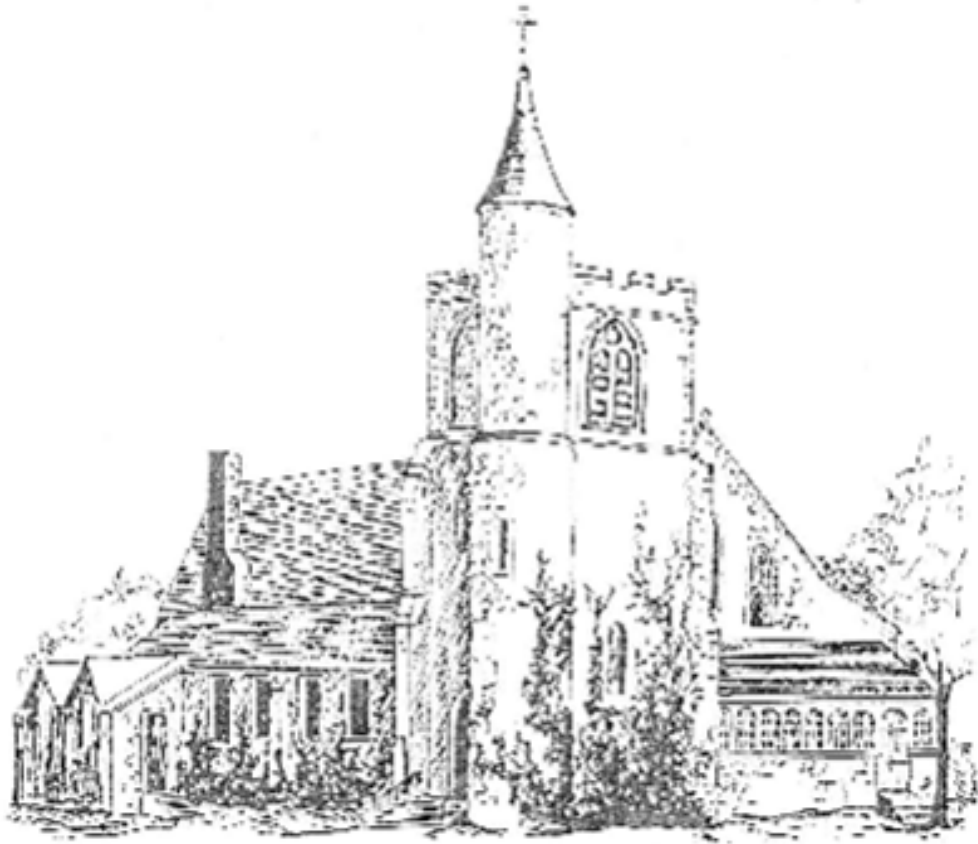


# *Annual Report for the Year 2015*



*Presented at  
The Annual Meeting  
February 14, 2016  
St. Thomas' Episcopal Church  
5 Hale ~ Street Dover, NH*

# St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

5 Hale Street, Dover  
New Hampshire 03820-3773

Phone: 603-742-3155

Email: [parish.office@stdover.org](mailto:parish.office@stdover.org) or [stthomas@worldpath.net](mailto:stthomas@worldpath.net)

Website: [www.stdover.org](http://www.stdover.org)

## Sunday Service Schedule

(unless otherwise announced):

8 am Holy Eucharist Rite I or II

8:30-10:00 am, Breakfast Café

9:30 am, Church School

10 am, Holy Eucharist Rite I or II with choir

The Rt. Rev. A. Rob Hirschfeld, *Bishop*

The Rev. Gail Avery, *Interim Rector*

Larissa Combe, *Office Manager*

Jerry Costanza, *Financial Bookkeeper*

Kathy Fink, *Director of Music*

Roland Girard, *Sexton*

## The Vestry

Officers: Chris Wyskiel, *Senior Warden*

Allen Laughlin, *Junior Warden*

William Hunt, *Clerk*

Kevin Gorham, *Treasurer*

2016: Valerie Smith, William Dudley, Margie ford

2017: Margaret Miller, Tim Constantine, Chris Turner

2018: Kathleen Ford, Gwen Klevitch

## Convocation & Convention Delegates

Kitty Cornwell, Nancy Hunt,

Judi Turner, Rob Sylvester

Alternate: Jo-Anne Fuller Sattler,

Margie Ford

## Table of Contents

<b>CLERGY REPORTS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Report of the Interim Rector.....	4
<b>VESTRY REPORTS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Senior Warden Report.....	6
Junior Warden Report .....	7
Treasurer's Report .....	8
<b>ACTS REPORTS</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Altar Guild.....	9
Craft Group .....	9
Harvest Fair.....	10
Hospitality .....	10
Office Volunteers .....	10
Prayer Shawl Ministry/Knitting Group .....	11
Property Committee .....	11
Stewardship Committee .....	14
Worship Team: Lectors & Eucharistic Ministers, Acolytes and Ushers .....	14
<b>CONNECTIONS REPORTS</b> .....	<b>16</b>
Breakfast Café .....	16
Hannaford Card Program.....	16
Safe Passage .....	17
<b>REVELATIONS REPORTS</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Children and Youth Ministries .....	18
Safe Church.....	18
<b>STAFF REPORTS</b> .....	<b>20</b>
Financial Manager .....	20
Music Program .....	20
Parish Administrator .....	20
<b>APPENDIX</b>	
2015 Annual Meeting Minutes	
Financial Statements	
Year End Statement & Proposed 2016 Budget	
Trust Fund Statement	

# CLERGY REPORTS

## ***Report of the Interim Rector***

Annually, churches throughout the Episcopal Church are asked to reflect upon the past year as we prepare for our life in Christ in the future. So it is with great honor that I give you my account of our past year.

We continue our time of transition, but we are a stronger body of Christ because of the work *you all* have been doing. A traditional view of leadership points to clergy who are tasked to lead the way. Yet, our Catechism, found in the back of our red Book of Common Prayer, beautifully articulates that leadership extends beyond the clergy.

BCP p. 855 states that “the ministers of the Church are lay persons, bishops, and priests, and deacons” and that “the ministry of the laity is to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him *wherever* they may be; and according to the gifts given, to carry on Christ’s work of reconciliation in the world; and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church.” (Italics are mine)

Our Catechism further states that the duty of *all* Christian is to follow Christ; to come together week by week for corporate workshop; and to work, pray, and *give* for the spread of the kingdom of God...and from where I sit as your priest and pastor, this is happening daily. You are using your gifts, spreading the kingdom of God in *all* you do. And the big change I’ve seen this year is *how* we are doing it—we are doing it *together* as one body; the body of Christ. Instead of individuals involved in important ministries, *together* we are looking at the ministry and mission of St. Thomas, which extends beyond our walls into the streets of Dover and our surrounding towns.

In a letter to me, Bishop Robert Hirschfeld had pointed out that one possible translation of John 1:14 is, “And the Word was made flesh and moved into the *neighborhood*” and Bp Rob repeatedly states that the Church is called by Christ to look and listen to what God is doing in the *neighborhood* where our parishes are located. In other words, spreading the kingdom out *into* our neighborhood is what we are called to do. For it is *in* the neighborhood that we will meet Jesus. And I’m here to report that St. Thomas’ is doing this beautifully.

Here are the many places that you are being sent, many of which are described more fully in this report:

- A Christmas Breakfast Feast that served 70-80 people,
- \$600 worth of Christmas gift cards given to children in need,
- 67 pairs of pajamas, 100 pairs socks and underpants given to students of Woodman School and Seymour Osborne \_\_\_\_\_ this holiday season
- Weekly dinners provided by *Dover Friendly Kitchen*,
- The *Dover Share* dinner, which will be held again February 13, 2016
- The *End 68 hours of Hunger* barbeque
- *Godly Play*
- Altar Guild, Choir, LEM’s, acolytes, readers, cross-bearers, ushers
- Harvest Fair
- Craft group
- Hospitality Committee
- St. Thomas’ Breakfast Café
- The Tea
- *Safe Passage*
- AA meetings

- The Indonesian Church using our facilities

Plus the various ministries individuals participate in *outside* St. Thomas': Dover Cooperative Ministries, Dover Food Pantry, End 68 hours of Hunger, Dover Share to name a few.

This past year, we have said goodbye to members of our clergy team: The Rev. David Holroyd, The Rev. Dick Siener both who were part of the initial 'Dream Team'. The Rev. Ted Rice joined us in April. Ted has been vital in moving our parish to greater health and sadly he leaves us now to spend more time with his wife Pat who is battling an aggressive type of brain cancer.

Patty Laughlin has step down as interim office manager. She did a great job organizing the office, setting up new procedures that infiltrate all areas of parish life. Thank you Patty! Larissa Combe has been hired as her permanent replacement and is stepping into her new role nicely, thanks again to Patty and her stellar training.

Our strong financial team remains in place. Jerry Costanza and Karen Gardner are the *rock* of our financial foundation along with the tireless work of our Treasurer, Kevin Gorham. Thank you Kevin for your dedication and willingness to stay in this position for another year. Financially we're closer meeting our expenses and appreciate the relief that the Diocese has given for a portion of our Fair Share contribution.

Chris Wykiel will be stepping down after years serving as your Senior Warden. Please give Chris a warm round of thanks for his good work stabilizing St. Thomas in this period of transition. It hasn't been easy yet the resulting work of his leadership has been sound and will carrying us in the years ahead. Also, please thank your Vestry for their continued hard work. Val Smith, Bill Dudley, and Margie Ford will be signing off this year. They too will be sorely missed but I have confidence that our new slate of Vestry members will continue their fine work.

Our Property Committee has had some interesting challenges this year. Leaks, leaks, and more leaks. Building upon the Bishop's imagery of *Tending the Vine*, we've certainly splashed some baptismal water around! Looks like some repairs will be made soon that will give us a new face. So stay tune...

I'd like to close with a recent message from our new Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry:

What really binds us together is that we are followers of Jesus in communion with one another—that primal relationship holds us together. Of course, we're struggling—we're struggling, we know that—but I really do believe that we can continue to work together in partnerships that help to serve God's mission in this world by joining *together* so that children don't go to bed hungry, *to help* so that people have water, *to help* so that education is available to children, *to help* so that women can support their families. We've got some work to do; we've got some *Jesus* work to do ...this world is crying out for us. It needs us. And the Anglican Communion is *one* way that God uses us together to really make this a better world. Amen. (Italics are mine)

So let us boldly go out *into* our neighborhood where we expect to meet Jesus.

Faithfully submitted,

The Rev. Gail Avery, Interim Rector

# VESTRY REPORTS

## *Senior Warden Report*

Among other definitions, Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines the adjective "vital" as: (1) existing as a manifestation of life; concerned with or necessary to the maintenance of life; (2) full of life and vigor; (3) characteristic of life or living beings; and/or (4) fundamentally concerned with or affecting life or living beings. St. Thomas' Episcopal Church is vital to many, and so many are vital to its existence and good works done. It is vital that we all strive to sustain its many vines, and make them grow all the more stronger, for the good of each one of us individually, and for the collective good of all those who in one way or another touch our vines.

These thoughts resonated with me during our January 31 Consecration Sunday service which concluded in church with our offering "estimates of giving" in lieu of past years' solicitation of traditional "pledges." Our guest, Cannon for Mission Resources Kevin Nichols, preached about living with "delight," and pondering what it means "to delight in God's will." He motivated us to manifest our thanks for all of that in which we delight by our giving. Our celebratory luncheon following church was a time to simply enjoy being with one another, and hear the good news of our morning's commitment.

Of the 51 estimates turned in, seven were from folks who had not committed to regular giving to St. Thomas' in the past. Of the 44 (of the 51) who had regularly given in the past, 36 "stepped up" and committed to giving more this year than last. Our Treasurer announced that if some 13 to 14 parish members who regularly gave in years past committed again to similar giving, our collective pledge income could be just shy of \$115,000 ... an approximate ten per cent increase from a year ago.

Good news! Not enough to cover the vital expense needs of a tentative 2016 budget adopted by Vestry a couple weeks prior. Budget and Treasurer Reports elsewhere found in this Annual Report explain in greater detail this year's deficit expectation and the need to again liquidate some of St. Thomas' endowment to cover expenses ... but hopefully less so this year than last. And last year, the amount actually liquidated to make ends meet was less than originally projected. An improving trend ... a good "vital" sign. A vital use of trust funds.

Financially, we're not yet back to the \$140,000 plus level of annual pledge income we enjoyed for some three years in a row some five or so year's ago. But we're trending in the right direction these past couple years. More importantly, our spirit of community and the vines we've tended have trended more positively. The "corner turned" about which I wrote for Annual Report a year ago seems a distant memory. This Annual Report tries to account for the good works done in 2015. Many of you, like me, felt it. Feels good! A palpable vital sign.

Our individual vital signs felt an uptick from participation in Christmas pajama, underwear, socks and gift card buying, Christmas morning breakfast cooking, serving and funding, Sunday music jams, and a summer cookout to help fund Dover's "End 68 Hours of Hunger." This year's February "Share Dinner" sold out in January, buoyed by the joy and success of last year's enjoyable and worthy event. We continue to open and share our "downtown church" buildings with others. Vestry is moving closer to articulating a revised mission statement, acknowledging that we feed people well, with food and the Word. Both are vital to those our vines touch, and to us doing that touching.

St. Thomas' is in a good place ... in no way having yet reached its potential, but reaching in the right direction. Read this Annual Report fully, and realize you are a vital part of all that is reported. Realize how vital it is that we remain a full time parish. Our Bishop has shared this hope and expectation with Vestry on more than one occasion. And why shouldn't he. Dover is one of (if not "the") hottest communities experiencing positive economic growth in

New Hampshire. In his Consecration Sunday sermon, Kevin Nichols reminded us that St. Thomas' is vital to this community. Can anyone of us imagine Dover N.H. without it? Can we even begin to imagine the loss that would be felt by those touched by our vines?

Vestry and its leadership are in a good place. Authoring this, my fifth annual Senior Warden's Report, I look forward to others, enthusiastic and competent, leading us towards our greater potential. All of us should help in our own way, to help ourselves as much as others. It's vital that we do.

Chris Wyskiel  
Senior Warden

## ***Junior Warden Report***

The primary role of the Junior Warden is that of "overseer of the Church Property". These duties include assisting and supporting the Rector, being a liaison between the Vestry and the Property Committee, and assist the Treasurer and Budget Committee with long term planning for facility expenses.

We are blessed at St. Thomas to have a beautiful church and an abundance of facilities for our ministries. We are even more blessed by the people of St Thomas'.

Our Property Committee members and other volunteers do an amazing job maintaining our buildings and grounds, helping with repair and safety projects and supporting the varied uses of our facilities. Despite limiting our Sexton to just a few weekly hours, he keeps our facilities clean and ready for all events throughout the week, not just for Sunday morning services.

As I suggested last year, it is important to remember that our facilities are not new.

Both the Hale House and the church proper are historic structures and are recorded on the National Historical Register. Our projects continue to be reactionary in nature, but we are starting to take a more strategic approach in our vision and planning.

The Property Committee continues to work closely with the Vestry to balance our limited treasure with maintenance needs, so that the ministries of St Thomas' and other community organizations have the facilities they need to do God's work.

Some highlights from this year include:

Historic New England – St. Thomas' became a member of Historic New England. The resources available from Historic New England will help us better understand how to plan and prioritize projects to preserve our facilities. Additionally, they also have a large pool of resources who specialize in the preservation of historic structures like ours.

Insurance claims – Our facilities took a hard hit from last winter's weather. We had two major insurance claims. One due to ice and frozen pipes (Ervin Hall Vestibule, Memorial Garden side of church), and a second due to flooding from heavy rains (Ervin Hall basement). We initially attempted to manage both of these claims with our volunteers, but at the suggestion of our insurance adjustor, we are hiring a general contractor to work with our insurance adjustor and tradesman to complete the work. We should have things in place by early February and will start seeing progress soon after.

Gate House Window – This project ran into a couple of issues that have delayed its completion. The window itself needed extensive repairs before the frame it was in could be rebuilt. Also, part of the wall the window was in will need to be repaired due to wood that has rotted from the water intrusion over the past 20+ years. At this point, we are waiting on warmer weather to reinstall the window.

Many may not be aware, but the Gate House Window is one of the original windows from the church. To save money, it was common at the time, for churches to be built with “temporary” windows. These were usually basic, simple stained glass, that would later be replaced with more ornate windows, often donated by a family or ministry as part of a window upgrade campaign.

Our facilities serve as a vehicle to help do God’s work. St Thomas’ is not just a place of worship, it is also a place the Dover community uses to care for, feed and help others. As part of our mission to serve God and help others, we need to proactively care for and maintain the facilities that help do that.

St Thomas’ is more than a place of worship for our parishioners. For the Dover community, especially many in need, our facilities are a place of hope where they can be fed with both food and “the spirit”. Although it may sometimes seem like a burden, caring for our facilities is one of many ways we are able to tend the vine and reach out into the neighborhoods to do His work.

God Bless and Semper Fidelis,  
Allen

### ***Treasurer’s Report***

See Appendix documents:

Year End Statement & Proposed Budget  
Trust Fund Status



# ACTS REPORTS

## ***Altar Guild***

The Altar Guild consists of 5 groups that rotate duties on a monthly basis. Ideally, each group would have at least 5 members. There are currently 15 active members. The Directress leads a “Newcomers’ Group” to train new volunteers. Newcomers’ months will be March and October in 2016. Members of all ages and genders are welcome to ‘give us a try’ without feeling they are committing to long term service! There are also several members referred to as ‘Floaters’ who can’t commit to regular duties but are available to fill in when needed, and also accomplish tasks such as ironing and repairing the altar linens.

In May the group gathered at Dover’s Christopher’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Grill for our annual dinner. The Revs. Gail Avery Ted Rice joined us as guests of honor.

At the church work days held during the year our focus was on the interior of the church and sacristy. Members spent time organizing the storage spaces, sorting linens and other items, and sprucing up the sanctuary. Woodwork throughout the nave and sanctuary was washed, brass and silver were polished and damaged items sent for repair or retired from service.

Weddings, funerals and baptisms are special occasions in the life of the church. Altar Guild members work behind the scenes all year to assist parishioners and non-members through these life transitions. The High and Side Altars are prepared for Communion, candles are filled with oil, hangings are changed with the seasons, linens are cleaned and pressed, flowers are delivered to shut-ins, the sacristy and sanctuary are dusted and de-cluttered. The HOLLY AND THE IVY service held in December allows more people to participate in ‘greening’ the church.

The Guild meets in its entirety twice a year, in February and October, to plan for upcoming seasons. An Altar Guild member attends each Worship Committee meeting as well to keep us ‘in the loop’ with special plans.

Tom Massingham and Garrison Hill Florist continue to provide beautiful flowers and other plants during the Easter, Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany seasons.

Kitty Cornwell  
Directress

## ***Craft Group***

The goal of the St Thomas’ craft group is to make available quality craft and gift items to be sold at the annual Holiday Harvest Fair in October. We remain one of the only church fairs where all items sold are handmade by members of the parish. This has been very well received by the community and we were blessed with another successful year.

The craft group resumed weekly 7pm Monday night meetings in late January and continued through fair time. The craft room is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Hale House - the door on the left at the top of the stairs. The “regulars” usually number 7-8 and we welcome anyone who would like to join us, on an occasional or regular basis.

We are fortunate to have an abundance of supplies, mostly donated, which provide a wonder resource for projects but are beginning to limit our workspace a bit. Goal for 2016 will be to do some re-organizing so we can spread out a little. Our challenge continues to be finding projects that will appeal to our customers and we appreciate any and all ideas.

Our mission is to use our time and talents for the benefit of St Thomas' but the support and friendship shared benefit the members too. Please consider coming some Monday night – it's fun and a great chance to learn a new craft –no prior experience necessary.

Respectfully submitted,  
Georgia Campbell

## ***Harvest Fair***

This year's Harvest Fair was one of the most successful in recent years. Everyone; the fair committee, the table workers, the cooks, the cleaners, our waiters, our donors, our crafters, our pie makers, and our community of customers all contributed to the success and we are thankful for all the support from everyone, That is what makes our fair truly amazing.

We really had some special highlights this year. For the first time in a few years we had such a wonderful variety and number of cookies that the cookie walk was able to stay open for everyone for the entire fair day!! Thanks to everyone for those yummy cookies! The pies, as usual, were a great success, along with all the bakery table items. The fancy desserts were absolutely gorgeous this year! One of the rooms I truly appreciate is the Children's Room. Valerie, Paul and their helpers make it a wonderful space for our youngest visitors! I think having a special place for them is one of the reasons we have such a family oriented fair. It was wonderful to have the Guatemalan Table back this year with all the colorful works from Guatemala! We were also glad to have some wonderful music played during our luncheon hours.

The fair committee would like to thank everyone. This year's fair was one of the least stressful we have had, Everything just seemed to come together perfectly. It shows what we can do as a Parish when we work together,

Our fair does help our Church financially, also. The Church budget, our Guatemalan outreach program and the community all benefit from everyone's work and involvement. Because so many in the wider community contribute to our success we are called to give back. This year we were able to tithe \$550.00 to the Friendly Kitchen to help support the work that they do. We prayerfully thank God all the talents and time he has inspired to help us in this endeavor. Thank you all.

Your Fair Committee.

## ***Hospitality***

The hospitality committee is an informal, but extraordinary and dedicated group of parishioners. We have no formal meetings, but close telephone or email communication when our services are needed. We are primarily involved with providing receptions after funerals or memorials services and any special event that arises such as the Concerts in the Castle. We are always looking for and welcome new volunteers. All that is really needed is to be willing to be called at the time of a function if a refreshment is needed, or if one has the time and inclination, to assist with the preparations. For any questions please contact Nancy Hunt or Fran Whiting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Fran Whiting

## ***Office Volunteers***

Parish Office volunteers provide a presence at the church for the parish and community and support the Rector and office manager with administrative tasks. Office volunteers are very generous with their time and talents. In addition to the scheduling flexibility the volunteers

allow we've found that the tasks they do on behalf of the parish save us considerable effort and expense.

Some office volunteers provide office hours coverage: greeting visitor and vendors, answering calls, sorting mail, taking care of filing, preparing bulletins and providing history and perspective to the office manager and Rector. Many thanks to Nancy Stafford Parsons, Fran Whiting and Allen Laughlin for taking regular shifts in the office this fall.

Other volunteers have taken on independent tasks. For example the Bridge would not be created or published without the dedicated service of Kathy Koson and it wouldn't be delivered without our bulk mailing experts Nancy Levesque and Claire Gleeson.

There are many office projects and tasks, large and small, ongoing or one time, during office hours or on your own time, that could benefit from a parishioners attention. If you'd be interested in helping please contact the office.

### **Prayer Shawl Ministry/Knitting Group**

The St. Thomas' Knitting Group has not met as a group, but several parishioners continue to create beautiful shawls and donate them to the church. Prayer Shawls are available at no charge and may be presented by anyone to anyone in hopes of providing comfort in a time of need, or as a reminder of special blessings. Donations in the form of yarn and needles are always welcome and may be left at the church. Finished shawls are kept in the Parish Office, printed cards with a prayer are available, and the shawls will be blessed by Rev. Avery on request. The original shawl pattern (knit or crochet) may be found at [www.shawlministry.org](http://www.shawlministry.org) or ask Kitty Cornwell for a copy.

### **Property Committee**

#### **Duty**

The property committee shall supervise the maintenance, repair, and improvement of the congregation's real properties.

#### **Members**

Allen L. (Jr. Warden), Patty L. (chair), Don M., Hank F., Harold C., Bill H., Bill D. Mary-Jo D., Bob C., Michael B., Judi T., Debbie D.

#### **Volunteer Hours and In Kind Donations** (for the 5 months documented)

Volunteer Hours: 452 (does NOT include workday hours by non committee volunteers)  
In-Kind Donations: \$648

#### **Financial Review**

The property committee monitors several church accounts: janitorial supplies, insurance, waste disposal, utilities and repair & maintenance. Monitoring is for the purpose of finding opportunities for savings. As the church is currently operating at a deficit we have limited ourselves to fixing issues that would cause more work or expense later if not corrected and only those expenses approved by the vestry.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Account</b>	<b>2015 Amount</b>
Facilities Operations		
	Inspections, Licenses, Permits	\$385.00
	Insurance	\$8,938.83
	Janitorial Supplies	\$145.41
	Parking Lot Plowing, Etc.	\$3,525.00
	Security Alarms	\$966.00
	Waste Disposal	\$3,275.18
		<b>\$17,235.42</b>

Repair & Maintenance		
	Garden Maintenance	\$189.52
	Major Repairs	
	Gatehouse Window	\$1,675.00
	Asbestos Testing	\$480.00
	Repair & Maintenance	\$5,871.38
		<b>\$8,215.90</b>
Utilities		
	Electricity	\$8,128.67
	Natural Gas	\$10,901.01
	Water/Sewer	\$1,605.88
		<b>\$20,635.56</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>\$46,086.88</b>

These figures differ from those in the official financial report as some items were re-categorized based on specific knowledge of the expenses.

### 2015 Highlights/Accomplishments

- Demolition of basement rooms in Hale House
- Oil tanks removed and heating oil account closed
- Ervin Hall vestibule heater water line break
- Ice dams on roofs, esp. over Memorial Garden and connector exit
- Waste disposal company changed – saving ~\$200/month
- Ladies room painting & decorating
- Clean out the attic and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Hale House
- Church floor painting (see Fall 2015 Bridge article)
- Drain backup and water damage to Sunday school
- Gatehouse window removed and repaired (*re-installation pending*)
- Espaliered apple planted in Memorial Garden
- Management of water leaks (unrelated to insurance claims)
- Color palette and material selection for Ervin Hall vestibule
- Successful parish workdays in May and September (see Bridge articles for details)

Completed repair & maintenance tasks are many. A sampling is listed here:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| • <i>Altar stained glass light identified</i> | • <i>latch repairs</i>                                       | • <i>book cases from the Dallas Room to the 3rd floor 'library'</i>  |
| • <i>Antiques assessment</i>                  | • <i>Install and remove air conditioners</i>                 | • <i>Move storage cabinet on 2nd floor landing</i>                   |
| • <i>Change air filters</i>                   | • <i>Install grab bar in stall in ladies room</i>            | • <i>Mow, inc. the alley behind the Parish Hall</i>                  |
| • <i>Clean light fixtures in bathrooms</i>    | • <i>Install mailbox</i>                                     | • <i>New snow removal contract</i>                                   |
| • <i>Clean out the fridge and freezer</i>     | • <i>Install weather stripping</i>                           | • <i>Organize kitchen cabinets &amp; drawers, purge as necessary</i> |
| • <i>Clean woodwork</i>                       | • <i>Kitchen fire suppression maintenance and inspection</i> | • <i>Organize storage spaces</i>                                     |
| • <i>Dishwasher repair</i>                    | • <i>Label circuit breaker boxes</i>                         | • <i>Parking lot exit/entrance repairs</i>                           |
| • <i>Fire inspections</i>                     | • <i>Meet vendors for quotes and jobs</i>                    |  |
| • <i>Garden clean-up</i>                      | • <i>Move extra books and</i>                                |  |
| • <i>Gatehouse door locking issues</i>        |  |  |
| • <i>Church deadbolt and</i>                  |  |  |

- Prune
- Remove old tables, racks and ladders from the freezer room
- Repair ladies room sink
- Replace light blubs
- Replace/repair light switches and outlets
- Reprogram thermostats
- Seal up rotting wood in the Memorial Garden
- Security checks
- Shovel
- Signage
- Sump-pump repairs
- Weed gardens

### Looking Forward

Facilities work in 2016 will be dominated by insurance related repairs. Other priority tasks will be those that, if left undone, will make maintenance and repairs more challenging and more costly.

#### Operations

- Continue maintenance tasks & parish workdays (May 21 and Sept 24, 2016)
- Document committee roles & responsibilities
- Create a buildings and grounds operations manual to include a schedule of maintenance tasks
- Create a list of preferred vendors for repair & maintenance tasks and contractor engagement guidelines
- Conduct annual facilities walk-through
- Recruit additional committee members
- Structure the committee to allow time and focus on strategy and planning, décor and grounds in addition to essential tasks of repair and maintenance

#### Planned Projects

- Manage insurance claim repairs
  - Ervin Hall vestibule water and ice dam damage
  - Sunday school water damage
  - Church ice dam damage
- Manage repairs necessitated/facilitated by insurance claims
  - Slate roof, trim, fascia and flashing repairs over Memorial Garden
  - Code upgrades to boiler room
  - Asbestos abatement in boiler room
  - Connector emergency exit door replacement
- Bridge and gatehouse exterior & structural repairs (in Memorial Garden)
- Assess and plan heating plant remediation
- Commission Historic Structure Report (with support from LCHIP grant?)
- Reinstall Gatehouse Window

#### Wish List (as gifts, grants and funding allow)

Repair stained glass windows (a few windows need repair urgently)	~\$60,000-90,000
Replace Lexan window covers on stained glass windows	~\$4,300
Refinish/replace Ervin Hall floor	\$11,000-13,000
Replace shed	~\$3000
Rehabilitate 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> floor rental space in the Hale House	~\$50,000
Purchase floor burnisher	~\$1300
Reroute vestibule heating system	quotes needed
Install sump pump and pit in low part of the Hale House basement	quotes needed
Repair Hale House entrance	quotes needed
Renovate the kitchen	quotes needed

Repair/replace and paint trim work on the Hale House  
Repair/replace and paint trim work on the Church  
Improve accessibility of our facilities

quotes needed  
quotes needed  
ideas and quotes  
needed

The property committee members are a dedicated, talented and generous group who work behind the scenes to maintain St. Thomas' facilities. I'm blessed to be able to learn from them and help shepherd them in the work of the committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Laughlin  
Chair  
Property Committee

### ***Stewardship Committee***

The stewardship Committee has been busy the past few months with a different approach towards parishioners personal giving. The approach, called Consecration Sunday changes the typical fund raising drive into a program that focuses a person's need to give and helps to bring forward the question of "what is God calling me to do". It also helps bring forward the concept of one's working towards a principle of tithing.

Multiple parishioners have joined the Stewardship committee and are helping us understand the big changes in this approach when compared to our fundraising efforts of the past.

Consecration Sunday was held on January 31 with a single 9am service with Kevin Nichols as guest preacher. Kevin preached on the thought of us living and giving with "delight" and prayerfully led us to look individually at our spiritual giving to God. A delightful catered lunch was held for all present following the service.

The results of the Consecration Sunday effort are not completely in, but it is safe to say that we have at least 7 new people who turned in Estimate of Giving Cards along with over 80% of those pledging who "Took One Step Up".

As a result of all our parishioners, it looks like we may have a total of over \$117,000 income that would be 11% higher than last year!!

Thanks to all those who prayerfully considered what they give to God and his work and taking a step up that enables St. Thomas' to do it's mission.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Rob Sylvester

### ***Worship Team: Lectors & Eucharistic Ministers, Acolytes and Ushers***

The worship committee has been in place for almost 7 years now. Leading this ministry is my favorite thing to do and I believe the most important thing I do for the St. Thomas Community. The worship committee continues to accomplish what we set out to do.

- We meet routinely to participate in the planning of key liturgical seasons (typically February, May, August and November).
- We reflect back on those seasons, documenting what went well and what did not
- We keep our eyes and ears open for your advice about what might work or not and advise our clergy of it

The committee continues to do a great job providing Rev. Gail with what we've done in the past and suggestions for change, from that collaboration we plan our worship services.

We try to have representation from all of the organizations connected to our services: the Altar Guild, Lectors, Ushers, Sunday school, Choir, Vestry and Parishioners. If you'd like to participate, we'd be happy to hear from you. Give me a call at 370-0688 or email me at [daddeonh@gmail.com](mailto:daddeonh@gmail.com)

Beyond the worship committee St Thomas' is blessed with a group of dedicated, talented and friendly folks who contribute to the overall worship experience. Our ushers who greet you, our lectors who work to help you hear the WORD, our acolytes who take great pride in being a torch bearer or a server and our lay Eucharistic ministers (LEMs) who reverently assist delivering the sacrament of His Body and Blood. Like many things in life you may not notice these folks when they are there and doing a good job. But, you definitely notice when they are not there. So thank you to all our ushers, acolytes, lectors and LEMs. We greatly appreciate your service to St Thomas and our Lord and Savior.

Peace and blessings to you all  
Kevin M. Gorham

## **CONNECTIONS REPORTS**

### ***Breakfast Café***

Our year has been successful in one way and not so very in another. One of our focus points is providing an atmosphere for community worship, via the Café schedule openings. That continues to be a good thing. It is heart warming to watch from the kitchen as the seven sometimes eight tables occupied by parish members and friends converse, laugh and enjoy spending a few minutes in each others company.

On the other side of the coin contributions to St. Thomas has been weak and certainly not as good as in past years. Food costs have increased at an average of 18% to 23%, depending on what product.....like eggs for instance. There were seven Sundays that we were not open, four due to bad weather, Mother's Day was a church community hosting and two for Vestry Forum. Those seven, plus the three that we traditionally close; Sunday after Christmas Annual Meeting -Easter. These closings have had a bearing on our bottom line. Product loss and spoilage amounted to an estimated \$68.00 loss. Our reward cards have been a success with our loyal customers. Average of 1+redemption per week

None of this happens without volunteers, and we have the best, talented, and eager to please at St. Thomas. Thank you to Thomas Stafford, Tim Constantine our chefs. Patty Laughlin, Bonnie Hartford, Peggy Warner, Nancy Coleman, Robyn Britton, Cam Turner, Fran Whiting, Deb Rice, Kevin Gorham and Allen Laughlin.

None of this happens without our loyal customers and we thank you for supporting us week in and week out. Thousands of dollars have been raised over the eleven and a half years.....thank you one and all.

Nancy Stafford-Parsons  
Director of Breakfast Cafe

### ***Hannaford Card Program***

In a unique fundraising initiative, a program was started at St. Thomas' for parishioners who buy groceries from Hannaford while providing cash back to St. Thomas'. Thanks to the leadership of Bill Dudley, St. Thomas' started a "Hannaford Gift Card Program" as a way to bring additional funds to St. Thomas' by parishioners buying gift cards from Hannaford and replenishing them resulting in a 5% bonus card return from Hannaford on replenishment amounts totaling more than \$1000.

The Hannaford Gift Card program has totaled \$8420 from July to December 2015 and has brought St. Thomas' \$421 for that period in bonus cards.

Some of these bonus cards have been "sold" within the parish, and the funds going directly to our parish income, and some are being used to help provide assistance to those in need through the Rector's discretionary giving. This is just one of the areas where we can help others in our community.

Orders are taken weekly using provided envelopes to help us keep track of the information. Once we receive the \$1000 threshold where we will receive 5% bonus cards, a check is sent to Hannaford and the individual cards are replenished. Changes have been made to help streamline the process to minimize the time between issuing a check to Hannaford until the time the cards are actually replenished. Typically, this time is now down to 1 week.

Anyone interested in getting gift cards or getting replenishment should see Rob Sylvester during Café between services.



Respectfully Submitted,  
Rob Sylvester

### ***Safe Passage***

We have had the absolute pleasure and blessing to have been connected to Mynor jom Ica' and Galen Lorena Tepez for the past nine years. While both children have thrived and been enriched by our connection with them, Mynor has exceeded all expectations.

This year Mynor graduated from the Safe Passage program. Due to his incredible self-discipline in attending school, studying hard and resisting the temptation which always exists in the dump environment to make poor choices he was selected for a terrific scholarship from the Guatemalan government to continue his education. It is with sadness that our journey in his life will be ending but we can always know that St. Thomas made a huge difference in this child's journey. Those of us who traveled on support teams and spent time with him will forever hold him in our hearts.

Galen is still an active and successful student at the Safe Passage project. She is now 15 and will be preparing herself to participate in the Quinceanera celebration. She is dedicated to succeed and is grateful to all of you for keeping this part of our church's outreach in support of the Millennium Goals of eradicating poverty through education. Without our commitment to the Safe Passage program children like Mynor and Galen do not have the opportunity to ever escape the impoverished environment they are growing up in.

It would be wonderful if we could gain more momentum and perhaps sponsor another child and/or send another support team to Guatemala to experience first hand the Safe Passage project.

As we continue to fulfill Jesus's message "Truly I say to you, inasmuch as you have done it to the least of these my brothers, you have done it to me."

Ky Wolterbeek  
Global Outreach

# **REVELATIONS REPORTS**

## ***Children and Youth Ministries***

### **Jan - June**

We have been continually growing and adding children to this “drop-in” program. We have 8 regular Storytellers and Doorpersons. Each person is usually only scheduled for one Sunday a month, which seems to fit schedules so that worship and personal commitments can still be accommodated. We ended the 2014/2015 year with the “Following Jesus” stories and an Ice-Cream Social on Recognition Day.

In May we hosted a 1-day training event, with a Certified Godly Play Trainer, for storytellers and parents to provide a day to renew understanding or get an introduction to the Godly Play program. We had 7 parishioners of St Thomas’, and 5 from outside the parish. The trainer fees + mileage were \$630; we took in \$245 for the 5 paying guests; which gave us a \$385.00 expense for the day workshop session.

New this year, we hosted an “All Saints Pancake Breakfast” and “St. Nickolas Breakfast”. Both events had an income submitted as food was donated and we collated a fee for each event. “Income” for Church School should reflect these two events.

### **July - Dec**

The Vestry has approved to hire and pay for 1- babysitter for the Nursery but we did not secure a person for this position by the end of the year. Expenses for Church School in 2016 should include the cost of a paid sitter on a regular basis if this is a service we wish to provide for parishioners.

In the fall we re-introduced the Godly Play stories and we continue to welcome many new students. Currently we have 14 active students up to 5<sup>th</sup> grade participating in the program. We remain strong with 8 storytellers + doorpersons and we hope to include new adults this fall after the Safe Church Training is initiated for those interested in joining the teachers.

A summer storm flooded the north side of the classrooms in the church school space. Much flooring and walls were removed in the process of drying out the space. There are 3 classrooms with carpeting left, and we used one of those rooms this fall, 1 was prepped for the new Nursery space, and the other two are used for storage due to the damaged areas. Reconstruction and temporary relocation of Church School should be a priority for 2016. I feel that the space in this area is underutilized and before reconstruction begins, this would be a perfect time to access the full potential for using this space for the next 10-15 yrs. Built-in storage space and multi-use rooms for other groups should be considered before renovation begins in this space.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Judi Turner

## ***Safe Church***

I became the Safe Church Minister at the Annual Meeting in Jan 2015. My first task was to get familiar with the policy and our records pertaining to this area. In February I submitted the “Audit” report as a required part of the Annual Parochial Report, reflecting our church compliance for 2014. 2014 was a year of upheaval in leadership at many levels of our parish family. They report reflected this transition and showed many omissions to our record keeping and lack of compliance with the policy.

The Clergy, Wardens, and Vestry are responsible for compliance with the Safe Church Policy for the NH Episcopal Diocese as it is written. Awareness and fiduciary are components need

to be addressed with every group that uses our building. Some of my effort this year was to educate and start a consistent plan for record keeping and training documentation which is the general role of Safe Church Minister.

The Safe Church Status Report is a fluid document that reports where people in leadership or staff, are up-to-date (or not) with the required (or suggested) Safe Church Training (online + "Live" Session good for 3 yrs) and background checks. A full status report will be included in the Parochial Report for 2015 listing those who need to move forward in the training process to get us current for 2015. Also worth noting is that we ask volunteers to pay \$30 each for their background checks. The Vestry has voted to cover the cost of all staff background checks. The money for this service flows in and out of an "Office Admin" account. Because some people cover the cost of their own background check and some do not, there will be an "expense" toward administrative costs to be compliant with the policy.

This report does not include our outside groups that use our building. We do not, at the time of my report, have any Certificates of Insurance on file for any groups that have used our building for 2015 (except 1 for a 1-time use, non-church event). This means that all groups must follow the guidelines of compliance with our diocesan policy in terms of training, record keeping, etc. As vestry and leadership changes each year, this list also will change. It is my hope that although the responsibility falls back to the Wardens and Clergy, that each parish member is familiar with the policy and be aware of the potential for minimizing risk in an effort to keep everyone in the parish safe as we get together to do the mission of our church.

Respectfully submitted,

Judi Turner

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### ***Financial Manager***

2015 has been a year of refinements in our bookkeeping and improvement in our finances. Cash flow has become more even, helping the timely payment of invoices. Early in the year we met with the Diocese and were granted a reduction in our monthly Fair Share payment, which also was a significant help.

We have been fortunate to have Karen Gardner as our bookkeeper. She handles the weekly collection, getting it ready for deposit, entering it into QuickBooks, and into Church Windows. Her understanding of financial controls and attention to detail makes my job much easier.

In August, we successfully completed a financial review by the Diocese, the first review in a very long time. It was reassuring to have their review, approval, and their independent insights.

I am looking forward to 2016. We will continue with refinements and instituting "Best Practices" in accounting.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Jerry Costanza*

### ***Music Program***

The choir had a great year with some new members joining us this fall. We had a second annual "Hanging of the Green" service and the choir sounded especially strong. Concerts in the Castle with the Fourth Street Jazz had successful concerts in January and June 2015. The numbers continue to grow for our audience. We managed to minimize purchases of new music in 2015 and rediscover the many resources already in our files. We look forward to the coming Easter season and possibly adding our youth string players for that celebration.

Peace,  
Kathy Fink  
Music Director

### ***Parish Administrator***

September of 2015 brought a new administrator to St. Thomas. Not being a parishioner of St. Thomas I had a lot to learn right out of the gate. With the guidance of Rev. Gail Avery and Patty Laughlin the transition has been smooth. I have learned more about the Episcopal Church than I ever imagined I would.

The office was in very good shape coming in as Patty had done a wonderful job organizing. Everyday I learn something new and feel more comfortable in my duties. I enjoy getting to know the parishioners and being able to help with whatever is needed.

I feel that at this time I have the every day tasks down and am quite comfortable with the week to week duties. Every once in awhile something new comes my way and it may take a little more time to accomplish but I am hoping by this time next year it will all seem natural.

I want to thank those people who have helped me with this transition. Patty Laughlin, Fran Whiting, Jerry Costanza, Kathy Fink and The Rev. Gail Avery. Thank you to everyone for making me feel so welcome.

Respectfully submitted,  
Larissa Combe