

Senior Warden's Report

Annual Meeting: January 13, 2013

Report prepared by Jim Kenney
Senior Warden

2012 was our first full year of under the leadership of Ascension's third rector, Sherrill Page. It was also the year that we mourned the passing of our first rector, Chuck Daugherty, who had continued to worship with us. Chuck was for many years the face of the parish. He built a church made up of both cradle Episcopalians and newcomers from other faith traditions attracted to Ascension by a sense of family and social mission. That was Ascension then and it remains Ascension today.

There have, of course, been changes over the years. We, along with other "mainline" denominations, have come to realize that the post World War II model of "stand alone" parishes with full-time priests and totally independent social mission programs will be harder to maintain in a society where church membership and attendance is falling off. The need to share resources with other churches and people of faith has grown and will continue to grow. Ascension has recognized that need and has joined with others, including but not limited to our sister Episcopal parishes, in the HOPE ministry, a summer Vacation Bible School, the WARM program and the Winter Coat Drive to name just a few collaborative programs in which we are involved.

It seems sometimes that our many in reach and outreach ministries just happen, but that of course, is not true. They depend on the dedication and talents of many people. In addition to Sherrill, Deb, and Diane, there are many parishioners whose time, talent, and treasure are essential to these efforts.

The day-to-day operations of keeping the lights on and paying the bills involves the work of our treasurer, Donna Miles, our Finance Committee led by Paul Fletcher, and by a Vestry dedicated to the work of the parish.

Our worship program, led by Sherrill, is enhanced by our music program that for 39 years has been directed by Diane and supported by our choir members, our bell choir and other talented musicians. Our lectors and lay readers add their voice to our services.

Important to our future, and an essential aspect of our ministry, is our Sunday School, which has been growing. Sarah Chen and Eve Thompson, with the help of others have continued a successful program with the Godly Play curriculum. Recently our older children have been introduced into the program as helpers with great success.

With the help of the AMEN group and the ECW and the watchful eyes of George Merchant, we have been able to maintain our Church building and have made some modification to our heating system in an effort to save money. Our grounds have been maintained by the ongoing ministry of Joe Gough. But, as you have heard, we are facing some challenges including new windows and repair of the stained glass window, both of which require some early attention. Within a few years, we will need to address the roof.

Speaking for the current Vestry, we are appreciative of all that our Church family does to make Ascension a special place to worship and work toward building the Kingdom of God. We are taught that the mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. The Church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its members. At Ascension, we have been blessed with members who, with their gifts of time, talent and treasure, have taken on this work of reconciliation in the world by taking their place in the life, worship, and governance of this parish. Much has been done, and yet there remains much to do. Speaking for myself, and I hope for many of us, I know no place better and no group better to do it with than the people who call Ascension their home church.