

Holy Comforter Episcopal Church

2019 Annual Report



2015 Fleischmann Road

Tallahassee, Florida

A Message from The Rev. Canon Dr. Jerry Smith

The intention of an annual report is simply to be accountable. Although we are not 'congregationalist' in ecclesiology, we do believe that every member has a right to be made aware (with some natural exceptions) of all of the activities in the parish church, just as congregations are kept abreast of diocesan activity.

This report is in part our attempt to fulfil this responsibility.

Each member of vestry acts as liaison to a number of the groups in our parish, representing them at monthly meetings, keeping them informed of vestry decisions and seeking to maintain the harmony that God wants for us.

These same members gathered the information for this report.

The number of words used to reflect the activity of each of our ministries is not a reflection of the importance of them. Indeed not! Everything we do is motivated and maintained because the vestry believes that this is the direction God has invited us to live our parish life together.

We do not exist as a mutual admiration or support society. We exist in order to learn what it means to be the Kingdom of God. His people doing His work in order to maintain His reputation so that His kingdom might spread throughout the world.

This mission requires the vestry be a community who are committed to listening and following God's lead.

As you read this report celebrate what God is doing here and listen as to how God might be leading you.

Fr Jerry+

1.31.2020

Church Leadership

Clergy

Vestry

—Clerk

—Treasurer

*Church Care Commission *Church Community Commission

*Evangelism Commission *Finance Commission *Outreach Commission

*Spiritual Life Commission *Worship Commission

Vestry Members Amy Johnson, Senior Warden
 Cynthia Jester, Junior Warden
 Lannie Cardona
 Mary Cordero
 Dave Jacobsen
 Randy Desilet
 Tricia Culbertson
 Hollie Maddox, Treasurer
 Carolyn DiSalvo, Clerk

177th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Florida

Holy Comforter Episcopal Church was well represented at the 177th Annual Convention by both clergy and lay delegates - Jerry Smith, Beth Pessah, Jeanie Beyer, Lannie Cardona, Laura Rumph, Amy Johnson, Cynthia Jester, and Chris Jester. Mother Beth was the Convention Chaplain. The Convention theme was *Bringing the Good News*.

It is wonderful to have the Diocesan family assembled. Each parish and mission has both clergy and lay delegates. We filled the Snell/McCarty Youth Pavilion at Camp Weed with singing, worship, and the business meeting.

The convention's business included reviewing the 2019 Diocesan budget, passing the 2020 Diocesan budget, and voting on an issue related to the amount pledged from the Diocese to the National Church. In addition, clergy and lay delegates were elected for many Diocesan positions. There were reports from various ministries. The Bishop's Cross awards were distributed to very deserving individuals. Convention ended with the eucharist. **Respectfully submitted by the Holy Comforter Episcopal Church delegates.**

The Reverend Beth Pessah

Associate Rector and Holy Comforter School Chaplain

Just this week I realized that the regular rhythm of weekly School Chapel services is a comfortable and welcome addition to my life. What could be better than gathering with students and teachers for corporate prayer and worship? Nothing. It was this realization that made me aware of a significant shift in my thinking this year. I no longer see Chapel Services as just another enjoyable item on my long list of to-do's but rather now I approach these services as a regular part of my rhythm of life and I actually miss these moments when school is cancelled or holidays appear. To me this is good news. I am beginning to not just prepare for officiating or presenting in chapel but to actually enter into worship. This community has become my home.

Thank you for your encouragement and support. Because of all of you and the lovely faculty and staff at HCES, I entered this year (August 2019) with a tremendous sense of peace and excitement about the new year. I continue to pray for 5 families in each Chapel service, I am present each morning to greet the students and this year I have moved over to the Middle School crosswalk and have begun building more intentional relationship with the students and parents of middle schoolers. Things continue to hum along.

This year, the Church and School Committee worked with me to mail out Advent Prayer Chains to each family in the school. The mailings were met with much appreciation and gratefulness. Children and Parents were encouraged to read a verse of scripture and to put together a link for the chain each day of Advent. Many families have mentioned to me how meaningful this exercise was. Thank you to all those who helped to make this resource mailing a possibility.

The most significant new element of School this year has been the opening of the Commons (a performance center and cafe) which Bishop John Howard blessed on Monday January 13th. This space has created, for me, a greater sense of connection since I am able to enjoy lunch each day with students, teachers, and staff. As you know, Episcopalians love to visit over food. Please continue to pray that my eyes will be opened to all of the many opportunities that are before me as I journey with these lovely children and families. Also please pray for all of the students, families, faculty and staff. May God bless and keep them and you.

In Peace,

Mother Beth+

Church Community

Take Them a Meal Ministry (Jan Calvin)

At the Ministry Fair, we welcomed five new members.

For the first half of 2019, no requests came to the office asking for assistance. From September to mid-December, Home Meal participants provided 35 meals for three different families.

Supper Club (Teresa Thomsen)

Supper Club is a much appreciated opportunity for fellowship “bridging my church pew friend to my friend”. In 2019, there were groups meeting mid-rotation from January to the Gala in May. There was a summer hiatus and the groups were reformed in September. As of the September regrouping, 104 people participated in 10 Supper Clubs. Of these 10 groups, 9 were meeting regularly. One group had not been able to find dates that worked for everyone.

Lunch Bunch (Robbie Brunger)

The Lunch Bunch is an informal social group that meets monthly at St. John’s *Lively Café*. It is a no-agenda Dutch-treat get-together of friendship and conversation. We currently have 42 names listed for this ministry.

I assumed leadership from Katie Simmons in March, 2019. Attendance data for the months of March through December show that 17 individuals associated with Holy Comforter plus two guests attended at least one time. The number of attendees for any given month ranged from 3 to 8. Attendance during the previous years was general higher. I have no theory about why there has been such a decline.

Book Club (Robbie Brunger)

The book group meets on the second Sunday of every month at 5:00pm. I assumed leadership from Nancy Mazek in March, 2019. During the 9 month period of April to December, at least 19 parishioners attended at least one meeting, with a range of 6-13 attendees monthly. The intensity of the material ranges from occasional fluff to deeply profound and insightful explorations of the human condition. Here are the books we read during our 11 meetings during 2019.

January 13	Connie May Fowler	<i>A Million Fragile Bones</i>	Memoir
February 10	Lauren Groff	<i>Florida</i>	Fiction - Stories
April 14	Michelle Obama	<i>Becoming</i>	Memoir
May 12	Jessica Shattuck	<i>The Women in the Castle</i>	Fiction - Period
June 9	Delia Owens	<i>Where the Crawdads Sing</i>	Fiction - Period
July 14	Salley Vickers	<i>The Cleaner of Charities</i>	Fiction - Period
August 11	Min Jin Lee	<i>Pachinko</i>	Fiction - Period
September 8	Kate Atkinson	<i>Transcription</i>	Fiction - Period
October 13	Charlie Lovett	<i>The Lost Book of the Grail</i>	Fiction - Current
November 10	Paulette Jiles	<i>News of the World</i>	Fiction - Period
December 8	Various	<i>Individually selected readings</i>	Poetry

Girl Scouts/Boy Scouts (by Mary Cordero)

Last year, we welcomed back Daisy Troop and added Junior Troop 124 and Cub Scout Pack 3. We now have Lions, Tigers, Wolves, Juniors and those little Daisy girls who have advanced to become Brownies. HC officially sponsored the Cub Scout Pack3 dens by holding its original charter, establishing their non-profit status and offering a location to meet.

Parish Retreat (Mary Cordero)

Early planning stage was started this year for a Parish Retreat. Because we are involved with *Reading the Bible in 90 days* this spring, it has been decided to schedule this event in early Fall.

Men's Cooking Crew (Tom Gray)

The men's cooking crew prepares a hearty breakfast every 1st and 3rd Sunday between the 8:00 AM and the 10:30 AM services. We also prepare meals for various other event and fundraisers throughout the year. The modest \$3.00 charge for breakfast allows costs to be covered with the profits going into the general fund to be used for projects and outreach as determined by the Vestry. To promote the Holy Comforter brotherhood and fellowship, the crew also participates in various events such as a barbeque contests and chili cook-offs. We have come away with our fair share of awards!

Bereavement Committee (Eunice Filar)

The bereavement committee works with the Hospitality chair Joan Maddox and our floral designer Laurel Hall. All receptions are based upon information and requests from the deceased's family. Close to 30 volunteers are involved in preparing the venue. The committee facilitated five funeral receptions* in 2019.

I have submitted my resignation after 6 years of serving as chair. Tricia Culbertson has accepted the position.

*Funerals presided over were: Eva McBride Curry (6/28); Dr. Maria Pitner (7/31); Sonja Chambers (6/2); Mildred Dickinson Howse (6/28); Clyde Derrick Daniel (7/29); William "Spike" Wright (9/24); and Giuseppe Balbo (9/28).

Connect Women (Mary Nielsen)

This was our third year as a Ministry. Our outreach for 2019 was Big Bend Hospice. We had our first luncheon in March. Janie Kadar, a volunteer coordinator, gave us the Hospice 101 on the history and services Hospice provides. Our next event was painting with a twist with Susie Leckinger from *Shut the Front Door*. A second luncheon was held at the Hospice House to hear the Rev Candice McKinnon discuss ethical wills (documenting and sharing before or after death of your family traditions, special things to carry on recipes, customs etc.) The last outreach activity was to work The Tree of Remembrance table at Governor's Square. Several ladies did volunteer. These activities raised \$1074 for Hospice House.

In early November, a Thank You luncheon was given to the ladies at HC. It was hosted by the Connect Woman's Team at the home of Marjie Smith. Forty-eight ladies attended the charcuterie board luncheon.

An email listing for ladies is maintained for those who are interested in social events. They attend concerts, movies, go out to dinner Etc... We do not keep a count of these outings as they are usually a small group. We are already making plans for 2020.

Hospitality (Joan Maddox)

The Hospitality Committee works closely with the Bereavement, Evangelism and Fund Raising Committees. We also work with the Episcopal School and with Church Relations. Listed below are the activities we were involved with in 2019,

Ongoing activities

- Provided coffee and snacks after each service every Sunday
- Ordered food and/or prepared desserts for various events.
- Shopped for church supplies as needed.
- Laundered tablecloths and other lines

Special Events

- Easter Brunch – shopped, setup, served, cleaned up after the event
- Shopped for Evangelism bags for distribution in the Canopy neighborhood
- 50th Anniversary Celebration – decorated, served cake, snacks and coffee, cleaned up
- Fr. Jerry's birthday reception – provided coffee and cake
- Episcopal School Sunday - decorated, set up, cleaned up after -
- Music concert (Hiroya Tsukamoto, 12/6) – decorated, set up and cleaned up
- Funerals – decorated, set up, cleaned up for the Curry funeral, Pitner funeral, Wright funeral and Balbo funeral
- Teacher's bags – In early August shopped for, assembled and distributed bags at the start of the school year
- Ministry Fair – ordered food, bought plants, set up and cleaned up

Evangelism

For 2019 the overall theme for the Evangelism Commission was “partnership”; specifically to continue existing partnerships with other church committees and commissions and to explore new ones.

To that end, the following activities were accomplished:

Pew Cards

Researched, designed and implemented a “Pew Card” ministry.

Pew cards are also used in the Greeter Bags.

Greeter Bags

Reviewed the contents of the bags for potential revisions and updates.

Significant changes were made and implemented during 2019.

Additionally, the Commission organizes the Bread Making ministry. Each greeter bag includes a small loaf of homemade bread which requires an ample supply of bread.

“Bagged the Canopy” during Lent.

Purchased 250 bags and worked with the church office to identify and design the contents of the bags.

Bags were intended to welcome new residents to the Canopy and let them know about Holy Comforter Episcopal Church.

Intentionally chose to deliver the bags the weekend before Palm Sunday to let residents know about the various services and activities Holy Comforter was offering for Holy Week.

Stuffed the bags and then “bagged” 190 homes and apartments in the Canopy.

Back-to-School Backpack Drive

Partnered with Grace Mission to provide 30 back-to-school backpacks which also included classroom supplies identified by Grace Mission.

Implemented a “Blessing of the Backpacks” on the Sunday before school started.

Ministries Fair

An annual responsibility of the Commission is to host the Ministries Fair.

Over 30 ministries highlighted at the Fair.

The Opportunities to Serve and Opportunities to Gather booklets were updated and distributed prior to the Fair.

School Fall Festival

Partnered with the Church/School Relations Committee to host a Cooke Decorating booth at the school's Fall Festival.

Several Commission members worked the booth at the Festival.

New flyer highlighting church services and activities for the youth was developed and distributed at the Festival.

Episcopal School Sunday

Flyer used to distribute at the Fall Festival was also distributed before and after the service.

Finance

Financial Update Year End 2019

Holy Comforter Episcopal Church closed the year of 2019 in strong financial position.

Total income received for the year was approximately \$577,000. Pledged income received was approximately \$466,000, which exceeded the budget for pledges by nearly \$18,000. Other income received represents unpledged gifts, fundraising income, and donations from the Diocese and parishioners for growth support.

Total expenses for the year were \$570,000. The operating results for the year resulted in a surplus of approximately \$7,000, despite budgeting a shortfall of over \$14k.

The cash on hand at the end of the year was a total of approximately \$58,000 in designated and undesignated cash.

Fundraising

This Committee is ably chaired by Chris and Cynthia Jester. The committee met multiple times to plan and prepare for the two concerts held in 2019: Phil Madeira and Hiroya Tsukomoto. Both concerts were well attended and greatly enjoyed. The proceeds of the two concerts went to the Building fund.

Stewardship

This committee is ably chaired by Sterling and Brandy Luce. The committee met to organize and host the annual Stewardship Dinner held on October 30, 2019. The committee assisted in the distribution of pledge cards and additional giving information. The culmination of the work of this committee assists the Finance Committee and the Vestry in the development of the parish budget.

Outreach

The Street Corner Ministry makes bags of food for people who stand at the street corner with signs asking for help. Bags contain a pair of white socks, a bottle of water, pop-top canned foods, a spoon and napkin, and a sheet of other resources for places they can get services. The bags are placed in the Narthex and parishioners are encouraged to keep a couple in their cars to give out. We prepare about 10 bags per week for distribution and have handed out approximately 400 bags in 2019. We hope to add travel size toothpaste and toothbrushes to the bags this year. **Submitted by Diane LoCastro**

The **Disaster Relief** ministry has continued to help those in Leon, Calhoun, Gadsden, and Jefferson counties who were affected by Hurricane Michael. This ministry has unfortunately moved more slowly in some instances than we would like, however we have remained faithful with everyone that we have been in contact with as we attempt to help them get their lives back together. Our goal is to stay with them as long as it takes and to walk with them throughout this process.

During the year we have helped or are in the process of helping 12 families. We also have been in touch with numerous families to check on their progress. We've found that most of them have already completed the work on their home, others are in the process of having their homes repaired and others have moved from the area.

Our fundraising efforts resulted in donations totaling \$21,180. We've already spent \$10,590 from this ministry for: asbestos tests, mold tests and construction estimates **\$1540**; tree and debris removal **\$7,050** and **\$2,000** to repair a Tallahassee residence. Thus we have a balance of **\$10,620** to help families in need in 2020.

Some of the HCEC volunteers did physical work at the home of one of the ladies we met as we started this journey. At others we hired tree removal companies to take down trees that were leaning dangerously toward homes and found workers to remove debris to make it safer for the homeowners to move around their properties. We have hired inspectors and contractors to complete estimates so one homeowner was able to get her insurance company to cover the additional costs for repairs, a **discrepancy in her favor of around \$90,000**.

We have also hired an inspector to complete a mold test for another homeowner. We were able to help one family with repairs to their plumbing by locating a plumber who helped them at no cost.

Additionally, State Representative Lorraine Ausley, enabled one family to receive needed services from the local officials in Calhoun County. Her office also provided us with information about the state and federal services that became available last summer that allowed us to forward the information to our families so that they could get started on the process of qualifying for assistance.

Most of the families we help have limited financial resources and no insurance. One person was able to defray some of the costs associated with the home repair once we were able to locate people to complete the work. Finding qualified workers has hampered our efforts but we are beginning to have more success as one woman received the state SHIP (State Housing Initiative Partnership) to make the needed repairs in her home. Another woman whose insurance covered a minimal amount of her repairs has finally received additional funds to begin the home repairs. We helped another woman with tree removal using the SHIP program.

One family in particular has a desperate need of a mobile home. We've possibly located one whose asking price is \$7,500 but moving it will cost another \$5,000 bringing the total sale price to \$12,500. To make it livable will also require additional painting and flooring. We will continue to explore other options.

We have another woman in need of living space. Her home is in such disrepair that it may need to be demolished and a new one built or having a mobile home place on the site.

The need continues to be great for the families we've helped and for the families whose needs are yet fulfilled. Thus we'll have more fund raisers in the coming months and again depend on the generosity of our parishioners. **Submitted by Nancye Rubin**

In November of 2019, 7 parishioners from our **Cuban Ministry** made a trip to renew our friendship with our companion churches in Ceballos and Baragua and to replenish the water purification system that we helped install in March of 2017. Haydee Lugo Marrero is the rector of the church in Ceballos.. She resides in what was once the parish hall at the back of the church. She maintains a lively congregation and a very healthy youth group at the church as well as providing pure water to the community at large. She is much beloved by the both the church and townspeople. She supervised the building of a well built for the water system as well as maintaining a garden. The garden yields food for herself as well as for others. She also grows her own coffee, has it roasted and then ground. We all attest to the wonderful coffee aroma. We hope that she remains as the rector for many years to come and to that end, we hope to eventually raise enough money to build an addition to the church where she can reside more comfortably.

We also made a morning trip to our other companion church, St. James the Apostle in the small town of Baraguá. Rev. Yohanes Cobiellos is the rector of the church. We were able to have a short visit with him personally but he was not able to accompany us to the church since he had to leave town to tend to his mother who was ill. We did manage to bring a suitcase chock full of items that were donated.

In addition to the water supplies and copious donations of items for the Sunday school, we were able to give Mtr. Haydee \$1000 for the church in Ceballos, \$700 went to Fr. Yohanes for the church in Baraguá and \$100 was given to José Antonio Huguet who has been having some serious health-related problems lately.

Julie Sullivan will be heading back to Cuba in March to attend the synod and then organize another group trip for September. **Submitted by Julie Sullivan.**

Grace Mission is most grateful to HCEC parishioners for their dedication to volunteering, sponsorship and donations that enables Grace Mission to continue all the wonderful work and ministry they do.

Last year, The 10th Annual Evening of Grace, **Benefit on the Bayou**, fundraising event at the Woman's Club of Tallahassee was a huge success due to the hard work of many volunteers. Thank you to everyone that organized the event, volunteered, attended, donated and danced the night away. Pastor Amanda said, "I also want to say a special thank you (for another successful event) to everyone that volunteered and attended the 8th Annual **Blues & BBQ** fundraising event in August. We also raised money through **GoFundMe** for a new on-demand hot water tank and a new ADA compliant shower room. All of us at Grace Mission are very grateful for your generous support."

HCEC contributions this winter season helped GM giveaway many coats, blankets, sweaters, sweatshirts along with numerous sweatpants, pants, winter caps and scarves, hygiene products and much more. Throughout the year GM had 4 **free Health Clinics** (they were partners with FSU Medical School and Leon County Health Dept.). They gave 40 **free** flu shots in 2019 as well as 40 **free** Hepatitis A shots.

GM offers **free showers** three times per week, as well as **free laundry services** (1 load of laundry per person). They gave away an approximate total value of \$29,050 worth of clothing items and a total of \$6,260 (\$10.00 each) Goodwill vouchers to those in need through their once a month **free clothing giveaway**. They ask for your donations and remind us to "please continue to clean out your closets and donate to Grace Mission."

Grace Mission, through their partnership with Second Harvest, offered **free quarterly Mobile Food Pantries** giving away wholesome and nutritious food to over 1,529 people in Leon County. GM is thankful for all the volunteers from HCEC who volunteer to make this event successful.

Grace Mission continued to support the Brehon House (for pregnant women who need shelter and help during pregnancy). They delivered baby clothing and other baby items that they needed. Grace Mission supports the local humane society by providing towels for the many homeless animals at the shelter. They also provided clothing, hygiene items and food to other agencies in the Big Bend area.

Grace raises money, through our outreach basket each Sunday, for many partner agencies that help people suffering from poverty and homelessness in Leon County.

HCEC were among the volunteers to serve 38,000 hot nutritious meals in 2019.

As a worshipping community within the Episcopal Church we continue to provide a Eucharist celebration every Sunday, Morning Prayer on Wednesday, Evening Prayer on Thursday and we baptized 7 adults. Bible study remains strong and vibrant. People are learning Scripture and it's very exciting to see that! GM is seeing larger numbers attend the 12 Step Recovery Service on Tuesday nights.

HCEC was among the churches to provide over 300 Christmas Angel Tree gifts for children attending the GM After-School Program and their siblings. St. John's Episcopal Church partnered with GM to provide a beautiful venue and atmosphere for our Family Christmas Service. HCEC was among the volunteers to serve dinner to the families, provided entertainment and handed out the gifts for the children.

We had 8 children earn the right to go to Camp Weed. GM outfitted each child with new clothes and shoes for the entire 5 days of camp to enjoy a wonderful Christian Education program along with all the fun camp activities.

The Reading Academy helped the After-School children prepare for the new school year by improving their reading ability. This past year's theme was 'Friends of the Earth' and it ended with a field trip to Wakulla Springs. The program reminded all the children of the importance of protecting the environment and being good stewards of this incredible planet. This year the theme is 'Sea TurtleTastic.'

The beginning of each school year GM gave out **new** backpacks (Blessing of the Backpacks) to the After-School children filled with all the school supplies that they may need to help succeed in school. GM is most grateful to all the people who donated back packs and school supplies especially Holy Comforter Episcopal Church. "We are humbled by your support," Pastor Amanda said. "We also shared additional school supplies to Riley Elementary School and Griffin Middle School," she added. The Grace Mission S.O.A.R. After School program continues to help and encourage the children enrolled in the program to academically succeed in school.

Grace Mission is committed to raising money to support our budget and ministry needs. We raised 36% of our income this year through our Fundraisers, Mail-outs, 100 & 500 Club, and Alternative Markets. This of course is a reflection of the dedication and commitment of all the volunteers, sponsors and donors who support Grace Mission. HCEC supports GM with a \$9,100 annual pledge.

GM offers a very big Thank you to HCEC parishioners for giving of your time, talent and treasure in helping to bring help, healing and hope to the City of Tallahassee. **Submitted by Dave Jacobsen and Nancy Daniels**

This past year the **Food Pantry** continued to serve the needs of our community by helping 3,651 families. This represents 10,356 individuals. Our numbers were down slightly from last year for a few reasons. The primary reason being that the economy is doing better and there are fewer people in need. For that we are thankful. Other reasons included: the Food Pantry was closed a few more Saturday's than normal and the construction that was going on out back made it hard for some people to get in and park. Thankfully this issue is no longer a problem and our clients are now able to find room to park much easier.

Once again we were blessed by the Holy Comforter School who ran two food drive and the students and their families donated over a ton of food. For the Thanksgiving drive they were able to bring the Food Pantry over 160 bags of items to be given to our clients. Through the coordination of Miss Claudia, the Student Council coordinator, the students have been volunteering two Saturday's a month. They are a great help and set excellent examples for us all.

All this could not be possible without the dedicated efforts of our volunteers and the generosity of the church. We are most grateful for those that come to pre-bag, to those that volunteer on Saturday mornings to help distribute, to the students from both Lincoln High and the Holy Comforter School, to the Doty, Gina, and especially Alpha; who all make a wonderful team to keep this ministry running smoothly. **Prayerfully submitted – Food Pantry Staff and Stephen Moors.**

Spiritual Life

Banner Ministry – Sandra Cartwright

The Ministry makes banners for Baptisms and Confirmations and consists of 6 members. We create banners using religious symbols as a reminder of these special occasions. During this year we produced 7 for Baptisms. They were: Hayden Faith Cole (1/20); Preston James Marks (4/20); Brandon Kendler Marks (4/20); Colton Dayne Marks (4/20); Atticus Rado Spear (9/29); Soraya Alohi Kulkani (11/3); and Oliva Grace Logan (11/10). There were no Confirmations.

Brotherhood of Holy Comforter – Chris Jester

The Brotherhood meets monthly to share our experiences on the spiritual path, enjoy food & fellowship and plan service projects. We currently have 15 members. The projects this year included hosting the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper (Mar 5), the Summer Grillin' and Chillin' Cookout (May 25) and study series on Benedictine Spirituality and Prayer. We are currently exploring the possibility of hosting a Sleep In Heavenly Peace event that builds beds for children in need in our local area. The group is open to all men of the church.

Card Ministry – Sandi Jacobsen

Our 7 members send birthday, anniversary and get well cards to our Church members. This year 360 birthday, 93 anniversary and numerous get well cards were sent.

Children & Families Ministry – Julianne Chester

The highlight of this past year was the move to our permanent home which we were able to outfit with a small altar table, new folding tables and chairs, and a tv monitor. While attendance varied from week to week, we had 298 contacts with elementary aged children and 136 contacts with our preschool and nursery kids. In addition, over 25 kids and adults attended our Fall Family Fun Day. We sadly said good-bye to six children whose families moved away. We were blessed to have eleven adult volunteers with the Sunday programs, losing four by year's end.

To Mars and Beyond, our Vacation Bible School program, was packed. Somehow we managed to educate and entertain 36 children. Many were veterans of previous programs coming from Holy Comforter Church and school, Episcopal Church of the Advent, and the community at large. More than 30 volunteers, including four teens, made the program such a success. They did everything from creating a planetarium in the narthex and decorating the parish hall, to teaching crafts and classes, making snacks and even operating the puppet from outer space.

Cursillo-Ultreya – Bill and Pat Reineking

Cursillo in the Dioceses of Florida is a celebrated renewal movement for adults. Cursillo began in the 1930's during the Spanish Civil War thru the Catholic Church for renewal, and has spread to Lutheran, Episcopal, Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Evangelical churches. It is a small course in Christianity and personal faith. Weekends are offered for married couple and singles. About 50 to 80 persons attend a "Cursillo weekends" each year. The weekend includes a variety of study, reflection, fellowship, singing, good food, and meeting some wonderful like-minded people seeking to strengthen their personal faith and knowledge of God. Each congregation throughout the diocese usually has individuals whom have attended Cursillo and are available to answers questions or assist anyone who wishes to attend or learn more about Cursillo. Over the years there has been over thirty individuals who have gone to Cursillo from Holy Comforter.

Daughters of the King – Beth Scott

We are a religious order for women who are communicants, pledging to a life-long program of prayer, service, and evangelism. Our 16 members meet monthly and respond to all prayer requests placed in the DOK Prayer Request Box located on the Newcomers credenza. The members pray daily in responds to these requests. A lecture featuring Mary Moore speaking on " The Power of Love, A Spiritual Journey " was scheduled this year and we led the Stations of the Cross on Fridays during Lent.

Flower Guild – Teresa Thomsen

The guild is tasked with arranging the altar flowers each week as well as flowers for funerals and other special occasions on the church calendar.

On January 1, 2019, we had 6 members. They are Laurel Hall, Roberta Boyer, Mary Cordero, Carolyn DiSalvo, Jo Deeb, and Teresa Tomsen. Each week, member(s) purchased and arranged flowers to meet the requests of those in the congregation who signed up to provide altar flowers.

At the annual Ministry Fair in August, the Guild welcomed 3 members. They are Debbie Twomey, working with Roberta Boyer; Melissa Tucker, working with Teresa Thomsen; and Pat Greisl, working with Laurel Hall.

In the year 2019, we provided: 48 arrangements for the alter; 6 arrangements for the narthex; and 3 funeral arrangements.

Prayer Chain – Jan Calvin

Many years ago when Betty Harris and Anne Wells were responsible for sending prayer requests this was an actual chain of phone calls. Each person on the 'chain' had 2 people to call and the last person called Betty and Anne to complete the chain.

Prayers requests now come from Daughters of the King [DOK] prayer request box on the New-comers credenza [sent only if Parish Family is marked], the church office or by emailing Jan jcalvin@embarqmail.com.

The Prayer Chain currently has 40 *Prayer Angels* to answer the prayer requests.

Youth Group – Sella Kinch

Since our last report, our former Youth Director Grace Ellen has left to attend school out of town, leaving Jeff Schmoll as the Youth Director and me as the Assistant Youth Director. While we lost a couple attendees due to the stress of entering junior year or other additions to their weekly schedule, our regulars continued to come as Jeff led the Wednesday night meetings.

Last summer, Jeff unfortunately had to leave town due to a medical situation and I led the youth group through May, June, and some of July. During this time, I focused on connecting activities such as going out to dinner or attending their last concerts or events at their schools with practicing self-care before the end of their semester. We ended the school year on a definite high note of obtaining the new Youth Building and having our own space to recruit more youth and plan out more games and activities that may require more leg room.

Throughout the year, we have had a steady group of five to seven regulars, all of them currently attending Leon High School. Through their involvement in the chorus and fine arts department at Leon, Jeff and I created many events in order to attend their many concerts or performances. Attending concerts such as the Performing Arts Winter Showcase (fondly referred to as P.A.W.S.) and their competition showcases, along with going to their musicals, this year's favorite being "Godspell", allows us to stay involved with both the youth group attendees and the Tallahassee high school community at a low price and high entertainment value.

Additionally, something Jeff and I had started near the end of the year (and something I hope to continue with the new Youth Director Randy Winton) was having a monthly recruitment event. We started it off with a bang-- around seventeen youths joined us at CMX Theatres to watch a rerun of *The Polar Express*. This led to a growing interest in our youth group, and Randy and I plan to continue this monthly events in order to raise our attendee number.

Worship

The Worship Ministries encompass the activities that pertain to the actual services at HCEC. Perhaps the most recognizable activity is the **Choir**, led this year by John-Mark Schacht. Under his leadership 24 “saints” complement the services and have increased the use of contemporary Christian music as well as rearranging and modernizing some of the traditional worship melodies. Additionally the organ underwent a major overhaul and a generous gift by Caroline and Bill Jones led to the acquisition of a very versatile digital piano. Performance-in-worship highlights included the memorial Advent Festival of Lessons & Carols among many others.

The **Greeters & Ushers** led by Paul Robinson have more clearly delineated the duties of each in order to make HCEC a welcoming and safe place of worship. They need more volunteers to meet their critical ministry! Just as you want to set a perfect table at home, our **Altar Guild** led by Ms Dawn Lynch strives to dress and set a perfect Alter for the celebration of the Eucharistic and have excelled this past year due to a real team effort. Three new members were added as a result of the Ministry Fair and a training session is being planned for early 2020.

The **Worship Team** supervised by Reverend Deacon Jeanie is composed of a number of related, but distinguished ministries. There are now 36 Readers that include those that read the Prayer of the People from the pew, which was introduced this year. This group is led by Ms Mary Whitmire, and more Readers are needed for the 8:00 service on Sundays.

The **Eucharistic Ministers** are the Acolytes, Chalicers, Crucifers, and recently added Servers. The Team has expanded this year and have added four youth Crucifers, who lead the worship procession to and from the Alter on a rotating basis. Often team members performs several duties, as service requirements dictate. There is a small core of Lay Eucharistic Visitors, but their numbers are expanding in order to extend the sacrament of communion and fellowship to those who cannot attend the services.

The least visible but a critical Worship Ministry are the **Intercessors**. This group’s one-on-one interface with congregants complements the service for those in need. Tying all the foregoing into a coherent service is the **Liturgy Commission** led by Ms Claire Walker. Following the Ministries Fair several new members joined this group. The Advent Reflections booklet is one of the more visible effects of the Liturgy Commission. The coordinating the greening of HCEC for Christmas services and assisting our clergy in preparing for Holy week are other examples of their efforts to facilitate that every worship service is orderly and respectful. And that the liturgically sound traditions of the parish are observed.

The **Healing Ministry** led by Reverend Deacon Jeanie is and has been vital to those in need of healing of any kind. It is a small, but very important was well utilized during the past year. Overall the all the members of the Worship Ministries have set a high standard for themselves and have accomplished that end!

Finally, the worship team supported the marriages of Nathan Pessah & Lena Lavette ((6/5); Rick Wagner & Ann Mitchell (2/16); Brad Barrett & Brianna Ingersoll (3/20); Danny R. Warren & Nancy M. Dean (7/16): and Francis Fincham & Frances Homme (11/9).

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