

## **St Thomas of Amenia**

### **ANNUAL MEETING January 29, 2023 @11:17**

**Present:** AJ Stack, Anne Vance, Oresta Szeparowycz, Eileen Logiudice, Jeff Bacon, Emily McElwreath, Ruth Adams, Lynn Nesbit, Ann Dean, Jim Wright, Bethany Sheffer, Brian Distelberg, Coco de Marneffe, Samantha Lucas, Robert Cole, Nancy Causey, Dan Rayhill, Randy Conti, Peter Doebele, Thomas Bucelwicz, Pam Jarvis, David Christiansen, Danny Hutnick

#### **Vote to appoint clerk:**

- Approved by show of hands: Jeff Bacon

**Homily: AJ**

**Prayer – AJ**

**Quorum**

**Announcement of retirement of Anne Vance and Jim Wright from the vestry**

#### **Vote for treasurer and co-warden**

- Brian Distelberg (co-warden)
- Christine Clare (treasurer)
- Call for self-nomination from floor: none
- Vote by ballot (22) – unanimous approval

#### **Minutes from last annual meeting (2022):**

- Motion to accept: moved by Anne Vance, second by Jim Wright
- Approved by show of hands

**Presentation of Danny Hutnick and Coco de Marneffe as new church staff**

#### **Financial Report - Christine Clare**

- See below
- Vote on receiving the budget - MVP

It is my pleasure to once again deliver good news about our present financial health, and the outlook for the future.

## **St. Thomas**

Total revenue received for operating expenses in 2022 showed an increase of 5.5% over the amount we received the previous year. Two factors contributed to this positive change: earned income from our investments was up 2.5%, and the total pledges received increased by 3%. The expenses in 2022 were less than had been anticipated, and a few hundred dollars more than they were in 2021.

We made a decision to incur the cost of hiring an administrative assistant -- excellent decision. Tim Hunter has been a great addition to the staff relieving the leadership of many of the day-to-day tasks. And even with this additional expense we ended the year with a \$10,500 surplus. I say well done, St. Thomas community, well done!

AJ, Samantha Lucas, Jeff Bacon, Pam Jarvis, and I are the members of the newly formed Finance Committee. Our first order of business was to create guidelines for approving emergency expenses, extraordinary expenses, and non-budgeted items. Those will be presented to the Vestry at their next meeting for discussion and approval. Going forward, the discussions will include developing the structure of an endowment (see below) and wrestling with bigger questions, such as "In 10 years, who will be pledging?" and "How do we ensure the financial sustainability of our ministry?"

Our beloved parishioner, Jean Krulis, who graced us with her presence for many years, named us as a beneficiary of her estate. We received a very generous bequest in the amount of \$614,000, and the plan is to fund an endowment. The Finance Committee will make recommendations to the Vestry in the near future for the structure of that endowment and how to distribute the earned income.

## **Food Pantry**

The "shout from the rooftop" news in the Food Pantry was the substantial increase in the donations received for the annual appeal. Thanks to the generosity of our donors and Samantha's hard work and dedication to this project, the final number for 2022 was \$81,699! This is approximately 2.5 times the 2021 total. Additionally, we received a

steady flow of revenue from several sources: \$32,466 from Gifts, \$1,470 from the Sharon Crafts Fair, \$16,100 from the Clothing Sale, and \$50,115 from Grants. The 2022 fiscal year ended with a deficit of \$15,500, which was much lower than we had planned for.

A decision was made to assume a significant salary increase by hiring a full-time program manager for the pantry -- another excellent decision. Danny Hutnick has been a wonderful addition to the staff, providing support for the clergy and lay leaders and direction for the volunteers.

### **Giving Garden**

In 2022, the Giving Garden received grants from the Millbrook Garden Club in the amount of \$3,500, and the Community Foundation of Hudson Valley for \$16,500. These generous gifts were used for general operations, including the master gardener's salary and supplies that are needed to tend and maintain the garden, and they also helped to pay for the new drainage systems in the Giving Garden and the Jean Krulis Teaching Garden (JKTG).

Because Grants are more available for the Food Pantry, we have included the Giving Garden budgeted income and expenses with the Food Pantry 2023 Budget. The Garden checking account has been closed and the funds transferred to the Food Pantry account.

The cash flow in St. Thomas, the Food Pantry and the Giving Garden bank accounts is excellent. And as we did in 2021, a portion of the surplus funds were transferred to the Money Market account.

It is an honor to serve as Treasurer, and to work with AJ and the dedicated members of our Vestry.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Clare

### **Priest: AJ Stack**

2022 Annual report (to be inserted)

Acclamation of Jim Wright and Anne Vance's work over the many years by the congregation.

### **Co-Warden: Samantha Lucas**

2022 Annual Report Co-Warden

**February** - Completed Food Safety Training from the Regional for Food pantry and food bank ordering to be back up if needed. Was away in Portugal for February. Started to plan for Pantry Manager and Admin search with AJ.

**March** - Started to migrate over to Plentiful for neighbor Management for Comida de Vida/ Food of Life. Interview process for New Pantry Manager and Admin was completed. We had over 20 applicants for the pantry job and were able to find a great new manager. Tim Hunter was hired by the search committee with the approval from the Vestry.

**April** - [Danny Hutnick](#) was hired by the search committee with the approval from the Vestry.

**May** - Started to turn over most of the website management to Tim Hunter. Planning and training occurred. Tim has been an invaluable addition to the St. Thomas team. The Vestry hosted The Right Rev. Bishop Glasspool, many of the Dioscean priests and AJ's mentor for his long postponed Installation to St. Thomas. We also included the garden blessing with this great event and had a lovely pot-luck and picnic after the celebration. The weather was amazing and turn-out was even better. What a lovely day was had by all.

**June** - Celebrated Denis and his work with the pantry. [Danny Hutnick](#) took over operations of the pantry fully.

**July** - Baseball, Baseball, Baseball ;-)

**August** - Scheduling and management of Pantry Volunteers was turned over to our very competent Pantry Manager, [Danny Hutnick](#).

**September** - Started to work on the 2023 Annual appeal. Decided to nix the feed a family program as it took an inordinate amount of work and with no results. Did further updates on database.

**October**- We got the Annual appeal out early. Turns out getting everything to Stacey Moore at More and Moore, Our printer in Millerton as early as possible really makes a difference. We will make sure in 2023 that the Annual Appeal will again go out early again. We have also decided that we will continue to pay for first class mail for the annual appeal. With the method we were using in the past, paying a company to process the annual appeal, it just took too long. Not only did it take weeks for the company to put together the mailing, there was also a lag time of almost 3 weeks at the post office. So even if we had the entire mailing printed and ready to go by mid October the mailing wouldn't get to our audience for at least 6 weeks. In terms of cost, the average cost of a fundraiser in Not For Profits is 15% the income from that fundraiser. Our total cost percentage was less than 4%. So our expenditure is well below industry standard. Our ability to get it out fast really had a huge impact on our amount raised, See December.

I also planned and implemented the Halloween Pantry candy give away and 'costume party'. What a blast!

**November** - Attended with AJ, Dioscesan Convention in Tarrytown, NY. It was a blast and so inspiring to see the amazing priests and youth we have coming up in our diocese. Money started to come in for Annual Appeal.

**December** - I am very proud to have been a part of the Annual appeal. The budgeted goal for the annual appeal was \$30,000. The goal in my mind was \$50,000.00 for the fall appeal. In the end we surpassed \$70,000.00, The most, by far we have ever raised. Many of the people who gave gifts in 2021 converted and gave again to the annual appeal. We are still not fully funded for 2023 Pantry but we are close. We also have some plans to increase our fundraising efforts by adding another fund raising event in the spring or summer 2023. More details to come later.

I am also excited to continue work with the database management. We believe we are on the right track now and will have the database fully streamlined with the google mailing list by mid year. It is still a work in progress. I also created a new grant tracker spreadsheet, to help us manage the many balls that need juggling at any one time at St. Thomas, which will also be streamlined into the new database system.

Thanks to Donna Christensen we introduced a new ornament exchange where a parishioner brought a new or hand made christmas ornament and then you could take a new ornament home. We had a few participants. Anne Vance made probably the best ornament with paper. I hope next year we will have more participants. It was a fun thing to do at Christmas. I also made handmade ornaments for all of the attendants to St. Thomas Christmas eve services. I think most people liked them. I hope to continue to build on this tradition. I also distributed some of these ornaments to the Christmas volunteer crew of volunteers. This is the second year I have made ornaments for everyone. I hope to continue this tradition but next year do it earlier and get a bunch of people together and have an ornament party to make the ornaments together. In turn we can distribute on Christmas Eve and to all of the Pantry volunteers as well.

Respectfully Submitted,

Samantha F. Lucas

**Co-Warden: Jim Wright**

## **2022 Annual Report- facilities**

**January** - Giving Garden has a standing water problem. 2 contractors weighed in: either install a French drain or build up the pathways with gravel. Charlie Paley advised that a drain is the better way to reduce the standing water. Allyndale Landscaping was hired to install the drainage system.

**February** - The Vestry voted to increase the maintenance schedule for the Harvest House's generator from once to twice a year.

Danny Percefull volunteers to lead the effort to design and build the Jean Krulis Teaching Garden.

**April** - Jean Krulis Teaching Garden layout created and includes three community beds. Bids are out to Gardener's Supply, Herrington's, HG Page, Tractor Supply for irrigation, fencing and raised bed materials.

**May** - The area for the Krulis Garden is cleared - \$3115 (Allyndale), and a water line installed to it - \$916.66.

Corners and connectors for the raised beds (from Gardener's Supply) are delivered - \$1865.64

Herrington's is donating all the lumber for the raised beds.

Deer fence will be erected before the beds are installed. Herrington's is donating the fence posts.

Giving Garden: Drain installation by Allyndale is finished - \$6,885. Woven ground cover has been ordered for the aisles - Rain-Flo \$391.36. Many cold water tolerant plants are already planted.

Spring Planting Day is 5.21.

\$16,500, entire requested grant, received from Community foundations of the Hudson valley.

The Leedsville Rd sign was repaired and installed.

**June - Giving Garden:** We've experienced raccoon and vole invasions. A critter cam will be installed to aid in identifying the culprits.

Over 100 lbs of salad greens have already been harvested

The Church: Three bids for the replacement of the church doors have been submitted and attached to our application for a grant from the Fund for Repair & Restoration Committee of the Diocese.

**July - Giving Garden:** Critter cam has been installed and seems to be working (voles, raccoons, birds, groundhogs). Salad greens and peas are done. Warm weather veggies are next. Jeronimo Morales has repaired gaps in the fence and openings into the shed to prevent critter invasions.

We have hired a gardener, Angel Florentino, to work for four hours once a week on the entire campus.

**August - JKTG** beds are almost completely set up. Q Farms is donating compost for the beds, beyond their donations of chickens and eggs to the FP.

FP: After much trouble, AJ found a new air conditioner unit for the CoolBot.

Jeronimo Morales installed the JKTG deer fence and finished the installation of the new ac unit in the CoolBot. He patched the parish house roof.

**September - JKTG:** Beds are filled with Q Farms' compost. Many volunteers - including FP guests - worked together to get the job done.

**November - JKTG:** The survey results from food pantry guests as to what they would like to see happen in the garden will be analyzed by Coco, shared w/the Vestry and Danny Percefull. The information will help us create a plan for a program.

Giving Garden: Is put to bed by a terrific turn out of volunteers.

The Parish House roof was patched, insulation for the CoolBot air conditioner installed and Tim bush hogged the area between the two gardens.

Proposal from Doyle Security to update fire alarms in Parish House and Church: \$1400 was approved to make it operational.

**December** - Gardener/Fellow Coco introduced a draft of the mission statement for the JKTG.

The Church: The organ was damaged by mice. It was repaired, but it is not clear how long it will continue to work.

Roof: Some shingles are loose. 4 bids are received for both parish house and church roof replacement. We will contact the Diocesan Property Management office to seek support for these repairs.

Thank you lunch at Le Gamin for Marsha, Diana, Edna and Nancy.

We placed an ad for Blue Christmas, Lessons and Carols, Christmas Eve and Day in the Millerton News and Lakeville Journal. It appears to have drawn new people to the Christmas Eve service.

## **Pantry Manager: Danny Hutnick**

### **Comida de Vida/Food of Life**

Since beginning my work with CDV in May 2022, I have had the pleasure of working alongside our volunteers and getting to know our neighbors. Building onto the work of the previous Pantry Manager, we spent the remainder of 2022 developing several new systems to better meet the diverse needs of our neighbors.

- We have bilingual staff and volunteers, and present our food options in English and Spanish.
- We added multiple new volunteer roles.
- We rearranged the inside of the Harvest House to maximize space and organization.
- We established sustainable partnerships with The Millbrook School, Troutbeck, Animal Farm, Northeast Community Center, Q Farms, Tent, and Sweet Williams Bakery.

- We are working on sustainable solutions to reduce and eliminate seasonal food waste by pickling, saucing, and canning produce in licensed commercial kitchens.
- We are planting a larger variety of vegetables and herbs in our Giving Garden, and providing education about growing and cooking new vegetables.
- We were featured for our work with food security on Radio Rotary with Sarah O'Connell and Jonah Triebwasser, NPR's Robinhood Radio with Marshall Miles, The Millerton News, and Millbrook Magazine Spring/Summer 2023.
- We fed 4,975 children, 10,928 Adults, 1,220 Seniors, and 5,325 Families for a grand total of 18,179 people served in 2022.

Overall, we had an incredible year of service and growth. We have more volunteers, neighbors, and community partners connecting with us each week. We are excited to continue our mission with greater capacity in 2023. We continue to add volunteers and new roles to our bustling weekly and monthly calendar. If anyone is interested in volunteering at Comida de Vida/Food of Line as an individual or work group, please contact Danny Hutnick via email [dhutnick@stthomasamenia.com](mailto:dhutnick@stthomasamenia.com) or register online at on the St. Thomas Amenia website at <https://stthomasamenia.com/volunteer-sign-up/>

## **Giving Garden: Marsha Kaufman**

It is my great pleasure to be the garden coordinator for the Giving Garden. There is no better feeling than knowing that you have made the world a better place by your actions.

2022 was a challenging year, with lots of pests (voles, mice, chipmunks, and squirrels) plus a cold spring followed by a drought that stretched from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The good news is with baiting traps (I hate to kill anything but had to) and attention to the electric charge at the top of the fence, the problems abated. Whenever I had issues with the irrigation, Charlie Miller was there to help. I could not do this job well without the help of my very faithful volunteers, Diana, Edna and Nancy with summer help from Christy and Alex.

Despite all these challenges, we were still able to grow approximately 3,500 pounds of vegetables in 2022. Danny Hutnick and I will meet over seed catalogs to plan the garden for the coming year. He is very interested in providing colorful vegetables which have nutrition density. We will have a meeting of the minds over this!

I am so proud to be a part of your mission and look forward to the coming year!

## **Jean Krulis Teaching Garden:**

## **Danny Percefull & Coco de Marneffe**



2022 was an exciting year for the Jean Krulis Garden. We started the year with a well-attended and very productive planning committee meeting that led to the creation of a plan to build the garden. We received a very generous donation of all of the lumber we needed to build the deer fence and the raised beds from Herrington's in Millerton. With the help of our new and growing group of volunteers, we built the raised beds throughout August. Q Farms very graciously donated close to 30 yards of compost – enough to fill all of the beds in the garden, which we did with amazing efficiency in late September. We developed a survey in October to find out what our neighbors wanted from this community space and what specific foods they would like grown as well as what previous experience they had had with gardening. We collected data over the course of three pantry distributions in October and November. This data has been compiled into graphs to be used for internal reference and grant application support. We have also begun working on a mission statement and mission priorities. We are looking forward to our first growing season this year and to exploring new ways of engaging with our neighbors and community partners through the shared experience of gardening.

Special thanks to Jim Wright, Gaye Parise, Marsha Kaufman, Jordan Schmidt and the NECC Teen Team, Pam Jarvis, Herrington's, Q Farms, and everyone who volunteered their time in 2022.

## **Stewardship: Jolly Stewart**

Pledges made for 2023 numbered - 23

Units totaling: \$ 89,310.00

Average pledge per unit was \$3,883.04

Since beginning my work on stewardship at St. Thomas eight or nine years ago, I am continually amazed by the generosity of our membership. We have always risen to meet the budget challenges we've faced and this year is no exception. 2022 was a financially difficult year for everyone and it was reflected in a slight decrease in pledges for the first time since I became Stewardship Chair; yet we still were able to balance the budget by trimming and refining our expected income from investments. As we enter 2023, remember that we are likely to see increased costs throughout the year. Please consider planning ahead to raise your pledge for 2024 or, better yet, adjusting your pledge upward as the year goes on.

## **Altar Guild Report**

This brave group has gone through lots of change in the past years. Because of the continuing pandemic, there have been many changes in the way we worship, all of

which directly affect the duties of the Altar Guild. We owe Ann Dean Wright, Laurie Nussdorfer, Donna Christensen, and new this year, Katie and David Crum, many thanks for their loyalty and dedication.

## **Liturgical Assignment coordinator:**

### **John Stewart**

First, let us all thank our loyal and faithful liturgical participants: Anne Vance, Lynn Nesbitt, Alex and Brian Tart, Samantha Lucas, Jim Wright, Jolly Stewart, Christine Clare, Katie and David Crum, Sarah O'Connell, and Brian Distelberg. Their commitment makes our Sunday experiences richer and fuller. And I'd like to extend a fervent invitation to all parishioners to take up any or all of the three participations. The reward for greeting is a more face-to-face hands-on connection with parishioner friends. For reading, we are invited into a more thoughtful and deeper connection to the Sunday scripture. Serving as acolyte offers both these gifts, and in addition nourishes our spiritual life through a more intimate relationship with God. Besides which, all three are fun! Please contact me: [johnhargerstewart@gmail.com](mailto:johnhargerstewart@gmail.com) and join us in these participations!

Service concluded with the General Thanksgiving and the Benediction.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Bacon (Substitute Clerk)