



# Annual Report

November 10, 2019

ST. BENEDICT'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
SMYRNA, GEORGIA  
ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA, NOV.10, 2019

1. OPENING PRAYER (in unison, printed at the bottom of this page)
2. ELECTION OF THE SECRETARY
3. APPOINTMENT OF 3 TELLERS
4. INTERIM RECTOR'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5. VESTRY REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
6. REPORTS OF ALL ORGANIZATIONS
7. ST. BENEDICT'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL REPORT
8. ELECTION OF VESTRY MEMBERS
9. OTHER BUSINESS
10. CLOSING PRAYER AND BENEDICTION
11. ADJOURNMENT

Almighty and everliving God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with us who take counsel in St. Benedict's parish for the renewal and mission 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.

## INTERIM RECTOR'S REPORT

The past twelve months have been quite a roller coaster ride for St. Benedict's. The rector resigned in January to become full-time Head of St. Benedict's Episcopal School. Ashley (a.k.a. A+) was giving strong, wise and loving support and direction, and then you learned that you'd need to have an interim-rector and that A+ couldn't be the new rector. That's about the time I came on board, and the roller coaster swerved back and forth, shaking folks, including me, quite a bit. Then it climbed up to the highest point. But guess what? There wasn't a fast and twisting and terrifying descent. Rather, we've been rolling along, up a bit and down a bit, the ordinary journey of the Body of Christ.

Our staff, The Rev. Ashley Carr, Deacon Edith Woodling, Children's Formation Coordinator Campbell Witkiewicz, Music Director Valerie Pool, Parish Administrator Monty Johnson, Communications Guru Carol Kirshner and Seminarian Zach Jones, continue their wonderful ministries. Our weekly meetings are filled with care, mutual support, Scripture study and always some laughter.

And you, the Beloved People of St. Benedict's? You have continued without pause the work of building up the Body of Christ. In the kitchen, in the classrooms and parish hall, in the nave and the choir room and the Sacristy, in homes and conference rooms, at Common Ground and Holy Comforter, with Path to Shine and El Refugio, through a Men's retreat, a fabulous Youth retreat, an upcoming Women's retreat, at breakfast or lunch, in small groups, with newcomers and "gym" folk, in joy and sadness, sharing BBQ and Low Country Boil, through intercessory prayer and sacramental living, continually knitting together this Body of Christ, and patiently picking up the dropped stitches and threading them back together with us.

Throughout this time, your Vestry has been faithful, hard-working, patient, and willing to speak the truth in love with all of us around the table. Much of their ministry is not so obvious, but it is essential, providing the strength we need to prosper the faith day by day.

What's coming next? Well, we're always on that roller coaster, a new breed of Holy Rollers, we. The Spirit moves us, and moves through us, to calm our fears, to encourage our curiosity, to cherish our gratitude, to strengthen our courage and to simply love us. All of us. Thus we are made new, witnesses in word and deed to God's faithfulness to us, through Jesus Christ, our Savior, Redeemer and Friend.

Yours faithfully,



The Rev. E. Claiborne Jones  
Interim Rector

P.S. I hate roller coasters, but I've found that if I'm with ones who will comfort me and hold my hand, it's not so bad.

## ASSOCIATE RECTOR'S REPORT

We've had another wonderful, challenging, and holy year at St. Benedict's! With Brian's departure, and a whole new set of changes, it's been a joy to watch the parish navigate it all. I've been continually impressed by the willingness of this community to get to work and make your church happen. It's been a busy year with the youth mission trip, small groups, more funerals than I'd like to remember, and many a joyful meeting with old and newcomers over coffee and lunch. I've said it a million times, and I'll say it a million more, God is stirring in this place and our job is to notice and respond to God's calls. The next year feels full of hope and promise and I can't wait to see where St. Benedict's goes!



The Reverend Ashley Carr  
Associate Rector

## 2018 MINUTES

### ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES Sunday, September 9, 2018

Present: Brian Sullivan, Ashley Carr, Amy Lancaster, Michael Jones, Leonard Wallace, Bob Drake, Rachel Oliver, Stephanie Park, Paul Stein, Scott Stewart

#### 1. Call to Order / Opening Prayer

- Fr. Brian opened the meeting with prayer after the conclusion of the 10:30 am service.

#### 2. Election of New Vestry Members

- The vestry nominees were announced: Scott Offen, Ann Canipe, Kelly McNabb, and Jack Sickling.
- Brian opened the floor for any additional nominations. There were none.
- A motion was made to elect the nominees and was seconded. The motion was passed, and the new vestry members elected.

#### 3. Last Year's Annual Meeting Minutes

- A motion was made to accept last year's annual meeting minutes, which were included in the report handed out to attendees. The motion was seconded, and the minutes were approved.

#### 4. Treasurer's Report

The Annual Report included the Treasurer's Report compiled by Brook Garrett and Scott Stewart, along with 2018 year to date highlights and the 2018-2019 budget. Scott summarized the Treasurer's Report:

- Pledge contributions are projected to increase by 5% compared to 2017.
- Non-pledge contributions are projected to come in lower than last year, in part due to a number of conversions from non-pledge to pledge status for 2018.
- Operating expenses remain well managed which will increase cash reserves, further strengthen the financial position of the church, and allow for the funding of future growth of the parish and its ministries. A motion was made to accept the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded and approved.

#### 5. Day School Report

- The St. Benedict's Episcopal Day School Annual Report was printed in the church report, and it included the school's goals and objectives and 2018-2019 budget.
- Brian noted that the day school mission, which was printed in the report, had been rewritten.
- The school's objectives were described; finances were discussed with help from Christie Brown.
- Brian spoke of the mutually beneficial relationship between the church and the school.
- A motion was made to approve the day school annual report. The motion was seconded and approved.

#### 6. Ministry Highlights

- Summaries of the St. Benedict's church ministries were printed in the annual report. These included a message from our Senior Warden Gail Sickling, Music Ministries from Valerie Pool, Children's Ministries from Laura Ross, Adult Education from Paul Stein, Youth from Rev. Ashley Lytle Carr, Mission and Outreach from Stephanie Park, San Benedictio from Rev. Ramon Betances, and Stewardship from Amy Lancaster.

#### 7. Adjournment /Closing prayer

Fr. Brian closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Paul Stein, Clerk

## TREASURER'S REPORT - Scott Stewart

### Unrestricted Operating Fund Summary

	9/30/19 Actual	2019 Budget	FY 2018
Pledge Contributions	\$ 364,446	\$ 534,500	\$ 530,093
Non Pledge Contributions	59,080	62,000	61,772
Other Income *	55,876	52,500	72,871
Total Operating Revenue	479,402	649,000	664,736
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 437,960	\$ 608,277	\$ 554,161
Net Income/Loss	\$ 41,442	\$ 40,723	\$ 110,575

\* Other income includes transfers in from other funds

### Operating Cash Balances - 9/30/19

Unrestricted	\$ 297,016
Restricted	\$ 48,376

- There were fewer pledges, but more dollars pledged in 2019 compared to 2018.
- Placeholder expenses have been budgeted the last two years to allow for future rector expenses. Those placeholder expenses are the primary reason net income was positive in 2018 and is projected to be positive in 2019.
- A cash reserve of 5-6 months of operating expenses has been accumulated.

## STEWARDSHIP REPORT – Ann Canipe

The Stewardship Committee has been working for the past several months, and Commitment Sunday will coincide with the annual parish meeting on Nov. 10, 2019. The theme for 2020 is "One Step Forward". The theme has been presented with stickers, videos, articles, and speakers during the church services. This year's pledge card gives people an opportunity to share their commitment to giving time and talent as well as treasure. In this time of transition with the Hispanic congregation moving and our search for a new rector there are some definite challenges. The 2020 budget will be based on the pledges received. The amazing enthusiastic members of the Stewardship Committee are Scott Offen, David Oliver, Abbey Naylor, Scott Mize, Nick Loadholtes, Chris Gaffney, Sarah Barton Taylor, Christy Willis, Ryan Bifulco, and Travis Pietrusza. Many, many thanks to Ashley for her inspiration, knowledge, and ability to get people to do what she asks. Thanks also to Monty for getting all the paperwork and logistics handled so well and to Carol for handling the communications to the parish.

## MISSION AND OUTREACH – Peggy Kessler

The Mission and Outreach programs at St. Benedict's continue to be an important focus for our congregation. Fun golf, great dinner and an exciting auction all added up to a very successful Ugly Pants event in support of our mission and outreach programs. \$34,000 was raised to support Path to Shine, Holy Comforter Friendship Center, El Refugio and Church of the Common Ground. Right now, we are putting emphasis on continuing to educate St. Benedict's members on our current outreach opportunities and looking for new opportunities which can benefit from our time, talents and treasure.

## **ADULT ED – Paul Stein**

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.” The Apostle Paul’s words from 1 Thessalonians apply well to the St. Benedict’s Adult Education program this past year, as we have been inspired by homegrown talent and expertise. During Lent Rev. Bronson Bryant led us through the Book of Common Prayer, while on Wednesday evenings we met at parishioners’ homes to hear about the prayerful side of people’s hobbies and activities. Our seminarian Zach Jones enlightened us on “Displacement, Exile, and Sanctuary” and has returned for an encore this fall with The Book of Luke. Phyllis Seitz inspired our Sunday learners with wisdom on living a Christian life, and Rev. Claiborne guided us through the Catechism. Adult Education continues beyond Sundays with three Bible studies, our book club, and Facebook groups.

## **CHILDREN’S MINISTRIES – Campbell Witkiewicz**

Children’s Ministries has seen a lot of change over the past two years, but our parish’s faith in the ideals of the program has never wavered. Children need a safe space to come together and develop their knowledge of our faith, while always being surrounded by reminders of God’s love for each one of us. This year we have embraced the storytelling of Godly Play for our younger Sunday School crowd, while engaging in the lectionary based Living the Good News for the upper elementary Sunday School. Children’s Chapel takes a lectionary-led approach as well, connecting a picture book to each reading to allow the children a broader view of the readings and to encourage discussion. We continue traditions, such as blessing of the backpacks, blessing of the ghouls and goblins, and Advent wreath making, in order to foster the sense of community and fun which is so integral to the church experience. We hope to encourage all children to explore their faith through an active worship life, and to send them out into the world always feeling enveloped in God’s love.

## **YOUTH MINISTRY - Kelly McNabb**

St. B’s youth ministry continues to grow! On any given Tuesday night at EYC there could be 10 to 25 youth enjoying pizza and discussing their junk, joy, and Jesus for the week. Thirteen of these young people did mission work this summer in Palm Beach Gardens, learning about service and showing love to others. On Sunday mornings, we have mixed up Sunday school a bit, offering different options in order to meet the varying interests of each youth. We have breakfast on the first Sunday, team building on the second, service on the third Sunday, and bible study on the fourth. Even in the absence of a youth director, the adult volunteers and the parents who bring their children to participate in the youth ministry contribute to making our youth ministry as success.

## **MUSIC MINISTRIES – Valerie Pool**

It has been wonderful getting to know the St. Benedict’s family since I started in August 2018! I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work with some of the many talents among this parish, especially through the weekly rehearsals with the Parish Choir and Children’s Choirs. Over the past year, five new members have joined the Parish Choir, singing regularly at Sunday services! And several others will sing with us just for Advent Lessons & Carols, scheduled for Sunday, December 8th, 2019 at 5:30pm. I’ve enjoyed collaborating with the two music teachers at St. Benedict’s school, playing and accompanying their school concerts, and welcoming them to play and sing at our special services. We have also hosted other guest musicians at services, in addition to volunteers from within the church and school. The Friends of Music are planning to present some exciting recitals and musical events starting in early 2020. I am looking forward to connecting with many more of you, and to continue making and sharing music together!

## **ALTAR GUILD - Peggy Kessler**

The Altar Guild is a volunteer group of the parish whose ministry is to care for the altar, altar vestments, vessels, and altar linens of the parish. Altar Guild members prepare the sanctuary for services and clean up afterwards. It is not quite that simple, but this work does provide an opportunity for quiet time, meditation and reflection. We have increased our volunteer numbers in the last year and are always happy for new volunteers to join us.





**SCHOOL** - Brian Sullivan

The school continues to be a vibrant ministry of the church. As we celebrate our tenth year, St. Benedict's is currently serving 494 students from infant to 8th grade. Our mission is to inspire learning, encourage growth and embrace the values of Episcopal Education.

To continue accomplishing our mission, the school created eight specific objectives. Below is a list of those objectives with the progress on each objective.

- Expand facilities to accommodate our unique educational model.
  - A master plan has been developed and land is being zoned to accommodate that plan.
  - A feasibility study has been developed to raise funds for the first phases of the plan.
- Preserve our community by retaining three classes (or less) of preschool - 8th grade.
- Create a marketing and communications strategy.
  - New branding and admissions material have been created with the help of a new marketing team led by Nicole Priem.
  - Extensive research has been completed to help target students who fit our mission.
- Exceed traditional standards for each student in every grade.
  - We have hired a new academic chair, Angela McKenzie, who is working directly with faculty and curriculum.
  - She is tracking our academic data and creating a dashboard for our unique standards.
- Mirror the local community in religious, cultural and racial diversity.
  - With 40% cultural, religious and racial minorities, we continue to lead independent schools with the diversity of our student body.
- Integrate STEAM into our unique and collaborative curriculum.
  - We are currently pursuing major grants to help support our STEAM program.
- Align after-school care and club programming with academically focused and engaging extracurricular activities.
  - We have hired a new after-school director, Taylor Justice, who is bringing in excellent talent and programs that align with our curriculum and programming.
- Build an operating reserve of at least 5% of expenses.
  - Our financial stability continues to stay strong as we strengthen our mission with a tuition that is half of most independent schools in our area.

I am incredibly blessed to lead such an incredible ministry of our church.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Brian Sullivan, Head of School















## **Church Clergy**

The Rev. E. Claiborne Jones, Interim Rector (claiborne@mysaintb.org)

The Rev. Ashley Carr, Associate Rector (ashley@mysaintb.org)

Deacon Edith Woodling (edith@mysaintb.org)

## **Church Staff**

Monty Johnson, Parish Administrator and Registrar (monty@mysaintb.org)

Valerie Pool, Music Director (valerie.pool@mysaintb.org)

Carol Kirshner, Church Web Administrator (carol@mysaintb.org)

Susie Grimley, Bookkeeper (susie@mysaintb.org)

Kate Chastain Lessin, Children's Choir Director (kate@mysaintb.org)

Rachel Oliver, Children's Choir Accompanist (roliver5@bellsouth.net)

Zach Jones, Seminarian (zljones@emory.edu)

Campbell Witkiewicz, Children's Formation Coordinator (campbell@mysaintb.org)

## **School**

The Rev. Brian Sullivan, Head of School (b.sullivan@stbs.org)

Anne Shamanski, Assistant Head of School (a.shamanski@stbs.org)

The Rev. Wendy Porter Cade, Chaplain (w.cade@stbs.org)

Christie Brown, CFO (c.brown@stbs.org)

Polly Wallace, COO (p.wallace@stbs.org)

Wayne Ledbetter, Facility Manager (w.ledbetter@stbs.org)

## **Path To Shine**

Deacon Lesley-Ann Drake, Director (lesleyann@pathtoshine.org)

Christie Stevens, Norton Park's Monday Program Coordinator (christiestevens@gmail.com)

Ellen Gaffney and Julie Savini, St. Benedict's Monday Program Coordinators

(ellen.parker.gaffney@gmail.com, jtsavini1@yahoo.com)

## **Vestry—Class of 2019**

Kristine Anderson, Adult Formation (kfaphd@aol.com)

Rachel Oliver, Sr. Warden, Music (roliver5@bellsouth.net)

Johnnie Purify, Marketing/Communications (jpurifyjr@aol.com)

## **Vestry—Class of 2020**

Gil Benjamin, Children and Youth (gilbenjamin@att.net)

Peggy Kessler (pgkessler1@gmail.com)

Paul Stein, Clerk, Adult Formation (pgstein1@att.net)

Saralee Parker, Jr. Warden, Parish Life (texslt67@gmail.com)

## **Vestry—Class of 2021**

Ann Canipe (canipeann@aol.com)

Kelly McNabb (kellymcnabb@hotmail.com)

Scott Offen (swoffen@comcast.net)

Jack Sickling (jacksickling@yahoo.com)

## **Treasurer**

Scott Stewart, Treasurer (stewar74@gmail.com)