



2022 Annual Report
December 4, 2022
St. Clare's Episcopal Church

Rectors's Report

2022 has been a full year. We have returned to many of the ways in which we were a community prior to COVID: gathering for special dinners, robust adult formation opportunities on Sunday mornings, and Wednesday evening programs for our youth. Of course, we returned to full time in-person worship on Easter Day of 2021, but the masks and other safe-guards were lifted this year. We have also retained some of the COVID-born necessities because they enrich our lives: live-streaming of Sunday worship and Choral Compline, weekday Morning Prayer and Compline on Facebook, and Zoom opportunities for adult formation.

The building of our community has continued as we have welcomed many new members this year. They enrich our lives together and bring new gifts and perspectives. We will look for opportunities to get to know one another better in the coming year.

There are two initiatives that make 2022 unique in the life of our parish. First, the vestry discerned a new outreach ministry for the church. On a shoestring budget, we have begun a program of English classes in Blairsville. Against all odds, on a very short timeline, and on a shoestring budget, we have successfully launched this program. Our students are learning as well as developing a community within the classroom. The Holy Spirit's presence has been palpable to all of us involved. We hope to receive a grant from Episcopal Community Foundation to expand the program.



Second, prior to COVID, we had plans to expand the old administrative offices to build a new choir room and a small chapel. We received a gift for a portion of the cost. Following COVID, we did not see the feasibility of funding this larger project, however our senior warden, Lamar Barber, envisioned a smaller project to create a multi-use room that allows both in the same room: a larger space for choir rehearsals (while maintaining the current choir room for storage and the choir director's office) and a chapel space for special, small services. In our St. Clare's tradition, parish members have come together to build this new space, which we hope to dedicate in

the new year.

For the many gifts of this parish, and for the ways in which we love one another and God, I give thanks.

Liz+



Senior Warden's Report

In many ways, 2022 has been a reset year. We resumed our in-person Sunday services and are beginning to start gathering for periodic parish dinners. What we offer at St. Clare's is a chance for more than a reset. It's a chance to move ahead--revitalized and re-energized.

As we look ahead toward next year, we ask: "Who is my neighbor?" What does it take to do the things that strengthen our ties to each other, our community and God? This does not mean enormous projects that require money or dramatic changes in direction. It means taking stock of the many types of resources we already have, and then consulting with the individuals, families, and other groups in

the church and beyond, inviting them to join us and become a part of our family.

The Vestry Retreat this year included an open-ended exercise which led us to explore and evaluate our communities with an eye toward needs unmet. In doing that, we discovered a need for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes in our North Georgia area. After appropriate prayer and planning we sought guidance from St Bede's parish in Atlanta, GA. With guidance from them we have formed and are currently operating ESOL classes to serve this community's unmet need.

With this experience, as we continue to look ahead, we now ask not only "who is my neighbor?" but also, "and how can we serve them?"

Respectfully submitted,
Lamar Barber, Senior Warden



Junior Warden's Report

As the people's warden, I can report that the people of St. Clare's are well. After Liz's+ sabbatical, we have maintained strong participation and leadership in the parish, and energy is high. As COVID restrictions lifted, various programs resumed with enthusiasm, and you can see those reports.

Thank you for everything you have done to support the people of this parish. It is an honor and a joy to serve this community as the junior warden and experience who we are!

Among other activities, we hosted a Parish Clean Up Day on April 16th, in preparation for Easter. Fifteen people gathered to spruce up the grounds, prepare the church, and eat chicken biscuits.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynnae Boudreau, Junior Warden



A fun Parish Clean Up Day on April 16



Treasurer's Report

Reports

Throughout the year there are various reports required by the Diocese and Vestry which provide numerous segments of financial and congregational data contained in the daily energy and growth of St. Clare's.

These reports are significant and include information reflected in our database, audits, and budget trend analysis.

Parochial Report – This is required to be sent to the Diocese by March 1st. This report is a yearly tool for the orderly collection of data to assist the church with future plans and to update the Diocese. St. Clare's Parochial Report was completed and submitted in March 2022.

Audit – A church financial audit is conducted every year and must be submitted to the Diocese. The Diocese requires a CPA certified audit for any year the church operating budget is at or above \$250,000. If below \$250,000, then the church can opt for an in-house audit for two years and then a certified audit for the third year. Our last CPA certified audit was for our calendar year 2019. For calendar year 2020 and 2021 we have conducted in-house audits using a three-person volunteer team of parish members. The audit for calendar year 2021 was completed in September 2022 with a finding that our financial statements fairly represent the financial position of the congregation as of December 31, 2021.

Vestry Report - The treasurer provides a monthly report to the Vestry providing ongoing review of financial status with recommendations. A summary of this report is approved by the Vestry and published monthly in the eClare.

Financial Information

Comparison of our Revenue vs Expenses for the past five years. For 2021, the Actual (Oct) are the actual revenue and expenses for the year as of October 31st.

The effect of Covid-19 continued to be felt as our pledges declined slightly from 2021 to 2022 while our expenses increased related to going back to full time in person service with the related costs of maintaining our building and cost of living increases. One bright spot has been the larger than budgeted increase in Other Revenue. To keep our programs fully operational in 2022, the Vestry approved a deficit



budget of \$35,992 to cover all our programs. As of the end of October we have experienced higher than projected revenue and lower expenses, so our budget deficit is currently \$11,727.

Overall, we are in a sound financial position with enough in our operations checking account to pay the next 2 months of budgeted operating expenses.

	2022		2021		2020		2019		2018	
	Budgeted	Actual (Oct)	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual
Pledges	\$212,713	\$ 171,759	\$213,440	\$208,102	\$230,858	\$ 213,906	\$225,000	\$208,415	\$220,859	\$211,722
Other Revenue	\$ 17,025	\$ 28,378	\$ 13,025	\$ 29,822	\$ 26,000	\$ 18,242	\$ 26,000	\$ 35,214	\$ 24,225	\$ 25,768
Total Revenue	\$229,738	\$ 200,137	\$226,465	\$237,924	\$256,858	\$ 232,148	\$251,000	\$243,629	\$245,084	\$237,490
Expenses	\$265,730	\$ 211,864	\$243,292	\$235,019	\$256,858	\$ 223,675	\$251,000	\$240,815	\$245,084	\$228,549

Sabbatical Funding

The grant we received from Lily Endowment covered the costs of Liz’s 2020 sabbatical and the cost of supply priests and other programs in her absence. The remaining unused portions of the grant have been used this year for theme dinners, a lay person retreat for Daily Office leaders and a parish prayer workshop.

Respectfully submitted,
 Jim Morton, Treasurer

Vestry

Because of the continued threat of COVID and because of lower-than-needed funds, the Vestry held its annual winter retreat in the parish hall of the church, rather than spending a weekend away.

The primary focus of the retreat was to ask the questions, “Who is our neighbor?” and “What can we do to enrich their lives?” After prayer and exercises to aid deliberation, the Vestry settled on the invisible migrant community in Union County and our neighboring counties, and determined that English classes may be a helpful way to engage with our neighbors.



Following the retreat, Vestry members talked to people in the larger community (for example, the school system and other churches), to see if what had been discerned was indeed a community need. While there is

support in the school system for students under the age of 18, there are no readily available English classes for adults in our area. Plans began to launch English for Speakers of Other Languages later in the year.

The St. Clare's ESOL class kicked off on September 13 and we had 11 potential students and 5 children. Countries represented were mainland China, Hong Kong, El Salvador, Mexico and Bolivia. Since beginning the class, students from Venezuela and Cuba have joined as well. The class meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and we have 2 teachers each night, 2 childcare volunteers, and a coordinator.

Worship

*Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness:
Come let us adore him. –BCP 81*

Worship of God undergirds everything we do as a parish. We are committed to beauty in our liturgy and music, to making worship as accessible as possible, and to welcoming everyone to participate.

Acolytes

The acolyte program has resumed with enthusiasm. St. Clare's hosted its first training in several years on August 10, 2022. Trainers included Lamar Barber and Eli-Smith-Foot. Newly trained acolytes included Camilla Duello, Bea Harkins, and Grace Harkins. They join Eli Smith-Foot and they've served weekly since training. We are delighted by and grateful for all their service!

Respectfully submitted,
Lynnae Boudreau

Altar Guild

The altar guild members are responsible for preparing the altar for all worship services held in the church. What might be an overwhelming task for our very small group is offset by the blessing that each of us receives from this service.



Most of the time, a single guild member is alone in the sanctuary. We touch the linens, brass, silver and candles with great attention and care. After each service we clean and put away the items, dispose of the wine and host properly, and take home linens to wash and iron. These tasks feel like part of a sacred expression of our love for Christ and the celebration that we have as a community when we partake of the Eucharist. This is a wonderful way to learn how our worship service is conducted and the rich meaning (and name!) for each item used in the celebration.

This past year, our church community has been fortunate to meet often. On Sunday mornings and Wednesday at noon the altar guild unfailingly sets up the Lord's Table. During the many church seasons such as Lent, Christmas, and Easter the guild members work together because there can be more than one or two services in a week or even in a day. Sometimes we substitute for each other in cases of unexpected illness or travel. The altar guild members would love to share this spiritually meaningful task with other volunteers. It is a blessing to serve the church members and visitors who appreciate the beautiful setting which is St. Clare's Episcopal Church.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa McElfresh
Altar Guild Member



Daily Office

The Daily Office Team had a very needed and blessed retreat at a convent recently to consider if and how to continue leading the Daily Offices online each week. These services

began when the church was closed during the pandemic as a way to hold our worshipping community together. The services actually met a great need far beyond our community borders, reaching folks from various parts of the world! After much prayerful discussion, the Team decided to continue offering Morning Prayer each weekday morning and Compline each weekday night on Facebook.

We would love to train more people to lead the offices. It is not hard to do. Please consider joining this online ministry as we share God's Word throughout the world. We need you!

Respectfully submitted,
Sandy Bell



Flower Guild

Flowers. The smiling faces of God we place under the cross each week. Many St. Clare's volunteers grow the beautiful flowers for your enjoyment. Their labor of love provides options for the Flower Guild to arrange flowers for Sunday service or other events. Plus, they save our church hundreds of dollars annually.

I first volunteered to help when I was greatly needed. My thought was, "How hard can putting flowers in a vase or arranging them in a vase be?" Funny that I thought that. Doing the flowers was not only about the arranging. It has been much more personal.

Currently, only Patti Albritton and I do the flowers regularly. Coming into the quiet church, filled only with the presence of God, light streaming through stained-glass windows and my nervousness, has changed me. First, it destroyed my insecurity about will my arrangement be 'pretty enough' or will they move people like when Kees Schellingerhoudt does arrangements on special occasions? Will they have the wow factor like when Tommy Westbrook does them?

I have learned in that quiet church on Saturdays, when it's just me, God and some flowers, that if I begin, God will guide my thoughts, my ideas, and my hands. Even on weeks when I could almost cry from disappointment in my work, there were many people on that Sunday who sought me out to share the joy they felt from seeing such a beautiful arrangement. I was dumbfounded. I was amazed. Most of all I was humbled to learn that my labors done with a joyful heart – even if it's a nervous heart - had meaning, power and purpose.

So, with that knowledge, I would love to share a God-filled empty church, flowers in my hand and show you how you can also be a willing servant of our sweet God. Please consider becoming part of the Flower Guild. Come evolve, grow and arrange with us.

Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Pilcher

Lay Eucharistic Ministers, Eucharistic Visitors, and Lectors

We have added some new people into this particular ministry this past year, and are grateful for the dedication of everyone involved. We always welcome more participants! If anyone desires to learn more about serving our Lord as an Eucharistic Minister, Lector, or Eucharistic Visitor, please contact the office and let us know. Training is available, and help is definitely appreciated however often you can serve. The rewards are everlasting!

Sandy Bell
Chairperson



Compline Choir

Choral Compline provided a beautiful end to the evening on many of the 1st Sundays of the month this year. Lingering COVID threats along with personal illnesses prevented a full year of the choir's choral leadership. The candlelit altar and incense, provided by Tommy Westbrook, and a traditional liturgy sung and chanted, was provided under the directorship of Henry Batten.

Lamar Barber ran the videography each evening so the service can be enjoyed on Facebook. The Compline Choir and St. Clare's choir joined to present Advent Lessons and Carols on December 11.

Music Program

Music continues to be an integral part of St. Clare's in 2022. The Sunday

Choir, Compline Choir, an organ recital and instrumentalists have blessed our community this year.



A dedicated group of singers meet every Wednesday night (except in July and August) and Sunday morning throughout the year for the Sunday Choir. The members of the Choir care for and uplift each other and they sing with a unified voice. The choir members are Missie Kirkland, Lisa McElfresh, BJ Foster, Mary Ann Fox, Kay Waldrup, new member Terri Byrd, Butch Duryea, Bill Fox, and Sandy Calloway. When in town, Darrell and Mary Golnitz, Chris Calloway and Whitner Schellingerhoudt join us! Michelle Crawford joins us for the Easter Vigil and Bucky Buchmaier has sung with the choir on occasions as well.

I have a few shout outs for two choir members. Bill Fox, a life long music educator, choral conductor and singer, will still agree to sing a solo part at 92 years! And, he continues to share his wisdom with the choir. Mary Ann Fox, another life-long music educator and pianist continues to accompany some choral anthems and solos that Missie Kirkland sings! Rain or shine, Bill and Mary Ann bring their talents and warm spirits to all rehearsals and services.

For years, St. Clare's has had Choral Scholars from Young Harris College to supplement the choir. However, finding these scholars has become increasingly more difficult so this year we decided to allot the monies to a staff singer. We are so fortunate to have Missie Kirkland as our first staff singer!

On May 22, George Atwell presented an organ recital for the congregation and the community. This concert, in memory of Jim Yost, was made possible by the generosity of the Yost family members, daughter Julie and son Chris. George's warm personality and exceptional skills were enthusiastically received by those in attendance.

Advent and Christmas are quickly approaching. There will be a lot of music. Compline Choir will team up with the Sunday Choir for Lessons and Carols. A small group from the Brasstown Ringers played during the Sunday service of Advent I. Ceci Duke, recently retired rector from Christ Church in Norcross, and her husband David, will sing with the Sunday Choir through Advent and Christmas Eve. Their son, Craig will sing Christmas eve as well. It is my hope that Chris Calloway and Whitner Schellingerhoudt will join in Christmas Eve as well.



St. Clare's is blessed with many wonderful and dedicated musicians and I am so grateful!

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Calloway
Organist/Choir Director

Usher Ministry

Google lists as attributes of a good Usher: punctuality, humility, graciousness, kindness, submissiveness, flexibility, cleanness (neat), sensitiveness (alert), faithfulness (dependable), availability, dedicated, poised and most of all, prayerful. Sounds like just the qualities of people we all want to know, and the description could definitely be applied to the faithful Usher teams at St. Clare's.

It is perhaps intriguing that Google included "prayerful." On reflection, the service of the ushers at St. Clare's IS one of prayerful dedication to the smooth-running of each event held on the church grounds. Many moments are spent in silent prayer that the order of the service will be maintained, that no attendees will be overlooked or injured as they participate, that equipment will function properly, and that distractions are avoidable. To this effort our Usher teams support the priest and congregation in the seamless accomplishment of each service.

As the parish grows, it is my hope that more attendees become ushers! I know you are out there just itching to be an additional shepherd to our faithful flock!

Respectfully submitted,
Carlene Dockery

Verger

The title of “verger” arises from the ceremonial rod they traditionally carried, known as a “verge”. The office of verger has its roots in the early days of the Church of England's history. The Verger swung the verge (a short staff or mace with a small cross on the end) to keep back animals, ruffians, and ne'er-do-wells who might interfere with the procession. The Verger was called the Protector of the Procession.

Our Verger team quietly supports the parish in so many ways beside our traditional roles as the Protector of the Procession. Thanks to Michael Smith-Foot and Lynnae Boudreau for providing support to our parish.

Respectfully submitted,
Lamar Barber

Video Ministry

Immediately upon moving to online only services, a team of people was formed to provide live stream video to Facebook. Our online church ministry continues to grow.

Parish members Lamar Barber, Michelle Crawford, and Kees Schellingerhoudt offered their leadership for these important weekly services of the church, and Sandy Bell and Haley Bell will join the team in 2023.



Newcomers and Greeters

Fulfilling the role of a greeter gives one so much joy! Greeting people as they come into the church, seeing their smiling faces simply fills your heart to overflowing. People you have seen every week or people you've never seen before. It's all amazing. What a wonderful gift to be able to welcome people into our church. (Especially now that we can actually see who it is we're welcoming without masks).

When you greet someone who has never been to St. Clare's before, and ask them if they would like to sign up for emails a.k.a. e-clairs, most people are very happy to do so. Asking a few questions and showing interest in them as a person. Everyone is so grateful to be greeted with a friendly face and a smile, a caring soul....what a wonderful ministry!

Thank you for the opportunity to be a greeter. If you haven't tried it yet, come on, there's always room for more!

Respectively submitted,
Michelle Wilson

Administration

*Let the favour of the Lord our God be upon us,
and prosper for us the work of our hands—
O prosper the work of our hands! - Psalm 90:17*

An important ministry of any organization, including the church, is effective administration. The coordination and planning of all activities of the church, as well as the care and maintenance of the physical plant represents appropriate stewardship of the time, talents, and physical plant of the church.

Office Administration

Julia Gatta, professor of pastoral theology in the School of Theology at the University of the South, makes the argument that good administration is effective pastoral care. Through clear communication and well-organized processes people feel connected and cared for.

My deep gratitude to Kitty Taylor, our parish administrator, to Karen Calloway, our music director, and to volunteer Carlene Dockery for her organization of our Reception Volunteers (RVs). You and I are well-cared for through the dedication of each of these folks.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz+



Receptionist Volunteers Ministry

RV is short for “receptionist volunteer” but long on hospitality and service. Currently assisting in the Church office twice a week, the Receptionist Volunteers provide extra hands for the priest and parish administrator. Doubling as a Tuesday Teller, the RV on duty helps prepare the weekly bank deposit. As greeters to guests and callers to St. Clare’s, RVs provide an important first impression of St. Clare’s with warmth and caring. The RVs meet the “day to day” activities in the church

office with willingness and flexibility.

Going forward as a community loving like Jesus loves, RVs have the opportunity to extend the welcoming St. Clare’s message to new people and learn more about their own church family. RVs NEED YOU!

Respectfully submitted,
Carlene Dockery

Building Maintenance

Maintenance and Improvements

2022 has become a year of renewal for the physical structure we call St. Clare's Episcopal Church. After two years of reduced activity within our church's building, the sounds of voices and footfalls are again echoing in volumes close to pre-covid levels.

Many small projects were completed while things were quiet. Plumbing, electrical, structural and HVAC issues were attended to so that our building and grounds would be ready for this much anticipated regrowth. Tony Dockery, Butch Duryea, and Jerome Laux will soon complete the biggest change of the year: the transformation of the old offices in the parish hall to a beautiful new chapel and choir rehearsal space. Many thanks to Kees Schellingerhoudt for painting the newly configured space.

There will be more improvements coming over the next few months and those of us charged with keeping our building in good repair are excited at once again being called to service. We hope If you'd like to join in that service, please reach out to any Vestry member. We'd love to share it with you.

Respectfully Submitted,
Herb Pilcher



Safety and Security

Members of the vestry with considerable input from the congregation are conducting an ongoing assessment of the safety issues for the church space, including assessing risks due to medical emergency, weather, fire and

other dangers. As part of that assessment, the church installed wireless, motion activated cameras at various points at the church; and met with county fire officials in order to identify areas where we can increase the safety of church parishioners, officials and staff.

Respectfully submitted,
Marvin Harkins

Beauty

Speak to the earth, and it will teach you... - Job 12:8

Episcopalians rejoice in the beauty of creation and in the arts, as all beauty points us to praise of God. In our worship, we strive for good music, a sense of flow and grace, and poetry and drama. We seek beauty in our worship space with art, flowers and candles. At St. Clare's we have surrounded our church with beautiful gardens.

Church Gardens

There is a small group of church members who are caretakers of the garden. Bucky Buchmaier and Susan Stokke work in the garden weekly. Diana Symins, Lisa McElfresh and Michelle Joyner work when their schedules permit or when needed. Each crew member has a good understanding of what needs to be done in the garden, making an excellent team. This small group has put in many hours of work in the garden, which shows their love and support of God's creation. Other support has come from Lynnae Boudreau, who organized a spring work morning on April 16th. The group of church members attending this workday were invaluable in getting tasks done or started.



Dick Bell brought machinery to church to cut and clean the back field. Tommy Westbrook brought and planted new plants in hard to grow areas. Herb Pilcher has worked on equipment in the garden shed. The church has had to hire outside help to keep up with some basic jobs. Our church has a Memorial Garden, a flower garden, mature garden areas, new garden areas, garden areas that need replanting, along with a large field and parking lots which need to be maintained. There is a healthy population of animals living and visiting the garden, therefore, we have some missing plants. Some plants are healthy while other plants are unhappy or sick with fungus or virus. A selection of the plants need to be watered when extremely dry. Who has time to water? Never a dull moment. And from the garden crew, the love continues...

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Stokke, Garden Crew Member



Compassion

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.—John 13:34

Compassion for one another at St. Clare's is shown through Clare's Companions, Eucharistic Visitors, the prayers and service of the Daughters of the King, the prayer shawl ministry, the newly formed Community of Hope and the ongoing companionship between parishioners.

Companions of Clare

Companions of Clare consists of 5 very dedicated parishioners who offer support and encouragement to members of our congregation who are experiencing crisis. Companions prepare and deliver meals, send cards, distribute flowers, grocery shop and/or visit the homebound.



We update each other on the various needs of our parish family. We find great spiritual comfort in sharing our faith with our parishioners. We hope to recruit new members for our committee over the coming

year.

Our goals for the next year include increasing our membership and possibly enticing our senior youth in collaborating with Companions of Clare to offer service to elderly members of our church family.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Cottone



Community of Hope (COH)

The Community of Hope Ministry (COH) of St. Clare's Episcopal Church consists of seven members who have been through a training program in pastoral care. A members' visit is to listen to an individual in a compassionate, non controlling manner. The members do not give advice, or try to fix any problems. Members try to respond to individual spiritual needs.

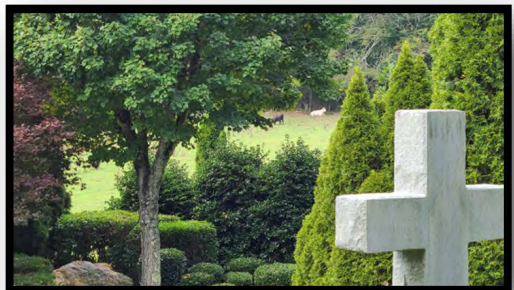
COH is working hand in with Clare's Companions who share their knowledge of who may need

a "listening presence". COH shares with Clare's Companions information about members needs. For example; meals, cards, flowers, and finding transportation.

Community of Hope is currently looking for a coordinator. BJ Foster, who established the program at St. Clare's, stepped down from her role this year.

Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden committee has worked this year to put paper files into electronic records, update the garden plan, and update our donation schedule and processes for securing a spot in the garden. Thanks



to Liz+, Sandy Bell, Bucky Buchmaier, Susan Marr, Susan Stokke, and Mary Beth Wiles who serve on our Memorial Garden Committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Lamar Barber

Outreach Committee

In the Fall of 2021, the Outreach Committee contacted previous years' recipients of St. Clare's outreach grants to let them know that the committee would be taking a year to review its grants program, and that grants would not be made in 2022. As pledges were received for the 2022 year, it was clear that money would not be available for grants this year. Luckily, they were not expected. It is hoped that the Outreach budget can be restored in 2023.

Stitched in Christ

"Stitched" is a ministry of making items to be blessed for people going through a time of need. Many items available for gifting can be found in the "Stitched in Christ" area in the parish hall.

We currently have blankets, shawls, and

prayer squares. Feel free to select any item to gift but be sure to write the item in our log book so that we can keep a record of those who have been served. Arrangements may be made through the church office to select items as well.



We've continued to meet as a group on Zoom on Tuesdays at 1 p.m. We have regular members who live as far away as Rochester, New York!

In addition to keeping our inventory stocked with shawls, we took one a new project this year which we've entitled "Comfort Blankets." We solicited assistance from not only our core group of stitchers, but also community members and members of other churches across our area. We asked folks to make 10 inch x 10 inch squares which were then joined together to form blankets of varying sizes. The first set of 12 blankets will be blessed at the worship service on December 4. These Comfort Blankets will be donated to the Hurlburt Johnson Friendship House in Murphy as well as any other community organization that may have a need. We plan to continue this ministry year-round.

If you'd like to join our Tuesday group, participate in the Comfort Blankets ministry, or have a request for a prayer shawl or other item, please email Michelle at mlkcrawford7@gmail.com and we'd be happy to help you.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Crawford

The Order of the Daughters of the King (DOK)

DOK is an order of the Episcopal Church for women. Members undertake a Rule of Life, incorporating the Rule of Prayer and the Rule of Service. Our Rule of Life requires a spiritual discipline of daily prayer, service, and evangelism. We maintain a confidential prayer list, which our members pray daily. We have meetings and engage in study of various topics. Upon admission to the order, all Daughters make the same promises.

- To obey the two Rules of The order: the Rule of prayer and the Rule of Service.
- To wear faithfully the cross of the Order.
- To work for the purposes of The Order as God may give us the opportunity.
- To offer at all times loyal aid to our clergy and parish to spread Christ's kingdom.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Boyett, President
St. Clare's Chapter, The Order of the Daughters of the King

Christian Formation

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.

-Matthew 18:19-20a

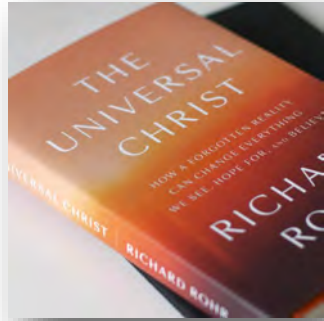
One of the primary purposes of the church is to form people in the Christian faith so that they may go out into their daily lives and live the Christian life. Opportunities for study, for reflection, for prayer, and participation in the sacraments all provide renewal for living the Christian life outside of the walls of the church.

Adult Christian Education (ACE)

Our Adult Christian Education program returned with in-person Sunday morning classes this year but also continued to offer online formation opportunities:

Conversations in the Parish Hall: On Sunday mornings that did not have a scheduled program, we gathered for coffee and conversation in the living room area of the parish hall. These conversations helped us get to know one another better, learn about happenings in the broader community, and grow in faith.

Adult Education: Sunday morning adult classes included “Dying Well: Preparing for the End of Life, a three-part series in August; a conversation with Lindsey Hardegree, executive director of the Episcopal Community Foundation; “Episcopal 101” after church 3 Sundays in September with Liz+; a bible study focusing on the writings of the Apostle Paul, using Sarah Ruden’s book *Paul Among the People: The Apostle Reinterpreted and Reimagined in His Own Time*, a Sunday exploring Celtic prayer with the Rev. Ruth Pattison; a Sunday exploring iconography with Mary Jane Miller; and a short series on the poetry of Mary Oliver.



Thursday Book Study Group: This Zoom gathering read several books together this year including *Reaching Out: the Three Movements of the Spiritual Life* by Henri Nouwen; *His Truth is Marching On* by Jon Meacham; *Freeing Jesus* by Diana Butler-Bass; and Richard Rohr’s book *The Universal Christ*.



Parish Retreat on Celtic Forms of Prayer: The final offering provided by the Lilly Endowment sabbatical grant, the parish was invited to spend the weekend with the Rev. Ruth Pattison to explore Celtic spirituality and prayer.

Sacred Ground: In October we began our second offering of the “Sacred Ground” program created by the Episcopal Church that allows parishioners to explore the issue of racism in a safe and welcoming community.

The Hymns of our Tradition: In this online class we explored the stories behind the creation of the words and music of some of the greatest songs in our hymnal.



Iconography Workshop with Mary Jane Miller:

This weeklong workshop taught participants the art of icon-writing by painting the image of Holy Silence. The workshop was soaked in prayer and meditation. 11 people participated from St. Clare's, the larger Blairsville area, Atlanta and Houston.

Respectfully submitted,
Ken Alexander



Education for Ministry (EfM)

As Episcopalians, we believe that our spiritual lives are shaped by faith, tradition and reason. The Education for Ministry Program (EfM) is designed as a way to explore these areas together in a small group. Each EfM group consists of six to twelve lay people and a mentor.

The EfM Program is administered by The School of Theology at the University of the South and a tuition payment is required. The full program is four years in length, but group members commit to one year at a time. Year 1 members study the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament); Year 2, the Christian Testament (New Testament) ; Year 3, Church history; and Year 4, Theology, Ethics and Interfaith Encounters. We all participate in theological reflection, which is a process whereby we look at how we live out God's call to us.

Our EfM group is an online group utilizing ZOOM for our meetings. It is sometimes hard to maintain an EfM group in a small-medium size church and being online we were able to expand our group membership geographically. We now have eight members in our group in years 2-4 which includes four members from St. Clare's, two from St. Elizabeth's in Dahlonga, one from Canton and one from Wisconsin. Within the parish we also have members who have completed EfM or have completed some years of the program. Mentors for the group are Jim Morton and Ken Alexander. The group meets every two weeks on Monday morning, 9:00am-12:00 pm, from September through May.

During group meetings, we worship together, discuss what we learn and experience, and reflect together on theological implications for our lives. If you are interested in learning more about EfM please ask Jim or Ken for more details.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Morton



Youth Formation

This fall we began our youth programming again at St. Clare's! We have been meeting twice a month on Wednesdays and have been work-

ing to strengthen and grow our group in our time together. The youth have met in three ages groups: elementary led by Liz+, middle school led by Amy Cox and Marvin Harkins and high school led by Jonathan Cox and Mackenzie Harkins. Each group has focused on age appropriate Christian education themes including serving others, gratitude and social justice themes. We coordinated an abbreviated workday for the parish and raised funds and food for local animal shelters at the Blessing of the Animals in October-it is exciting to be together again!

As we wind down this year, we look forward to a church wide cookie decorating night and participation in the Christmas Eve service. As we look forward, we will be engaging in more mission opportunities both local and regional, looking to build our core group of children and youth, and continue

to learn ways we can be the church in the world. Our deepest thanks to our Wednesday night supper team- y'all have fed us well. We look forward to sharing 2023 with our parish family!



Respectfully submitted,
Mackenzie Harkins

Participation

Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing—I Thessalonians 5:11

Participation in the community of St. Clare's provides social opportunities for parishioners to become more deeply involved in one another's lives and to build up the body of Christ.

Parish Life

It's been a year where Parish Life could actually begin planning for events in the parish hall. What a lovely return to 'normal' as our new normal unfolds before us. We are relearning how we host functions with grace and ease. We recall past events and build from what we learned. We seek to make each event welcoming, inviting and filled with gratitude that such events can happen again.

If you have never volunteered for Parish Life, I encourage you to consider doing so. Try a small event like Fellowship and ask the hosts if they need help. For a host, that question is music to their ears. Need Help? Ahh. They might not need help as much as they need company when volunteering in PL. Those simple words proves that they are not alone, their efforts are noticed and validated.

Even though what they say needs done, i.e. take out the trash, sweep the floor, pour beverages, load the dishwasher, etc., are not hard tasks nor do they take much time. However, they are valuable and important. In the serving of others, we discover who we are. We are people who value showing others love through making the events welcoming and enjoyable. Maybe you can only give 10 minutes to helping clean up. Or maybe you want to give 30 minutes to decorating and setting up for larger events. If you prefer to just put ice in glasses, that is important, too.



No matter what your skills, there is a place for you in Parish Life. Whether, you might be interested in helping for one special event, hosting Fellowship Hour once or twice a year, or being a regular PL worker, you are always welcomed and appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,
Darlene Pilcher

Clare's Readers

Clare's Readers is a three year old ministry at St. Clare's. The book club was suggested at a ladies luncheon and is not exclusive to church members. We meet every month on the last Friday unless otherwise designated in the eClare. The group is very fluid and we welcome all book suggestions. The group is presented a list of potential "reads" and we usually decide at the meeting (in February) what will be read every month for the upcoming year.

This year has been good but a little unusual. Some of the titles that we read did not capture the interest of the majority but usually there are a few in the group that have wonderful interpretations about a book and this alternate viewpoint is always welcomed by our members. We read a variety of genres. This year we began our club with a collection of fictional short stories that are set in Fairhope, Alabama (Eveningland by Michael Knight) and moved on for several months to more meaty nonfiction (Gilead, Factfulness, and Mutant Message Down Under).

It is always a pleasure and amazing to see the variety of stories, opinions and interpretations that emerge from studying fiction or nonfiction. Our group is very respectful and inclusive and we have developed friendships that carry onto an occasional group lunch after the meetings.

I invite anyone who wants to broaden their reading choices to join us. We go on hiatus November through February so please look for an announcement about our resumption in the January 2023 eClare.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa McElfresh

Ladies Who Lunch

In March of 2022 several ladies of the Church indicated their interest in resuming once a month lunch at a local restaurant. We had a meeting to discuss what day of the week would work for the most people and Friday was selected. Joy Gibson was kind enough to hand over the reins of this activity to me.

Our first lunch was held on 5/20/22 at Sicily's with a large turnout of 22 people! We had successful lunches on 6/17 at G and G and 7/15 at Dan's. The Lunch for August was canceled due to a combination of weather and lack of interest. September was also canceled but in October we had a lovely lunch at the home of Darlene Pilcher.

We have experienced difficulty in scheduling places that used to welcome us such as Harvest on Main and The View, both due to staffing. We have historically gone to Brasstown in December but the group wants to cancel for December. We will try to do November in the Fellowship Hall with a pot luck lunch.

All in all I think we all enjoy the lunch idea but there have been complaints about it being on Friday, so we may need to address that.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Marr





2022 Vestry

Lamar Barber, Senior Warden
Lynnae Boudreau, Junior Warden
Jim Morton, Treasurer
Linda Jarom, Clerk
Sandy Calloway
Katherine Duello
Butch Duryea
Marvin Harkins
Pat Murray
Elizabeth Nelson
Herb Pilcher

Bishop of Diocese of Atlanta
The Right Rev. Robert C. Wright
Rector—The Rev. Liz Schellingerhoudt, OA
Liz@StClaresEpiscopal.org
Parish Administrator—Kitty Taylor
Admin@StClaresEpiscopal.org
Organist-Choirmaster—Karen Calloway
edwins@windstream.net
Sunday Sexton—Billy Clayton

St. Clare's Episcopal Church
777 Ledford Road, Blairsville, GA 30512
Office Hours: Mon—Thurs 9:00-5:00
Phone: 706-745-0607
Email: Admin@StClaresEpiscopal.org
On the Web: StClaresEpiscopal.org

*Welcoming all people to worship with us.
Unapologetically Christian.
Learning to love like Jesus.*