

Through our many Outreach projects, the people of St. Mary's "seek and serve Christ in all persons," especially those most easily forgotten or left out.

Your contributions of time, talent and treasure continue to make a significant impact in our community. St. Mary's is a covenant partner in Habitat for Humanity's Faith Relations Partnership. That means we sponsor and help to build the Faith House for a deserving poor family, through a program which helps them achieve financial independence, complete credit counseling and a knowledge of home ownership basics, as well as put hundreds of hours of sweat-equity into their own home.

From Helping Handbags to Homeless Connect to the 100,000 Homes Campaign, the people of St. Mary's have helped Anchorage to make real and significant progress in the fight to end homelessness in our community. From your contributions of "PEANUT BUTTER" to the Golf Tournament to the efforts of weekly/monthly volunteers and all cash contributions including the Alaska PFD, "pick, click, give, the people of St. Mary's help FISH (Friends in Service to Humanity) provide over 10,000 meals each month. With Crop Walk, Brother Francis Shelter, Relay for Life (American Cancer Society), the Blood Drive (BBAK) and so many more activities, the people of St. Mary's offer so much to those with so little. If you would like to be more involved with these or other Outreach activities, please let us know. Especially in this struggling economy, you make a difference!!

St. Mary's elected to become part of AFACT: Anchorage Faith and Action Congregations Together. This group is a faith based, grassroots organization which empowers everyday people to create a more just community. Through congregation based organizing, AFACT leaders - raised and trained from our own congregation - work on issues most urgent to our congregation (e.g., education, public safety, youth services and health care). AFACT is a great way for our congregation to move forward with some of the social justice issues we've been working on recently. We have spent several weeks in October in parish meetings exploring what role St. Mary's has and the discussions are continuing as of this printing.

Reaching Arms of Love to the Far Side of the World. Malawi mission

This year also saw one of our long-time dreams begin to take shape: an effective partnership with our sister churches in Malawi, Africa. The Burke family spent the month of May travelling among the villages, preaching, teaching, and meeting with the clergy and lay leaders there. They brought home

specific plans of how we could work cooperatively with our Malawi family in areas such as micro-economic development, education, and self-sufficiency programs for those living with HIV and AIDS. These new friendships will take the next step forward in May of 2012 as a team of adults and youth from St. Mary's travel to Malawi to worship and work together in building up the Body of Christ.

Strengthening Families through Early Education and Intervention.

With the hard work of several dedicated parishioners, the St. Mary's Playschool has been put on a firm financial footing and through patient bridge building with the advisory council and staff of the Playschool, have more closely aligned the Playschool with the people and mission of St. Mary's. A vibrant Playschool and K-12 is an important ingredient in helping us build our church. Careful work has been done to welcome and draw in families who do not have a faith community, and encourage ways for them to become involved in St. Mary's, on an invitational and educational model. Our Rector Michael was appointed by the Governor to serve on the new Alaska Early Education Coordinating Council, and St. Mary's is becoming known throughout the Alaska as a leader in faith-based early education.

Caring for God's House.

By careful selection of projects and selective capital campaigns we have continued to maintain our facilities. Well-maintained facilities are necessary if we are to attract new parishioners and honor what God has given us. While a number of projects still exceed our present financial resources, we have focused on the areas of greatest need. Phase one of the front sidewalk study has been completed with blueprint plans drawn up and initial engineering studies complete and reported to the Vestry. The immediate safety hazard has been remediated through a "grind-down" of selected portions of the concrete. The Junior Warden's Committee, under the excellent leadership of Bob Bradley, is actively pursuing cost estimates of several different cost-effective options, including a heated sidewalk with an associated increase in boiler capacity, as well as other means of both beautifying and upgrading our main church entranceway. We have also undertaken an environmental review and are implementing a phase-in of new, lower cost and more environmentally responsible lighting, as well as necessary repairs and upgrades to our heating system.

Pastoral care has been strengthened in practical ways, as being at the core of our response to the Gospel message.

Pastoral care is not just what we do, it is who we are as a faith community of people who walk in the

way of Jesus. Decades ago, we envisioned *becoming a ministering community*, not simply a *community gathered around a minister*. Today, we are closer than ever to this goal. Our pastoral care minister, Sara Gavit, is busy throughout the week serving as a *catalyst for care*, linking people in need with the resources and gifts of other parishioners, so we can more effectively minister to one another, or more properly, so that *Christ may minister to us through one another*. Sara and the pastoral care leadership team of Jeannie Ryan, Margaret Sharrow, our clergy and church staff, along with our Stephen Ministers and Lay Eucharistic Visitors help wrap “circles of care” around those in need.

Through our employment of one full time person dedicated to pastoral issues, we have effectively leveraged the ministry of the whole community in healthy, efficient, and affirming ways. We are there when things are at their worst: domestic violence, unemployment, divorce, illness, death of a child or spouse, addiction, sexual assault, suicide, depression, and loneliness. Under Cathy Kincaid’s strong leadership, the prayer chain is now active seven days a week, in responding to over forty prayer needs at any given time. Karol Libbey and Jeanne Ryan have initiated a “Coffee Pals” program designed to be a partner to our Stephen Ministry, providing skills to training to those who are willing to “walk alongside” a person who is going through a rough patch in their life. Over 90% of our pastoral care is to and with others in the St. Mary’s community with whom we have an established relationship as a family of faith.

Joy and Reverence in Worship.

Every week, we are blessed by the continued strong ministry of our worship leaders and music groups. Dr. Marilyn Barry and Wade Hampton Miller have continued in their fine tradition of providing sound learning and uplifting worship through the ministry of music. Our many Praise Singers, 9AM Choir members, lectors, lay readers, acolytes, altar guild members, and our church staff work with passion and commitment that we might gather together in lifting our hearts to the Lord. In a world of divisions and strife, no one is turned away and all are truly welcome at the Lord’s table in St. Mary’s house of prayer for all people.

Raising our Profile in the Wider Community

At the request of the Sr. Warden and Michael, a Parish Visibility Committee was formed to assess what could be done to leverage our location at the corner of the busiest intersection in Anchorage to proclaim the fact that we have a welcoming faith community at this location, and to find an effective way of letting the many travelers know of some of what programs and activities we have to offer. This is a multi-faceted project, with at least three phases. Phase 1 consisting of repair of lighting for the bell

tower, clearing out of brush and trees that had grown up obscuring many of our signs and landmarks and designs for the updating and modernizing of our signage is largely complete. The new signage will have a consistent message and design and will be illuminated so they can be viewed night and day, winter and summer. We are in the midst of Phase 2 which consists of continuing to remove excess brush and trees, raising funds to update our signage and getting the signs actually installed.

Our Blessings Overflow.

This is a lot to digest, but it only scratches the surface of the vitality and amazing work of God among us. We are not a perfect community, but we are honest and authentic in admitting the many challenges ahead of us.

Where we are wrong, we seek God’s forgiveness and undertake the changes we are called to. Every day of the year, through numerous small groups and “communities within the St. Mary’s community” we offer a supportive, accepting, and healing place for the Grace and power of God to slowly work on God’s own timetable, and in God’s own inexplicable and wondrous ways. Every week, lives are changed and this world made a little better because of the faith we share and the tangible ways our love for others is made visible among us.

And you make this possible. This is a large part of your life’s work, as well. Everything we do, that which is known to us, and that which is the hidden transformative work of grace known only to God – all of it happens because of your willingness to rise to the call of the Holy Gospel, and answer, “yes, Lord.”, in support of this shared ministry.

We give God thanks for your faithfulness every day. We ask only for your continued prayers and support, and your love, partnership, and guidance as we move forward into 2012.

Mike McCormack, Senior Warden 



Junior Warden

My name is Bob Bradley and earlier the year I took on the responsibility of Junior Warden. The prime function of the Junior Warden is to maintain and help to facilitate projects regarding the church building and its grounds including the 2 building located on this property.

The members of the Junior Warden Committee are as follows:

Joe Baldwin	General Maintenance and all around handyman
Mike McCormack	Snow Shoveling and Junior Warden's go to guy when needed
Brad Sewell	Snow Shoveling and former Junior Warden
Greg Wilkinson	Snow Shoveling
Bill Anderson	Snow Shoveling
Mick Hawley	Snow Shoveling

There are others that have called me and have volunteered their time to help with odd jobs such as raking leaves and clearing out brush.

It wasn't until lately that I realized the maintenance on the buildings is extensive and that this now needs to be a priority. My goal as Junior Warden is to bring our buildings into the 21st century. Everything from heating to lighting to just small thing such as paint needs to be updated and completed so that we will have a building that is efficient and easily maintained. The following are items on my list for the year 2012.

We went through a fire inspection a month ago and had many things on the list that were not up to code standards. We have since been signed off on 16 code violations some small and some that were major items. This opened my eyes to all the maintenance items that need to be addressed in the near future.

Change the lighting out to more efficient LED lighting. LED lighting will last up to 60,000 hours without replacing. I am currently working with a company out of Michigan called Hybra that manufactures Led lighting. Our current fluorescent lighting uses 140 watts of power and the new lighting will use 24 watts and will deliver twice the Lumen (brightness). This will not only help with the cost of new bulbs every other year but will drastically reduce our carbon footprint and our electrical utility cost.

The other project to get completed is the upgrading on the heat system. We don't have to replace any boilers or big equipment but the electrical board on

the forced air units has to be upgraded since the parts are getting harder to come by. Also by updating this board we would be able to get trouble messages to us via E-Mail. This will save a lot of down time and any prolonged damage to the equipment.

The Signage Committee with the help of the Junior Warden Committee will be looking to install 2 signs one at each entrance to the church. This will be a wonderful way of letting people know we are here. If you have not seen what the signs look like there is a replica of the sign in the Narthex.

Brad Sewell in his last year as Junior Warden engaged with a Civil Engineering firm to replace the sidewalk to the main entry to the church. We will be moving forward with this project and hope to have enough funds to make it a reality this coming year.

It is my goal to reduce the utility costs for the building and the cost to maintain our facilities. This will be an expense that will pay for itself in the coming years as costs will start to increase.

This has been my pleasure to serve St. Mary's and it's parishioners for this last year. I look forward to working with all of you in 2012 to make St. Mary's a warm and welcoming community.

Bob Bradley, Junior Warden ☩



Junior Warden

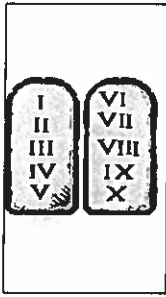
Acolyte Ministry



Young parishioners may serve the church as Acolytes beginning in about the third or fourth grade. Acolytes often continue through their high school years, graduating to the lead position of Crucifer. The Crucifer and Acolytes lead the procession as the start of the service, as well as the recessional at the end. They also serve communion, light and extinguish candles, hold the Gospel during readings, and wear beautiful red robes. Training for new acolytes will be offered in early February. Please consider serving in this ministry.

Tom Bradley, Acolyte Coach ☩

Acolyte Ministry



Adult Education

The Adult Education Committee promotes Christian formation by offering classes and other educational opportunities. During the Christian Education and Fellowship Hour (Sundays at 10:30 AM), we have classes on a variety of topics, reflecting the needs and interests of our congregation. This year, as she also did two years before that, Ann Lovejoy took the lead on an evaluation and needs assessment survey to point us in the right direction for future classes. We always welcome your suggestions for future offerings. We are also open to proposals from people who want to teach or facilitate a session. We do ask that you come to one of our committee meetings in person to show us the course materials and tell us about the class.

Reflecting the different needs and desires for classes that we have heard from you, last year saw a variety of Adult Ed classes. Mary Ellen Harris and Connie Jones brought the DVD-based series "Uppity Women of the Bible" back in a series of enjoyable Sunday morning classes. Ann Lovejoy and Ted Cole facilitated a two-session Appreciative Inquiry focused on St. Mary's worship services. Eric Wohlforth led a session on the Thomas Gospel. Once in the spring and once in fall, Ann Lovejoy reprised her popular classes on ritual, rhythms and poetry. Rachel Mason led Today's Gospel each week, reflecting on the Gospel readings for that day. This long-time Adult Education class has now been put on hold to give participants (and the leader) the chance to attend other classes. It will be revived when there is a demand for the class, perhaps during the summer when other Adult Ed classes are on hiatus. This year's offering of Fifty Days of Faith and Life began in September, following up on the exciting new all-parish program of faith formation Ted Cole introduced in January 2010. The Discover class, launched in the fall of 2010, continued through the spring, and in fall of 2011 we started a new session. This wonderful class, led by Michael Burke, continues to be incredibly successful. Discover explores common reasons for seeking a faith community,

St. Mary's core values and traditions, and the ways of being Christian in our contemporary world. The group is especially suited to those seeking to deepen their understanding of the faith, as well as those preparing for adult reception or confirmation. Other Sunday morning classes in the fall of 2011 included opportunities to discuss the St. Mary's budget, Safe Church training, and our congregation's participation in AFACT (Anchorage Faith and Action - Congregations Together).

In addition to the classes on Sunday mornings, we also held an increasing number of classes outside that time slot. Bible Workbench met weekly throughout the year, despite the sad loss in April of the program's longtime coordinator, Caroline Wohlforth. Rachel Mason now serves as lead facilitator. Education for Ministry (EFM), a four-year program for laity, also meets weekly; Sara Gavit and Maggie Wilkinson teach the classes. In both spring and fall of 2011, the Ted Cole taught a session of Kerygma, an innovative Bible study class that uses discussion and discovery to gain deeper understanding of the Bible. The spring's readings were from the New Testament, while the fall session focused on the Old Testament.

This fall we added several new evening or weekend classes. Heather Hall taught "Seeing the Word," using the method of *visio divina*, a meditative practice of using visual images to prayerfully reflect upon Scripture. Michael Burke led a class on the Book of Exodus, describing its themes of salvation and revelation, promise and fulfillment, covenant and community as a gateway to the whole Bible. Ted Cole taught a class entitled "Listening to God in the Night," drawing from Jung's analytical psychology and from Christian theology to understand our dream life as part of our relationship with God.

The dedicated and energetic Adult Ed Committee meets on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:15 p.m. in Cay's Room.

Adult Education

Clergy advisors Michael Burke and Ted Cole have also been active in the group.

Core committee members are currently Ann Lovejoy, Eric Wohlforth, and Heather Hall. I am thankful to each for their enthusiasm, wisdom and many contributions. Others are less regular at meetings but make valuable contributions when they do. We are presently actively recruiting new members. Anyone is welcome to join the Adult Ed committee, propose a class, discuss an ongoing program, or just

drop in on a meeting to find out what we are up to. In 2011 we sought to deliver more, broader and deeper opportunities for learning and spiritual growth at St. Mary's. We have made considerable progress toward this goal by providing a variety of sessions on Sunday mornings and throughout the week. In 2012, we are planning another inspiring lineup of classes and look forward to seeing you there!

Rachel Mason, Adult Education Chair ☩

Altar Guild

The Altar Guild is a group of dedicated people who prepare the Altar and Sanctuary for our worship services, and for special services and events such as weddings, baptisms, funerals, and ordinations. The lovely flower arrangements, the sparkling white linens, the gleaming silver and brass vessels, and the colorful seasonal banners are all the work of the Altar Guild. Members perform their duties quietly and behind the scenes once a month on a rotating basis. The sub-committees of Altar Guild include the flower committee, the banner committee, and the bread bakers. Jann Sherrill heads the flower committee. Members serve on a weekly rotating schedule with breaks during Advent and Lent when no flowers are displayed. Our talented flower arrangers are Jann Sherrill, Glenda Hassel Kruger, Margaret Sharrow, Teddy Arnold, Patricia Koch, Marcia Nattress, and Winnie Nowak. Our communion bread is faithfully baked by Liz Rockwell with Judy Veerman filling in when Liz is unavailable. Marian Richter and Nancy Talbott keep the Altar linens clean and pressed.

Those who set the table for communion are JoAnne Banta, Valerie Buckendorf, Donna Edmondson, Alexia Gordon, Linda Johnson, Karol Libbey, Kathryn McCormack, Jane Straight, Ned Strange, Jane Thomas, Judy Veerman, Laura Vidrine, Sheila Willis, and Erin White. I appreciate the faithful service of all the Altar Guild members. Long-time members, Caroline and Richard Mitchell, retired from Altar Guild in June to be free to travel and visit family and friends. They were truly dedicated and knowledgeable about all aspects of Altar Guild and always willing to help out in a pinch. Recently we welcomed Alexia Gordon to our team. She has previous Altar Guild experience and is a wonderful addition to our group. One of our goals for 2011 was to reorganize the area where the banners are stored. This remains to be accomplished and will be placed on our 2012 list of projects. We also hope to replace/repair some of our existing banners during 2012. We welcome any who are interested in joining Altar Guild, with a special need at the 11:30 service. Please consider this vital ministry.

Nancy Talbott, Chairperson ☩



Altar Guild



Community Building and Hospitality

The Community Building and Hospitality Committee supports St. Mary's in our effort to be "an ever more welcoming and inclusive community." As it is such a vital part of our calling as a church family, every member of St. Mary's, whether on the committee or not, is part of this ministry. The hospitality we extend can be as simple as a friendly "hello" on Sunday or as complicated as a formal parish dinner, but whatever form it takes, our activities are in many ways the tangible hands of Christ, open in welcome to all.

In the past year, the committee has been involved in a number of events, from potlucks to funeral receptions to parish picnics and dinners. Many of these events were planned in coordination with other committee groups as we worked in concert to foster a sense of welcome and inclusiveness at St. Mary's. We are pleased at the success of the past year's events and look forward to the coming year, which we hope will demonstrate new growth in parish events and outreach.

We will have a new committee chair this year, but our mission remains the same: to reach out with the hands of love. There are many ways in which you can take part, should you feel so called: as a greeter for services; providing or coordinating refreshments for Sunday fellowship time; helping out with scheduled events like the Annual Picnic, Maundy Thursday dinner; supporting receptions for funerals; and working on reaching out to newcomers in person and over the phone and Internet. We welcome everyone's input, gifts and talents. Please let me or the incoming Chair know if you'd like to be a part of this vital ministry.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Talbott-Clark ☪



Christmas Dinner on December 19, 2011

Children's Ministry



God of all wisdom and knowledge, give your blessing and guidance to all who teach in your Church, that by word and example they may lead those whom they teach to the knowledge and love of you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
From the Commissioning of the Church School Teachers – Fall 2011

As a committed, prayerful, and enthusiastic team, I believe Children's Ministry is moving into a new awakening of the sacred that brings new meaning to God Is Love. I believe the 2010 Vestry Retreat Goal of providing lively and engaging children's activities and opportunities is also being realized. Following are a few highlights of the past year:

- Flowering of the Cross
- Children's Ministry Open House
- Mary's Garden
- Sunday School Teacher Appreciation Event
- Food Drive Bag Distribution
- Children's Chapel – Godly Play – Cross Dedication
- Attendance Certificates
- Children's Chapel Training Events
- Pentecost Celebration
- Children's and Bell Choirs
- Primary and Intermediate Sunday School Worship
- The Alaska Zoo Donkey Adoption – "Sara"
- Malawi Penny Project
- St. Mary's Picnic Treasure Hunt
- Fall Registration and Downstairs Hospitality Gathering
- Fifth and Sixth Grade Sunday School
- Fall Family Zoo Event
- Angel Tree Gifts
- Christmas Eve Family Service

These activities bring opportunities to walk and connect with the children as they discover that God loves them. It is our hope that the activities and connections that they make with their teachers, peers, and the community of St. Mary's, will nurture them as they grow in their faith journey. We celebrate the consistent, growing attendance in Sunday School and Children's Chapel, and we are excited to welcome numerous new families. The Children's Ministry Team meets monthly to pray and plan. We believe that the Holy Spirit is working through us and with us. We are thankful for the steadfast guidance, faith, and knowledge of Rev. Dr. Ted Cole, Jr. As a team, we continue to pray that God will give the children "strength to hold their faith in you and to keep alive their joy in your creation through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (Book of Common Prayer)

Susan Burch, Vestryperson for Children's Ministry ☪

Children's Ministries