

**MINUTES OF THE VESTRY
ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, HILLSBOROUGH, NC
September 15, 2020**

Present: The Rev. Robert Fruehwirth, Rector; The Rev. Lisa Frost-Phillips, Associate Rector; Kim Powell, Director of Christian Formation; Jehanne Gheith, Senior Warden; Jim Charton, Junior Warden; Maria Costello; Conrad Fulkerson; Elizabeth Hays; Steve Hutson; Vera Shanley; Blythe Thompson; Sonja Tilley; Susan Alden, Clerk of the Vestry

Absent: Dorothy Wood, Treasurer - excused

The Rev. Fruehwirth called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. We met remotely by Zoom due to diocesan and governmental recommendations for social distancing to slow the spread of Covid-19. The Rev. Fruehwirth expressed his thanks to the vestry and opened the meeting with prayer.

I. Approval of August Minutes with Notes from August 25th Meeting and Previous Audit Approval – All

ACTION: Dr. Fulkerson motioned to approve the minutes and notes from the two August meetings.

Dr. Shanley seconded the motion, and the vestry voted unanimously to approve them.

PREVIOUS ACTION: On September 1st, the vestry unanimously voted to approve this year's audit.

II. Associate Rector Report – The Reverend Lisa Frost-Phillips

In reflecting on the month, the Rev. Frost-Phillips's thoughts fall into categories of past, present and future:

- Reconsideration of the Ruffin House name has led her to dive deep into the past as we all relearn and reconsider our heritage at St. Matthew's. The reconsideration process is underway and moving forward.
- Presently, the program year is underway. She has been meeting frequently with Kim Powell for planning. Last Friday she attended Hugh Tilson's Bible study, which will be ongoing for two years. She also served as a chaperone at the Youth Group movie night last weekend. It felt good to be together with others at a socially distant event although it did involve extra care to ensure that safety protocols were followed.
- Looking to the future, she ponders what St. Matthew's will be moving forward. What will we do and how will we do it? It is challenging to consider the possibilities ahead for connection in old and new ways. She is starting to think about Advent, All Saint's Day, and what those celebrations might look like. Tentative plans are underway for a new version of FeST in early December.

III. Rector's Report, including Update on Ruffin Reconsideration and Liaison Role Development – The Reverend Robert Fruehwirth

- Even as we continue difficult work, we must balance that by involvement in loving, joyful activities.
- He would appreciate any feedback about how he can most effectively participate in vestry meetings. He has been considering whether to provide more written prepared reports to spur discussion.
- **Ruffin House Reconsideration:**
 - Small group reflections will start in 7 days. About 35 people have signed up to participate, and hopefully that number will grow. Facilitators are preparing. The Rev. Fruehwirth would like to have a vestry representative at each reflection to open it with prayer and listen attentively. For the meetings already scheduled, vestry members volunteered. On September 21st, Mr. Charton will attend the morning reflection and Mr. Hutson will attend the evening session. Ms. Tilley will attend the session on September 24th.
 - Each reflection session will have a facilitator and recorder, a vestry representative, and about ten parishioners. Each session is scheduled to last 90 minutes. Participants will consider both sides of the renaming issue in split groups and will then answer a third question asking them to speak to the

vestry about their point of view. The groups will conclude in early October, and the parish will be provided summary information.

- On October 20th the vestry could begin considering the information gleaned from the small group sessions. There was substantial discussion about the process. The vestry would like to develop a statement about the decision rather than merely providing a binary response. One member noted that parishioners had asked why the issue would not be voted on by the parish. In the Episcopal Church, the vestry is considered a discerning body, entrusted to make decisions in the best interest of the parish and with parish input. Vestry members hope that after the small group meetings conclude and they have the space to digest and discuss the information gleaned, they will be able to prepare a statement to present to the parish sometime in November. Hopefully the statement will not only convey the decision about the Ruffin name, but will also express our undergirding values and the rubric we can rely on for such controversial decisions moving forward. While some will be disappointed with the outcome of the naming issue of the Ruffin House (regardless of which conclusion is reached), there is hope that all will realize the energy and thought that has gone into the process and that all will have had the space to express their own opinions if desired. There was recognition that a complex answer is needed, a continuum of ideals around the issue.
- After lengthy discussion, the vestry realized that the regularly-scheduled October meeting will not provide sufficient time to process the issue. An additional meeting was scheduled for October 27th beginning at 6:00 pm.
- All of the vestry members hope to reach the best decision for St. Matthew's. While everyone has a personal opinion about the issue of renaming, members realize that they must not rely on personal feelings, but must take into consideration all that they know and have learned to discern together what is best for St. Matthew's.

- **Liaison Roles:**

For now, liaisons will continue to work with their assigned areas as they have been. We will work towards clarifying the roles in the new year.

IV. The Vestry as Discerning Body – The Reverend Robert Fruehwirth

- The Rev. Fruehwirth is considering how to let the parish know about the progress around the Ruffin Renaming proceedings. The vestry agreed that they would be willing to offer progress reports, perhaps providing an update every other week. Dr. Gheith will offer the first update at an upcoming service. Updates will also be made in the newsletter.
- The Rev. Fruehwirth has been thinking about the vestry as a discerning body. There is a strangeness to Christianity—that there is a God, who acts in this world, who sent Christ, who is also the Holy Spirit who moves us in ways that are unpredictable and unseen. There is a second strangeness in that Jesus presented us with a reversal of this world's hierchies in the Kingdom of God. The last will be first and the first will be last. The values of the world are turned upside down in the Beatitudes and Magnificat and other Christian writings. The third strangeness is that God's ways are not our ways. How do we discover the movement of God's spirit? Listening, prayer, silence, attention, allowing differences—through these acts we will find our way together as a community. It is exciting that we get to do this work as a vestry, to hear the voice of the parish and figure out how we move forward together. There was much discussion about what discernment means and what role personal opinion plays in discernment. We must listen to hear what God is calling us to be at St. Matthew's, both with each other and with our community.

V. Plans for Regathering – The Rev. Robert Fruehwirth, Elizabeth Hays, and Blythe Thompson

- The Rev. Fruehwirth is appreciative of the thoughtful reopening document produced by Ms. Hays and Ms. Thompson. That document along with the lengthy one provided by the diocese will continue to guide us.

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- The Rev. Fruehwirth would like to have a small outdoor Eucharist on Sunday, September 27th at 6:00 pm with the vestry members and the staff. This will provide an opportunity to test the process before hopefully holding additional outdoor Eucharists open to parishioners in October. He will contact Charles Thomas because ushers will need to be involved. He plans to meet again with Ms. Hays and Ms. Thompson to continue developing expanded offerings for in-person gatherings. The vestry was supportive.
 - The YMCA recently contacted the church to see if they could set up remote learning spots for children on our property. This is not currently possible due to our limited internet capacity, but it might be revisited when capacity is expanded.

VI. Senior Warden Report – Jehanne Gheith

Senior Warden Bullet Points are attached.

- If anyone is not able to make the calls recently added to their original calls, please let Dr. Gheith know.
- The outgoing vestry class works with the Rector to develop a slate of potential vestry candidates for our annual meeting in February. Mr. Charton, Dr. Fulkerson and Dr. Gheith will be working with the Rev. Fruehwirth to get started on this.
- After the second vestry meeting last month, Dr. Gheith spoke with David Sellery of the diocese. They will speak again on Friday about the Mutual Ministry Process. St. Matthew's has not been involved in this revised process, but it would be beneficial. More information will be provided at the October meeting.

VII. Junior Warden Report with IT Improvement Update – Jim Charton

Junior Warden's Report is attached.

- The Hayden Building refit is almost complete. The Archives Committee has moved into their space, and Ms. Powell's office is getting organized.
- St. Matthew's is going to convert from CenturyLink to Spectrum for internet and phone. The conversion will cost about \$5400, and once it is complete we should have excellent speed for multiple devices on campus. Installation should occur within 45 days once Mr. Charton signs the paperwork. A donation will cover some of this cost, and our monthly bill will decrease by about \$200 once it is complete. We will also have a hotspot. Hopefully the new system will be in place by late November.

VIII. Review of August Financials – The Reverend Robert Fruehwirth and All

August Financial Summary is attached.

- We are at 67% of the year. Our income is at 70% and our expenses are at 60%.
- Since we had many pledges prepaid this year, our lead in income has decreased. We actually spent \$14,000 more in August than we received. However, we continue to be ahead of the budget in our income with lower than budgeted expenses for the year.
- Dr. Wood still feels good about our financial status. We are in a typical place for this time of year.
- Fortunately, our investments have increased over the past few months, gaining back most of the loss we saw at the end of the first quarter.

IX. Stewardship Drive Update – Elizabeth Hays and Allison Bass

- The process continues to move forward as we approach kickoff of the annual stewardship campaign.
- The final pledge packet is nearly ready and all the canvassers (24) are on board. There will be a training session for the canvassers next Wednesday, September 23rd at 6:00 pm on zoom.
- There will be an additional opportunity added to our form this year to pledge time and talent.
- All stewardship campaign materials will be mailed this year. The pieces are ready and they are in the process of being assembled. Thanks to Mary Rocap who has been a great help! Due to mailing costs, the directory will not be sent with pledge packets.
- Many thanks to Ms. Hays and Ms. Bass for the positive, energetic lead in this endeavor.

X. Education Report – Maria Costello

Liaison Report on Education is attached.


- A lot of information is contained in the report, which is reflective of the work put into the area of education by the Rev. Fruehwirth, the Rev. Frost-Phillips, Ms. Powell and Ms. Tilley. Our programs have continued and have stayed strong with good attendance in spite of the challenges added by the pandemic.
- The at-home VBS was a huge success this year. It was held in partnership with Church of the Holy Family, and 13 children from St. Matthew's participated.
- We recently held our first in-person youth group since the pandemic began, a movie night.

XI. Upcoming Meetings Dates

- The Outdoor Eucharist for vestry and staff will be September 27th at 6:00 pm.
- The next regularly scheduled vestry meeting will be held on October 20th at 6:00 pm. There will be an additional meeting on October 27th at 6:00.
- Dr. Fulkerson will do his cameo on September 20th, and Ms. Hays will do hers on October 4th. Ms. Costello will do her cameo on October 18th.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. Dr. Gheith closed the meeting with two prayers, one from the Reverend William Barber and one from the Iona community in Scotland.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan Alden
Clerk of the Vestry

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August financial reports, Senior Warden Bullet Points, Junior Warden Report, Liaison Report for Education

ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
MONTHLY FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR AUGUST 2020

GENERAL FUND BUDGET

BUDGET INCOME SUMMARY ITEMS:		2020 BUDGET	MONTH OF August	YR 2020 TOTAL	% of Budget	NOTES/COMMENTS
1	PLATE/GIFT OFFERINGS	50,000	2,671	24,455	49%	
2	LATE 2019 PLEDGES	7,227	0	7,227		
3	CURRENT YR PLEDGES	436,104	21,708	310,048	71%	
4	FEES & MISC INCOME	3,100	225	1,300	42%	
5	CARRYOVER CASH FROM 2019	20,000		20,000	100%	
6	Total Budget Income:	516,431	24,604	363,030	70%	
7						
8						
9	OUTREACH EXPENSES:					
10	DIOCESAN ASKING	55,681	4,640	37,121	67%	
11	FOOD FOR ALL	300	94	124	41%	
12	OUTREACH PLEDGES	13,200	0	5,100	39%	Vestry designates
13	DISCRETIONARY OUTREACH	11,500	1,000	656	0%	
14	INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH	3,430	0	0	0%	Social Ministries Committee designates
15	Total Outreach:	84,111	5,734	43,000	51%	
16						
17	MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENT:					
18	SEXTON & CUSTODIAN	34,280	3,115	22,528	66%	
19	REPAIRS/MAINT/SUPPLIES	9,500	958	3,914	41%	
20	CHURCH UTILITIES	16,460	1,144	7,472	45%	
21	RECTORY UTILITIES	3,900	311	2,738	70%	
22	PROPERTY INSURANCE	8,216	0	6,508	79%	
23	INSURANCE CLAIMS		0	0		
24	Total Maint & Improv:	72,356	5,527	43,159	60%	
25						
26	CLERGY SUPPORT EXPENSES:					
27	RECTOR	97,490	7,765	62,305	64%	Sal, Prof Exp, Trv, Pens, Med Ins, CE, Sab
28	ASST. RECTOR	52,633	4,165	33,478	64%	Salary, Prof Exp, Trvl, Pension, CE
29	SUPPLY PRIESTS	1,400	0	450	32%	
30	Total Clergy Support:	151,523	11,930	96,233	64%	
31						
32	ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES:					
33	WORKERS COMP	2,880	64	377	13%	
34	SECRETARY	28,406	2,367	18,938	67%	Salary + Pension
35	FINANCIAL SECRETARY	9,548	796	6,365	67%	
36	SUPPORT PERSONNEL	2,000	0	1,813	91%	
37	STAFF SS/TRAVEL/HEALTH IS SUPPORT	20,358	1,667	13,339	66%	
38	AUDITOR	2,500	0	0	0%	
39	COMMUNICATION	23,650	901	13,700	58%	Phone, Postage, Off Exp., Off Supl, Misc
40	Total Admin. Expenses:	89,342	5,795	54,531	61%	
41						
42	CHRISTIAN ED. PROGRAM EXPENSES:					
43	NURSERY PROGRAM	6,600	400	3,000	45%	
44	EDUCATION PROGRAMS	47,070	5,769	32,557	69%	
45	DIOCESAN CONVENTION	1,000	0	0	0%	
46	Total CE Program Expenses:	54,670	6,169	35,557	65%	
47						
48	WORSHIP EXPENSES:					
49	MUSIC PROGRAM	43,639	3,673	27,991	64%	Choir Dir, Orgnet, Spcl Muscn, Supl, misc
50	ALTAR GUILD'S EXPENSES	900	0	159	18%	
51	WORSHIP SUPPLIES	800	0	0	0%	
52	FELLOWSHIP & SPECIAL EVENTS:	2,500	14	528	21%	Fellowship, Spcl Events, Pastri Receptions
53	Total Worship Expenses:	47,839	3,688	28,678	60%	
54						
55	Total Budget Expenses	499,841	38,844	301,158	60%	
56						
57	NON-BUDGETED DISCRETIONARY FUNDS					
58						
59	NET BUDGET INCOME (Income - Expense)	16,590	(14,240)	61,872		

ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
NON-BUDGET FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR AUGUST 2020

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 Created 9/8/20

NON-BUDGET FINANCIAL STATUS INFORMATION AT MONTH-END

			NOTES/COMMENTS
1	FIRST HORIZON CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE <small>(Operating + Custodial account balance)</small>	\$243,006	
2	OPERATING ACCOUNT BALANCE	\$77,189	
3	CUSTODIAL ACCOUNT BALANCE <small>(Pass-through funds and Reserve funds)</small>	\$165,817	
6	CD'S: CD (Outreach endowment) \$8,075	\$8,075	
7	DIOCESE-MANAGED ENDOWMENT VALUE:	\$791,233	(Churchyard + Murphy + Undesignated)
8	VALUE CHANGE SINCE LAST MONTH	\$92,821	
9	VALUE CHANGE SINCE START OF YR	-\$4,631	

Senior Warden Bullet points for Vestry meeting September 15, 2020

--Have redistributed Beth Swain's calls: most of you have written me back to say that you can do this; if you can't, please let me know that.

--Helping the rector with various initiatives (Birds, Ruffin House, etc.)

--Organizing Vestry meetings in conjunction with the Rector (and in conversation with many of you, including Dorothy, and Mary)

--Planning a new Vestry slate—Conrad, Jim and I meet next week and we will be in conversation with Robert about this.

--Talking with Canon Sellery and organizing a Vestry Mutual Ministry Review

Next Vestry meeting is: October 20, 6:00-8:00

Next cameo is September 20 (Conrad's from May), then Elizabeth Hays October 4; Dorothy usually reports in November and then Steve Hutson's written report is due in November and his cameo is in December. We need to settle on dates as I let Mary know of the cameo dates so that they can get scheduled in the bulletin.

--Jehanne Gheith

Junior Warden's Report

September 15, 2020

Hayden Building

- Replaced attic A/C (\$7200)
- Refit construction complete with exception of outlets in Music Directors Office
- South window trim repaired and painted
- More ceiling tiles fell in Fellowship Hall

- Getting window shade estimate for new offices

Internet/Communications

- Decision made to convert from Century Link to Spectrum for higher internet speeds and approximately \$200/month savings
- Cost to convert is \$5420 for new cable installation, partially offset by recent donation(s)

Churchyard

- Targeted trees trimmed and fertilized in cemetery, Ash Borer treatment to be scheduled
- Need to develop landscaping plan for Education Building

Society of Junior Wardens

- Quarterly Meeting held
- Reviewed Rectory Maintenance/Improvement Projects and decided to focus restricted fund donation (\$50,000) on repair/replace windows, improve HVAC and resolve major foundation issues.

--Jim Charton

Vestry Liaison Report: Education September 7, 2020

St. Matthew's continues to further Christian education through our many programs for adults, youth, and children. Education is coordinated and led by our Rector, the Rev. Robert Fruehwirth and our Director of Christian Formation, Kim Powell. Although we have not been able to meet in person for the last 6 months due to COVID-19, St. Matthew's ministry of Christian education and formation has continued to thrive. The 2019-2020 program year taught us how to be rooted and grounded in love. Below are a few highlights from the past year along with some of the plans for the upcoming year.

Transitions in Leadership

Sonja Tilley served as interim Director of Christian Formation through December 2019. Sonja focused on the formation of children and adults and providing oversight for youth ministry. This was a 20 hours per week position. Kim Powell was hired last August to serve as interim youth minister. This was a 10 hours per week position, and Kim focused on the formation of youth. Kim accepted the Director of Christian Formation the first of the year, and this a 30 hours per week position.

New Education Building

The new building was finished and furnished this summer, with the exception of the main room which is partially furnished. More chairs, entry furniture, and digital projection equipment will be purchased once the building is operational and we understand how the building will be used. The children's Sunday School classes, Children's Chapel and Family Faith Formation are moved in are ready to go.

Program Year Kick-Off

We are going to celebrate the start of the church year on Sunday, September 13th. Robert will preach and offer a Sunday Forum laying out the religious vision for the year ahead: *Abiding in Faith, Acting with Hope, Anchored by Love*.

Children's Formation

Godly Play (preschool – 2nd grade) is a Montessori-based curriculum that helps children explore their faith through story, wonder, and structured play. Last year, we had an average of 6-8 children each Sunday with 14 children active in the program. We had 2 storytellers and 6 adult volunteers who served in the Godly Play classroom. Godly Play transitioned over to Zoom in March and was supplemented by weekly faith at home activities sent to families via email.

Growing in Christ (grades 3-5) is a curriculum that was developed specifically for St. Matthew's in which children work their way through a series of twelve lessons designed to help children learn about and prepare to actively engage in the liturgical life of the community. The class had a read-a-thon to purchase food for Samaritan's Pantry at OCIM and raised over \$600. Last year, we had an average of 4-6 children each Sunday with 13 children active in the program. We had 6 adult volunteers who served in the Growing in Christ classroom. Growing in Christ did not transition to Zoom in March and was sent faith at home activities and prayers via email each week.

2020 Children's Program will meet at 10:15 on Zoom for weekly children's formation. As a supplement to Sunday formation, households can sign up to receive a kit of Faith at Home materials each month. The kit includes crafts, games, Bible stories, a weekly devotional and other activities to be explored at everyone's own pace. The kits are designed to be intergenerational with a different theme each month.

Storytime with Kim: During the COVID-19 shutdown, Kim and other parishioners read beloved children's stories and posted to YouTube.

Children's Chapel (preschool through 5th grade) was offered during the 10:30 am worship service this past year with the goal of making worship more meaningful and accessible for children. Following the Opening Collect, children were invited to follow the Children's Chapel leader to the Cameron Room where they worshiped and learned together in a service designed especially for their formation and development. They returned to the regular service during the Exchange of the Peace. There was an average of 4 children and 7 volunteers.

Nursery (infants through 5-year-olds) was provided on Sunday mornings for both worship services as well as during special services such as the early Christmas Eve service.

Secret Pals was held last February. Secret Pals is an annual tradition bringing all generations together for food, fellowship and fun. Adults sign up to a secret pal and send treats and clues to their younger pal for a week and then their identity is revealed at the Secret Pals breakfast. Last year, 10 children participated and were matched with 10 adults.

Vacation Bible School - we partnered with Church of the Holy Family for an at-home VBS which included kits with stories from scripture, response materials, activities like nature journaling and Montessori inspired crafts. A website was created with instructions and online materials, and a VBS box with activities and materials for the week were available at the church. The theme was God's Good Creation, and it was a huge success. We had 42 children participate in total, 13 were from St. Matthew's and we had 4 children from the community who heard about it and joined.

Family Faith Formation (for all ages) is a monthly intergenerational program offered at 9:15 am in the Fellowship Hall until March. All members of the parish – not just those with young children – are encouraged to attend. The new program year will be held via Zoom.

- October 6 – Blessing of the Animals / Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi
- November 3 – All Saints' Day
- December 15 – St. Lucia Day
- January 5 – Three Kings' Day
- February 9 – Secret Pals Breakfast
- March 8 - Harriet Tubman
- April 5 – Palm Sunday (at home edition)
- 2020 October 4 – St. Francis' Feast Day
- 2020 November 1 – All Saint's Day
- 2020 December 6 – Advent at Home

Youth Formation

Youth Sunday School (grades 6 through 12) was led by Kim Powell and 2 other teachers and was held weekly last year in the Youth Room on the lower level of the Ruffin Building. This past year, the class completed one full 4-year cycle using the "re:form" curriculum that encourages youth to explore questions about the Bible, the creeds, discipleship, Jesus, and more with the goal of providing a foundation for lifelong faith formation. The Youth Service was held on June 7th on Zoom.

Youth Group (grades 6 through 12) was held weekly on Sunday evenings from 5-7 pm during the program year until March. Youth gathered for dinner, fellowship, worship, and explored the intersection of faith and life. They went on a Corn Maze outing, Fall Mountain Retreat, had just started learning to write Icons when the pandemic came. Beginning in March, youth group met via Zoom from 5-6:30. This year's youth group will alternate biweekly with confirmation class. Youth group kickoff will be September 12th with an in-person outdoor movie night.

Confirmation Class is offered biannually and will be offered this fall via Zoom on Sunday evenings alternating biweekly with Youth Group.

Adult Formation

Sunday Forum was held in the Fellowship Hall each week until March, and now is held via Zoom after Morning Prayer. The program year began with a three-week series led by the Rev. Robert Fruehwirth entitled "St. Matthew's, Rooted and Grounded in Love" that explores Christian spirituality as a process by which we are grounded and nourished by deep roots spread into the love of God. In November we learned about Paul's understanding of grace and gift and his influence on the formation of Christianity. In December we explored hymns and words of Advent. In January we viewed *The Greensboro Four*, discussed "What is a Parish?" and learned about the ways we can better listen to and engage in ministry with our neighbors. In February we began our Parish-Wide Lent Program: Journey to Jerusalem. This Lent program was coordinated with other new offerings like personal companionships through Lent as well as other programming. In July, we began the Reconsideration of the Ruffin House Name. The parish was invited to do some reading around Thomas Ruffin and the original naming of the Ruffin House. The documents were emailed and posted to the website: Statement from St. Matthew's Racial Justice and Reconciliation Committee to the Vestry, Eric Muller's Paper on Thomas Ruffin, examining his place within NC History, The Text of Sally Greene's Presentation to St. Matthew's Sunday Forum from February 2019. The parish was encouraged to write papers on why the building should not be renamed in order to ensure all voices were heard. In August, Robert presented "Making All Things New" and is an autobiographical account of where Robert sees himself and St. Matthew's at this particular time. Lisa led us through an exercise to help shape our prayer and conversation as we take on the question before us of whether or not to change the name of the Ruffin House.

Adult Bible Study has continued to go well. There are between 8 and 12 regular members. Charles Thomas and Jack Troxell (along with some help from Hugh Tilson) lead the round-table open discussion. The study normally starts with some background on the time it was written, who actually wrote it (if known) and the socio-political happenings of that time to give context to the book. Before the Covid shutdown, they met on Sunday mornings at 9:15 in the Graebner Room. Since the shutdown, they have been meeting Thursday nights at 7:30 via Zoom. They started the program year with James, just finished Jeremiah, and are now in the middle of Daniel.

New Bible Discussion Group: Hugh Tilson is leading a systemic review of the Hebrew Bible and New Testament over a two-year period.

Summer Duke Divinity School Interns: David Nichols and Amy Peterson joined us (from a distance) this summer and called parishioners to say hello and to elicit feedback on virtual worship. They also put together 10 podcasts on prayer. Amy led a writing workshop called "Word and Spirit." David offered a seminar series on Ecology and Faith.

Birds of the Air: Robert began a new program of lay leadership development and discernment for the parish. 16+ parishioners join Robert and leaders from two other parishes in a ten-week program aimed at creating a cohort of lay leadership in the parish. The focus is on spiritual grounding as well as practical group leadership skills and discerning a particular call in the parish.

Education for Ministry is a four-year course of study for laity who want to deepen their engagement with core theological subjects and to strengthen their sense of vocation and ministry in daily life. Led by the Rev. Hugh Tilson, this program met in the Graebner Room on Monday evenings and then via Zoom.

Other Adult formation opportunities were offered throughout the past year, including a class on Becoming Christian (formerly called Inquirer's Class) for new members led by Rev. Robert Fruehwirth. Last October, the Racial Justice and Reconciliation Task Force offered REI (Racial Equity Institute) training at St. Matthew's. There was a book discussion last September on White Fragility – why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism. The task force became a committee in October. They showed the movie "If Beale Street Could Talk" in January. In June parishioners gathered via Zoom for a discussion of the movie *Just Mercy*. RJRC will be hosting a discussion of the movie *Selma* on September 22nd via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Costello
Vestry Liaison for Education