

Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit

"A community of faith seeking to love and serve in the Spirit of Jesus Christ."

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - MINISTRY REPORTS

JANUARY 15, 2017



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What a year! In many ways this past year was the most important and challenging of my seven-plus years at Holy Spirit. The Lord gave us all the grace and guidance we needed as we needed it. Three areas were a focus for us as a parish in the past year—the completion of our major building expansion; my sabbatical and the related activities of the parish while I was gone; and the death of many beloved members. There were many other things that took place and we will cover those, too, in the rest of this report; but I would like to focus on these three areas.

Though our building expansion was completed in 2016, it was the result of prayer, planning, conversation, and hard work that goes back over several years. I am most appreciative of the positive attitude demonstrated by so many during the construction period. Our staff-- Jeff, Julie, Cathy, Bonnie and I-- had to be patient as our work areas were disrupted. Our members kept engaged through the dust and inconvenience. Dan Krogh, our wardens, Bonnie and I worked hard to complete the project along with Janice Davis and her team. Janice took over much of Ralph's general contractor role while also caring for him after his injury and grieving for him after his death. There were more than a few moments that were very difficult for us "behind the scenes." I am grateful that so many did so much in a spirit of Christian love and prayer. And we have a beautiful and useful new expansion that was "built to serve."

In addition to Ralph's death, we lost several other long time and influential members in this past year— Harold Gill, Marilyn Goeltz, Tom Gibson, Lohr Pickering, and Rosetta Wolfe (in addition to Bruce Cross who died at the end of 2015). These were all major losses as each person was loved not only by their family, but by the wider parish. Many of us felt a sense of corporate mourning this year as we lost one more person. As *The Book of Common Prayer* states, "human grief is not unchristian" (507). It is the result of our "deep sorrow when we are parted by death." But we also rejoice as people who believe in Christ's resurrection that we will be reunited with those "whom we love but see no longer" (498). The Christian hope (861) holds and guides us during these times of grief like we endured this past year. I am grateful we could be there to support each other and especially the families of those who have died.

My sabbatical from April 4 to July 10, 2016 was a very important time for me and I believe for the parish. Like the building expansion, it was the result of months of planning by a dedicated parish sabbatical planning team. I am grateful for their dedicated and creative work on this project. We were committed not only to my time away for learning and renewal, but also for the parish to have a plan to follow so that together we could learn to "listen with the ear of our heart" as we discern what is important to us and what is next for us as a community of faith.

I will not review every detail of what we did—I hope many of you came to the three Wednesday night suppers we had to review my time away and remember what you did during

this time. I will state again that I am grateful to Mother Bonnie, the vestry, and staff for their leadership while I was away; and grateful to all of you for staying engaged in the life, learning, and ministry of our community. I knew the parish was made up of faithful people who would do the right thing and that gave me a sense of peace.

My main learning from my sabbatical and for the months since I have returned is to answer this question: “How do we further engage with one another and our wider community in order to work for justice and build bridges with people outside of our usual social circles?” So, for example, we used Adult Christian Education this fall to discuss “Faith and Public Life” and to build on our learning about community-based ministries during our Lenten series this spring. And after months of planning, we are taking part in the ministry of Family Promise to help families escape from homelessness. Look for more opportunities to learn and be active in 2017.

As we review this past year and look to the future, I continue to be grateful to God and to all of you for my continued calling to serve as your rector. It is a blessing and a responsibility that I take very seriously. I am also grateful to Lynn for all that she does to love and support me and help to keep me grounded. I trust this New Year will continue to be a time of joy and challenges for us as we follow our Lord Jesus Christ in our shared life of faith.

Associate Rector’s Report

The Rev. Bonnie Underwood

Grace and peace to you, in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. It has been a remarkable year, as I have been blessed with the opportunity to serve here full time and witness continuing fruitfulness in God’s work here at Holy Spirit.

An important part of this year was leading the parish during the time of Father Keith’s Sabbatical. I was blessed with the opportunity to come to better know Mark Bohan, Janice Davis, Dan Krogh, Bill Kukarola, and Bruce Zavitz, as we all worked together towards the building completion. I’d like to thank them all, and particularly Janice, for their remarkable dedication to this faith community throughout this extensive building effort. With the help of many, we were able to flexibly achieve both continuity and joyful worship in our ever-changing space! A special thanks to Laura Castrillon and Jeff Daniel for their resilience, resourcefulness, and creativity in working through these changes; to Julie Wilson and all the pre-school staff for their constant flexibility throughout the project; to Bert Printz, the Decorating Committee, and all who helped to put things “back in order” as the building was completed; and to the Sabbatical Committee who helped keep our focus on “listening with the ear of our heart” through play, pilgrimage, and mission, to align with Fr. Keith’s own Sabbatical activities. This community showed how much we can accomplish together in faith and love.

What a joy to restart key parish events that had been temporarily halted during our year of construction! Our Dutch Jahnz Kite Day and Messy Olympics, which included a remarkable Men's Club cookout and Parish Potluck, was glorious, as well as our expanded Vacation Bible School. What a gift to begin to live into our new space in fellowship!

This year also initiated our first international youth mission to Honduras in support of LAMB Institute, as five Holy Spirit youth (Jaden Ahadzi, Mary Edwards, Will Murray, Colleen Norris, and Laura Schlecht), Jay Franklin and I, joined St. David's and St. Aidan's June Youth Mission Trip. The outpouring of ECOHS support for our youth and LAMB was remarkable and the enthusiasm of the returning team was contagious as they told their stories. In July of 2017, we will send out an expanded intergenerational team of 14 to continue to build relationships with our brothers and sisters in Honduras.

With the support of the Youth Advisory Board (Sylvia Cardona, Meg Davenport, Shannon David, Carol Franklin, and Fiona Norris), we continue to offer a wide breadth of opportunities for our youth to listen to God, to learn more about themselves, to serve in the world, and to build community. Our youth are actively involved in all aspects of worship and parish life, as youth preachers, acolytes and crucifers, choir members, lectors, ushers, and Eucharistic ministers, to name a few. This year's service projects have included trips to the Church of the Common Ground, working at the Pantry, support of Mentor Me and Family Promise, as well as Diocesan events including the Youth Service Retreat and working with *Stop Hunger Now*. Our new space has allowed us to separate our High School and Middle School classes and provide better age-specific Christian Education.

I have been privileged this year to walk with many of you pastorally through both joy-filled and difficult times. With Fr. Keith's support, I am joyfully expanding my responsibilities beyond Children, Youth, and Families into Parish Life and some of the "behind the scenes" administration of our liturgy. I look forward to continuing to serve in this community as your Associate Rector. Please keep me in your prayers in this upcoming year, as you are in mine.

Senior Warden's Report

Mark Bohan

What a year 2016 was! As we begin to look forward to how we can best use our facility to grow our Church and mission in 2017, I would like to thank you all for what we have been able to accomplish as a Church family during the past year. We are healthy financially thanks to the faithful giving of our parish community. As Father Keith completed his sabbatical, we continued down our own path with the goal of listening with the ear of our heart. We had a wonderful Kite Day, a reflective and memorable visit to the monastery in Conyers, another successful vacation bible school, a wonderful fish fry and boat blessing, a building expansion dedication/dinner with the bishop, a successful Honduras mission trip, and very successful follow-up sessions that focused on the listening with the ear of our hearts activities. Our many

small groups were also very successful in helping reach out to our community in many ways. We have two wonderful EFM programs underway, a growing youth program thanks in large part to Mother Bonnie, the building and grounds team is adapting to the challenges of our new space and changed landscape, and our Preschool has expanded to include children with special needs. The list of accomplishments is beyond impressive and it is clear that Christ is with us.

With our many successes, we also had our share of challenges as well this year...we dealt with the pains of a major construction project, faced various forms of sickness within our congregation and lost some very dear friends. The wonderful community of faith we have at ECOHS along with the grace of our Holy Father pulled us through...

While we have accomplished much this year, we have so much more to do to expand our circle ever wider into our community. I ask that you pray for the leadership of our Church and each other as we move forward and start a new chapter in the life of ECOHS. God has given us a tremendous facility along with a willing and talented congregation...we must do our part to ensure we capitalize on our wonderful opportunities and do what God has asked us to do!

As I transition off of the Vestry, I'd like to thank Father Keith for his tremendous leadership, Mother Bonnie, and you all for your continued support throughout this past year. I am grateful for the opportunity to have humbly served as Senior Warden this year. I will miss being part of the Church Vestry team, but will find new ways to contribute to our wonderful Church family and mission.

Junior Warden's Report

Bill Kukarola

This was a challenging year for our church with all the construction, Father Keith on sabbatical and losing so many long time members. But with a lot of praying and hard work from our congregation, the new addition was completed and Father Keith came back refreshed. I am looking forward to this next year in our new building with our community and Jesus Christ.

Adult Christian Education

Fr. Keith

The parish continues to provide vital Adult Christian Education options. We offer two Education for Ministry (EFM) groups that each have the maximum of twelve members. This is after several parishioners have graduated from EFM over the past four years. In addition, we have a weekly Bible study with the Rector on Thursday mornings throughout the year. Our Sunday school class meets during the program year (September to May) and studies various important issues connected to our life and faith. Beginning in 2017, we will add a Just Faith group to help people better understand issues of compassion and justice in our society. Talk to Fr. Keith or Allison Taylor to learn more. Fr. Keith offers a weekly "Lessons & Questions" reflection via email and

the website to help us consider in advance the coming Sunday's lectionary. These questions are also used by our three small groups that meet to pray, study, and grow.

Children's Christian Education

Julie Wilson, Children's Ministries Director

It seems odd to start off the annual report talking about Vacation Bible School which was in June! However VBS in June was our first Christian Ed event in our new building. Many of you have heard me talk about what a wonderful success it was but in case you have not there is something I want to share with EVERYONE! Vacation Bible School was an exciting, fun, wild, crazy, joyful, active week with amazingly little stress?! That may seem hard to believe but something that was a mind blowing surprise to everyone that participated in VBS was what an INCREDIBLE difference the new space made. The new space seemed to lower the inherent stress level involved in an event with a 100 children running around. It was amazing to all of us that the event seemed to go off without a hitch and the difference the new space was something none of us expected. More space meant more room for children to move around meant less spills and less mess, more laughter, more hugs, more fun and more friends! It was an unexpected, unplanned for delightful blessing! JUST A GIFT OF JOY AND LAUGHTER! We are so incredibly thankful for the way the entire parish worked together to make this happen and the benefits were reaped right away! Thank you for the space for more laughter and more joy!

The above hold true for Christian Ed every Sunday. We are growing and welcoming new families every week! The new space is warm and welcoming and allows us to do new things, meet in bright and sunny spaces and learn and grow in our love and knowledge of God! It is a wonderful space to spread the great news with plenty of room for new friends and family!

Communications/Evangelism/Newcomers

Janet Pfaff, Vestry Liaison

Communications & Evangelism at Holy Spirit is accomplished in a variety of ways by number of people, both parishioners and staff. Whenever we increase awareness of who we are as "a community of faith seeking to love and serve in the spirit of Jesus Christ", we are communicating and advocating (or evangelizing) for people to share in our beliefs and mission.

We use a variety of tools to communicate both within our parish and to the broader community. The most common are the Sunday bulletin insert, the *Dove*, our website, www.echos.net, bulletin boards in the parish hall and elsewhere, and routine and special email communications from the church office and volunteers. Most of these are parish directed, but we also communicate to the broader community through our various ministries and activities such as the Pantry, In Stitches, the Preschool, along with our Facebook page and church listings in the *Forsyth County News* and occasional announcements or news items in the Diocese

Connection email publication. This year we were able to obtain front page coverage in the *Forsyth County News* about the celebration and dedication of our expanded church facilities.

Our efforts to welcome newcomers to our church are also a form of evangelism. We seek out visitors to offer them welcome packets and follow up with welcoming phone calls, letters from the rector, and delivery of a Holy Spirit mug, tea, and bread. We recently updated the newcomer brochure in the packets and created a new visitor card placed in the packets and in the chair back pockets in the nave.

We also officially welcome new members at our annual Newcomers Reception. This past year we invited 35 newcomers to the reception and welcomed 28 visitors during the year who filled out the visitor cards.

In reality, everyone is part of the evangelism and newcomers programs of our church since a welcoming approach to visitors and word of mouth in the community is the most effective way to share our message. We hope everyone is spreading the Good News of the Gospel and our Holy Spirit Church.

Music Ministry

Jeff Daniel, Organist/Choirmaster

The music ministry at ECOHS is thriving. The children's and youth choirs are currently numbered at 20+. Our children's choirs are the St. Cecilia Choir (age 4-1st grade) and the St. Luke Choir (2nd -5th grade). Meg Davenport leads the St. Cecilia choir. Jeanie Lipscomb, assistant St. Luke's choir director, assists Jeff Daniel, choirmaster, with the St. Luke choir. Our youth choir (6th – 12th grade) is led by Jeff Daniel.

The children's and youth choirs presented the annual Christmas Eve pageant during the 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service. "***St. Francis tells the Christmas Story***" was the program presented through narration and song. The children's and youth choirs also present anthems for the 10:45 Sunday services at various times throughout the year.

The adult chancel choir is currently numbered at 15. The adult choir sings throughout the year as worship leaders in music for our 10:45 a.m. Sunday morning service and extra liturgical services (All Saints' Day, Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Great Vigil of Easter, and Evensong for various Feast Days.)

My hope is to continue to provide quality music through our music ministry. We can do this with all who have any interest and/or talents to add. I invite all children, youth, and adults, who are interested singers and instrumentalists, to join the music ministry of Holy Spirit AND share your musical talents with your parish. With all of the changes that occurred in our expansion, we now have a choir rehearsal room and a larger parish hall and nave. I am looking forward to this expansion allowing us to expand our musical offerings in a variety of exciting ways.

Nursery**Kathy Mello, Nursery Director**

I have been the Nursery Director since second half of 2015. There are currently seven nursery workers being scheduled for Sunday services and days and evenings as requested for special programs. Two workers are scheduled for the early service with two additional workers coming in for the later service for a total of four on Sundays as our needs have changed due to congregational growth. We currently remain in compliance with insurance guidelines of one worker to four children and all workers are required to take the Safeguarding God's Children course.

Outreach**Sylvia Cardona, Vestry Liaison**

Holy Spirit parishioners have continued to be faithful in service to our greater community during 2016 with a wide variety of ministries. We enjoyed fellowship with our brothers and sisters at Common Ground, provided comfort to children and youth in with Wendy's Bears, support for Mentor Me, a "Deer" (Angel) Tree and Backpacks of Love. We continue to help over 170 families each month through our Pantry, pray and serve the women and children at Arrendale State Prison and now that Family Promise has launched, provide volunteer assistance, though more help is certainly needed. In Stitches continues to grow and now also sews items for Newborns in Need, in addition to caps for soldiers, blankets for babies and prayer shawls- including some for friends in our congregation who needed that extra special comfort for healing or loss. The funding set aside to support outreach, a clever "Red Elephant" sale and a grant all made it possible to continue these ministries in 2016. We have now added a budget line for outreach to the 2017 budget, but it is our individual and personal involvement with the work and fundraising events that makes these ministries vibrant and strong. Everyone involved can speak to the grace, love and growth experienced by loving like Jesus, and we invite you to share in the blessings too.

Parish Life**Jennie Zavorski, Vestry Liaison**

2016 was a year to be remembered! Our fabulous new commercial kitchen and parish hall were completed, dedicated, stocked and put to good use by many. We look forward to years of fellowship and serving others in this new space. If you are interested in serving on one of the kitchen related ministries, please contact one of the faithful committee heads noted below.

Coffee Hosts

Sharon Linsley

Volunteers are assigned dates to prepare and serve light refreshments following the early or late service. This is a wonderful time to greet visitors and catch up with friends.

Hospitality/Receptions

Sharon Linsley

Volunteers have opportunities to provide baked goods, cheese, fruit and sandwich platters, create centerpieces, set up, or clean up. Smiling faces are always welcomed.

Kitchen

Jim and Judy Foster

Shopping, re-stocking, loading and unloading the dishwasher, prepping for special events. We would love to have you join us!

Dutch Jahnz Memorial Picnic & Kite Flying Day

Bring a picnic and plan to stay after the late service.

Parish Weekend

Janice McClelland

Approximately 90 parishioners of all ages (children & adults) gathered at Camp Mikell in Toccoa on March 18-20 for a relaxing weekend of worship, learning, and fellowship. In keeping with Fr. Keith's sabbatical theme, Br. Kenneth Hosley joined us to help us learn and practice St. Benedict's instruction to ***Listen with the Ear of your Heart***. The adults participated in breakout sessions on centering prayer and chant, Stations of the Cross, spiritual journaling, and daily office, while our children and teens participated in listening activities lead by Camp Mikell staff and the Blue Ridge Outdoor Education Center. Together, we participated in a Drum Circle experience lead by Amy Jackson (Drumrise) on Saturday evening. During the weekend, there was also plenty of time to hike, sit by the creek, enjoy fellowship with others, and sing around the campfire. Our weekend concluded as we gathered for a Palm Sunday procession through Camp Mikell and to celebrate the Holy Eucharist.

Fish Fry and Boat Blessing

Tom McDonnell

Each summer we gather on the shores of Lake Lanier at Neva Jahnz's home after the late service to enjoy a good old-fashioned pot luck with our main course or fried catfish and hush puppies being provided and prepared by our very talented Men's Group.

Red Elephant Sale

This year's new approach was a great success! The Bake Sale and "Rummage Sale" raised over \$2,000 supporting our Outreach ministries.

Mom's Group

Cassie Stanley

We are a group of mom's from the ECOHS family and within the local community. We support each other, encourage one another and build each other up as mothers of young children so often need! We meet the 3rd Friday of every month from 11am to 1pm in the youth conference room for fellowship while the children are in the nursery. We have approximately 8 ladies in our group.

Men's Breakfast Group

Tom McDonnell

This group meets for breakfast and meaningful discussion on the second Saturday of every month. Occasionally, a few remain to work on our ongoing "honey-do" list.

Foyers

Karen Cross and Julie Ford

These small in-home supper groups continue to be a great way for our newest members to get acquainted as well as for long-term members to deepen their friendships. Spring and fall groups organize annually, followed by a Christmas Party and Summer Party.

SASSE

Alice Bryan

These Socially Active Single Senior Episcopalians enjoys luncheons and outings the second Friday of every month.

Pastoral Support

Fr. Keith

Father Keith and Mother Bonnie provide primary pastoral care when families face illness, injury, death, and other serious pastoral issues. They are ably assisted by the Pastoral Support Committee, which meets monthly to discuss those who need longer term pastoral care. This ministry communicates with the Inreach group in order to provide meals for families as they go through difficult times, such as after major surgery for one of its members. It also shares prayer requests with the Intercessor group so they can pray for those in need. Community of Hope provides additional training and support for those who want to be more involved in pastoral ministry both within the parish and to those in need beyond the congregation. People interested in helping with Pastoral Support may contact the clergy or Beth Jones for further information.

Preschool Annual Report

Julie Wilson, Preschool Director

It seems hard to believe that we are approaching the time to pre-register for the next school year! This has been an incredible year and we are so very thankful to be in our new space and welcoming new families every week! It really is such a delightful gift for me to be a part of this program, to know you all and to watch your children learn and grow!

As our preschool is growing we are happy to invite children of differing abilities to join us! We are so thankful to have Kristi Baggaly, our speech therapist on staff to assess and evaluate children's speech. She is here on Tuesday and Thursday and is available to work privately with children in need of speech therapy. We also provide a "natural environment" for OT and PT through Georgia's Babies Can't Wait. We are here to be a part of your team in every way we can, that affects the growth and development of your child.

Yes, our preschool is growing but one of our benefits is that we will always be a small preschool, where all of the teachers know all of the children and all of the children know each other! We offer a wonderful confidence building program that is adaptable to the children's needs, tweaking our curriculum to capture their interest in weather, sharks, bulldozers or x-ray machines!

We are so thankful for your support this year and certainly in years past as we soldiered through construction and moving locations. I expect our rates to remain the same for the year 2017/2018. They are listed below for you. **I am expecting a change in our pre-registration this year. I am anticipating that our preschool will be full next year which is certainly a reason to rejoice! This year more than ever it will be important to pre-register so that your child will have priority and his or her space will be reserved. Pre-registration for currently enrolled families will be January 30th-February 3rd.** Public registration will begin on Monday, February 6th.

Preschool is a wonderful ministry that provides a gateway for new families. Currently 40% of our children's families are church members. This year we have been averaging a new family every week! We are excited to be growing and look forward to the way we can serve others through the preschool.

Worship

Fr. Keith

The parish showed great flexibility in continuing to worship in our space despite the disruption of construction over the first six months of the year. We worshiped at 8:30 and 10:45 (10:00 in the summer) on most Sundays. Our average Sunday Attendance (ASA) held steady at 185 (54 at 8:30 and 131 at late service). We hope to see a return to ASA growth in 2017. We had three baptisms, eight funerals, and one person received into the Episcopal Church during the year. A highlight of our year was our building expansion dedication with Bp. Wright in August. It was a joyous celebration of God's grace and the faithful work of so many people. Jeff Daniel and the choir lead us musically in our worship of God. The Clergy, Altar Guild, Flower Guild, Worship

Building to Serve Capital Campaign

Jay Franklin & Allison Taylor, Co-Chairs

We combined our half way celebration for the Building to Serve campaign with the dedication of the facilities on August 17th. It was great to be able to use our newly expanded parish hall that easily handled the 170 dinner attendees!

At the end of 2016 we are pleased to report that we have now collected contributions of \$885,400 which is 74% of our \$1,210,100 total commitments for the 36 month contribution period. Collections are currently running right on our planned budget. In addition to our capital campaign commitments, we have also received some special contributions. These now total \$220,000. The final construction costs have come in at \$2,054,100. So, we will probably have a loan balance of about \$700,000 when the BtS Campaign ends in March of 2018. This should be a manageable mortgage for our size parish.

We are now enjoying the additional worship space, dedicated space for youth, a greatly enlarged parish hall, commercial kitchen, a choir room and significantly improved pre-school facilities. The opportunity to serve God with this space became a reality in 2016.

Thanks to all for keeping your contributions current and for dealing with all the inconveniences during construction.

Treasurer's Report

Bruce Zavitz

(Please see separate addendum)