



ST. MARTIN'S

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

2024 Annual Report
January 26, 2025

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Annual Meeting Agenda

January 26, 2025

- Opening Prayer: The Rev. Linda Mackie Griggs
- Necrology: Arthur Chute, Althea Crowley, Peter Dennehy, Constance Francis, Ellen Mills, Louise Rymer, John Thompson
- Welcome: The Rev. Mark Sutherland
- Approval of Minutes: Sheila Hoogeboom, Senior Warden
- Warden's Report: Sheila Hoogeboom
- Treasurer's Report: David Whitman, Treasurer & Melinda DelCioppio, Financial Administrator
- Property Report: David Brookhart, Property Manager
- The Thrifty Goose: John Marenzano, Manager
- Thanking Departing Vestry Members: The Rev. Mark Sutherland
- Presentation and Election of Vestry: Sheila Hoogeboom
- Questions
- Closing Remarks and prayers for the year ahead: The Rev. Mark Sutherland

Minutes - Annual Meeting, January 28, 2024

Vestry Officers Present: Cathy Bodner, Senior Warden
 Sheila Hoozeboom, Junior Warden
 David Whitman, Treasurer
 Debbie Boedecker, Clerk
 Mark Sutherland, Rector
 Linda Griggs, Assisting Priest

Staff Present: David Brookhart & Melinda DelCioppio

Meeting Called to order by Cathy Bodner at 11:35am.

Opening Prayer: Linda Griggs, Assisting Priest, then remembered members of the parish who had died in the last year.

Necrology 2023: Cynthia Burke, Ann Coburn, Hannah Edgerly, Stewart Gibson, Carol Hills, David Joslin, Howard Kilguss, J. Mauney, Gail Peet, Kurt Raaflaub, Nancy Rhodes

Welcome: Mark Sutherland, Rector, highlighted the key points in his annual report including major groupings of Ministries and Committees: Philanthropy, Portal Ministries, Formation, Worship and Property. He noted that we are blessed with beautiful historic facilities and while currently able to keep up with maintenance we should be mindful of the future. Outreach and Philanthropy efforts are likely the greatest in the diocese. The strength of the 20-30's group has blossomed.

Approval of Minutes of 2023 Annual Meeting: Moved by David Whitman, seconded by Beth Toolan. Approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: David Whitman, Treasurer, thanked Melinda DelCioppio for her dedication as financial administrator. Two slides were projected for the audience to summarize the financial report.

2023 Annual Income (Primary Budget Categories)

Actual \$ (000's)		Budget \$ (000's)	
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 14.9	Miscellaneous Income	\$ 10.0
Offerings	487.9	Offerings	466.0
Thrift & Estate Sales	77.6	Thrift & Estate Sales	60.0
Building Use Fees	30.1	Building Use Fees	25.0
Endowment Draw	15.0	Endowment Draw	64.2
Total	\$ 625.7	Total	\$ 625.2
2023 Budgeted Income		\$625,163	

2023 Annual Expense (Primary Budget Categories)

Actual \$ (000's)		Budget \$ (000's)	
Personnel	\$ 369.4	Personnel	\$ 378.8
Outreach	83.6	Outreach	83.3
Operations/Office	28.0	Operations/Office	28.5
Music/Worship	24.9	Music/Worship	27.0
Property/Maintenance	113.8	Property/Maintenance	100.9
Total	\$ 619.7	Total	\$ 618.5
2023 Budgeted Expense		\$625,060	

Income: David outlined that pledging units were down. He urged younger members to learn about pledging and to participate. The success of the Thrifty Goose and dedication of staff and volunteers really helps balance our budget. Annual Estate Sale in Oct brought in over \$12,000 unbudgeted dollars. Building Fee use is up with two current contracts in place for the kitchen. Stock market is up and our Endowment has exceeded three million this year.

Expenses: Apportionment to the Diocese has gone up along with Worship and Property.

Investment Committee: Chaired by parish volunteers, Sam Hallowell and Fla Lewis, this committee has helped ensure our endowment is in good order. David thanked Fla and Sam for their years of commitment and service.

Warden's Report: Cathy provided highlights of the year and particularly thanked incoming Senior Warden, Sheila Hoogeboom, and Bonnie and Hugh Gorman who led the Emergency Operations Plan and the fine efforts of the Outreach and Philanthropy Committee.

Vestry Nominations (2024): New members added to the vestry. Motion by Susan Allen, seconded by Debbie Boedeker, to approve slate of Officers and Vestry Members was made and approved.

Closing: Mark Sutherland thanked everyone and gave the closing prayer.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:05pm

Respectfully submitted,
Sheila Hoogeboom

Rector's Introduction to the Annual Report

In 2024 we enjoyed a fruitful year despite facing some strong headwinds. Being the custodians of a historic church building continues to remind me of John Donne's words in his *Hymn to God the Father*:

When thou hast done, thou hast not done, for [there is] more!

And indeed in 2024, there has been more work to be done, some of it foreseen and greatly welcomed, and some an unpleasant surprise, and I urge you to read the property report. But to sum up, 2024 has been a year of solid achievement, particularly in the key ministries of philanthropy outreach and property maintenance. This unusual pairing reveals two of our key priorities – reaching out in service to make a real difference for good in the world around us – a primary orientation that is only going to become more important as we face the unpredictability of the immediate and longer-term, and to maintain our historic buildings for the future.

In this year's Annual Report, to give a clearer sense of how our ministries cohere together, we've once again grouped the presentation of ministry reports into categories:

- Philanthropy & Outreach
- Portal Ministries
- Formation
- Worship Life
- Facilities and Finance

In 2024, all our ministries have revealed an engagement energy that increasingly characterizes our members. In 2024, the post-pandemic recovery has continued – positioning us for 2025 to break fresh ground.

- In the area of Philanthropy & Outreach – we have experienced our second full cycle of application and distribution of Outreach Endowment funds. I encourage everyone to read the OPC report which covers not only our philanthropic support of agencies and initiatives that are contributing to the building of stronger social capital in the wider RI community, but also includes our outreach programs of which Epiphany Soup Kitchen and the DCYF Christmas gift appeal deserve special mention here. You will also find the Thrifty Goose report showing continued steady increases in revenue return. Pursuing our goal of strengthening the Thrifty's ministry of high-end clothing repurposing – an environmentally relevant ministry – in 2024 we appointed a new shop manager who comes to us with a great depth of commercial experience and has impressive ideas for expansion.
- In Portal ministries, the 20-30's group maintains real traction in attracting, holding, and strengthening the contribution of this demographic to wider parish life. Knitting Group, Women's Spirituality Group, and Gander men's ministry groups have all flourished beyond expectations in the past year.

- In Adult formation, the Tuesday evening Lent Program attracted record signup and attendance retention, and the Life:Act 3 seminars addressing the issues facing many of us in the third act of life continued their record-breaking success. Two seminars simply entitled, *Why do you choose St. Martin's?* brought good attendance and a reminder of how hearing one another affirm our attraction for and experience of the St. Martin's community inspires and encourages.
- In Parish life, hospitality pioneered several highly successful parish events, including the traditional St. Martin's Day feast which this year was held as a post-Sunday service lunch to coincide with the Bishop's Visitation. Following the main service at which 10 persons were either confirmed or received into the Episcopal Church, the St. Martin's feast had a record attendance of --- A midday lunch provided a new template for future feast celebrations.
- In Worship life, the music ministry continued to refine the particular character of our worship experience, while the tech desk continued to grow in experience and expertise in presenting our worship to a wider participation.

Challenges ahead

- We continue to maintain our historic buildings for the benefit of both present and future generations and in 2024 we had record levels of facilities use by outside community groups ensuring that maintaining and staffing building supervision will be an issue going forward.
- Early indications from the return of members' estimates of giving information for 2025, show a continued fall in the number of pledging units if not – at least for the time being - the actual dollar value of the pledges reflecting the wider demographic trend of a marked shift in societal valuing of institutional life. Good causes continue to excite support but the commitment to the institutions that gather and hold a community together is weakening – though there are early signs of a possible resurgence as persons stressed by the conflict in civic society seek out safe and sustaining communities with a sense of greater urgency.

Opportunities grasped

- In 2024, experienced a steady return towards pre-pandemic average Sunday attendance levels with Christmas Eve attendance increasing year after year.
- A major redesign of the website together with a robust social media presence and Sunday service livestreaming continue to expand our digital footprint.
- New people finding us online continue to make their way through our great red doors on a Sunday morning for our particular blend of traditional worship and radical theological messaging.
- An encouraging sign in 2024 has been the average age of the Vestry moving in the direction of a younger profile– bucking wider social trends. Energetic lay leadership from the Wardens and Vestry marked our movement towards becoming a more evangelically proactive community.

The divine synchronicity in God's providence has continued to mark our experience in 2024, ensuring that in 2025 meeting the challenges of the coming year will continue to call the right people, possessing the right skills, to step forward at the opportune time.

Luke begins his story of the birth of the Christ Child with: *In those days*. On Christmas Eve I posed the question, how would this story read if we begin its sequel with - *in these days ...*? A story beginning in this way carries a timely challenge for us hitherto safe armchair Christians for a more radical sense of commitment and allegiance to the story of God's involvement in human affairs.

A story that begins with the words *In these days*, renews our awareness of the divine life entering our human neighborhood - inviting us to embody the values and expectations of God's Kingdom. K Casenhiser reminded us in her sermon on the Fourth Sunday in Advent that:

God insists that bodies are the systems through which the world of the Kingdom will be built. God articulates God's dependence upon us human creatures when God says: humanity is how I wish to become recognizable in the world. Critically, though, before God takes this action, God chooses to get the consent of the actors involved.

As we enter 2025, to paraphrase the Collect Prayer on page 540 of the BCP, we pray that the God of unchangeable power and eternal light may look favorably on us as that wonderful and sacred mystery on Orchard Avenue. By the effectual working of divine providence within us let us carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation - so that the whole world may see and know that things which were being cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new - so that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord Amen.

Mark+, January 2025

Warden's Report

It has been my pleasure to work with our Vestry, staff and volunteers as your Sr. Warden this year. We have hosted memorable spiritual and social events that have enriched our lives and strengthened our relationships with each other. We strive to do more to welcome new members into our community.

We have good news to report this year. Attendance in church is very strong, as is program participation. There is a lot going on at St. Martin's, and I have personally grown by participating in our many events like Act III, Weekly Lenten Suppers, and Linda's Book Group; as well as through social interaction with you all. It has been a wonderful year for our parish. Please consider getting involved in our parish life in some small or big way. I can tell you it is rewarding, and there is so much more going on behind the scenes than worship that may just warm your heart, and you will meet some great people along your way.

Highlights of the Vestry's efforts in 2024

- Meetings Held: 11 Vestry meetings, 11 Finance Committee meetings, 4 Investment Committee meetings
- The Vestry flushed out some new goals at our February 2024 Orientation Retreat to focus on short- and long-term ways to best serve parishioners while exploring ways of welcoming visitors and new members. We established four focus areas:
 - Accessibility: Enhance the St. Martin's website and streaming services for easier navigation for all. Explore better access to the Atrium with an automatic door.
 - Growing Membership: Explore why people come to St. Martin's and why they stay to share with new members. In August we hosted two events for attendees to share their story, all thanks to Tony Cottone. We offered guided tours of the parish house and church in November to inform our parishioners on how our spaces affect ministries and worship, and to acquaint all with the many features of our facilities.
 - Outreach: Organized a new team of parishioners to develop additional opportunities for outreach in 2025.
 - Planned Giving: Provided parishioners with tools and resources to help guide them in planned giving, and inform them of our Endowment utilization. Held two ACT III programs on Planned Giving and Estate Planning.
- Supported all groups managing and maintaining parish property.
- Explored the future of the parish thrift store and assisted in hiring a new Thrifty Goose Manager.
- Adopted the Emergency Operations Procedure and shared with outside groups using our facilities. Parish followed up with AED Training with Allen Dennison.
- Spearheaded 2024 Stewardship/Estimate of Giving Campaign, acknowledged pledges.
- Aligned outreach ministries to help the Vestry stay informed and streamline giving to inside and outside groups.
- 8 Vestry members and 1 lay leader attended workshops on parish development run by the Diocese.
- The Vestry hosted Coffee Hour in December.

Our Vestry teams worked well together, and most members served on another ministry or committee in the parish. We learned it takes time to get new initiatives designed and off the ground.

Tony Cottone, Vestry Clerk, has prepared a binder to live permanently in the Stearns Room Library for all parishioners to have access to our agenda, minutes, financial reports, and more. We hope to share more of what is happening behind the scenes with you.

With the help of many in the congregation we managed our finances and reduced endowment draw while still fostering some major renovations, including the kitchen, in early 2024.

We are greatly going to miss outgoing Vestry members, Beth Toolan, David Barrall, and Sammi Tulungen. Their service and commitment to our parish enriched every meeting.

I would be remiss not to acknowledge the hard-working staff and all they do to make your parish what it is today. Years of institutional knowledge, dedication, swift reaction to special needs, and love of the parish makes it a pleasure to work with all.

Respectfully submitted,
Sheila Warden, Sr. Warden
Brian Robert, Jr. Warden

Outreach

The term “outreach” covers a broad range of activity and authorized spending in support of our obligation to help our neighbors, highlighted, for example, in Jesus’s parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37). In the parlance of St. Martin’s budgeting, “outreach” can refer variously to: the annual operating budget line item (about \$5,500); the rector’s confidential, emergency fund (\$10,300), to assist those with urgent financial needs; the diocesan apportionment, \$90,846; individual parishioner’s contributions to the Episcopal Charities of Rhode Island (not part of the St. Martin’s budget process); and “pass through” funds where parishioners give donations to St. Martin’s that are earmarked for particular groups or events.

Thanks to the community’s generosity and foresight in its most recent, successful capital campaign, St. Martin’s now also has a special “endowed” fund of about \$330,000, proceeds from which are designated annually by the vestry for outreach support. The Outreach and Philanthropy Committee (OPC) oversees grant approvals for both the operating budget line (\$5,500 in 2024) and the vestry-approved, annual “draw” from the new outreach, endowed fund (\$14,400 in 2024).

Separately, as Stevens McAleer reports, going back to the early 1950s, St. Martin’s has been one of the key founding members of Episcopal Charities Fund of Rhode Island (ECRI). Today Episcopal Charities raises funds for a broad range of Rhode Island non-profit and Episcopal church related charitable organizations. In addition to traditional annual grants, beginning during the COVID Pandemic, ECRI launched CHARITIES NOW, which is designed to disburse funds throughout the year, to the extent funds are available, to organizations addressing shelter and food insecurity issues. For calendar 2024 ECRI raised approximately \$15,000 from St. Martin’s parishioners (approximately 80% for annual grants and 20% for Charities Now), up 13% from \$13,000 raised in 2023. So ECRI is another important component of the St. Martin’s overall outreach effort.

ECRI generally requires that grantees have a connection with at least one church community in the diocese. Two ECRI grantees, Hope Clinic/Clinica Esperanza and the Epiphany Soup Kitchen are associated with St. Martin’s. Clearly, there are many other kinds of outreach that include, for example: volunteer efforts of time, such as staffing the soup kitchen; the Thrifty Goose; annual collections of clothing and other goods; the youth services Christmas drive; the knitting/prayer shawl ministry; the estate sale, and many others. These are all important in the life of St. Martin’s and constitute a larger understanding of “outreach.”

The Outreach and Philanthropy Committee (OPC) in 2024

2024 Committee Members: Chris Dennis, co-convenor; Beth Toolan, co-convenor; Jennifer Kiddie; Susan Kostas; Carol Landau; Bob Saik; Sammi Tulungen, Katharine Beckman.

Acting on the recommendations from the Outreach Planning document from 2022 (and detailed in the 2022 Annual Report), the vestry formally established OPC as a vestry committee and asked the newly constituted OPC to consider organizational rules of the road that might guide decision-making about grants--and to implement procedures for awarding grants, for streamlining communications to grantees and for making regular reports to the vestry on expenditures and outreach matters. The vestry also asked OPC to make grants across the calendar year rather than awarding most grants at the end of the year, a request that OPC was able to meet in its 2023 awards and again in its 2024 awards.

In 2019-21 donations or grants from the annual budget line item (\$5,500 per year) included about ten grants per year at an average of \$583.00 per grant. In these years individual grants ranged from \$250 to \$1,000.

In 2023, the vestry approved both the \$5,500 operating budget line item and a \$14,000 draw from the endowed outreach fund for a total of \$19,500. OPC was, consequently, able to increase grants and awards significantly, making a total of thirteen grant awards, including to both local and international organizations. Continuing that work in calendar year 2024, the vestry approved the \$5,500 operating budget line item and a \$15,000 draw from the endowed outreach fund for a total of \$20,500.

2024 Grant Awards (\$20,500)

- Epiphany Soup Kitchen, to help purchase fresh fruits and vegetables, pay for contracted cook, and cleaning supplies (\$4,000)
- Crossroads-Housing Problem Solving Program, to help prevent imminent homelessness with expenses like security deposits, utility payments, rental assistance, moving costs. (\$1,900 in Q1, and \$500 in Q4)
- City Meal Site, money to help with Tuesday Meals, blankets, gloves (\$1,000)
- Children's Friend, Emergency Crisis Fund for food, formula, diapers, etc (\$1,000)
- Better Lives RI, food and supplies for Community meal site for homeless (\$1,000) and support for their fundraiser in the fall (\$1,000), additional support for hunger insecurity mitigation programs (\$500)
- The Cloak, money for purchase of underwear, socks, razors for men at Harrington Hall, (\$500)
- Planned Parenthood RI, in the wake of the overturn of Roe v Wade, to support women's health, (\$1,000)
- American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ), emergency appeal following closure of Al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza (\$2,000), prepayment for our planned AFEDJ 2025
- Lenten appeal/matching program (\$4,500)
- Open Doors support for The Welcome Home project, providing basic supplies for those restarting after incarceration, (\$600)
- Knight Memorial Entrepreneurship Center (Providence Library), support program mentoring aspiring artists and entrepreneurs starting out (\$1,000)

Looking Ahead to 2025

Our plan for 2025 is to begin the year with a fundraiser/gift matching tied in to our Lenten program around support of AFEDJ. We also continue to work to communicate with the parish about OPC's work and about awarded grants in 2025, through the Thursday E-News and in other ways. OPC feels that its charge includes considering with the parish new ways to think about outreach and philanthropy, and we hope to work with the parish leadership and clergy to consider how best to make progress in this area. Beth will be the lead convener for OPC in 2025, and we will look to recruit a co-convener.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Toolan and Chris Dennis
(2024 Co-conveners for the OPC)

“Our Hearts Are Open” Advent Project (DCYF)

The St. Martin's “Our Hearts Are Open” Advent Project continued to spread holiday cheer by completing the holiday wish lists of 66 children associated with the RI Department of Children, Youth and Families. More than 300 presents were purchased, wrapped and delivered in 3 very full cars, 8 days before Christmas, to DCYF's main office in downtown Providence. Our DCYF contact shared her sincere appreciation that St. Martin's helps the largest number of children during the holiday season. Thanks so much to everyone for their enthusiasm and support.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Ng

Epiphany Soup Kitchen

The Epiphany Soup Kitchen (ESK) is a non-profit organization in Providence, RI that started at its namesake, the now closed South Providence Epiphany Episcopal Church. ESK was later rescued in 1981 by St. Martin's parishioners, Elke Moonan and Gail Peet, and St. Stephen's parishioner, Bruce Lennihan, when it was at risk of closing down due to lack of volunteers. When the Bishop closed and sold the church in 1988, ESK moved to Grace Episcopal Church in downtown Providence. In 2009, we moved to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church where we are currently located.

Our organization feeds a hot meal to people in need every Saturday afternoon. We reopened for in-person dining in September 2022 after being take-out only throughout the pandemic, and we have been open every Saturday since then, including holidays and inclement weather.

2024 has been a year of expansion! ESK has established many partnerships this year. Over the spring 2024 semester, we created a partnership with the Brown University Food Recovery Network (FRN). Every Friday during the school year, students from the FRN drop off fresh produce that was not needed by the cafeterias around campus. Our chef works to incorporate the vegetables into the meal on Saturday. Later in the year, we established a partnership with the United Way of RI, an organization that helps connect people in need with various resources including food and housing. Lastly, we are in the early stages of partnering with the Clínica Esperanza/Hope Clinic and their Vamos Adelante project aimed to vaccinate and educate the underserved. We have long talked about bringing this service to our guests as we know that many of them do not have healthcare.

ESK has also continued to grow its volunteer base as well as its core team. Our Volunteer Coordinator, Elizabeth, worked to train experienced volunteers as “Shift Leaders” who can help direct the other volunteers in the event that the coordinator cannot make it that day. We currently have two amazing Shift Leaders and are actively looking to recruit more.

Longtime board member and St. Stephen's liaison, Bruce Lennihan, passed away on April 9th of this year. He was 80 years old. Volunteer and Shift Leader, Katy Gilchrist, stepped up to join the Board as our St. Stephen's representative. After the closing of East Side Market in October (thus losing our donor source for desserts and bread), Katy has taken on the challenge of finding a new donor.

For now, we are operating with only grant money. All the grants we have received have been written by our Grant Writer, Mary Blake. With funds from the RI Foundation and the Frank B. Hazard grants, we are able to purchase around \$100 worth of food each week, mainly

consisting of salad materials and desserts. Other sources of funding include an annual Episcopal Charities grant, a St. Martin's Outreach and Philanthropy Committee (OPC) grant, the Patricia A. Fuller Trust grant, a Stop & Shop fundraiser, and donations from various individuals. Monetary contributions are one of the main things we need to continue operating, and we are thankful for all who have donated or given grants.

We are also grateful for our Resource Drive Coordinator, Jennifer DePardo, for donating colorful blankets for a blanket drive this fall. The guests were so excited to pick from all the choices!

Jennifer also worked with Katy and the St. Stephen's leadership to organize our donation rack in the hallway. Prior to this major cleaning, a large amount of clothes were piled up there, too disorganized and overwhelming to even begin to tackle. Many of the clothes left there were also not suitable to give to our guests, so St. Stephen's donated the things we did not need. Now that we have a neat and organized system, we decided we would only run specific and targeted drives at different times throughout the year.

April is "volunteer appreciation month" so we decided to thank everyone with our first ever volunteer appreciation party. We held an ice cream social with board games at the end of that month. Those who came had a great time! If the budget allows, we hope to continue and grow this as an annual tradition. It is important to show everyone how much their time is valued by us, as our organization (literally) cannot run without volunteers.

Speaking of volunteers, St. Martin's parishioners make up the largest group of volunteers out of all the schools and churches that participate! We have seen almost 30 individuals from our church come to volunteer with us at least once, and quite a few who come monthly. Additionally, we received about 10 new signups at the Ministry Fair in September. We hope to see these new faces sometime in 2025! St. Martin's week to staff ESK will continue to be every second Saturday of the month. All are encouraged to join fellow parishioners in fellowship over this good work.

Over the year, we have served over 1,500 meals not including seconds, and hosted an average of 29 people per week. Though we saw a slight decrease in the number of guests we were getting towards the end of the year, we are heading into 2025 with a determination to spread the word and make sure everyone knows we are here as a resource for them.

This year, we honored Bruce's legacy by continuing to run the Epiphany Soup Kitchen as he would. The Board is now Elke Moonan, Mary Blake, Elizabeth Blake, Katy Gilchrist, and Karen Ng who is currently on leave.

Respectfully Submitted,
Elizabeth Blake, Epiphany Soup Kitchen Volunteer Coordinator

The Cloak

We continued our year-round ministry of providing clothing, toiletries and household goods to sisters & brothers at:

- Harrington Hall, 40 sheltered men given clothing, underwear, socks and shaving needs.
- Nathan Bishop Middle School students given personal toiletries and also cleaning products for their families
- Camp Street Ministries, clothing given for a working community
- Salvation Army, Pittman Street clothing, bedding and goods to support their community efforts
- Savers, those things not distributed elsewhere are given so nothing is wasted
- Rhode Island SPCA receives bedding, gear and food for sheltered animals as well as for those families who need assistance in adopting animals.

Meg LoPresti and I thank Cloak volunteers who sorted and packed: Bonnie Gorman, Gail Hamel and Sandy Levis; those who delivered our donations, Paul Bergeron, Richard Burling, Kevin Cunningham, David Ely, Jill and Denny Scott.

We thank all at St. Martin's who donate year 'round, Wayland Starbucks for supporting a donation box for winter clothing, and we thank the Wheeler School for including us as recipients of free clothing after their annual Spring sale.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Jane Pagan

Episcopal Charities

Going back to the early 1950s, St. Martin's has been one of the key founding members of Episcopal Charities Fund of Rhode Island. Today Charities raises funds for a broad range of Rhode Island non-profit and Episcopal church related charitable organizations. In addition to traditional annual grants beginning during the COVID Pandemic, Charities launched CHARITIES NOW, which is designed to disburse funds throughout the year to the extent funds are available to organizations addressing shelter and food insecurity issues. For calendar 2024 Charities raised approximately \$15,000 from St. Martin's (approximately 80% for annual grants and 20% for Now) up 13% from \$13,000 raised in 2023.

Respectfully submitted,
Stevens McAleer

Portal Ministries

Hospitality

Hospitality and welcoming parishioners has gone hand in hand since its inception. Our committee is small but mighty and always welcomes new participants.

Our weekly coffee hours are ongoing. We are grateful for all who have donated their time to help make these a success. There are still weeks available so please check out the sign up board in the back of the church and volunteer to help. There is a sheet attached to tell you what is needed. It is an easy and wonderful way to celebrate our church community. And again thanks to all who have donated their time and goodies. It's been greatly appreciated.

In November, we had our annual St. Martin's Day feast celebration. This year it was a brunch to celebrate a visit from the Bishop welcoming new members being confirmed and received. It was again catered by Amos house. To say it was a success is an understatement. It was attended by 140 plus parishioners. It was very well received and enjoyed by all. And, we got to celebrate Mark's tenth anniversary with St. Martin's.

In December, we had our annual Christmas Carol Sing Along. Elisabeth Crawford choreographed the program and our committee, with the help of parishioners, provided cookies and drinks. Again, this was attended by over a hundred people. The Great Hall was filled with music and merriment. Special thank you to Elisabeth Crawford and her team for a very enjoyable program.

In the coming months we will be having a celebration for newcomers to the parish, our annual Easter cupcake celebration and more - and of course our weekly coffee hours.

As the winter moves into spring the Hospitality team looks forward to helping in any way we can. We are always looking for new ideas to celebrate our wonderful community at St. Martin's. Feel free to contact us with any questions or ideas for providing a welcoming, friendly environment for all our parishioners.

Lastly, we would like to thank the members of this committee that include: Pat Whitman, Mary Jane Pagan, Gail Hamel, Rebecca Kidman, Faith Fogle, Susie Macdonald, Murielle Adadevoh; who through their diligence, hard work and commitment have made these celebrations such a success. It has been a joy working with these talented women.

Respectfully Submitted,
Donna Huntley
Catherine Bodner
Co-Chairs of Hospitality Committee

20's/30's Group

During 2024, the 20's/30's at St. Martin's (SMEC) experienced a high level of turnover in membership. A few beloved participants left for graduate school or new career opportunities, while others joined our ranks, both at our own events and in the larger St. Martin's community.

This year we have seen growth in a new and exciting way which brings new promise for the future of young-er adult ministry at SMEC. As Joshua has gradually stepped back from active leadership of the group, Susan, Stephen, and Claire have taken up the charge. While Joshua has continued to host cozy events at home (usually including karaoke), the new leadership has hosted exciting outings to LaSalette and hosted a cocktail hour in the Great Hall. They have also opened our group up to build new relationships with other churches within and beyond the Episcopal Church. We now have somewhat regular overlapping activity with St. Stephen's and the nearby Presbyterian church.

New members continue to find home at St. Martin's after a bit of church shopping, attracted to our theologically traditional and radically welcoming approach to Christian faith. The plan for the next year is to increase our involvement in the community through volunteer work, and we are considering resurrecting some old SMEC programming, such as family movie nights. We are also returning to monthly events.

Respectfully submitted,
Joshua Maria Garcia

Meditation

In our eighth year, we continue to gather all who come to sit in calm abiding with one another, regardless of faith or tradition. We meet Thursday evenings 5:30-6:30 in our now permanent location of the Fireplace Room.

Our former meditation circle leader, Prof. Brad Marston, happily was able to join us for meditation. Joshua Maria Garcia shared leading the circle for several months and then was called to other responsibilities. Fr. Mark Sutherland and Mary Jane Pagan completed the circle leadership for 2024. Kathryn Barr, a regular member, will share leadership in 2025.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Jane Pagan

Gander Writers' Group

We met at 1pm on the first Monday of each month in the Stearns Room. We submitted short pieces of writing – essays, short fiction, memoirs, poems, plays, etc. – to be read and discussed by the group. At present we have nine members, and new members are always welcome to join. New members who joined in 2024: BG Goff, John Marenzana, and Jim Hafner. Contact the Parish Office if interested.

Respectfully submitted,
David Ely

Gander Lunch Group

The Gander men's lunch group meets about every 6 weeks in the Great Hall during the academic year to develop relationships and understanding of important topics that impact our common life. Lunches are catered for \$20 and our conversations range from a wide variety of issues whether religious, social or political. There is no set agenda, but along the way there are many opportunities for service and outreach to people in need. We are happy to provide this important ministry in furthering the mission of Saint Martin's.

Respectfully submitted,
David Ames+

Gander Book Group

Organized in 2019, St. Martin's Gander Book/OPED Reading Group now meets every 6 weeks or so from September through June, taking the summer months off. During the COVID Pandemic we convened via Zoom and resumed meeting in person Spring 2022. Our group meets at a volunteer host's home for a light dinner and this venue provides for a relaxed and comfortable setting to deeply explore novels, biographies, histories, poetry, or other readings which our group mutually decide upon. It has been a great way for Ganders to meet and share ideas and insights into our readings as well as what may be going on with their lives. Our group has grown steadily from a handful of participants to currently between 10-12. We would love to welcome and engage new members.

Respectfully submitted,
Stevens McAleer

Knitting Ministry

During 2024, the Knitting Ministry, now in its eleventh year, continued to meet in person throughout the year, including during the summer months. Our group of dedicated knitters and crocheters produced many beautiful prayer shawls which were then distributed to those in need of comfort. We also gave small blankets to newly christened babies. The prayer shawls and blankets were blessed at the altar during several Sunday services.

This ministry is planning to take on a new project in 2025 with the creation of "Linus blankets" for children with Camp Street Ministries. We will be holding an informative meeting on how to become involved in this project. Also, beginning in September, Natasha welcomed Pat Whitman as her co-chair.

We are deeply grateful to all of our knitters and crocheters who make this ministry possible.

Respectfully submitted,
Natasha Lofgren & Pat Whitman

Women's Spirituality Group

The Women's Spirituality Group is a lay-led gateway ministry of St. Martin's Church which completed its ninth year in 2024. We welcome women of all ages and faiths and those who identify as female. We encourage members to bring friends, and welcome members from outside the parish. Within WSG, women form lasting intergenerational relationships in a warm social atmosphere with spiritual nourishment in an inclusive, cohesive, caring and supportive whole. At each monthly meeting (we do not meet in July or August), after a meet and greet rich with potluck food and drink, we have a circle of introduction, and then member-presented spiritually nourishing programs. All gatherings are free of charge. Come and see!

In winter 2024, we met in person at Susan Allen's house near the church, at the church, or nearby. We enjoyed programs on Spiritual Journaling by writer Virginia Bradley, Raising Children in a Multi-religion Environment by Piya Sarawgi, Lectio Divina in Lent, Thich Nhat Hanh by M.J. Pagan, "The God who Bore You: legacies of Israelite goddess worship" by Joshua Maria Garcia, and Ecological Stations of the Cross by K Casenheiser. After a summer break, we gathered in the fall for programs led by Gail Hamel on Living History, K on Creation Care and Wild Worship in Blackstone Park and along the Seekonk River. November found us bonding over a feastish fireside potluck on Election Night, and later that month watching a powerful biopic on Vogue model turned WWII war photographer, Lee Miller at the Avon Cinema, Thayer Street, and venturing to St. John's Barrington to hear Rev. Dr. Hilary Raining of Hive Christianity (in person!) at the diocesan Learn and Lead. Finally, after many of us joined Linda Griggs' Advent Book Group reading Rachel Mann's *Do Not Be Afraid: the Joy of Waiting in a Time of Fear*, we said goodbye to 2024 with a New Year's Eve Ice Cream party. We have fun, learn, share, and form deep and lasting friendships through faith and community.

Each meeting has included first timers and attendees range in age from 30s to 80s and sometimes 20s to 90s. As leader, I send a recap of each meeting to all women of St. Martin's and members at large so that even those who do not attend can feel a part of the group and learn from the content shared. I also send notices of programs of interest in the wider community to the group which are gratefully received. I actively solicit ideas and recruit presenters for future programs.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Allen

Christian Formation

Kidzone: KidZone Church School continued in 2024 with lessons based on All Creation Waits by Gayle Boss and on the lectionary. In November, the children learned a few Old Testament stories, and then they turned their attention to Advent. The routine established in 2022 continued whereby children move through a variety of activities including coloring, reading, listening, praying, singing, dancing, and creating.

While the in-person KidZone attendance hovers between 3 and 5 students, and we would love to have more children, we are delighted to share lessons with any children who step through the doors. To keep the community aware of the children, Kathryn and Linda+ send occasional emails to the families and volunteers, post on social media, display slides in the Atrium, and report in enews.

We are thankful to the families who prioritize Sunday morning worship and learning, and to those who have assisted in KidZone, including Cathy Bodner, Tim Edgar, Meg LoPresti, Sheila Hoogeboom, Gail Hamel, Pat Whitman, Claire Kokoska, Suzie McDonald, Steven Gadbois, Muriel Adadevoh, and Donna Huntley.

On the second Sunday of Advent, in honor of his feast day, KidZone received a visit from St. Nicholas, who told stories, brought small treats, and then participated in Eucharist with the children. Thanks to David Brookhart for making St. Nicholas' visit possible.

We are excited about 2024, and we are thankful for the kids and adults who make KidZone a special time.

Wednesday Zoom Book Study: 2024 continued our popular Wednesday noon book group led by Linda Griggs+ and Kathryn Barr. The group discussed *The False White Gospel* by Jim Wallis and *Do Not Be Afraid: The Joy of Waiting in a Time of Fear*, by Rachel Mann. Plans are already underway for the next selections, and we look forward to our 2025 Zoom gatherings.

Lent Program: Our Tuesday evening Lenten dinner series, Bearing Witness: A Journey with Holy Land Christians, was led by Mark Sutherland+. This video-based program shared the stories of people living in Palestine and Israel and the remarkable ministries of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem that bring hope and healing in this volatile part of the world. A simple supper catered by Amos House was followed by video clips, readings, and discussion. About 30-40 attended each week.

Act 3: LIFE: Act 3, a series of seminars focused on the last third of a person's life continued in 2024. Led by Kathryn Barr, Linda Griggs+, and Mark Sutherland+, these sessions included the topics of educational travel, planning your funeral, and the importance of having a will and other paperwork, using Zoom, and planned giving. Approximately thirty-five people have attended each seminar. Additionally, an occasional newsletter is sent to the participants of Act 3 with resources and news of interest. During the summer, Kathryn hosted two hands-on sessions for people to work on their "All About Me" binders. These binders include the information needed in case of emergency evacuation, severe illness, memory loss, or death.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathryn Barr
The Rev. Linda Griggs

Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Care Ministry is responsible for two functions: Eucharistic Visitors, who take Communion to people who are not able to attend church; and healing liturgies, which include a monthly Healing Eucharist and the annual Blue Christmas Service.

Our number of Eucharistic Visitors has still not rebounded from pre-COVID days, but we do have a regular need for visits, which have usually been covered by clergy. We would like to increase the number of Visitors in order to offer this ministry more widely. Potential Visitors, after discussion with clergy, would apply for licensing with the Diocese and need to receive Safe Church certification. If you feel called to this ministry, please contact Linda+ or Mark+.

Our Healing Eucharist takes place at 5:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month during the program year. A combination of flyers, word-of-mouth and parish-wide communication, and presence on social media is a valuable factor in steady attendance; we have a number of “regulars”, but each service includes new people, some of whom are not members of the parish, which speaks well for our ability to reach beyond the church walls. The short liturgy, which includes intercessory prayer and laying-on-of-hands and anointing, is a time to bring concerns for the self, loved ones, or the world, and lay those burdens at God’s feet, resting in God’s presence. Attendance has ranged from 6 to 16 people.

An offshoot of the Healing Service is the annual Blue Christmas service on the 21st of December, now in its tenth year. This service, “for the sorrowful in a time of joy” takes place on the shortest day and the longest night of the year; a time when those who struggle during the holiday season may find solace and hope in the fact that, after the darkest night, the light begins to return as Earth turns toward Spring. Blue Christmas is a service of prayer and candle-lighting accompanied by quiet music, this year provided by Tom Barr on piano and the combined voices of the Providence Threshold Singers and the Grace Notes Singers.

Blue Christmas was available both in person (76 people) and on livestream (14 views) again this year, reaching one person as far away as Florida. Again this year I noticed that many of the people present were new to me—another very good sign that we are reaching beyond our walls.

Many thanks to everyone who has assisted with Blue Christmas, Healing Eucharist, and pastoral visiting in the past year.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Linda Griggs

Worship Life

Music

Our music program at St. Martin's continued to thrive in 2024, notwithstanding fewer numbers and ongoing battles with the organ. Sadly, but not unexpectedly, the condition of the organ continued to decline, despite our best efforts. At the instruction of the Rector and the Senior Warden, we launched a task force to seek solutions, guided by John Brooks, our organist, with the assistance of Tom Barr, David Ames, and Vestry representative Brian Robert. In addition to, and in consultation with, our organ service provider, Foley Baker, three other vendors were identified and contacted regarding proposals for repair, rebuild, and/or replacement. The process is ongoing as of the writing of this report.

We have continued to make vocal music the center and foundation of our musical worship. Though the number of volunteer singers has decreased, especially since the pandemic (due to the demands of modern life, people finding expressive outlets outside the church, changes in music education in recent decades, etc., etc.), we have continued to develop and refine our vocal resources, thanks to the commitment of those volunteers that remain, in collaboration with our increasingly excellent staff singers, the latter collectively known as the St. Martin Chapel Consort.

Highlights of our 2024 musical program include a wonderful professional instrumental quartet for Good Friday, along with our well-received musical rendition of the Passion According to St. John; a Celebration of the Feast of St. Martin that coincided with the Bishop's Visit, featuring oboists Cheryl Bishkoff; a new level of excellence for our annual Interfaith Thanksgiving service in collaboration with musicians from Temple Beth-El; our traditional Christmas Eve services with oboe; and Christmas Lessons & Carols to close the year.

Overall, we continue to innovate—in our repertoire, our use of technology, how we cope with the unexpected, and meeting the needs of the St. Martin's community in worship.

Respectfully submitted,
Gabe Alfieri, Director of Music

Altar Guild

The role of the Altar Guild is to assist the clergy in preparation for the Holy Eucharist, which is to prepare the altar and sanctuary for the liturgy before and after each service, making the worship life of the parish run smoothly. We care for the vessels, linens, and other sacred items used in the worship—a vital and rewarding worship ministry at St. Martin's.

After Mary Worrell stepped aside from the flower guild, the AG was responsible for preparing the weekly fresh flower arrangements, preparing the church for Easter, and greening the church at Christmas. Thank you, Mary, for your long-standing service to St. Martin's. Donna Huntley, Mandy Whiteleather, Bernadine Cunnigen, Carol Morton, Margaret Noel, Ann & Frank Pellegrino, Arlene Walker, and I currently serve the Altar Guild. Thank you To K Casenhiser and Elizabeth Mueller, AG members Bernadine Cunnigen, Mandy Whiteleather, and Frank Pellegrino for assisting me in preparing the Sanctuary and the Nave for Easter and Christmas. Your support is appreciated.

Preserving and maintaining our sacred vessels are essential for St. Martin's liturgical worship. We had four vessels regilded in 2024: the silver Chalice and three Intinction cups. St. Martin's purchased a coordinated sanctuary set of Lenten Array in the traditional colors used during Lent. Thank you to Jane Taylor for contributing towards the cost.

Becoming an Altar Guild member is a small commitment– approximately 45 minutes once a month. We welcome new members to participate in this meaningful ministry. Thank you to all the members of the Altar Guild. Your service is very much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Bergeron, Sacristan

Tech Team

This year the Tech Team, which manages the YouTube livestream of our services, was delighted to add a few new faces at the tech desk. Nate Talbutt, K Casenhiser, and Jim Hafner trained diligently to continue the incredible work of their predecessors on the team. This coming year, as Joshua is planning their next steps, Nate will be taking the lead. His artistic sensibility and native technological knowhow were apparent from the start, and everyone is breathing a sigh of relief that we have someone ready to step up into this role.

This year Joshua pitched a new brand kit to the St. Martin's staff, which was accepted with edits. This included a new logo for St. Martin's, which has been gradually introduced, first on the livestream, and then elsewhere in the church building. You can see it on the cover of this report, and it will gradually make its way onto bulletins, booklets, and maybe even new "church merch."

The impetus for this change comes from a small expansion to the role Joshua and Tech Team play in the management of St. Martin's online assets, especially YouTube and the Website. We're working toward simplifying the site after a request from the Vestry to improve our ease of use. This ongoing project opened up the opportunity not only to streamline but also to unify our branding, both online and in person.

In the coming year, the Tech Team, Joshua, and Kathryn Barr (in charge of Communications for the parish) are looking to improve even more by making conservative but powerful improvements to our tech equipment and content management systems.

Respectfully submitted,
Joshua Maria Garcia

Facilities and Finance

Building and Grounds

The daily use of the St. Martin's facility has been a major driver of needed updates and upgrades to our buildings. The third floor space is used everyday by AA groups and others. The Great Hall hosts a 100-person meeting on Friday night. It is also in regular use for other meetings and gatherings of 40 to 100 people.

The major project for the year was the refurbishment of the kitchen. This included a new commercial stove, new and expanded cabinetry and a complete refresh with a new paint job. New heating was added at the end of the year. This activity was driven by the need to provide a professional working environment for increased use (now 5-days per week) of the kitchen. More than 600 meals for the homeless are prepared daily.

In the Spring we had the slate roof over the narthex entry repaired and the narthex entry (inside) repaired, replastered and painted. We updated the heat/air-conditioning in the Washburn room by installing efficient heat-pump units. The Washburn room hosts a daily pre-school and our Sunday nursery. We refinished the Great Hall floor. This room is also in almost daily use for meetings, as a Winter playroom for the children, for Summer church services and meetings year 'round. As a result it takes a beating and will need to be addressed more often than we have in the past.

As daily use has increased, so has the need for greater access control and security. Security cameras were added to the third floor. We have initiated proposals for updated security and access control systems to control entry to and to secure our facilities during hours when the office is not in use. This includes a handicapped access control system for the Atrium door, an improved door monitoring and entry system, and potentially electronic door security locks throughout the facility.

The St. Martin's Tool Team had a busy, but joyful day painting the third floor hallway and entry. The roofing over the Atrium, the north side of the church, and the Washburn room is 30-years old. We are experiencing increasing leakage. We will address the need for repair/replacement of this roofing in 2025.

The Property Committed updated the St. Martin's 5-year plan (Maintenance, Repairs, Replacements, Updates). This is a 2-page "living" document that is regularly updated. David Brookhart is available to discuss it with you if you would like to know more about it. The needs of a 100+ year-old church are constant. Installed systems (heating, electrical, etc.) require constant repairs and replacement. Walls, windows and floor wear out. How we use and share the blessings of our facilities changes - and we respond to serve our greater community.

Thank you for your support and prayers.

Respectfully submitted,
David Brookhart, Brian Robert, Peter Lofgren

2025 Projects Underway (Buildings and Grounds cont.)

N.B. All dollar amounts are estimates.

Repair/reroof area south of the office east of the Atrium Skylight: \$130,000

Facility Security and Accessibility

- Accessible Access, upgraded intercom and door control: \$19,000
- Limiting and controlling access to our campus: \$40,500
- Electronically controlled locks and access panels

Organ Repair and Refurbishment

- Study Team in place to decide: Tune, Repair, Restore, or Replace
- Info from Foley Baker (our vendor): \$80,000 to restore the organ to minimally acceptable working order
- Estimates for the restoration of the existing organ rise to seven figures
- Replacement of the organ: \$2,000,000-3,000,000
- Should we consider a digital replacement? \$100,000-250,000

West Wall Interior repairs - TBD

Great Hall flooring refinishing and/or replacement - TBD

Air Conditioning

- Third floor office spaces: \$20,000
- Classrooms: \$24,000

Outdoor Signage – TBD (negligible)

- St. Martin's sign
- Street end directional signs
- Schedule of services sign(s)

Needing consideration sooner rather than later:

- Exterior windows and woodwork of Parish House
- Toilets, urinals, plumbing, and exhaust in basement restrooms
- Floor resurfacing and painting of Washburn Room

Finance

Financially speaking, 2024 was as stress-free as I have experienced in, lo, more than twenty years as head of the Finance Committee at St. Martin's Church. (Coming on the heels of an outstanding 2023, that's quite a claim!)

The good news starts with the revenue side of the ledger. Here, St. Martin's is heavily dependent on the generosity of our parishioners via pledges, plate donations on Sundays, and "miscellaneous gifts," which are gifts not included in the annual "estimation of giving." We collected slightly more (4%) than we had budgeted in the Pledges category. (I can remember years ago when we routinely took in ten or twenty thousand dollars *less* than had been pledged.) Plate donations exceeded expectations by a wide margin (190%). Miscellaneous

Gifts came in remarkably close (98%) to our estimates. And Holiday Gifts beat estimates by a decent margin.

Other increasingly important sources of revenue include Building Use Fees, which we collect when a wedding takes place in our church, or OpenDoors or small local businesses use our kitchen to cook; the Thrift Shop; and the annual estate sale. All these categories exceeded expectations in 2024. We continue to look for opportunities to enhance our revenue and compensate for the difficulty in recruiting volunteers, a problem that dogs nearly all our activities at St. Martin's Church.

On the disbursements side our penny-pinching staff and clergy worked their magic again in 2024 as expenses came in about as planned. The categories "Parish Life/Hospitality" and "Landscaping" were the exceptions, beating estimates by double digits. But I like to think, "How bad can it be that St. Martin's parishioners enjoy a party and like the outside of the church to look good?"

The fact that the budget nearly balanced, thanks to good revenue and controlled spending, means we did not have to tap our endowment to fund operations to the extent we thought we would in 2024. That, in turn, means funds not needed for operations could remain in the endowment and grow along with it. And the endowment had a good year last year, returning more than 18% or more than \$540,000. Those of you who have known me for a while at St. Martin's know that I have a personal crusade under way to grow our endowment as much as possible. That is because the whole concept of how to finance a church is changing away from the traditional pledge-and-plate model to...who knows? However things work out, St. Martin's is going to need substantial savings, a substantial endowment, to weather storms that are sure to come.

Thanks for helping with this task via your contributions to our church, contributions of time and talent, as well as treasure. We are making progress at making God's Kingdom a reality, one fiscal year at a time.

Respectfully submitted,
Fla Lewis, Finance Committee Chair

Memorial and Endowment Report

Memorial Funds

During the year funds were received in memory of Althea Crowley. The funds were added to the General Memorial Fund as no special allocations were requested. Monies were also received to honor Lois and Pres Atwood; the monies were used to defray the costs of new vestments for clergy, choir and Eucharistic Ministers. The donor was advised of this use.

Monies were used from the Doeblor Doherty Fund to pay for special musicians at Easter and Christmas. Organ tuning/repair and purchasing a memorial garden plaque were also paid for from their respective funds.

Endowment Funds

In response to a request from the Planned Giving Committee in 2018 for additions to the endowment, a few parishioners are donating on a regular basis; weekly or quarterly. These additions in 2024 totaled \$365.

Just under \$39,000 was transferred out of the Endowment to supplement the operating budget. The Outreach report details the monies taken from that fund over the year for grants to our community.

In March 2015, the Endowed Pledge Fund (\$45,947) was transferred to the Rhode Island Foundation. The Foundation pays a dividend of 4½ percent of the balance over the preceding 16 quarters. A \$2,401 grant was issued in December. Annual earnings figures won't be available until next month.

Line of Credit

The Parish has no outstanding debt.

Respectfully submitted,
Melinda DelCioppio

The Thrifty Goose

The Thrifty Goose enjoyed another solid year of growth and highly positive customer feedback. The Goose was bolstered by generous donations from both the St. Martin's community and the broader Providence area. Our customer base expanded through word-of-mouth, positive online reviews, effective signage on Butler and Wayland Avenues, and enhanced visibility on Google.

Volunteer Engagement

In late 2024, we expanded a recruitment campaign with focus on volunteers interested in digital marketing, social media post-writing, merchandising, online marketing – to name a few specializations.

We welcomed new volunteers in the fourth quarter: Eve Pietkiewicz, Sylvia (Lexi) Rolloff, and AJ Tanksley. Our longstanding volunteer veterans — Jennifer Kiddie, Heather Tingle, Ellen Patterson, Kevin Supple, Bridgette Hubbard, and Meg LoPresti — continued to provide unwavering support.

Marketing and Outreach

The Goose is thankful to Kathryn Barr for her marketing support, guidance and communication expertise to broadcast the store's schedule, special events, and Newsletter inserts. Photography contributions from Jennifer Kiddie and David Brookhart enriched our social media presence. Amy Fuller and Brigit Thompson (New Zealand) played key roles in maintaining our online visibility and SEO search results.

Operations

Since joining in September 2024, The Goose's new manager, John Marenzana fine-tuned processes, procedures, and led the charge to accelerate the donation flow from arrival, sorting, pricing, and placement on the retail floor. John also introduced a financial management process.

Based on his long career in the hospitality and service industry, John guided the team to focus on interaction with customers as "guests." By introducing his expertise in Concierge-Level interaction and support, The Goose strives to emulate the Guest Loyalty achieved by The Four Seasons and Ritz Carlton hotels.

St. Martin's Sexton team, led by David Brookhart and David Ely were essential in keeping The Goose "ship-shape."

Financial Performance

During Q4, The Goose concluded the year with an approximate 40% increase in gross revenue, significantly contributing to St. Martin's and its missions. This performance positions The Thrifty Goose favorably among Providence's non-profit thrift stores. In the competitive landscape of Providence thrift stores, The Thrifty Goose stands out for its community engagement and revenue growth. While specific financial data for other local thrift stores is limited, our revenue increase in Q4, 2024 underscores a strong performance. Notably, only 13.2% of thrift stores in Rhode Island are non-profit

organizations, making our achievements particularly significant in the non-profit sector. (Source: Capital One Shopping) We extend our heartfelt thanks to all volunteers, donors, and customers for their unwavering support throughout the year. A special 'shout-out' to Susan Esposito and Sheila Hoogeboom for their administrative and strategic guidance.

Respectfully submitted,
John Marenzana

Estate Sale

St. Martin's Annual Estate Sale was once again a big success! The quality of the inventory was impressive, and we are grateful to all who donated and to all who volunteered. This year, we contracted "Sold Everything Specialty Sales" company to help us run the sale. We were open on Friday in addition to our usual Saturday and Sunday (October 25, 26, and 27). This proved to be very productive, and after paying all expenses including for the contracted services, we netted \$16,085 up almost \$4,000 from last year.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Esposito

Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden is a lovely and sacred place where the ashes of loved ones have been buried. If you would like a quiet sanctuary for rest and contemplation, the Memorial Garden is an excellent space for you to come and sit awhile. The children from the daycare walk through the garden weather permitting to access their playground, and it is a pleasure to watch them appreciate the garden's beauty. Every year there is a spring clean-up, and we could use some assistance from the parish with raking, bagging leaves, and sweeping. From May to September volunteers weed, prune, and sweep the garden to keep the plantings and sacred space healthy and well-maintained. Please come and sit awhile!

Respectfully submitted,
Meg LoPresti

Vestry Nominations

Officers

Senior Warden: Sheila Hoogeboom

Junior Warden: Brian Robert

Treasurer: Steve McAleer

Clerk: Tony Cottone

Class of 2026

Claire Kokoska

Susan Kostas

David Whitman

Class of 2027

Donna Huntley

Richard Gruber

Hugh Gorman

Class of 2028

Connie Hildesley

Elizabeth Welshman

Sarah Walker

Delegates to the Diocesan Convention

Meg Lopresti

Susan MacDonald

Respectfully submitted,

The Nominating Committee

Vestry Bios

Hugh Gorman: I have been attending St. Martin's with my partner, Bonnie, for about three years. We chose St. Martin's as our church home because of the deeply insightful preaching, the warm people we have met, and the community's genuine inclusiveness. I am a retired professor of history and policy who returned to Providence after forty-five years of various endeavors (and as a member of Episcopal churches) in Pittsburgh, Chicago, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. I look forward to helping St. Martin's assist those in need and provide a home to those seeking to deepen their spiritual journeys.

Stevens McAleer: Soon after moving to and retiring in Providence in late 2016, Steve was drawn to St. Martin's. Since 2019 he has been St. Martin's liaison for the Episcopal Charities Fund of R.I. annual fund-raising campaign. He also very much enjoys the Gander Men's Group lunch and book reading groups. Steve spent most of his career in capital markets/fund raising and was primarily based in the NY Metropolitan Area. He and his wife Sheila have three grown sons who live in Japan, China, and in the DC Area. They love the outdoors and especially hiking, walking, sailing, skiing, and gardening.

Sarah Walker: Sarah Walker has been a member of the St. Martin's community since 2020, when she and her husband, Len, relocated to Seekonk, MA. Prior to joining St. Martin's, they were active members of St. Thomas's Church in Taunton, MA. Professionally, Sarah serves as the Human Resources Director for the Dean of the Faculty Office at Brown University. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from Providence College. Sarah has a strong commitment to service and leadership, having held various volunteer leadership roles, including Cheer Director for Pop Warner, Chair of the Newcomers' Committee, and organizer for children's fair booths. Currently, she serves as the treasurer of her homeowners' association. Outside of work, Sarah enjoys traveling, gardening, sewing, spending time at the Vineyard, and cherishing moments with her grandchildren and grand puppy.

Elizabeth Welshman: Elizabeth started attending St. Martin's in 1999. Born and raised in the Catholic Church, Elizabeth was received into the Episcopal Church in November 2000. Elizabeth has been involved in many ministries and activities at St. Martin's, most notably serving on the Vestry as Junior and then Senior Warden following the retirement of the Rev. Clare Fischer-Davies in 2013, the hiring of the Rev. William Locke as Interim, and the eventual installation of the Rev. Mark Sutherland in 2014. Elizabeth is part of the leadership team at Merrill's investment center in Lincoln, RI. She is the mother of two grown daughters, Maura and Erin, both of whom attended St. Martin's church school and served as acolytes, with Erin also part of St. Martin's Tech Team. Elizabeth lives in Barrington, RI, with her spouse Dana, a lifelong member of St. Martin's, and her two cats, Cheeto and Freya.