church office or email an electronic copy to info@stcross.org. Successful applicants will be notified in late spring.

General Endowment Fund: \$267,734 as of 12/31/2018

*Distributions from the General Endowment fund are used for parish buildings, grounds and the general operating fund. Distributions are calculated at 50% of General Endowment Fund income once General Fund balance exceeds \$200,000. 2017 was the first year that the General Fund exceeded a balance of \$200,000 which resulted in **\$2,718** for distribution in 2018. However, these funds were not distributed in 2018, but instead rolled forward for use in 2019. For 2018, 50% of General Endowment income resulted in an additional **\$6,955** for distribution in 2019. Therefore, there will be up to **\$9,673** for distribution in 2019.*

Gifts to the Funds: Gifts of any size can be made to either fund at any time. Simply make a note on your check for distribution of funds to either the **Mission Endowment Fund** or the **General Endowment Fund**.

Bequests are the foundation of endowment fund growth. Please consider St. Cross in your estate planning by using the following wording:

"I hereby bequeath to St. Cross Church, a religious organization presently located in Hermosa Beach, California, the sum of \$____." My gift is to be allocated to the St. Cross (Mission/General) Endowment Fund.

Note: To limit the amount of the bequest to a specified percentage of your estate, add: "or a sum equal to ___ percent of the residue of my estate after payment of taxes, costs and expenses of administration, whichever is less."

These gifts are often accumulated into endowment funds to grow through the years and provide income to use for special needs and to serve others.

Respectfully submitted, **Endowment Fund Trustees** Scott Gauch (1) - chair, Lori Schreier (2), Sarah Ferris (2), Darren Beckford (0), Mike Spitzer (1) *Numbers in parentheses are the years remaining in each trustee's term. Each year the congregation elects two trustees to three-year terms on the committee. We will be adding 2 members to the Committee in 2019.

Family Promise

Family Promise of the South Bay (FPSB) is a community-based approach to solving homelessness, engaging both the local community, as well as, houses of faith in an effort to combat family homelessness. Families receive a full complement of resources, services and training as they work towards their own stability and self-reliance. This is accomplished by providing short-term shelter, meals, case management and the support of volunteer congregations.

FPSB formed in response to the growing need to provide shelter, meals and comprehensive support to families without homes while allowing the family to remain in tact. Family Promise is one of only two resources in the South Bay of Los Angeles that allows homeless families to stay together in shelter while they work towards self-reliance. FPSB believes that no child should have to sleep in a car, in a park, or under a bridge, and that every family deserves to be whole and have a roof over their head again. It is through an effective and innovative approach that Family Promise partners with an interfaith network to serve newly homeless families.

Families entering the emergency shelter program stay as the guests of congregations throughout the South Bay. These churches open their doors to provide a bed for the evening, nutritious meals, and the hospitality of a loving community. Support Congregations, while not hosting families directly, strengthen the network by providing volunteers for host sites and the Family Day Center, supplies and food for the families, and in some cases, financial support for families when they graduate from the program.

As a support congregation, St. Cross is paired with Good Shepard Lutheran Church (Torrance), which serves as the host church. Additionally, both as a group and individually, members of St Cross have volunteered to support other host churches when needed.

In our FP ministry, we celebrate, explore and share God's love through service which includes providing food, hospitality and time when we are responsible for dinner, evening hosting and overnight stays. We in turn get to connect with people who are overcoming tremendous challenges and have such grace and fortitude. Additionally, those who participate in this ministry find it a sacred space to connect with others and find that we are not all as different as we may think.

Additionally, St Cross member support FPSB's fundraising efforts like their annual "Empty Bowls" event. Additionally, the St Cross ministry raises funds to purchased beds for the children and other needed items for families that graduate from the program and move to their own home.

We glorify God through our partnership with Family Promise by serving others. We are so fortunate to have the resources of food, time and God's glory, which allows us to go forth in FP ministry. One of our favorite expressions about this ministry is that we all have different resources to share and offer. We bring food, good will and kind words of support and in turn we witness the power of the Spirit through the success of people who receive what we offer and do the hard work to make their lives and their children's lives more hopeful.

– Sr. Patricia Sarah

Giving Tree

We on the Giving Tree team are all very grateful for another incredibly successful year of providing gifts and gift cards to deserving families in the South Bay and the greater Los Angeles area. In 2018 we touched the lives of 39 families by giving each of the 107 children at least two presents each. In addition, we were able to present each family with a \$75 grocery gift card as well as a \$25 Target gift card.

In total, we received \$4,485 in cash donations in December 2018. Our total expenses were \$4,708 so we ended up reducing our surplus fund, ending 2018 with a surplus of \$1,267

Inevitably each year there always seems to be one story that stands out amongst all the others in terms of need or appreciation or general inspiration. This year the source of greatest surprise to all of us came in the form of \$1300 donated to Giving Tree by a sometimes parishioner at St. Cross. This woman was married at St. Cross and teachers in Redondo Beach. She reached out to us because she hosts a yearly Christmas party for her friends and at the gathering everyone donates money to be distributed to a local charity. This year the intended recipient fell through, which is why she reached out to us. When we told her of our partnership with the Redondo Beach school district she was thrilled. As a middle school teacher she sees first hand the need in her school. She told us of her efforts to buy students jackets when they need them, or other necessities these kids are not getting otherwise. Through her generosity and kindness, we were able to give each of our Redondo families a \$100 Target gift card, with \$300 going to the one teenage boy who not only goes to school full time, but works and takes care of his sick mom as well. We could not have asked for a greater blessing and were thrilled to be able to pass it along to local families in need.

As always, we want to send a huge heartfelt thank you to everyone that helped to brighten so many lives this holiday season!

Bill Soper
Amy Hanrahan
Courtney Shott
Dana Thomas
Jennifer Salem

Habitat for Humanity

The Habitat for Humanity ministry helps build new homes and refresh older homes in the greater Los Angeles area while at the same time giving church members an opportunity to work together while getting to know each other better. The experience is inspiring, rewarding and helps foster teamwork and camaraderie among church members.

This year we had two builds, both in South Central Los Angeles. Our spring build was a refresh (painting and repairs) for a retired, low income senior who was very appreciative of our assistance.

Our second outing, in the fall, was a new build in partnership with Thrivent and the Lutheran church. Reverend Robin lead us in prayer and jumped right in with the build.

For both outings we had around 15 to 20 builders and we were well supported by additional volunteers taking care of food and refreshments.

Please contact Dan or myself if you are interested in our next Habitat for Humanity build which is coming up on March 23rd, 2019 tentatively planned for a multi-unit new build in Culver City. We are also exploring opportunities to help areas outside of Los Angeles that were impacted by recent natural disasters.

We have strived to make Habitat for Humanity a truly church-wide event. Opportunities exist for almost every person in the parish to participate. We need construction day volunteers, meal planners, money and, most importantly, your prayers. When the build days near, we will communicate with the Parish and work to get everyone involved.

John Cheslick and Dan Wilson

History Committee

Mission Statement: To help preserve the 100+ years of St. Cross history through photographs, written history, and artifacts, including albums and posters. We enjoy a casual atmosphere, occasionally celebrating birthday and holidays, while seriously cataloguing church activities and people for current members and posterity.

Displays: In 2018, our credenza displays were Mardi Gras, Lent, St. Patrick's Day, Palm Sunday, Easter, Confirmation, Graduation, Vacation Bible School, Fourth of July, Beach Mass (in July and August), Softball (with trophies), Holy Cross Day, "Manhattan to Monterey," "Blessing of the Animals," *Messiah*, Thanksgiving (new sign by Pat Woolley), Christmas Pageants, and Bob King's Manger scene. Guild Room posters showed 1952 construction, our Windows, Centennial 2006, R.I.S. Parker Memorial window, and 1736 Outreach.

Acquisitions: Audrie Wing made albums for 2016 and 2017, with plans to add photos when available.

Sharing St. Cross History: Patsy Brierley with the committee continued informational "History Q&A" in the Crossroads, piquing readers' interest in St. Cross.

Summer Breakfast Extra Photo Giveaway: We set up our table on several Sundays and were well-received as we also offered looks at our albums. Asking for parishioners' "Memories," we got one friend's interesting page so far.

Presentations: January 14: Adult Education; March 9: Sociable Seniors; June 25: friends from Christ Church came to ask "How does a History Committee work?"; July 29: Patsy gave a Stained Glass Windows tour on "Critters."

The History Committee thanks our clergy for ongoing approval, our vestry for financial support, and the church staff for special help. Thanks also to Dan Wilson and Bob Cornner and our members for excellent photos of parish events.

Respectfully submitted:

Pamela Barnes, Patsy Brierley,
Emma King, Barbara Moore, Carol Reznicek,
Kathy Shinkle, Audrie Wing, Pat Woolley,
Marilyn Young



Laundry Love

Laundry Love is hands-on ministry which acknowledges a visible need in our community. When people have clean clothes, people treat them like human beings. To this end, volunteers from St. Cross meet at a laundromat once a month to supply detergent, dryer sheets, and the funds necessary to clean the clothes and bedding of people who are living in the streets, their cars, in low income housing and simply anyone who needs help. The activity also offers time to engage in meaningful conversation between members of St. Cross and their guests who benefit from our care and concern. As the Rev. Jimmy Bartz puts it, "it is modern day foot washing".

During the four years of growing our ministry we have created a robust accounting system, learned that clean trash bags are needed to carry clothes home in, kids still like crayons, and everyone loves pizza and an occasional haircut. Our volunteers come from various circles of St. Cross and new friendships have developed as we interact with those we serve. The community we nurture is a transient one, but we know many of our guests' names and their stories. We have seen a few at church, spot others around town, and worry about "regulars" that are absent on laundry night. On average we assist 30 people/families each month, and our sign-in sheets show hundreds more.

We are approaching the completion of our fourth year as a ministry at St. Cross, we join a growing community of compassion. Laundry Love began 13 years ago in Ventura, California (learn more at Laundrylove.org) and two nearby episcopal congregations who operate their own wash nights provide us with coaching and encouragement. Over a dozen volunteers from St. Cross are regularly involved with Laundry Love which takes place at *Clean Scene Laundromat* - 2301 Artesia Blvd, Redondo Beach on the last Wednesday of the month. Come join us at 6:00PM, help with the late shift from 8 to 10PM, or just come by and say hello. We can always use new volunteers. You can also find us also on Facebook at *Laundry Love South Bay*.

With love,

Shane Mathews, David Charlton, Jim Sullivan, and Susan Tsutsumi

Listening Hearts

Listening Hearts, formerly Enduring Hearts, meets every Monday morning at 10:00AM in the Guild Room. The purpose of the group is to provide a peaceful, comforting, safe and holy place among loving and accepting friends to share feelings that are on our hearts in a confidential setting. With Rev. Nathan Biornstad's regular guidance, we explore how God speaks to us. The meetings are regularly attended by 10 to 12 people. The group offers Christian support to one another through reading of scripture, poetry and books followed by discussion. Our most recent book study is: *THE HUMAN CONDITION, Contemplation and Transformation by Thomas Keating*.

The Listening Hearts group sponsors the Altar of Repose for All Souls and All Saints days. It also sponsors the Longest Night service in Advent and the Holy Innocents services during Christmas. The group provides a strong support system at St. Cross. The most often used self description of the group is family. The group welcomes all, male and female, who wish to share their feelings. We are happy to report that a few new people have joined us for our weekly meeting. We are also appreciative of Rev. Nathan Biornstad's regular presence.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth Baird Krusic

Men's Bible Study

We are a small in formal group of men, mostly parishioners, with the firm intent to join in fellowship, to share and discuss the BIBLE. Usually some part of one of the four Gospels gives us plenty of topics to read, then exchange thoughts on what we have just heard. Some times we even agree on the message. Very often we look at the Gospel reading for the next Sunday so we might understand the Gospel better when it is being read in church. But that has changed in the past to meet the interest of the group.

We meet every Wednesday at St. Cross starting at 5:45 PM for about one hour. This gives those interested the opportunity to attend Men's Bible "STUDY" and still be able to attend the Holy Eucharist Service at 7:00 PM that evening. Need more answers and a good reason for joining us, please call:

Ed Margrave 310-322-0878

or

Bill Soper 310-736-4934

See some of you on Wednesday. Stay Blessed, the Men's Bible Study

Men's Fellowship Group

The Men's Fellowship Group consists of St. Cross men that want to get to know each other more than attending services and coffee hours associated with them. Activities are based on doing things that accomplish this goal and consist of a great variety of activities, depending solely on the desires of the group.

Major activities include helping with various breakfasts over the summer months, fixing dinners for annual activities such as the Christmas dinner, St Cross day BBQ, and Mardi Gras, assisting in some of the Seniors' group events, and a yearly retreat. These retreats have been held in Idyllwild, Palm Springs and other locations, usually within driving distance of the south bay area. In addition to religious discussions, most of the retreats include physical activities such as hiking, bike riding, and discovering local things about the retreat area.

The Men's Fellowship Group is always open to any activity that involves getting to know one another. This includes mentoring new members to get them to know what our church offers.

Please contact me or any of the clergy if you desire to join and or have suggestions on future activities.

Al Dickinson

Music Department: Chancel Choir

Much of the musical activity at St. Cross is connected in some way to the Chancel Choir. It is the foundation upon which our music program is set. The primary responsibility of the St. Cross Chancel Choir lies in its role as a liturgical leader. It is called to support and enhance the sung and spoken portions of the liturgy and to encourage you, the people, to participate actively in our corporate worship. Musical offerings, giving of one's self and one's resources, are provided on behalf of you, the people, as our gifts to God.

The obligations and responsibilities entailed in the Choir's ministry are demanding, calling for a sizable commitment of time and energy. Several new anthems have been added to our library which is maintained by Carol Vedder and Ruth Krusic. Dan Wilson's contribution to the life of the musical community is considerable and his assistance is invaluable.

We produced our Ninth Annual *Community Messiah Sing-Along* with rave reviews. Thank you to all who worked so hard on this event, especially Peter Coote.

Sadly, we lost our organist on November 1, 2018 when John Tveit passed away very suddenly. In the interim, the music department has mourned the loss of John deeply but has carried on with the talents among us. We are fortunate to have Canon James Walker, Organist, work with us temporarily as we continue the search for a full-time organist.

I am grateful to be a part of the community of St. Cross.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Wilson

Ruth Baird Krusic

Music Department: Bell Choir

Music is an integral part of the life of any church and its liturgy. *The Bell Choir* continues to be an important component in the music ministry here at St Cross. Our group rehearses an hour each week at 6:15pm on Thursday evenings (beginning in September and ending in May each year), and we generally ring at one 10am service each month. In August 2018, we met a little earlier than usual and spent a good part of a Saturday in a symposium to help improve our skills as ringers and musicians. We invited the entire congregation and had a wonderful turnout. And we even got a few new members in the bargain!

As in the past several years, the group rang at both the 8am and 10am services on Palm Sunday, and, once again the group was a featured part of the musical offerings in December at the caroling portion of the Christmas Eve service.

The group must ring with a minimum of 11 persons when we present a musical offering. When a ringer has to miss due to illness or vacation, their spot has to be covered by someone else or the music suffers. We generally have between 11 and 13 ringers on the roster at any given time. We work hard in rehearsals and have become a committed '*community within a community*' as we prepare each week to serve. *The St Cross Bell Choir* is a welcoming group, and we are always looking for new members. Any interested persons, both women AND men, young AND *not-so-young*, should please contact Dan Wilson or any member of the group for further details. We'd love to have you join us.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Wilson

Neighbor to Neighbor

Sharing God's love beyond our walls ...

Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) is an ecumenical outreach program. We prepare a hot dinner for about 50-60 men, women and children the first Thursday of every month at Journey Covenant Church in Redondo Beach. Multiple other religious groups cover the other Thursdays. The third Thursday of the month, the guests receive medical assistance from volunteer medical personnel.

We often have two shifts of volunteers, those who prepare the meals and those who help serve the meals, while some volunteers do both. We are blessed to have loyal, caring volunteers who staff the dinner each month.

Boy Scout Troop 849 (Manhattan Beach) assist St Cross volunteers with serving and cleanup. A young mom, Katie, and her family and friends show up each month to decorate the tables for our guests.

In addition to a prepared hot dinner, The Kiwanis Club of Hermosa Beach prepare "to go boxes" containing a sandwich, juice box, trail mix, etc., so that the guests have food to take with them to eat the next day.

In June, the long time coordinator at Journey Covenant Church, Brenda, retired. A new coordinator, Ken Wiley, took over. He initiated changes to program, most significantly, that all churches are responsible for buying and storing all paper products, plastic ware, coffee, and condiments for their specific church. Marlene Fleischauer took on the task of buying and storing these additional products.

We continued the December tradition of delivering bags of toiletries and new socks to our guests. The Boy Scouts put the bags together. St Cross's Sock Sunday drive supplies the socks and St. Monica's Guild kindly collects the toiletries. These gifts are very much appreciated. Additionally, the Boy Scouts prepared so many bags, that additional bags were delivered to the House of Yahweh in Lawndale.

We are very fortunate that Kim Larsen has joined the leadership team as Susan Siegmund will step down at the end of the year but will continue to volunteer. Kim is a very welcomed and positive addition to the team.

As we look forward to our next Neighbor to Neighbor dinner, we realize just how important these dinners are to our guests and to ourselves. This ministry ensures those who need food have access to a caring environment where they can sit and have a warm "home cooked" meal. In turn, St Cross volunteers and others are afforded the opportunity to give their time and resources.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene Fleischauer, Angela Oliver, Kim Larsen, Susan Siegmund

Order of St. Luke (OSL)

The Hermosa Beach Chapter of the Order of St. Luke the Physician

The International Order of St. Luke the Physician (OSL) is an ecumenical organization dedicated to Christian healing ministry. It was founded in 1932 by the late Rev. John Gayner Banks (an Episcopal Priest), and his wife, Ethel Tulloch Banks, for the purpose of restoring the ministry of healing to the Church as well as to extend healing ministry beyond the Church to the greater community into hospitals, nursing homes and everywhere else where people are in need.

The core values of St. Cross that resonate with us are glorifying God by serving others by offering ourselves as vessels of Christ's ministry of healing. We also seek to create a sacred space where those in need of healing may be made present before God.

St. Cross sponsors the Hermosa Beach Chapter of OSL which meets on the second Sunday of the month from 5-7PM. After a simple meal of soup, bread and salad, after a brief check-in, we discuss Scripture, books and other materials on Christian healing and wholeness. We also have a brief healing prayer service. All are welcome to attend our meetings whether or not they are interested in membership.

We feel that much of what we do embodies the mission and vision of St. Cross. Every two years, we offer opportunities to learn more about Christian healing and healing prayer through a public workshop and healing service. In the fall of 2016, we developed a healing service and since then have offered it to the congregation on a quarterly basis. We plan to continue offering our healing prayer service in 2019.

Sr. Patricia Sarah and Becky Simms

Peace and Justice

In 2018, we again partnered with Family Promise of the South Bay to take a bus to the Women's March in downtown Los Angeles. All proceeds went to Family Promise!

The Peace & Justice Community continued their community outreach this year by showing the movie, *Under the Gun*, and then following it up with an evening of resource presentations which helped people to get active around the gun violence issue in this country. This event was scheduled in place of the Human Migration event which has been moved to 2019.

Although P&J tries to include a book study in its annual offerings, our efforts in educating to prevent gun violence overshadowed our other efforts in 2018. Instead, we will discuss MLK's final book, "Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?" on February 12, 19, and 26, 2019, and all are encouraged to attend.

The P&J retreat was held at the Episcopal Retreat Center in Echo Park, a beautiful and meditative location. In addition to our Friday afternoon get together and singing, we watched the movie, *Human Flow*, directed by Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, and then discussed the tragedy of human movement around the world which is being exacerbated by climate change, war, and corruption. Some of the P&J community followed up our interest in this film with trips to see Ai Weiwei's art exhibits that are on display in Los Angeles through March 3. In 2019, P&J is partnering with Doctors Without Borders to bring the human face of this tragedy to the South Bay, through our Human Migration event.

We were happy to provide some support for three immigrants, from Russia and Uganda, this year, as part of our commitment to getting to know "the other." They turn out to be people with hopes and dreams and families just like us only with a different background!

In October, we presented the Election Forum, which is a non-partisan presentation of the pros and cons of all initiatives on the California ballot. We had a very lively discussion on the many issues facing us as voters. We also provide written information on all the ballot measures, to supplement and hopefully to clarify the many things we have to consider when we vote.

We look forward to continuing to increase the participation of our fellow congregants in the New Year. Thanks to several new families who joined St. Cross this year and have started attending the P&J meetings – we appreciate the new input!

Margy Harrell, Mervis Reissig, Sr. Patricia Sarah Terry

Prayer Shawl

In the chapel of our church there is a wooden rack holding several hand made shawls. In 2006 the Prayer Shawl Ministry of St. Cross was established and it is still going strong. We have had countless thank you notes from recipients over the years and it is always heartening to receive feedback that we have made a difference in someone's life.

Several members of our parish knit, crochet or weave shawls that are designed to bring comfort, or joy, to someone in need, or someone who is celebrating.

While we have never been able to keep track of the shawls that are knit, crocheted or woven...there is always a supply waiting for those in need of an extra hug or as a means of adding another source of celebration in their lives.

Any parishioner who would like to present a shawl to a family member or friend is free to select one and take a suitable prayer from the supply in the chapel. Additionally, gift bags are available in the church office.

Historically we have partnered with a chaplain at the UCLA Medical Center in Santa Monica to provide prayer shawls for their cancer patients. While that relationship has not been active in the past 2 years, we will be re-establishing it soon.

We had a transition of leadership this year as Helen Dolph relocated to Desert Hot Springs, and Abbe Skones felt it necessary to hand over the leadership due to health concerns. We are a group of 'maybe' 10 people – we come and go – and some of our contributors have decided to remain anonymous. All in all, it is a dedicated group of people that meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month from 6 – 7 pm in room 4. If you are interested in joining us, please do! We teach too!

Laura Geisel
Chair, Prayer Shawl Ministry

Readers for Life

Readers for Life celebrates, explores and shares God's love through its study of spiritually-themed books, including philosophy, spiritual practices, theology, memoirs, histories and novels. Readers for Life nurtures members' spiritual development, expresses Christ's love through its hospitality and offers a sacred space for members to share ideas and opinions. Since 2003, the group has discussed more than 120 books, including in 2018:

And the Mountains Echoed, Khaled Hosseini
The Scribe of Siena, Melodie Winawer
God, A Human History, Reza Aslan
The Elegance of the Hedgehog, Muriel Barbery
Apostle, Tom Bissell
A Wrinkle in Time, Madeleine L'Engle
The Woman Who Smashed Codes, Jason Fagone
Evicted, Matthew Desmond

Meetings are the third Friday of each month and begin with a potluck dinner. New members are always welcome. To be added to the mailing list, contact Kathy Shinkle at kathyshinkle@verizon.net.

The next meeting is at 6:30pm Friday, February 15, 2019. It is a book selection meeting where we will be choosing books to read for the next six months.

Kathy Shinkle

Recorder Report

The recorder group continues to thrive as an integral part of the musical life at St. Cross. With a current active roster of eleven members, the group meets twice monthly to rehearse a variety of both sacred and secular music and to enjoy the pleasure of making music together with friends, some of whom have met through this group.

In November we played at the 10 o'clock church service and in December played for the Sociable Seniors Xmas party. We plan to expand our performance schedule during the coming year. For some of our parishioners, it was their initial experience of seeing the recorder as a serious musical instrument, capable of performing complex music.

The group meets at 5:15pm on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month. New members are welcomed. Newcomers should have some background in instrumental or choral music and the ability to read music. Initial instruction and recorders are available to anyone interested. You can contact Sharon Holmes at (310)379-2061 or lesterp2@roadrunner.com.

Sharon Holmes

St. Clare's Guild is now called "The Coop"

The COOP (Community of Open-Hearted Parents) 2018 Annual Report

The COOP is a community of parents that provides opportunities for St. Cross families to offer mutual support, share friendship, participate in child-friendly family events at St. Cross, and connect through God's love. In 2018, the COOP supported the following activities:

- In January, the COOP hosted the After Christmas Parents Party. This event was held in the Guild Room and offered parents an opportunity to relax and unwind after the hustle and bustle of the holidays. Everyone brought drinks and/or appetizers to share, and there was a white elephant gift exchange.
- In March, the COOP families attended a Winter Snow Playdate Weekend at Big Bear where everyone had blast playing in the snow.
- The Annual Easter Egg Hunt was held in Live Oak Park in Manhattan Beach the Saturday before Easter with a special appearance by the Easter Bunny followed by a family picnic.
- Monthly Gatherings. Parents meet up once a month while the kids are in Sunday School to socialize and discuss upcoming events.
- We closed out the year with the Christmas Pageant Reception providing lots of yummy treats.
- Throughout the year, the COOP coordinates family-friendly events. We have organized play dates, happy hours, and other get-togethers throughout the year, and also visited Candy Cane lane in El Segundo in December.
- The COOP is also responsible for baptismal cake receptions in Parker Hall and maintaining the prayer bags for the children during services to help facilitate a positive experience for both the children and the parents.
- Our Facebook website helps spread the word on the COOP activities and facilitates communications on other church correspondences geared towards families.

The COOP Coordinators

Sarah O'Grady

Jeanne Ogar

Purdey DesParte

St. Monica's Guild

St. Monica's Guild Meets four times a year for fellowship and for planning activities to serve our parish and community. St. Monica's main outreach to St. Cross continues to be the receptions held in Parker Hall. The Guild, also, fills the pews with offering envelopes, prayer requests and cleans and replaces pencils and drawings by young artists.

This year was a tribute to our members who called, prepared, and served at many receptions and funerals. This required a continual commitment by the contact volunteer to notify members of their needed service. We, also baked and served our annual summer breakfast organized by Betty Farrand and crew. We continue our outreach to The House of Yahweh and Neighbor to Neighbor by donating much needed toiletry items for their use. We are always delighted to accept any donations by putting the items in the basket in Parker Hall.

This year, again, we collected white long socks during the month of October. These socks were used for the guests at Neighbor to Neighbor and Laundry Love for Christmas bags organized by Boy Scout Troop 849 in Manhattan Beach.

St. Monica's Guild is always delighted to welcome any new women to membership regardless of age. We were overjoyed to welcome new guests at our annual Advent/ Christmas hors d'oeuvre and ornament exchange. Our next meeting will be March 12, 2019, with a baked potato bar, a short business meeting, and the sorting of toiletries in Parker Hall. Please join us for this event.

We will also have our favorite line dancing, once again, in Parker Hall in June, called by Paul Lipinski. Get out your boots and cowboy hats and invite friends!

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Grimes, Bitsy Lutton, and Alison Wilcox

Sociable Seniors

The Sociable Seniors continues to be an active ministry at St. Cross. Like always, this group is open anyone retirement age or older.

This year, we moved our meeting day to the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month from 11am to 1pm. For the first half of the year, my predecessor Will Stanley faithfully led the group. After our initial September gathering at St. Cross where we welcomed everyone back from the summer recess, the group voted on which destinations that they wanted to visit during the year. The two winning field trips were the California Science Center and San Antonio Winery.

In November, we visited the California Science Center. Our timing was perfect because the museum was hosting a King Tut exhibition. After watching an IMAX movie describing the era of the pharaohs, we toured the hundreds of ancient artifacts.

Earlier that fall, we held our annual BBQ in Valley Park, where the food and conversation were delightful. We also played BINGO. In October, we gathered for lunch at New York Deli.

In the month of December, we held our annual Christmas Party and gift exchange. The Recorder Group also provided us a brief concert after we shared a potluck lunch together. While reading a variation of *The Night Before Christmas*, as is our tradition, whenever the words "pass" "past" or any other variant are read, we pass the gift to the person on our right. This frequent passing of the gifts led to a lot of laughter and amusement.

We have a full schedule of events for 2019, including a visit to the San Antonio Winery, a Centering Prayer presentation, BINGO, presentations from both the police and fire departments, and much more. I hope that you will join us.

Rev. Nathan Biornstad

Softball

The final 2018 results are in and we hope everybody had some fun and fellowship for the 26th year of playing co-ed softball in the South Bay Church Athletic League. The Dodgers (1-8) went from first in 2017 to last in 2018 in the **“C” Division**. The Angels (4-5-1) fared better finishing one-half game out of 2nd place in the **“D” Division**. The Dodgers (.514) out hit the Angels (.491) for the year. The Angels were led by Bruce Difley and Shane Mathews (.769) batting averages while the Dodgers were led by Bill Hamilton and Bruce Difley (.778). Top power performances (slugging percentage) for the year goes to Jeff Ramsey (1.333) with 1 Home Run, Jamie O’Grady (1.160) with 2 Home Runs and Shane Mathews (1.154). The Women Angels were led by Caren Brownlie (.667) and Autumn Hoffman (.520) batting averages while sisters Britney and Brianne Bosnak (.429) paced the way for the Women Dodgers. Rookies of the Year go to Mike Whitehill (.588) and Elyse Ordicia (.714). This year we had 3 new people join the softball teams and most were young who have replaced some of the older generation ready to retire.

The 28 players who played were: Caren Brownlie; Shane & Eileen Mathews; Britney & Brianne Bosnak; Dana & Jeff Ramsey, Macy Jaeger, Art Castillo; Mike & Andrew Welch; Bruce Difley; Jamie O’Grady; Jim Sullivan; Oscar Esquivel; Doug Hall; Sean McCue; Mike McGough; Rich Wenzel; Andy Simon; Aaron Rose; Autumn Hoffman; Peggy & Bill Hamilton; Susan Hink; Mike Whitehill; Glenn Honda and Elyse Ordicia.

Thanks to all the wives and husbands who baby sit the kids on the sidelines plus we cannot forget the coaches wife who let the boys be out there on Saturdays – Candace Ford and Malinda Difley.

Mike Welch and Bruce Difley

Ushers

Ushers express Christ's love through hospitality and glorifying God by serving others. Ushers greet, provide assistance and make everyone feel welcome in a sacred space. Ushering is an important ministry at St. Cross Episcopal Church. Ushering at all services is a great way to get to know everyone in the parish and assist with the service. Ushers also assist at weddings and funeral services.

This year we welcomed Halim Dahdah, Sandy Lawton, Tao Will, Rhonda Woodfine, Evan Lynett, Azande Ndamase, Kevin Sanchez, Thomas Cole, Adam Tittle, Ben Tittle, the Rite 13 parents and staff to our team of long-time ushers. We appreciate and thank the dedicated service of our retiring ushers: Ann Peterson, and Richard McCurdy for their ministry.

We are grateful to all ushers for their time, hospitality and love for the people of St. Cross. We would also like to express our special thanks to those who have been able to assist at funerals, weddings and on holidays.

Lee Spivey and Marilyn Young



Women's Bible Study

Have you been to the church on a Wednesday morning around 9am? If so, and you are a woman, you might wander into the Guild Room and join those women gathered to study the Bible. Sitting with us requires very little -- you don't have to have done the reading for the day or even know much about the Bible or the Episcopal Church. You might bring a willingness to listen, to join in the discussion if you'd like, and even to ask that crazy question that has been bugging you.

In 2018 we continued our study of the book of Acts, and in Lent we used the gospel reading for the upcoming Sunday together with poetry from Mary Oliver under the leadership of Rev. Rachel and Rev. Robin. We realized how much the poetry added to our discussion that we then used Day by Day along with poetry provided by Margy Harrell or another member for a while.

For a change of pace, we met at Java Man during the summer, either inside or on the outside patio area, gathering enough chairs for all who came. What a wonderful place in the sun for our readings and discussions for a gathering of three to ten women!

In the fall we took up Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's book *Crazy Christians*. After the Royal Wedding we have delighted in "hearing" him in his homilies. They are applicable to our lives and his inclusion of so many biblical citations is wonderful.

As you have read, the group is casual -- you can come without knowing what we will be reading/discussing, without ever having come to Bible study before, never having attended St. Cross previously -- and all women are welcome.

Come! Wednesday mornings, 9am, Guild Room.

Patsy Brierley and Women's Bible Study attendees