## THE CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL & ST. GEORGE



ANNUAL REPORT 2024



# 96TH ANNUAL MEETING

January 26, 2025

"One Body Many Parts" I Corinthians 12:12-31a

# AGENDA

**Opening Prayer** 

The Nomination of Vestry Members - The Rev. Andrew John Archie

Senior Warden Update – Joe Sheehan

Stewardship – Alexis Posnanski & Peter Smith

Church School Children

180th Anniversary of St. George's Church – Harrison Hagen Heil

Joseph Arndt– Organ Talk

Youth Ministry

The St. Michael School of Clayton Update – Dr. Beth Human

Spiritual Gifts – One Body, Many Volunteers!

CSMSG Choir Anthem – "Arise, Shine" - Healey Willan

Rector's Report – The Rev. Andrew John Archie

Election of New Vestry Members – The Rev. Andrew John Archie

Closing Hymn 655 (page 4)

Join us for Chili and Pie in the Great Hall

# Hymn 655



# LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Recently a parishioner said to me, "There's an energy, a joy, and a positivity at our church at levels I've never felt before. Not in seventy years." My response was, "Well I haven't been here seventy years but I feel it, too." It feels like we are sailing and we've found our pocket of wind. A lot has happened over the past year.

This year, Joseph Arndt joined us as our Music Director. Music is at the heart of our worship at The Church of St. Michael & St. George. Joseph combines talent as an organist and choir director with unparalleled enthusiasm. He is relentlessly upbeat and hopeful. And he got here just in time as our organ is failing and we can no longer put off making plans to replace it. The campaign for a new organ begins as of now. Joseph's enthusiasm has brought a renewed focus to our choir and together they have produced a vibrant stunning sound that lifts one's spirit.

The great theologian Carly Simon once sang, "You showed me how to leave myself behind. How to turn down the noise in my mind."

We come to church meaning to worship God, but it's hard to leave behind our obligations, our relationships, our health, our job, our finances, and a world literally on fire. It's hard to leave all of that behind and listen for the still small voice that is God. Yet the music that we sing, the music the choir sings, and the instruments that accompany all help turn down the noise in our minds so that the roar of our lives is quieter – if for just an hour, and the Word of God can be heard.

Something deep within us insists on song, never gets over the bedtime songs which sang us to sleep, or in the Sixties when people stood and sang, "We Shall Overcome." A parishioner was telling me about being at a Taylor Swift concert, as she sang her song "Safe and Sound", and the audience picked up the refrain

> "Just close your eyes You'll be alright Come morning light You and I'll be safe and sound"

There's a reason that no army goes to battle without a band. When we get to music, we have peeled away the superficial from our lives, overcome the body-spirit dichotomy that so plagues us around here– the rational veneer with which we attempt to paper over our real selves and we get down to the deep, the primordial.

In Alex Haley's "Roots", Kunta Kinte lies on the dirt floor of his slave cabin in the New World where he has been brought from Africa. The horrors of slavery have all but obliterated any infantile memory of his native land, in which he was a free person. Until that night he hears a woman singing, singing a song in a tune now strange to him–strange but irresistible. It was a song from Africa and its tune awakened long suppressed memories. He remembered that he once had a home–he remembered who he was.

Sometimes on Sunday, as we're busy praising God, we hear our name called in the music. Something stirs in us and we sing, "This is who



I am and am meant to be." A renewed music program at CSMSG is as spiritually super-charging as nothing else because music draws us closer into the heart of God.

Another transition took place last year as well. The St. Michael's School called Dr. Beth Human to become the head. Working with the Vestry, Finance Committee and myself, Dr. Human has called the school back to its central mission that distinguishes it from other independent elementary schools. TSMSC knows that children are inherently spiritual and filled with wonder and curiosity about themselves and the world we live in and its transcendence. While educating children, The school knows that a developed spiritual life plays an important part in creating wholeness and cohesion in children's lives. Nurturing children's spiritual lives rescues them from imagining they are accountable to no one but themselves. It tells a story over their lives that they are accountable to and of which they are not the chief author.

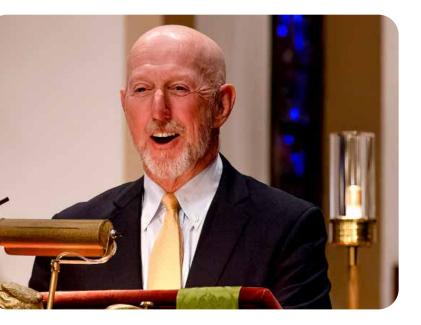
Beth has strengthened the Episcopal identity of the School while working hard to create the strongest academic experience for the children. School is our longest outreach commitment and our largest. The School reflects our church's larger commitment to children, young adults, and families.

The music program and our ministry to young people and their families are at the heart of who our parish is. The changes made this past year reflect a parish mindful of its mission and magnetic enough to attract the best people in their fields.

I am grateful to all the staff who have worked hard to make the past year successful. I am grateful to the Wardens and Vestry who share in the responsibility of leadership. I am grateful to all who week by week make CSMSG their home, give generously, and the fellowship this creates. The year ahead will be a challenging one, but I am confident that God's loving presence manifest in the sacraments will sustain us.

-The Rev. Andrew John Archie

# REPORT FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN



I am pleased to report that our church, The Church of St. Michael & St. George is in great shape – a result of every person affiliated with this wonderful community.

That said, I believe it is beneficial to review a few items.

First and foremost, our clergy is amazing! Under the leadership of Andrew Archie, our rector, we remained focused on our mission. His associates, Fr. Peter Speropulos, Fr. Tom Albinson, Fr. Stewart Clem, and Mthr. Anne Kelsey support and promote Andrew's leadership and our efforts to live Christ into the world. Their counsel and thought-provoking sermons feed us the concepts we need to pursue our religious goals as an institution and as individuals.

Our staff, too, provides incredible support. Joseph Arndt, Sonya Woolley, Marlene Kleffner, Laurie Brown, Alexis Posnanski, Terry Arthur, Becky Arthur, Mary Beth Tipton, Brett Rutledge, Debbie Fenner, Dayne Newberry, Eileen Klamer, Jess Speropulos, Marty Chapman, Roland Krekeler, James Leaks, Theresa Griffin, Olan Pierre, Naomi Merrihue-Irving, Lindsey Cooper-Peters, and Sara Baxter all contribute enormously to organizing and supporting our worship, outreach, social functions, finances and buildings.

Yet, without the members, there is no church. The most crucial aspect of CSMSG is the incredible group of people who count themselves as members of this church. Each of us comes to CSMSG for our own personal reasons, however the sum of our parts is significantly greater than the individual pieces. The diverse talents have made us a multidimensional church. Rare is the church in this day and age that has rich traditional worship, a warm welcome for all who enter the church, and outreach efforts that provide spiritual and tangible support to the incarcerated, the homeless, the home bound, and the discriminated.

Our mission is to live Christ's life in the world through the Anglican traditions of worshiping God with reverence, joy, and awe; serving and caring for our community, and leading spiritual formation for all ages.

While this mission may seem unique in 2025, we are living it every day.

Over the past few years, the Vestry and church leadership, with your support have been following a strategic plan formulated in 2019. This plan has been the road map for several positive changes, including better operational management, more organized outreach efforts, a modified Sunday service schedule, a significantly improved music program, and a more focused partnership with The St. Michael's School. While efforts are ongoing, the progress we've made has already added tremendous strength to our church. The results of these efforts can be seen in growing Sunday attendance, the increased participation in outreach ministries, the increased number of members pledging and of course, the beautiful music at our Sunday services.

Our church, despite national and local trends of declining religious institutions, is thriving. We cannot afford to lose our energy. Our work is ongoing. Fulfilling our mission is a lifelong pursuit. Today, more than ever I believe faith in God and the hard work that God calls us to perform is critical for our world, and the world in which our children and grandchildren will experience.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I ask each of you to committo two key initiatives:

• Increase our efforts to live the mission of The Church of St. Michael & St. George.

• Invite a friend that would benefit from membership in our church to give us a try.

Thank you, *–Joe Sheehan* 

# REPORT FROM ORGANIST AND DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

It is an honor to present my first Annual Report as the new Director of Music here at The Church of St. Michael & St. George. I relocated to St. Louis in May after purchasing a home in Benton Park. I love my neighborhood, and I am already enjoying the cultural resources the city has to offer. But most of all, I am thrilled to be among you at this great parish! I was raised in the Episcopal Church in a congregation that regularly worshipped according to Rite One, so I felt at home here instantly for that, amongst other reasons! I look forward to building on the legacy established by my predecessors. There is much to uphold, yet there is so much to take on. I am enthusiastic about it all!

I "officially" began at CSMSG on August 1, but I was around getting situated before this. In May, I attended a Vestry meeting that resulted in the approval of a bid for a new chancel organ from Schoenstein & Co. I appreciate the leap of faith the Vestry took in my vision. Money needed to be raised, but if we had waited, our chosen builder may have had to delay installation by several years. Fortunately, our installation will be in the summer of 2026. In the meantime, I pray and ask that we all give financially to support this project. If you haven't made a commitment, please talk to Alexis Posnanski or me. We need to pay for this organ with special gifts to ensure the long-term financial health of our beloved parish. Thank you to everyone who has already made a commitment!

My greatest joy is leading the choral program at CSMSG. Our singers have gone through a period of numerous transitions in the last three years, and I am so grateful for the trust they have placed in me already. They are singing with more energy, a much tighter blend, and we are offering difficult repertoire at a high level. I think a testament to this is the impressive attendance at All Saints Evensong (150) and Advent Lessons and Carols (280).

We recently welcomed Heather Martin Cooper to the music staff as our Associate Organist. I appreciate Heather's commitment to excellence and the enthusiasm she brings. Please say "hello" to her if you haven't already!

In 2025, we will get children and youth singing in a new Choristers program. We will again offer Evensong twice a month. And we will raise funds for the new organ while keeping our general pledges fulfilled. I look forward to taking this on with all of you!

> Respectfully submitted, -Joseph Arndt



## Organ Project Report Schoenstein Opus 188

2025, 2026, and 2027 will be momentous years for our parish. We look forward to the arrival of our new chancel organ, Opus 188 by Schoenstein & Co. The organ will be constructed over many months at the Schoenstein plant in Benicia, California. In the meantime, there will be much activity as this incredible project unfolds. We still have funds to raise, we must remove the current chancel organ, and we have site preparation work to do.

Many parishioners have attended Organ Listening Sessions on Sundays. It is easy to witness draw knobs falling out, stops no longer playing, keys sticking, and numerous other electrical and mechanical issues. I cannot overstate what a serious obstacle our current chancel organ has become. To be frank, significant parts of it could fail at any time. In fact, this past December, I was worried about how much of it would even work for Christmas Eve! Occasionally when the organ is turned on, the Swell division will not play. So far, when we turn it off and on again, the Swell works. This is a scary issue though because the Swell is the heart of any Anglican church organ – it is the backbone for choral accompaniment, and it is where the most important subtleties can be found.

I will publish a project timeline for everyone's reference. Please be aware that some of this could shift, but I think this is a good estimate of important milestones. In addition, there will be important work happening on the organ chambers later in 2025 and 2026. I am committed to providing regular updates on our church website as well as forums after Sunday 10 AM services.

–Joseph Arndt

# NEWS FROM THE HEAD OF THE ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL OF CLAYTON



It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I submit this annual report. It is wonderful to lead a school that is a part of such a vibrant and supportive community, and I look forward to many years of continued collaboration and growth.

The St. Michael School of Clayton (TSMSOC) has planned an ambitious rebuilding project over the next five years. With the support of the Board and the Vestry, I announced a series of changes this fall to solidify our identity in the St. Louis independent school market and position us for growth and success.

In 1969, The St. Michael School was established in the tradition of Episcopal day schools. As part of reaffirming our connection to The Church of St. Michael & St. George and as a way to differentiate ourselves in the St. Louis community, we have decided to change the name of the school to "St. Michael's Episcopal Day School," effective July 2025. We believe that this will have a positive impact on recruitment efforts as well as more clearly define our program to our constituents and our greater community. Our name change makes our identity clearer even as we remain committed to welcoming children from all backgrounds, faiths, ethnicities and cultures.

To guide the development of a new strategic plan, the Board of Directors has approved a new Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Core Values. These preserve the best of our traditions while galvanizing us for the future. These statements will also allow us to position ourselves more clearly in the St. Louis independent school market.

**Mission:** At St. Michael's Episcopal Day School, we cultivate curious, thoughtful learners to become responsible leaders who care for their community.

**Vision:** To be a leading independent school in the St. Louis area known for cultivating a vibrant community rooted in our Episcopal identity – a community that nurtures creative and confident thinkers prepared to tackle the challenges of tomorrow in a collaborative, inquiry-based way that transcends competition and nurtures understanding.

Values: Our school values the following:

**Care:** We use experiential learning and social awareness to help our students use all their talents in caring for others, the environment, and the larger society.

**Community:** Our small school size nurtures a strong, supportive community where everyone feels connected and valued.

**Curiosity:** We celebrate the spirit of curiosity and enthusiasm in learning, encouraging students to pursue their passions with vigor.

**Respect:** We encourage students to honor and appreciate the differences and similarities among their peers, fostering a culture of mutual respect and belonging.

**Responsibility**: We instill a sense of responsibility in our students, teaching them to take ownership of their actions and contribute positively to their surroundings.

**Spirituality:** Confident in the certainty of God's grace, we encourage children to explore their own spiritual life, striving for peace and justice and respecting the dignity of all human beings.

We are preparing a new strategic plan that reflects our updated mission and vision statement and will carry our work through 2030.

We have identified three priorities that will drive this plan, which are: **Priority 1:** Grow Our School's Mission, Enrollment, and Success

**Priority 2:** Partner with Our Church, Our Families, and Our Community

**Priority 3:** Lead Area Schools in our Application of Project-Based Learning

After a comprehensive evaluation of our educational model and the evolving landscape of private education, the Board and I have made the difficult decision to discontinue the middle school portion of TSMSOC. Effective summer 2025, we will no longer offer grades 7 and 8.

This decision reflects a growing national trend among private schools, particularly in St. Louis, where many high schools are extending their offerings to include middle school grades. As we consider the future success of our students in high school and beyond, it has become clear that the original purpose of our middle school no longer aligns with the needs of our students, particularly as they transition to high schools that now include middle school options.

In sum, it has been an eventful fall! Our major challenge going forward is rebuilding robust enrollment, which we are pursuing through advertising and open houses. One hope is that our new identity will attract people seeking education in the Episcopal tradition, bolstering enrollment.

Finally, I wanted to extend sincere gratitude to CSMSG. The support from the Church community has been phenomenal, and I see many opportunities for us to collaborate more fully in the future.

– Dr. Beth Human

## **VESTRY MEMBERS**

The Rev. Andrew John Archie, Rector Joseph Sheehan, Senior Warden Frankie Eichenberger, Junior Warden Matt Aplington

Stephen Eisele Rachel Hebisen William Jenkins Christine Johnson Barry Kirk, Clerk Rachel Martens Gale Patterson Mary Katherine Ray Nancy Reynolds Peter Smith William Springer Lindsey Stokes

### NON-VESTRY POSITIONS

David Ott, Treasurer

## TRUSTEES OF THE ENDOWMENT

The Rev. Andrew John Archie, Rector Gayle Jackson Joseph Sheehan Kathleen R. Sherby David Ott, Treasurer *(ex-officio)* 

## ENDOWMENT EXPANSION COMMITTEE

The Rev. Andrew John Archie, *Rector, (ex-officio)* Kenneth Bean Laurie Brown Spencer Burke Becky Fouke Jeannette Huey Talbot MacCarthy Jefferson Miller Alexis Posnanski John Rowe Joseph Sheehan

## DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVES

Harrison Hagan Heil Peter Smith Chad Templin Jan Jacobi – Alternate Bill Wallace – Alternate

## **CLERGY AND STAFF MEMBERS**

The Rev. Andrew John Archie, *Rector* The Rev. Peter James Speropulos, *Assistant Rector* The Rev. Thomas Roy Albinson, *Assistant Rector* The Rev. Stewart Douglas Clem, *Priest Associate\**, *Theologian-in-Residence* The Rev. Anne Hunter Kelsey, *Priest Associate\** Joseph Andrew Arndt, *Organist and Director of Music* Sonya Woolley, *Business Manager* 

Becky ArthurExec. Asst. 1	to the Clergy and Dir. of Stewardship
Terry Arthur	Accountant*
Laurie Brown	Director of Parish Life
Marty Chapman	Director of Parent Ministries*
Heather Martin Cooper	Associate Organist*
Debbie Fenner	Volunteer Coordinator/Receptionist
Eileen Klamer	Graphic Designer*
Marlene Kleffner	. Administrative Assistant to Rector
Roland Krekeler	Facility Manager
Dayne Newberry	Director of Communications
Alexis Posnanski	Director of Stewardship and Giving
Brett Rutledge	Childrens' Chapel Leader*
Jess Speropulos	Director of Youth Ministry
Mary Beth Tipton	Director of Children's Ministry*

## GUILDS

Betsy Panke	Altar Guild Director
James Stephenson	Head Usher
Carl Eichenberger	Servers' Guild
Mark Throdahl	St. Paul's Guild

## LITTLE SPROUTS NURSERY

Naomi Merrihue-Irving \* Lindsay Cooper-Peters \* Sara Baxter\*

### CUSTODIAL AND MAINTENANCE

James Leaks Theresa Griffin Olan Pierre \*

### **PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Marc Vorih\* Sarah Smith \*

Part-time staff\*



























The following are reports from different areas of the Church community reflecting on this past year's activities and accomplishments.

## FAMILY MINISTRIES

## Children's Ministry

Dedicated volunteers are the heart of our Children's Ministry! Every Sunday morning, I'm inspired by the commitment of our Church School teachers and infant-toddler care providers, who faithfully share God's love with our children. Building a strong foundation for our children's programming remains one of our top priorities. A heartfelt thank you to all our amazing volunteers –Molly Clem, Melissa Holman, Becca Jagger, Krista Jarvis, Patricia Litkowski, Kayla Martin, Claire Meyerkord, Ruth Rainey, Steve and Rachel Lamb, Rachel and Judah Hebisen, John and Alyssa McDonald, Amy Olsen, Lindsey Stokes, Jim Thompson, Del Villa, Hadley Altvater and Griffin Posnanski, and our awesome infant-toddler care providers Naomi Merrihue, Lindsay Cooper, and Sara Baxter.

Sunday morning Church School starts at 9 AM, offering something special for every age group. Little Sprouts Infant and Toddler Care welcomes children ages 0-4 years, while Pre-kindergarten through First Grade (ages 4.5-7) participate in engaging Godly Play sessions. Second and Third Graders, as well as Fourth and Fifth Graders, explore a flexible, Bible-themed Episcopal curriculum. A highlight of Sunday mornings is the Children's Ministry of the Word (Children's Chapel), led by our Chapel Leader, Brett Rutledge. Known for her nurturing spirit and boundless energy, Brett creates a vibrant worship experience.

Music plays a key role in Children's Ministry Worship, with leadership from Mrs. Franklin, supported by Nikki Nguyen and Nicole Franklin. Their lively song selections, paired with glockenspiels and percussion instruments, provide children with a joyful opportunity to develop rhythm and beat.

### Highlights from 2024

• Children sang at the Annual Meeting–Thanks to Mrs. Franklin!

- Ash Wednesday Family Service, Maundy Thursday Service and Simple Supper and Palm Sunday Donkey visit
- Lenten Collection of School Supplies for Arthur R. Johnson Community Outreach
- Parish Picnic with food, games and llama petting zoo
- Mini-Vacation Bible School
- Church School Open House and Guided Eucharist
- Expanded our collection of Godly Play Story Sets thanks to generous families
- Advent Gift Collection for ECM Youth in Detention
- Our Elementary age children participated in service projects including a "buddy program" with our Godly Play-age children
- Observing St. Nicholas Day by making sandwiches for the clients of Father Dempsey Charities
- Gospel Pageant

...He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ..." –Mark 10:14

–Mary Beth Tipton, Director of Children's Ministry

## The Youth Ministry

In 2024, we continued to work through the framework of Belong, Grow, Serve, and Go–the pillars of the youth ministry program at CSMSG. Weekly opportunities for students to belong to a safe and loving community while growing in their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith were offered on Sunday mornings at 9:00 AM (6th and 7th-grade Sunday School and 8thgrade Confirmation), as well as during Sunday night youth group from 6:30-8:00 PM.

For high school students, we provided three small group opportunities throughout the week, where students engaged in indepth Bible study and discussion with CSMSG staff and volunteers. The enthusiasm and engagement our students brought to these





gatherings were truly inspiring, as was the dedication of our youth staff and volunteers, who make these opportunities possible. I am so grateful for their time, energy, and patience.

#### Summer Programming Highlights

Our summer programming focused on service, rooted in the teachings of Jesus in Luke 10 and the parable of the Good Samaritan, where we are reminded to "love our neighbors as ourselves." We lived out this call both locally, through Middle School Mission Week in St. Louis, and nationally, through the high school mission trip to Benton Harbor, MI.

#### Middle School Mission Week

Over 30 students participated in a variety of service activities to support organizations across the St. Louis area:

- Heru Urban Farming: Students helped maintain a farm that provides food for areas of St. Louis experiencing food deserts. Heru Urban Farming also educates the community through agricultural classes for local schools.
- St. Louis Area Food Bank: Missioners packed 18,820 pounds of fresh produce (5,392 pounds of cucumbers and 13,428 pounds of potatoes), providing 15,683 meals for food-insecure individuals in the St. Louis Metro area.
- Loyola Academy: Students cleaned, sorted, and organized supplies, prepared for an upcoming fundraiser, and packed hygiene kits for those in need. Special thanks to Principal Ashley Chapman, a CSMSG parishioner, for hosting us!
- Mary Ryder Home: Missioners spent time with elderly residents living with mental illness, socializing, playing games, and crafting.
- CSMSG Activities: Students assembled donations for local charities, including sandwiches for Hunger Ministries, letters for Mary Ryder Home residents, dog toys for the Humane Society, and

clothing kits for Lifewise STL. They also ended the week with fun activities like a mini-color jam and water games with St. Michael School's summer camp children, capped off by celebratory snow cones.

#### **High School Mission Trip**

Nineteen high school missioners traveled to Benton Harbor, MI, to participate in various service projects focusing on community support, environmental stewardship, and cultural engagement.

#### **Community Support**

- Partnered with the Southwest Michigan Community Action Association to pack over 600 boxes of food for underserved and elderly residents.
- Worked with Habitat for Humanity to organize storefronts, sort donations, and maintain landscaping in neighborhoods with affordable housing opportunities.
- Packed over 500 food boxes with essential items at a local food bank.

#### Youth Outreach

• Engaged with children ages 5-14 at the Boys and Girls Club, playing games, dancing, and building relationships.

#### **Community Beautification**

- Maintained community gardens like the Fresh Start Children's Garden by weeding, shoveling, and planting seeds.
- Cleaned and beautified parks, including Roosevelt Park, and supported the local parks department with butterfly garden maintenance and farmer's market setup.

#### Historical and Cultural Engagement

• Painted and cleaned the Ark of the Covenant Church, a historic Underground Railroad stop.

- Maintained the African American History Gallery while learning about local history and culture from its owner. Support for Residents and Organizations:
- Assisted homeowners with yard work and cleanup projects.
- Cleaned, stocked, and processed donations at Mosaic Thrift Store, which serves under-resourced communities.

In addition to their work, the missioners embraced local culture, built connections with inspiring community leaders, and celebrated their efforts with visits to local ice cream shops.

#### Looking Ahead

This fall, the arrival of a vibrant and energetic sixth-grade class has brought renewed excitement to our Sunday morning and evening youth programs. Additionally, our high school small groups have been exploring the Old Testament book by book, digging into big questions about God's character and our role in His story.

As we reflect on the foundation laid in 2024, I am filled with hope and anticipation for what God has in store for CSMSG Youth Ministry in 2025.

In hope,

-Jess Speropulos, Director of the Youth Ministry

#### Parent Ministry

#### Parenting is HARD. We're here to help.

The Parent Ministry at The Church of St. Michael & St. George exists to support all those who nurture children: parents, grandparents, teachers, coaches, childcare providers-any adults engaged in raising the next generation. In a world that feels increasingly complex, we understand the challenges of raising Christian families and are committed to walking alongside you at every stage.

Through educational seminars, expert speakers, Sunday School programs, book studies, and fellowship events, our ministry offers resources and community to help you thrive. Whether you're a parent of young children, a grandparent guiding the next generation, or a parent caring for elderly parents, we want to support you! Our goal is to help adults share their faith with the next generation and to serve as spiritual mentors to all children and youth in our community.

Events are planned throughout the year to encourage new friendships and interactions among parents, grandparents and other adults important to these families.

Stewart Clem led a class on *The Ten Commandments: Learning* to Love God's Law. No better way to begin a new year! Two courses of *The Enneagram Journey*, a 12-week curriculum developed by Suzanne Stabile, were held this year. In February, we welcomed Laura Ollinger who spoke to us on *How to Raise Your Kids Without Freaking Out*. In April we studied the book *Never Enough* and in the summer we studied *The Anxious Generation*. These conversations were rich with the participation of parents, therapists and several heads of local schools. The Centering Prayer Ministry meets faithfully every Sunday for book study as well as intentional time for centering prayer. Throughout the year, *Quick Tips with Marty* featuring short video clips were posted on social media. These included: *Moving* through Lent, Everything isn't Terrible, Praying for your Kids, Navigating the Noise and Who Makes the Music.

The fall Parent Ministry Kickoff featured Chris Sasser presenting Navigating the Noise: Parenting through Busyness, Technology and Today's World and in November, parishioner Abram Van Engen discussed his latest book, Word Made Fresh: An Invitation to Poetry for the Church.

For fellowship and fun, the Parent Ministry sponsored an outing to The Fox Theatre to see Cirque du Soleil's *Songblazers* where 33 folks from the church and the St. Michael School were dazzled by the acrobatics and music! Rounding out the year was *Holiday Floral Arranging* featuring Andy Martin with his tips and tricks for decorating over the holiday!

Lastly and possibly the most important, the Parent Ministry strives to develop meaningful relationships with the families at CSMSG. Throughout the year gatherings are organized to bring parents, grandparents and other key adults together to meet other parents for food, fun and fellowship. The goal is to create opportunities for parishioners to get to know each other, share experiences and provide mutual support. We want to know you and are here to serve your families!

> – Marty Chapman Director of Parent Ministries

## PASTORAL CARE

The unchanging heart of pastoral care is prayer. Prayer for those who have formally requested our prayers and prayer for each member of our parish family.

We continue to visit the sick and the homebound, prepare couples for marriage, hear confessions, perform funerals and burials, prepare individuals for adult Baptism and Confirmation, perform house blessings, provide general spiritual counseling, and assist with vocational discernment of all kinds. Pastoral Care happens with phone calls, texts, zoom calls and home and hospital visits. The Pastoral Care of the members of the Church is shared by the Clergy along with those who serve as our Lay Eucharistic Visitors, or volunteer with Community of Hope, Heavenly Meals, Parish Visitors, Knitting Ministry and the New Parent Group. Thank you to all who serve in these ministries and support the Clergy.

– The Rev. Tom Albinson

## Community of Hope

The commissioning of nine new chaplains on December 10 added to the number serving in the Diocese of Missouri. Chaplains often serve as home visitors to the shut in or ill, visit hospice patients, prisoners, juveniles in detention, street people, and your neighbor. The chaplains are there whenever someone needs a listening ear and a non-judgmental voice.

The COH chaplains here at St. Michael & St. George are under the direction of Fr. Tom Albinson. As visitors to members of our parish, we aim to foster a sense of the larger community as well as a feeling of belonging. Upon request, we bring the



Eucharist to those we serve. Hours served by COH lay chaplains at CSMSG easily top 150 per month.

For more information contact Sandra Vuitel at sandravuitel@ gmail.com or Nancy Ferriss at naferriss@gmail.com.

#### Lay Eucharistic Visitors

This dedicated group of men and women take the Blessed Sacrament from Sunday liturgies to those who, for a health reason, cannot be present at the public celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

We are blessed to have such a dedicated team of visitors at CSMSG. While it is a high priority for our Clergy to make hospital visits and provide the Sacraments to those who cannot come to Church due to an illness, it is also a joyous occasion when lay ministers can function in this capacity to bring a part of the community to the hospital room where two and three Christians can gather to create the sense of a parish family and remind each other of their Eucharistic fellowship.

For more information, please contact Christy James at christy.f.james@att.net.

## WORSHIP MINISTRIES Liturgy

Worship is the center of life at CSMSG and the fuel for our mission in the world. When we gather to worship, we encounter the living God in the person of Jesus Christ. We experience God's mercy, grace, and love in the Gospel. We are changed and impowered by the Holy Spirit to make a difference in a waiting and watching world. When we gather for worship, we do so for the sake of the world. Including Sunday and weekday services, we celebrate six regularly scheduled worship services week by week at CSMSG, and also at several local medical and retirement communities. In this way, we mark every day with prayer and participate in consecrating time itself to the Kingdom of God along with our extended community.

Betsy Panke served as the coordinator of our faithful Altar Guild and has increased the number of parishioners in the Guild.

Mark Throdahl has continued as head of the St. Paul's Guild of Lay Readers and Chalice Bearers, coordinating servers and readers for each of our Sunday services. This year has seen more and more parishioners added to the Saint Paul's Guild under Mark's leadership.

Carl Eichenberger, Nic Ayling, Catherine Salmon, Brian Thomson, and Chad Templin make up our Vergers' Guild.

Bill Wallace, Ian Hagemann, and Jacob Piwowarczyk run the streaming ministry with skill and liturgical sensibility.

Jim Stephenson continues to direct the Usher Ministry.

Our sextons, James Leaks, Theresa Griffin, and Olan Pierre were tireless and faithful in their care for our building and worship spaces.

For all of these individuals, all of these gifts, and everyone who continues to offer their time, talent, and treasure in the worship of Almighty God at CSMSG, we are filled with gratitude and pray God's continued blessings on their labor and their love.

-The Rev. Peter Speropulos

#### Ushers

The ushers serve all the Sunday Morning Services as well as Special Services by warmly welcoming parishioners, handing out service leaflets, passing alms basins, and directing parishioners to Communion. They are there to help the various services run smoothly and efficiently. Each ushering team consists of men, women, and youth from the CSMSG Parish. For more information, contact Jim Stephenson at 314.603.0511 or Jstephenson@craneagency.com.

#### Servers' Guild

The Servers' Guild is composed of youth from the sixth through twelfth grades who serve as acolytes at worship services. Their service and commitment to this ministry contribute to the tradition of superior liturgy at CSMSG. For more information, contact Carl Eichenberger at 314.349.4724 or ceeichenberger@outlook.com.

### Altar Guild

The Altar Guild supports the sacramental and liturgical life of our parish under the direction of the Rector. We maintain the sanctuary and its elements. We prepare the altars for all celebrations: the weekly services, Sunday and Private Baptisms, all funerals, and memorial services, and all weddings. We take care of the elements needed for Eucharist; the silver, the candles, and the linens throughout the year.



We are 30 members strong, but always looking for new additions! Come join us and learn about the many seasons of the church and how we celebrate them. We invite you shadow one of our members and see if this is a good fit for you.

Please contact Betsy Panke if you want to learn more at betsy.Panke@gmail.com.

### St. Paul's Guild and Chalice Bearers

Our ministry is composed of members of the parish who serve as Lay Eucharistic Ministers. We read the Lesson and Epistle at Sunday services and serve chalice during communion.

All members of St. Michael's are welcome to join this diverse group of parishioners–some older, others younger; some experienced, others inexperienced.

If you are interested in joining, please contact Mark Throdahl at mthrodahl@orthopediatrics.com.

## **Christian Formation**

### Discovering Growth and Connection Through Christian Formation at CSMSG

Sunday mornings at CSMSG offer a special rhythm of worship and growth, with our Christian Formation Hour thoughtfully placed between the 8 AM and 10 AM Holy Eucharist Liturgies. This time is filled with enriching opportunities for every age and stage of faith, including the Rector's Forum, 6th & 7th Grade Sunday School, 8th Grade Confirmation, Adult Confirmation, "Conversations Beyond Confirmation," Centering Prayer, Children's Sunday School & Godly Play, Racial Reconciliation, Fr. Stewart's classes: "The Ten Commandments: Learning to Love God's Law" in the Spring and "The Sermon on the Mount" in the Fall, and "Growing Small Humans" with Dr. Beth Human, Head of The St. Michael School.

Beyond Sunday mornings, weekly Bible studies, and small groups for men, women, and high schoolers provide even more ways to grow together in faith. Christian formation is at the heart of our community's life, strengthening our faith, deepening our bonds, and preparing us for God's work in the world. As we embrace the new year, we warmly invite you to explore the joy and transformation these programs offer. Here's why now is the perfect time to join:

#### 1. Spiritual Growth

Grow closer to God through thoughtful exploration of the Christian faith. Engage with scripture, theology, and spiritual practices that deepen your relationship with Christ.

#### 2. Building Community

Find belonging and connection as we learn and grow together. Experience the joy of supportive relationships formed in small groups and classes.

#### 3. Empowerment for Ministry

Discover new ways to use your gifts and talents to serve God and others. Be equipped with knowledge and spiritual grounding to support the parish's mission and ministries.

#### 4. Living as Disciples

Answer the call to discipleship by integrating faith into your daily life. Be inspired by Jesus' teachings to live with love, compassion, and justice.

#### 5. Sharing Your Faith

Learn how to confidently share your faith and invite others into the joy of Christian life. Be part of the growth and renewal of the church through authentic evangelism.

#### 6. Navigating Life's Challenges

Gain a Christian perspective on today's complex ethical and societal issues. Find hope, strength, and guidance in applying faith to realworld situations. As we step into this new year filled with promise, we encourage you to embrace these opportunities to grow spiritually, connect with others, and deepen your faith journey. Together, let us be shaped by God's love and inspired to share it with the world.

- The Rev. Peter Speropulos

## PARISH LIFE

The first Parish Life event of 2024 was the 6th Annual Syrian Dinner, held on January 14. Ghaidaa and Ayman expressed their gratitude for our support.

Following the Annual Meeting on January 28, we enjoyed a lunch consisting of delicious chili, soups, and pies. In February, we hosted a fun-filled Pancake Shrove Tuesday Supper, which concluded with the burning of the palms. Many attendees appreciated our annual Lenten Women's Retreat which was truly a blessing for all who participated.

On March 20, we gathered to make palm crosses for Palm Sunday. On the first night of Holy Week, and we found ourselves in darkness, quite literally! However, thanks to candles and relocating the service to St. George Chapel, Holy Monday 2024 will be a night we will always remember! After the Easter Vigil we enjoyed our annual chocolate fountain and champagne feast, which has become a cherished tradition.

The April Tea event was another sell-out success, with the ladies presenting an impressive Wedding Dress program. The Outreach Fundraiser in May was both enjoyable and profitable for our Outreach Ministries. A hearty thank you to everyone who donated tickets, tastings, and wonderful events–including home-cooked dinners and lunches–as well as to all who participated! In September, we kicked off the fall with our Lay Ministry Fair. and enjoyed a beautiful day at our St. Michael's Day picnic. A special thanks goes to our Vestry for serving lunch!

In October, we held a one-day Women's Retreat, which offered a meaningful opportunity for connections among the women of our church. In November, we conducted our seventh "Our Community Listens" class. Thank you, Bob Chapman!

It has indeed been a busy year. Meanwhile, our Inreach Ministries provide assistance to church members in crisis by offering meals, visiting those who are unable to attend services, knitting prayer shawls, and caring for the beautiful grounds of our church. Additionally, the Archive Ministry preserves our church's history, while initiatives like Steak & Stories, Young Adults, and Casserole Clubs provide fun events for our parishioners and their friends. If you are interested in any particular ministry, please contact laurie@csmsg.org for more information.

## Episcopal Church Women

### Church Service League/Susan Mount Guild

The Church Service League, also known as CSL, invites all women and men of the parish to our meetings. Our year runs from September through May, with meetings on Tuesdays. Our day begins at 10:30 AM with Bible Study, followed by Eucharist, lunch, and a program. Guest speakers, book reviews, bingo, cookies for the homebound, and birthday cards are all part of our programs. Major fundraisers (funds go to in-house ministries,) include the Christmas Silent Auction and the Bookapalooza in February. CSL also manages the J. Francis Sant Memorial Fund, which provides grants for those pursuing ministerial vocations. Scholarship applications are available from January through May.

For more info, contact Lynne Roney lynneroney@sbcglobal.net or Sandra Vuitel sandravuitel@gmail.com.

### Volunteer Ministry

The establishment of the Volunteering Ministry was a direct response to the suggestions put forth by the Strategic Task Force. Under the leadership of Volunteer Coordinator Debbie Fenner, the "Many Hands" plan has been actively implemented, resulting in the formation of an expanding volunteer network. This network plays a crucial role in supporting the church's diverse needs, including production, grounds maintenance, building enhancement, and clerical and reception assistance.

Beyond its impact on the day-to-day operations of the church, volunteering offers numerous benefits to participants. It fosters a strong sense of community and fulfillment among volunteers, while





also providing a cost-effective solution that contributes to saving valuable dollars in the budget.

We encourage you to contemplate the idea of volunteering and consider contributing to the vibrant life of the Church. Your involvement can make a meaningful difference.

–Debbie Fenner

#### Library and Archives

This year, the Sant Memorial Library achieved a significant milestone with the support of Father Albinson. We now have access to the Library's digital records from previous years, which will greatly enhance our ability to locate and identify the rare and special editions that form a treasured part of the collection. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to this year's donors, whose contributions have enriched the Library's offerings. Maintaining and organizing this cherished space for books and gatherings remains both a purpose and a pleasure.

Similarly, the Archives have seen remarkable progress throughout 2024. With over 115 years of historical documents, the Archives have embarked on an ambitious project of sorting and cataloging photographs, with digitization now underway. This resource has become invaluable to staff and parishioners alike. For example, the architectural files and blueprints were instrumental in the planning stages of the church's new organ, and historical materials were used to enrich a recent commemoration event.

There's a place and a purpose for everyone here. For more information, contact Peggy Strelinger at 314.229.1525.

#### The Garden Ministry

The Garden Ministry tends to the gardens by planting and pruning annuals and perennials through the growing season. We tend the gardens at the Ellenwood and Wydown entrances, the Page Garden columbarium, the Davis Courtyard and the Point Garden. Thanks to parishioners' generosity, our church established the Daisy Fund in 2023 to honor Daisy Archie. With these funds, CSMSG hired a garden designer to direct the ministry's efforts. In 2024, volunteers updated the Ellenwood entrance and the Page Columbarium. In 2025, we will work on the Wydown entrance. The hope is to magnify the glory of God through floral abundance. We garden Thursdays, 8:30 AM to 10:30 AM, as weather permits. Come join us.

### OUTREACH

The leadership of the Outreach Ministries (Education Equity, Episcopal City Mission, Hunger Ministry, Nicaragua Ministry, Racial Reconciliation, Shelter Ministry and St. Michael's Houses) make up the Faith In Action Committee. The group meets monthly via Zoom, led by Nic Ayling and Fr. Tom Albinson. Below are the ministry individual reports. In 2024, the outreach ministries again worked together and hosted the third outdoor fundraiser for all the ministries.

#### The Shelter Ministry

The CSMSG Shelter Ministry has been serving breakfasts at the Gateway 180 Homeless Shelter for almost 40 years. We serve more than 4,000 community breakfasts each year. Sunday morning breakfast is the highlight of the week for many of the shelter's residents as it may be the only full hot meal they receive all week. The Ministry with the help of others has invested in a full remodel of the kitchen at Gateway. For more information on how you can help support the remodel or volunteer at the Shelter contact Bill Wallace at williamhwallace@yahoo.com.

#### St. Michael's Houses

Led by Jim Stephenson with committee members Mac Moore and Lucas Gredell, St. Michael's Houses partners with a number of various organizations in the St. Louis community who are dedicated to working with and providing both shelter to and service related to housing needs to the many in need of help. In 2024, St. Michael's Houses responded two grant requests from "All Among Us". "All Among Us" provides secure transformative housing and much needed support services to area women who are struggling to achieve and maintain stable housing. It impacts homelessness by establishing healthy, reliable relationships and community. These many supportive and enriching relationships have positive impacts on the resident's lives and the lives of their families and friends. The result is providing opportunities for individuals with a desire to transition from generational poverty toward self-sufficiency. Executive Director Cathryn Shaw remains grateful for the commitment, continued support, and participation of St. Michaels Houses for their ongoing programs.

-Jim Stephenson

#### Ministry of Racial Reconciliation

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. –Romans 10:17

Listening is an essential part of any reconciliation, but as those who have taken the *Our Community Listens* class know, listening is not as easy as we think! Listening reflectively to ourselves, our friends, our family, and our neighbors is especially important–and especially difficult–in seeking racial reconciliation. Listening to the past has its own challenges.

The seeds of racial division in the United States were sown hundreds of years ago, aided and abetted by first the Anglican and then the Episcopal Church. Generations on, none of us played any role in the hideous institution of chattel slavery during the 246 years it persisted. None of us bought and sold Black Africans; none of us tore families apart for economic gain; none of us beat our property into submission.

Those dark days are thankfully behind us, but we all–Black and White, rich and poor, colonial descendants and more recent arrivals– continue to suffer the effects of the long-ago decisions that embedded race into America's psyche. We are born into a broken world and none of us chooses our starting place within it, but as Christians we are obligated to do what we can to repair the breaches we see. Just as we have an obligation to update and repair this magnificent, quirky, and flawed building so that God's work can continue in this place for generations to come, so too do we have an obligation to update and repair the structures of our magnificent, quirky, and flawed society to help bring healing to God's people.

Answering this call, the Ministry of Racial Reconciliation is adding a new chapter to the recorded history of our congregation, a chapter that will shine light on how slavery contributed to our family tree. By listening to the past and acknowledging the role that an unrecognized group of enslaved people played in the earliest years of St. George's Episcopal Church, we equip ourselves to listen to–and, in new ways, truly hear–our living, breathing friends and neighbors of color when they share stories of past and present pain, and future hopes and aspirations.

St. George's was founded 180 years ago in March, 1845 when 44 white men petitioned Bishop Cicero S. Hawks for permission to establish a new congregation. Using the 1840, 1850, and 1860 U.S. Census as primary sources (supplemented by Washington University's integrated database of enslavement), we have documented that 22 of the Petitioners enslaved an estimated 165 people during the congregation's first 20 years, 1845-1865. The precise number of enslaved souls remains unknown, and is likely unknowable because slave names and family ties were deemed inessential to the nation's records. The oldest slave we've associated with St. George's was 75 years old, the youngest three months. Their stories are part of our story.

Absorbing the enormity of this piece of our history is emotionally and spiritually painful, but also filled with grace. Looking candidly at the past is not about judgment or division; it's about understanding and healing. In coming months, the Ministry of Racial Reconciliation will present a full report of our findings to the Vestry, and with their approval ask the Rector to appoint a committee to recommend options for a lasting commemoration of the involuntary contributions a heretofore hidden group of people made to the founding of our ancestral congregation.

All things in God's time. None of us can undo the past, and the present is pretty well set, but the future lies before us. The apostle Paul reminds us in his letter to the Galatians that "there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Twenty years from now, when CSMSG celebrates the bicentennial of St. George's founding, what role will our generation have played in the story of racial division among God's people?

-Harrison Hagan Heil, Harry Moppins and John Tyler

#### Education Equity Ministry (EEM)

In its fourth year, the Education Equity Mission (EEM) continued its mission of matching EEM's goals and our volunteers' interests with the schools' requests.We have continued with Sumner High and Columbia Elementary School as our partners.

EEM's arranging a visit by the local St. Louis Public School library representative who discussed programs available to students including on-line databases, reading programs, and after-school meals.

Parishioners Gina Wright and Susan Gallagher have volunteered to organize the library. Neil Tumber and Ian Hageman have volunteered to participate in the January Sumner HS Career Fair. Neil will also provide support to the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAGS) teacher as a volunteer. Nic Ayling has connected the school with Hoffman Brothers, a large HVAC company which provides training and internships likely to be of interest to Sumner students. Mary Ann Cook has volunteered as a cafeteria monitor for two semesters. There's always a need for reading tutors at both schools.

Columbia Elementary invites volunteers to work in their garden with 80 children in an after-school program. EEM members actively participated in fund raising through the Gala, poinsettia sales, and personal donations.

In spite of the turmoil resulting from the firing of the SLPS superintendent and the collapse of the transportation program, our two partner schools continue to make progress.

-Judith Walker-Felix



#### World Service Mission Ministry

2024 marked the 25th year of the World Service Mission Ministry supporting various Christian ministries in Nicaragua. The difficulties in Nicaragua continue as the government increases its stranglehold on every aspect of life there.

"Arms of Love", the shelter for abused children that we have been supporting, was shut down in 2024 and all its assets seized. The missionary at this ministry, Ted Rodgers and his family, whom we supported in 2024, was given 48 hours to find somewhere to move all the children and he has had to find new work. He has been helping several older teenagers and young adults transition from shelter life to independent living and is committed to staying in Nicaragua to do so for the next two years.

We continue our relationship with the Carolina de Sirker School. Fortunately, private and parochial schools such as this one have been safe from governmental interference, most likely because the government does not have the capacity to educate the students in these schools if it were to shut them down. There have been difficulties in recent years providing financial aid to the Sirker School, but we have found a way to send funds there. We still have a small fund that was designated specifically for the students at the Sirker School, and we will send it in early 2025.

AMOS is a Christian health care ministry that we have supported since the inception, and so far, it has not been targeted for closure by the government.

Thank you to all who have supported this ministry.

– Jennifer McGrath, Team Leader

### **Episcopal City Mission**

Since 1954, Episcopal City Mission (ECM) has been providing chaplains to serve children (ages 11-17) in the St. Louis Juvenile Justicon a personal level. ECM is blessed with faithful supporters who pray for the kids, host birthday celebrations at the detention centers, providing pizzas and showing they care about their future. There are other volunteer opportunities such as tutoring

#### –Tom Guignon

### Hunger Ministry

The CSMSG Hunger Ministry provides for those in need of food in the St. Louis area.

On the third Saturday of each month at 9:30 AM volunteers make sandwiches, fill lunch sacks and make casseroles in the Taylor Room. During 2024, 72 casseroles were made for the Trinity Food Ministry and a total of 1,950 filled lunch sacks with sandwiches were assembled for Trinity Episcopal Food Ministry, Trinity Lutheran and Gateway 180. 1,200 sandwiches were made for Trinity Lutheran Church in Soulard.

-Alison Wiedle

## **STEVVARDSHIP & GIVING**

#### In every way and everywhere we accept this with all gratitude. -Acts 24:3

With deep gratitude and joy, I am pleased to share an update on our stewardship journey at The Church of St. Michael & St. George and the remarkable blessings we continue to receive.

At the core of our faith, we recognize that God has richly blessed us with the gifts of Creation, inspiring us to become generous stewards. Our lives, rooted in this abundance, reflect His boundless generosity. As stewards, our commitment to the church's mission of living Christ's life into the world, is strengthened by the blessings we see around us every day.

Your continued generosity, through the Alleluia Fund, has been crucial in supporting essential building projects. Our historic building, cherished by all, requires ongoing care, and your support ensures its preservation. I am pleased to report that in 2024, because of your continued generosity, we were able to accomplish the following:

- Hired a Facilities Manager
- Purged/downsized offsite storage area
- Repaired the Rev. Peter Speropulos' garage roof
- Lead glass repairs for exterior windows (front facing windows of the school)
- Leak repair in Great Hall

- Fire panel installed
- Comprehensive maintenance of fire protection system (emergency lighting and building wide power back-up solution)
- Video switch component for Great Hall
- Ceiling repair, painting, and patching throughout the building
- Church boiler repair
- New women's restroom toilets and sink
- Additional small repair items

Thank you for being part of this vital effort as we preserve our past and look to build and enhance our future.

Also, we extend our gratitude to the 338 households that pledged to our church in 2024, showcasing dedication and generosity amid changing economic fluctuations and inflation. Your commitment shares God's abundance with CSMSG, enabling us to move forward with renewed focus in 2025.

As we set our sights on increasing both household pledges and stewardship dollars committed in 2025, as of January 16th, we have 301 pledges committed, totaling \$1,942,764. Compared to the same time last year, this is an increase of six pledges committed and more than \$169,454. Your support has made great things possible, but to continue in greatness, we need your help. Every contribution makes a difference, and it is not too late to make a pledge. We strive to make it as easy as possible so please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you would like to pledge in 2025.

My abundant thanks to Peter Smith, who has been more than generous with his time, serving as the 2025 Together We Give Stewardship Campaign Chair. Peter, along with an anonymous member of the Finance Committee, kicked off the stewardship campaign in October with an offering plate challenge. Thanks to the parish's generosity and their willingness to match the funds, \$10,120.50 was added to the Stewardship 2025 Fund. What a wonderful way to start the 2025 stewardship season! It has been a pleasure and an honor to work with Peter and thanks in advance for sharing a few words regarding your thoughts on stewardship and generosity as the 2025 Stewardship Campaign Chair.

Finally, in May of 2024, CSMSG's Vestry approved a proposal for a new chancel organ from Schoenstein & Co. of Benicia, California. Thank you to the parishioners who have made an early commitment to the new organ project. CSMSG is known for its steadfast commitment to traditional liturgy and music. A new organ will beautify our worship, support our singing, and ensure the future of our traditions. We have established a fundraising goal of \$3.8 million. This includes the cost of the organ (\$2.8 million), site preparation (\$500K), and an endowment fund for the instrument (\$500K). Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have questions about making a gift to the new organ fund.

Remember that we do not obtain God's love by stewardship; rather, it is through offering a generous spirit that cultivates

a giving spirit. We thank you for your continuous support, investment in CSMSG, and sharing God's bounty with the parish. With your prayers and blessings, we move forward with faith and gratitude.

May God's abundant blessings continue to be with us all. Thank you.

–Alexis Azar Posnanski Director of Stewardship and Giving

#### Report from Stewardship Campaign Chair

I would first like to offer my sincere gratitude to all who have made a pledge to the church. You are the reason we're able to gather in this magnificent place to worship God; to celebrate the sacraments year-round; and to find genuine fellowship and caring. Please accept my deepest appreciation for your generosity.

As Chair of the stewardship campaign, I have also spent time in prayer, wondering why some of us choose not to pledge. Maybe you are able, like me, to remember talk show host David Letterman and his famous "Top Ten" list. The lists were funny, much funnier than I could be. But it made me think of the top reasons some folks choose not to participate in the parish's financial wellbeing. Don't worry, I only came up with five.

**Reason Number Five:** Some may not feel a strong enough connection with St. Michael & St. George to make a pledge. That's ok. Most of us start slowly here, then develop a deeper bond over time. Even a modest pledge might inspire you to get a bit more involved... if only to make sure you're getting your money's worth!

**Reason Number Four:** Some may feel their contribution is too small to be effective. Not true! The amount you give is between you and the Lord. However, if just twenty parishioners make a first-time annual pledge of only \$200, the resulting \$4,000 would pay the church's electric bill for a full month.

**Reason Number Three:** Some may not understand or agree with the way their contributions might be spent. Well, today's Annual Report lets us see exactly where the church's resources come from, and exactly where they go. Still have questions or concerns? Please talk to a member of the clergy, senior staff, or vestry. I think you will be amazed at how efficiently our parish is managed, and just how hard each penny gets pinched!

**Reason Number Two:** Financial uncertainty makes us hesitant to pledge. We might be worried about the future and its impact on our resources. Remember, we are always welcome to revise our pledge if our circumstances change. The stock market may decline, but you could also win the lottery!

And now, **Reason Number One:** Some may have had a negative experience with stewardship campaigns or pledging in the past. Perhaps you are having a negative experience with me right now! If so, please don't let human failings and frailties dissuade you from trying again. After all, Jesus tells us to forgive, not seven times but seventy times seven. I humbly request that you give me this one more chance to get it right.

– Peter Smith



#### **Endowment Expansion**

The Endowment Expansion Committee was founded in 2012 with the goal of expanding the Endowment Fund of The Church of St. Michael & St. George to \$25 million over the next 20 years. This fund is vital for the future of the Church as it will eliminate annual operating deficits, ensure timely implementation of our current Strategic Plan, and sustain the Church's mission during difficult economic times.

The St. George Society was created to recognize those individuals, families, and organizations who have made gifts or future commitments of \$5,000 or more to the fund. The society, which is a keystone of our fund expansion strategy, now recognizes 192 members, and membership continues to grow at a steady pace. When parishioners put a provision for the St. George Society in their will it does not affect their everyday cash flow. Because of this, planned giving is accessible to anyone who creates a will, regardless of their current income. This parish gives thanks for those who have given from their earthly treasure to provide for the work of this parish beyond the span of their lives.

In 2024, two gifts were made to the to the stained-glass fund, one gift was made to Sant Memorial Scholarship Fund, one bequest was made to CSMSG, and three gifts were made to the general purpose fund. If you have not already committed to the Endowment Fund, the Endowment Expansion Committee hopes you will consider doing so in 2025.

– Alexis Azar Posnanski

## THE CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL & ST. GEORGE Total Active Membership - 1,561

#### ADDITIONS

By Baptism	
By Confirmation	
By Letter of Transfer	
Total Additions	
REMOVALS	
By Death	15
By Letter of Transfer	5
Total Removals	20

#### SACRAMENTAL ACTS

Total Sacramental Acts	70
Confirmation	
Burials	
Marriages	
Baptisms	

**Confirmation:** Of the 29 confirmands included in Sacramental Acts this year, 17 were added to our membership and the others transitioned their status from baptized to confirmed members.

**Deaths/Burials:** Removal by Death accounts for members who have died regardless of whether burial took place through CSMSG. Burials listed under Sacramental Acts include those done for both members and nonmembers. If a member dies in one calendar year but burial occurs in the next calendar year, each act will be recorded in its corresponding year.

## 2024 STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES, AND FUND BALANCES

Preliminary and Unaudited

Assets		Liabilities and Fund Balance	
Cash	\$ 460,087	LOC - Commerce Bank	\$ 691,000
Investments	\$ 14,305,904	Notes Payable - Page Columbarium	\$ 66,000
Property and Equipment (net)	\$ 2,757,748	Fund Balance - Beginning of Year	\$ \$ 15,150,483
Total Assets	\$ 17,523,739	Net Increase (Decrease) - Operating Fund	\$ 782,748
		Increase (Decrease) - Investments	\$ 833,508

Total Liabilities and Fund Balance

\$

17,523,739

# 2024 STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES

Revenues	2023 Budget	2024 Budget	2024 Actual
Pledges	\$ 1,766,635	\$ 1,785,000	\$1,909,231
Unpledged Contributions/Other	\$ 872,113	\$ 1,123,573	\$ 1,760,104
Endowment Fund/Capital Improvement	\$ 765,656	\$ 645,872	\$ 842,499
Investment Income	\$ 23,980	\$ 25,000	\$ 17,863
Total Operating Revenues	\$ 3,428,384	\$ 3,579,445	\$ 4,529,697

Expenses	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Actual
Pastoral/Communication/Worship/Music	\$ 1,783,287	\$ 1,738,866	\$ 1,793,035
Diocesan Assessment	\$ 177,895	\$ 176,663	\$ 176,664
Education Ministries	\$ 236,304	\$ 241,280	\$ 227,988
Business Administration	\$ 1,257,694	\$ 1,470,560	\$ 1,549,262
Capital Expenses	\$		\$
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 3,455,180	\$ 3,627,370	\$ 3,746,949
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (26,796)	\$ (47,925)	\$ 782,748

The Notes Payable to Endowment of \$ 1,016,116 are netted.

## Endowment/Special Purpose Funds

November 30, 2024

Value as of January 1, 2024	\$1	4,310,844
Additions	\$	149,133
Distributions Gain (Loss)	\$ \$	(880,509) 1,762,630
Value as of November 30, 2024	\$ 1	15,342,098

## CSMSG REGISTRAR REPORT FOR 2024

#### **Baptisms**

Catherine Grace Ballon-Landa Julian Dee Ballon-Landa Hunter Carlisle Brigham Charles Joseph Brizee Clare Hazel Brown Felix Graham Castelino Harrison Lawrence Clifton Grace Moore Coulter Noah Duckworth Ellston Sanderson Brooks Fender Ophelia Weaver Kuhn Jack Brian Maloney Penelope Josephine Martinez-Shearman Quentin Jose Martinez-Shearman Paul Allen Rapp William Blair Rapp Michael Richard Rhoads John Clyde Sanders Easton R. Smith Emmet C. Smith, III Elsie Jaymes Steuber Jackson Robert Wisniewski Luke Thomas Wisniewski

#### Confirmations

Chloe Marie Allen Lorna E. Bremer Rohan Christian Castelino Sophia Jane Clem Charles B. Cunningham Adeline Rhae Draper Mairead Farrell Suzanne Giraud Grow Abigail Leah Jager Sandra Hanneken Johnson Atticus M. Kramer Peter William Martens Ioanna Mireille Mikhail Andrew R. Mills Victoria Noble Claudia Jane Oldham Annabelle F. Olsen Gale Scott Patterson Josephine V. Pitman David George Plufka Marie Christian Plufka Griffin Posnanski Katherine A. Ray Nathan Athanasius Smith Simon Van Engen Violet A. Villa Ford Werner Sophia Belle Simanowitz Audrey Rose Simanowitz

#### Deaths

Albert Gerald Barnett Nicholas Berthoud Clifford Bertram Beach Culver III Patricia Edenburn Robert Hoffman Helen Doreen Hunter Lewis Robinson Mills Sr. James William Newbold III Cynthia Hein Shaw Michael Edward Sims Eve Banister Spencer Terry Madison Turner William Robert Van Luven Mary Bryan Bemis Woods G. Gordon Yoder John Francis Sutherland IV

#### Marriages

Ellie Golterman and Dylan Brady Kristin Poole and Myles Joseph Essick Susan Renee Eisenhart Conrad and Troy Lynn McIlroy Talbot Jean Holmes and Jacob Matthew Snow





#### 2024 Stewardship & Giving

Bruce & Marilyn Adaire Tib Albach Bill & Christine Albinson The Rev. Tom & Dr. Anna Albinson Mark Alford & Mari Watanabe Randy & Elizabeth Alsworth Randy & Nancy Alt Jeffrey & Melanie Altvater **Beverly Anderson** Kenneth & Sally Anderson Seth & Marcy Anderson Dorothy E. Anderson Anonymous John Ansehl & Timothy Solberg Matthew & Catherine Aplington The Rev. Andrew J. Archie Sara Arn Joseph Arndt Arne & Cookie Arneson Nic Ayling Ann Babington Dick & Iona Baldwin Mary Randolph Ballinger Howard & Sylvia Baltz Albert & Laura Barnett Bob & Chris Barrett Gretchen Barry Drew & Jennifer Baur Ken & Margot Bean Tim & Nita Beecher **Dennis Belieu** Dr. Walter Benoist Mike & Linda Bickel Katherine Billingsly Marion Black Chris Blewett Linda Bond Jan Boudinet Kevin & Peggy Bowe Laurie Bowman Betty Bowman Tim & Suzanne Boyle

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## 2024 VESTRY

*From left to right:* Gale Patterson, Lindsey Stokes, Rachel Hebisen, Bill Jenkins, Nancy Reynolds, Rachel Martens, Christine Johnson, Rev. Andrew J. Archie *(Rector),* Stephen Eisele, Matt Applington, Will Springer, David Ott (Treasurer), and Peter Smith.

# THE CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL & ST. GEORGE

**Our Vision** 

The Church of St. Michael & St. George transforms lives through Christ.

## **Our Mission**

Live Christ's life into the world through the Anglican traditions of worshiping God with reverence, joy, and awe; serving and caring for our community; and leading spiritual formation for all ages.

## **Our Habits**

We celebrate the Anglican liturgy with excellent preaching and traditional music in a holy church setting.

CSMSG is a welcoming community and a family-friendly church, uniting lifelong Episcopalians with members from other backgrounds in the beauty of our liturgy and music and the excellence of our preaching and teaching.

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We strive to improve the spiritual lives of our members through worship, education, outreach, and evangelism.

We have a passionate membership serving God with our time, hearts, and money.

Our church is led by clergy dedicated to the parish and accountable to the apostolic faith.

Through our example, and with our clergy, we are committed to training the future leaders of the church.

Our parish and school are united to offer children the finest educational and spiritual growth opportunities.



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