

# ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

January 28, 2024



**CHRIST CHURCH  
EPISCOPAL**

THE MOTHER CHURCH OF GEORGIA  
ESTABLISHED 1733

CHRIST CHURCH, SAVANNAH  
ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA  
JANUARY 28, 2024  
6:00 P.M. CHRIST CHURCH NAVE

- I. CHORAL EVENSONG
- II. PRAYER FOR A PARISH MEETING
- III. ANNUAL REPORTS
- IV. COMMISSION 2024 VESTRY
- V. COMMISSION CONGREGATION  
Baptismal Covenant, BCP 304
- VI. TRICENTENNIAL ORGAN  
PRESENTATION



## FROM THE RECTOR

Each Sunday throughout the year, we hear announcements about many opportunities for worship, community building, Christian formation, and service to others. Our various programs, service ministries, and worship experiences touch people of all ages and stages of life. However, we rarely discuss the administrative and financial stewardship that undergirds all that we do. These wheels of facility and financial management, administration, and stewardship provide a strong foundation of support for all of the people and ministries of Christ Church. In this booklet, you will read reports about our behind-the-scenes ministries that are present and functioning throughout the year. If you have questions about any aspect of our administrative and financial governance, please do not hesitate to speak with the rector, one of the wardens, or the person or persons listed as the chairs of the various ministries found in this Annual Report. Thanks to all who faithfully serve as leaders of our Church's mission through administration and stewardship. The good governance and strong financial base of our congregation is a key reason that our Church and its mission for God's world can continue to expand.

Michael White

## SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Dear people of Christ Church, it was a joy and an honor to serve as your Senior Warden in 2023. It certainly felt like a milestone year – not just because it was our 290<sup>th</sup> year. 2023 marked our first full year of several things, including George Fergus' first full year of ministry in our midst and the first full year of living into our current *Generation to Generation* strategic plan.

Over the past year, we have all benefited from a multitude of opportunities for Christian formation from Sunday evening discussions & evensong, adult forums before our 10:30 service, and after church Sunday school for all ages this past fall. To say that we are blessed to have such wonderful clergy teachers at Christ Church to facilitate these offerings is an understatement.

Through all of that, we are seeing the fruits of a parish that is vibrant and growing. We witnessed the joy of a record number of baptisms last year, our Christmas pageant last month had almost 60 youth & children heralding glad tidings, and our stewardship campaign this past fall, faithfully led by Claire & Whit Davis and fueled by your generosity, eclipsed total pledges of more than one million dollars for the coming year.

One of the things I've always loved about being an Episcopalian is our liturgy – the work of the people. This work extends beyond the time we spend together in corporate worship on Sunday mornings, and we are all beneficiaries of the work you all do each and every day to live out our Baptismal covenant in the coastal Georgia community and preserve Christ Church for future generations. As my time in the Vestry community comes to a close, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of the Senior Wardens I've had the chance to serve with, both as clerk and member: Ryan Chandler, Mary Raines, Denton Stone, Karen Oelschig, Bill Wallace, and Clayton Gagne-Thomas. Your servant leadership has been a true gift to me as well as to Christ Church.

To Rev. Michael, Rev. Samantha, Rev. Helen, Catherine Gussler, Suzanne Smith, and all our clergy and staff, thank you for all of the ways you minister to this congregation and our wider community. And lastly, thank you to Stephen Rilee for serving as Junior Warden this past year. Christ Church will be better for his leadership over the next year.

With gratitude, Sarah Jones

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Thanks to you, your Christ Church is blessed to maintain a solid financial position as indicated below:

#### **2023 Year End Summary: (Unaudited)**

Operating Income	\$1,241,955
Expenses	<u>1,179,188</u>
Net Operating Income (a)	62,767
Cash (b)	\$234,081
Investments (b)	2,310,989
Endowment	5,639,916
Net Fixes Assets	473,806
Total Liabilities (c)	304,175

(a) Net Operating Income does not include contributions to endowment or the organ fund, depreciation expense, endowment fees or unrealized gain/loss in endowment.

(b) The cash and investment totals include prepaid pledges, memorials and other donor designated funds, clergy discretionary funds and emergency reserves which total \$1,259,027 on December 31, 2023. At the Finance

Committee's recommendation, the Vestry approved a policy that Christ Church maintain emergency reserves approximately equal to 7 months operating expenses which is \$770,519 for 2024. This cash is also held in anticipation of the capital improvements and maintenance anticipated for the next few years. In the event of a named hurricane, the insurance deductible is 2% of the property value of the church's buildings. That deductible is currently approximately \$357,856.

(c) Liabilities are prepaid pledges in the amount of \$304,175

Patton Dugas, Treasurer

### STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Thanks to our Congregation's generous support, in 2024 Christ Church will maintain and expand our ministry – both to those in our church family as well as those in need across Savannah and the globe.

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Total Amount Pledged	<b>\$1,009,805</b>	\$934,521	\$884,916	\$750,351
Average Pledge	<b>\$4,974</b>	\$4,720	\$4,732	\$4,318
Pledging Units	<b>203</b>	198	185	179

We are enthusiastic that both the total amount pledged, the average pledged and the number of pledging units have increased for 2024. Your giving to the life and work of Christ Church allows us to celebrate the love of Christ in our community. Thank you for your generous support of our church home.

Claire and Whit Davis, Co-chairs Stewardship Campaign

### ENDOWMENT REPORT

Thanks to the generosity and fiscal management of previous generations of parishioners, Christ Church is blessed to have an endowment that is primarily used for the care and maintenance of our historic facilities. In 2023, the value of the Fund increased by \$629,138 to \$5,630,235, primarily as a result of broad increases in the financial markets. There were two donations to the fund in 2023. The fund is invested with the goal of providing a total return commensurate with the spending policy and to achieve a growth of principal to keep pace with inflation. If you have not done so, please consider adding the Christ Church Endowment to your will.

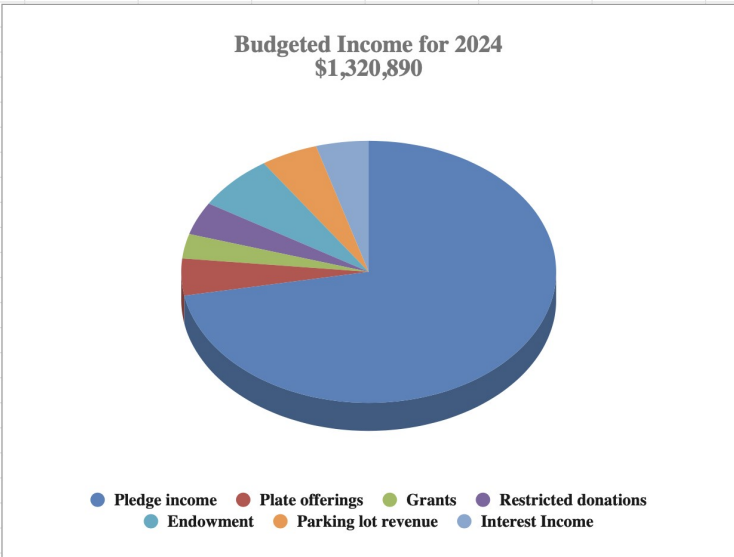
Each year, the Endowment Committee recommends to the Vestry a level of distribution from the Fund. The withdrawal is typically between 2-5% of the average market value of the Fund for the previous three years. It is the intent of the Committee and the Vestry to maintain the purchasing power of the Fund, taking inflationary effects into account. In 2023, the Committee recommended a \$90,000 distribution (1.85% of 12 quarter trailing average), which the vestry approved at its December meeting and will be distributed in 2024.

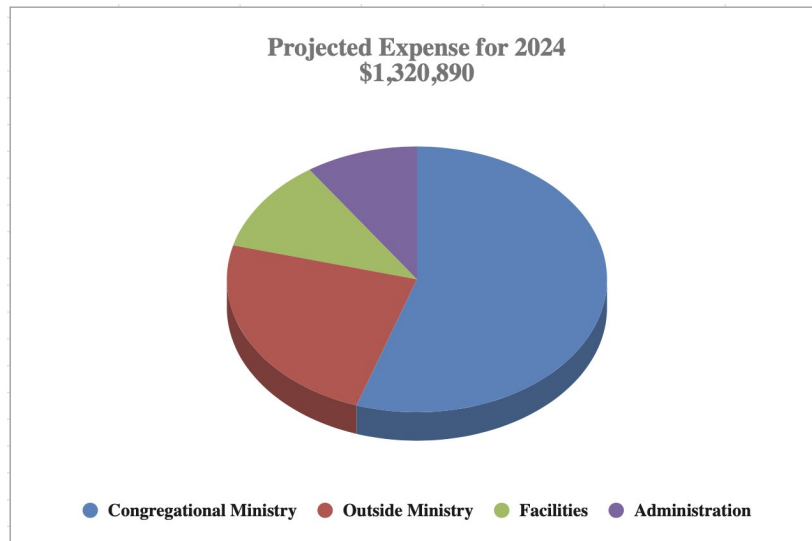
Manager	2022 Year End	Gain	2023 Year End
Minis & Co.	\$2,881,860	405,328	\$3,287,188
SSGA/ECF*	\$2,119,237	233,291	\$2,352,528
Total	\$5,001,097	638,819	\$5,639,916

Jim Pember, Endowment Committee Chair  
 Members of Endowment Committee in 2023: Steve Edwards, Jim Pember, Mary Raines, Denton Stone, Bill Wallace; ex officio: Michael White (Rector), Sarah Jones (Senior Warden), Patton Dugas (Treasurer), Stephen Rilee (Junior Warden), Catherine Gussler (Assistant Treasurer)  
 \*State Street Global Advisors/Episcopal Church Foundation

### BUDGET FOR 2024

Budget presented to Vestry by the Finance Committee and approved at the December vestry meeting.





Finance Committee: Patton Dugas (Treasurer and Chair) Karl Bohnstedt, Jane Espy, Stephen Hooten, Stephanie Lindley, Paul Reddick, Michael White (Rector), Sarah Jones (Senior Warden), Stephen Rilee (Junior Warden); ex officio: Mills Fleming, Catherine Gussler (Assistant Treasurer).  
Offering Tellers Coordinator: Tom Hollis

### FROM THE 2023 PAROCHIAL REPORT

Baptisms	13
Confirmations/Receptions	16
Marriages	6
Burials	8
Average Sunday Attendance 2021	145
Average Sunday Attendance 2022	198
Average Sunday Attendance 2023	240
<i>(All Sunday services are live-streamed on YouTube)</i>	
Easter Eve and Day Services 2023	547
Christmas Eve and Day Services 2023	794

## COMMISSIONING OF THE VESTRY FOR 2024

Wash Dender, Lindsey Eberle, Katie Griffith, Stephanie Lindley, Rosemary Mackey, Liz Macfadyen, Roger Moss, Rena Patton, Paul Reddick, Stephen Rilee, Paul Threlkeld, Polly Webster, Susan Wetmore

Thank you to Chuck Chewning, Betty Pember and Molly Taylor for their service to the Church as members of the Vestry for the last three years. Thank you to Sarah Jones for her service as Vestry Member as well as Junior and Senior Warden. Their leadership has been a gift to our community.

*Almighty and everliving God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with those who take counsel for the renewal, mission, and administration of your Church. Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory. Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Book of Common Prayer, p. 818*