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NETWORK NEWS

ST. ANDREW'S January—February 2024

I write these words on 28 December, the Feast Day of the Holy Innocents, when the church

Jay's Say

recalls the order from an infuriated King Herod to kill all the infants in and around Bethlehem so as to prevent the newborn king, Jesus, from threatening his hold on power.

The Savior was born in the midst of intense conflict and violence. Over the past three months we have sat in the comfort of our homes, viewing the bloodied bodies of innocent children in Israel and Gaza. The numbers are contested, but something like 8,000 children have died.

Three days after Christmas, the church calendar turns us from the joy of Jesus' birth toward innocent suffering. The crib already lies under the shadow of the cross. Mary laid her infant son in the manger and will receive his broken body into her arms from the cross. We are redeemed by the incarnation and the crucifixion. God dwells in the rubble of our broken world, and love finds a way to bring Shalom out of suffering.

Love's triumph is what we celebrate every Sunday in Holy Communion. Our worship forms us into more faithful followers of Jesus. But there are other crucial elements of Christian formation.

A year ago I was among twenty-three pilgrims in the Holy Land. Walking in the footsteps of Jesus and of the Hebrew prophets and kings before him, we began to read the Bible in new and life-changing ways.

When we returned, every church member was invited to encounter Jesus and the Bible in a bold new way by viewing the TV series The Chosen. The actor Jonathan Roumie gives us an amazingly fresh and Jewish Jesus. But we also learn about Jesus through the eyes and lives of his

> followers. As we witness the disciples changing, we are drawn into their transformation. When Peter, Mary Magdalen, Thomas and the others become more fully alive and strive to love as recklessly as their rabbi, viewers can feel the claim of Jesus on their own lives.

If you're new to St. Andrew's, I invite you to catch up with the rest of us by watching the first three seasons of The Chosen over the next couple of



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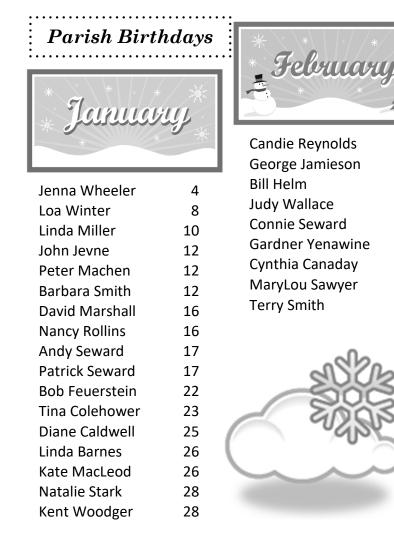
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Thoughts on Planned Giving

New Year's resolutions are so difficult. They start with all good intentions and more often than not, the good intentions never materialize. Nonetheless, I am taking this opportunity to convince you to create your will and to make it your resolution.

Leaving this world without a will creates the obligation for those who are left behind to deal with the awful process of probate. They are already dealing with the grieving process and don't need administrative issues and costs to further complicate their lives. In addition, a will gives each of us one last chance to make decisions that impact our loved ones.

I hope your New Year's resolutions include developing your last will and testament. Once the process is started, it's unlikely that it will not be completed and therefore reduces the risk of a broken personal promise.

And, of course it's my job to suggest leaving a little piece of your estate to your church. Happy New Year! – *George Jamieson*

Jay's Say, continued

months. The show isn't to everyone's taste but is compelling. The script is faithful to the Gospels but employs Jewish midrash — imaginative tales that fill the gaps between the lines of scripture. So we get fictional backstories of the first disciples whose actions and conversations reveal their internal struggles. The first three episodes are barely biblical and can be difficult to follow (subtitles help), but stick with the show through episode 4 when the Gospels really come to life.

Season 4 will be released in cinemas in February and should be streaming on our TVs in March. Like Lent and Eastertide last year, we'll get together to discuss the episodes two at a time in the Spring. The Rev. Dr. Kathleen Rusnak will lead these discussions on Sundays from 11:30 - 12:30 in the parish hall.

The Chosen will entertain you, but I hope it will also open your minds and hearts and make you better followers of the craftsman from Nazareth. In Season 4, as Jesus sets his face toward Jerusalem, the conflict sharpens and the darkness deepens. Might we learn how to better cope with the conflicts and darkness in our world — and in our selves?

NETWORK NEWS

St. Andrew's Youth Choir for 2nd to 5th Graders

I am very excited to be leading the newly formed Youth Choir at St. Andrew's. This adventure is set to be a regular, engaging experience for the students, meeting weekly over six months with monthly performances.

My call for enthusiastic singers definitely struck a chord among the students at school – having a whopping 35 students signed up to kickstart rehearsals on 8 January.

Through this shared experience, my hope is that the children not only explore the wonders of music but also find the courage to amplify their voices, foster a sense of belonging and empowerment that resonates



far beyond the realms of the songs themselves. - Nicole Densmore

Editor's Note: Thanks to your 2024 pledges and a grant from the Diocese, we are able to offer this wonderful opportunity to 2nd to 5th graders free of charge. The first performance of the new Youth Choir is set for an All Age Eucharist at 10 AM on 4 February, as we observe Candlemas.



🔄 Braver Angels

St. Andrew's Braver Angels team is considering co-hosting a debate in 2024 and moderating one or more workshops for other NH Episcopal parishes. Team member Paul Catsos continues as co-head of the NH Braver Angels Alliance which meets online monthly to respectfully discuss challenging topics.

As we approach NH's primary on 23 January and the extended political "silly season" that follows, polarizing statements are likely to ramp up. This will be an opportune time to use the skills we practiced in Braver Angels workshops. We highly recommend a brief summary provided by Braver Angels, "3 Quick Tips for Braver Conversations," to be found at https://braverangels.org/ braver-conversations/?link_id=0&can_id=616828fcd7526e9e975e28d3f40127b4&source=emailcould-your-story-inspire-more&email_referrer=email_2150382&email_subject=a-small-gift-fromus-to-you

Last Sunday Looks Ahead – **28 January** American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ)

Our January Last Sunday Outreach Offering supports the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ). We, as members of the St. Andrew's community, seek to help where help is most needed. No need is greater in today's world than in Gaza, the West Bank, and Israel, and that is where you will find AFEDJ. This highly respected, non-political, and non-sectarian charitable organization focuses its efforts on hospitals, schools, and children with disabilities in the Holy Land region, including Jordan and Lebanon.



AFEDJ was created 35 years ago, during the first Intifada, when Episcopal leaders recognized the necessity for a safe and secure channel for humanitarian assistance. AFEDJ for decades has provided services for *everyone*, without regard to religion, ethnicity, or ability to pay. Its funding comes entirely from individuals, foundation grants, and churches.

Al-Ahli Hospital, run by AFEDJ, is the *only* hospital currently operating in Northern Gaza. While the facility has been struck by Israeli shelling and lost the use of its top two floors, where cancer treatments occurred, the building remains structurally sound. Services provided, however, are severely limited by the lack of available resources. Surgeries must be performed in the courtyard in daylight and often without anesthesia or pain medications because those are not readily available.

This is the same hospital courtyard that was struck by an errant rocket launch from within Gaza by Palestinian Islamic Jihad in October 2023, resulting in hundreds of deaths and injuries. Al-Ahli Hospital has continued to treat patients despite being engulfed in war and located in the center of an area that has been the subject of multiple evacuation orders. The World Health Organization (WHO), which has provided limited supplies to Al-Ahli during brief cease-fires, reported in December that Gaza's health system is "on its knees" and "near collapse."

AFEDJ also serves broader Middle East communities, including refugees, through its many schools, children's camps, and programs. Our 2018 Holy Land Pilgrimage group visited AFEDJ's Holy Land Institute for the Deaf in Salt, Jordan. AFEDJ's website (afedj.org) emphasizes that "the Christian values of equity, justice, and respect for the dignity of all are at the heart of our efforts" in providing humanitarian relief. Amen to that. Please consider a contribution to AFEDJ so that we may help in some small way to address the tragic and dire conditions tormenting the Holy Land today.

To respond to Last Sunday appeal, you can place your gift in the offering plate prior to or on the last Sunday of the designated month, send your check marked for Outreach to St. Andrew's Church, P. O. Box 294, New London, NH 03257, or make an online donation from our website (standrewsnl.org) by choosing "Giving Online" under the "Give" tab. Your generous support will be matched by our online donors. The Outreach Commission and their identified organizations are grateful for your support.



Last Sunday Looks Ahead – **25 February** TLC (Teaching Loving Connections) Family Resource Center

The recipient of the Last Sunday donations in February will again be the Teaching Loving Connection (TLC) Family Resource Center based in Claremont. (We last supported them in 2020.)

TLC has served families in the greater Claremont, Newport, Charlestown, Springfield areas (Sullivan and Lower Grafton counties) for over 30 years. TLC started as a small agency helping mothers and babies. Over the years, TLC has been able to expand the services it provides to the community to include more diverse and robust support for families and community members. These services include providing in-depth parenting education, resource navigation, lactation support and more.

Families leave TLC feeling empowered and confident to navigate the continued hardships they may face. TLC serves over 1,000 clients in the course of a year. With the additional programming, TLC has maintained these supports without cost to the participant through help from organizations and groups such as St. Andrews. St. Andrew's longtime parishioner, Jane Van Bremen, is a TLC Board member. By giving generously in February,



we are able to help a local family resource center continue its work.



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Wardens' Words

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens. *Ecclesiastes 3:1*

Time is our measurement and our precious commodity. At this turning point of the year, we look back to assess how we have used our time, and we look forward to plan how we will use our time in the future.

What are our resolutions related to St. Andrew's for the next year? How will we use our precious time? As a church community, we hope that the following will be our reality in 2024:

- ⇒ We hope that you will participate in our January survey of the congregation's talents and gifts (see p. 7).
- ⇒ We will work with Liz Niehaus to explore the feasibility of a Montessori preschool here at St. Andrew's (*see p. 12*).
- ⇒ Nicole Densmore will lead a new Youth Choir in 2024 (see *p.* 3). We will support this work.
- ⇒ We plan to continue to demonstrate hospitality to all members of our faith community as well as visitors who choose to be with us. Wearing our name tags helps in this process.
- ⇒ We will continue to provide opportunities for fellowship such as coffee hour after church services and planned events like breakfast or luncheon gatherings, foyer groups, craft groups, participation in church fairs and events.
- ⇒ We will offer new opportunities for Christian formation via classes, study groups, and pilgrimages.
- ⇒ We will continue to be a community that is inclusive of all persons that society may considers as the "Other."
- ⇒ We will continue to seek out recipients of our outreach donations so that they can serve those in need locally, nationally, and internationally.
- ⇒ We will strive to faithfully provide spiritual care for those who are ill, hospitalized, or are homebound.
- \Rightarrow We will be a community that provides support and care to those who are grieving.

Besides these important commitments, we will continuously be responsive to new ideas, flexible to address new challenges, and creative in the development of programs that serve our church community as well as the wider community.

All of us need to be a beacon of God's love and mercy in this world. Please consider how you will use your gifts, talents and time in 2024. Let these be Christ's eyes, hands, and feet in service to others – all inseparable components of our ongoing spiritual journey. – *Claire Pace and Karen Zurheide*

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ANNUAL MEETING 2024

Join us on 21 January at 9 AM for our between-services Annual Meeting.

We'll elect officers, receive the 2024 budget, consider amendments to the bylaws, enjoy a photographic review of the year, and consider questions from the floor -- all in 50 minutes while enjoying coffee hour treats!

The **2024 budget** approved by the Vestry shows total expenses at \$736,129 with total income at \$736,438 (a \$309 surplus). As usual, the treasurer, Mike Quinn, will answer questions about the budget on the Sunday before the Annual Meeting (14 January), also at 9 AM.

Those retiring from the Vestry (Karen Zurheide, Alice Perry, Morris Edwards and Lin Potter) consulted with church members and the rector to create a **slate of candidates** for leadership vacancies as follows:

Nancy Rollins for a two-year term as Warden; Jennifer Giles to complete Nancy's remaining two years on the Vestry; Kathy Mathias for a three-year term as Clerk; Jerry Coogan and Susan Feyrer for three-year terms on the Vestry; JoAnn Hicks for a second term as Delegate to Convention; Bill Morgan for a two-year term as Delegate to Convention; Mandy Johnson for a two-year term as Alternate to Convention/Convocation.

Each of the proposed by-law changes will be explained, showing how they have been rewritten to reflect current practice at St. Andrew's — including our election last year of our treasurer to a second term.

It is a known fact the St. Andrew's faith community is blessed with a rich diversity of life experience, talents, personal and professional knowledge and interests, related skills and vital energ gy. All are gifts and everyone in the community has them. Sharing such is to walk in love.

To this end we – Claire Pace, Elizabeth Lowell, Nonie Reynders and Gardner Yenawine – have created an invitation and request for information in the form of a survey (questionnaire). **ALL** members of the congregation, regardless of age/stage will soon be invited to complete it online or use a paper copy.

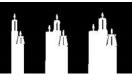
 $\hat{\mathbb{A}}^{\mathbb{A}}$ We pray that you will not be reluctant to "stand up and be counted" and that you will be $\hat{\mathbb{A}}^{\mathbb{A}}$ generous as you complete the questionnaire.

Calendar of Events

January:

7 (Sunday) - Feast of the Epiphany, 8 & 10 AM
8 (Monday) - First meeting of St. Andrew's Youth Choir (*see p. 3*)
13 (Saturday) - Faith and Issues resumes, 9 AM (*see p. 10*)
14 (Sunday) - 2024 Budget review, 9 AM (*see p. 7*)
18 (Thursday) - Book discussion, 4 PM (*see p. 10*); Vestry, 5 PM
21 (Sunday) - Annual Meeting, 9 AM
26 (Friday) - Friendly Kitchen (*see below*)
28 (Sunday) - Last Sunday, to benefit AFEDJ (*see p. 4*)





February:

4 (Sunday) - Candlemas – Festival of Light, Youth Choir sings at 10 AM (see p. 3)

13 (Tuesday) - Craft Group resumes, 9:30 AM (see below)

14 (Wednesday) - Ash Wednesday

25 (Sunday) - Last Sunday, to benefit TLC (*see p. 5*)

Monday to Friday 12 Noon Midday Prayer Mondays 6 PM Meditation (*suspended for now*) Tuesdays 9:30 AM Craft Group (resumes 13 February) Thursdays 7 PM, Choir Rehearsal (in choir room downstairs) Third Thursday (most months) 5 PM, Vestry



EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF NH

Did you know that there is a newsletter from the diocesan office with stories from throughout the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire? It comes out once a month and is called The Vine. If you are not already receiving a monthly email, you can subscribe to **The Vine** with this link:

https://episcopalchurchofnewhampshire.formstack.com/forms/the vinesubscribe

After a successful St. Nicholas Fair in December (*see photos, p. 5*) the Craft Group is taking a well-earned rest from weekly gatherings, with plans to resume crafting and socializing on Tuesday, 13 February, at 9:30 AM in the parish hall. Please join us for two hours each week, where snacks and conversation are offered together with ideas for projects, or simply time to work on your own work already in progress as we get ready for our summer fair.



Help Re-Stock the KLS Community Food Pantry January: Canned fruit

February: Large juice (especially low sugar & 100% juice)



Paper towels, toilet paper, coffee (regular, decaf and instant), peanut butter and jelly, cake and brownie mixes and monetary donations are always welcome. Our next visit to the **Friendly Kitchen** is Friday, 26 January. Friendly Kitchen is one of St. Andrew's longest running outreach projects. The kitchen has one purpose -- to feed the hungry. Let JoAnn Hicks know if you would like to help. With lots of help, she says, it is an easy task.



Parish Updates Ordination to the Diaconate 9 December Joe Rose Funerals and Burials 4 November Annedore Hasenfuss 11 November 11 November Martha Moor Hill 9 December Lindsay Anne Roberts 10 December George Sutherland 18 December Anne Sarkisian



WILL YOU HELP?

Verger Anne Hall is looking for help at both 8 and 10 AM Sunday services, and would like to add your name to her rosters. Full training is provided and there is no age limit. Won't you consider serv-

ing St. Andrew's in one or more of the following ministries?

Acolytes Needed to serve as an altar assistant.

Ushers Needed to greet people with the order of worship and to guide them to the altar rail at communion.

Chalice Bearers Needed to serve the



Lectors Needed to read scripture or prayers of the people.

chalice at communion.

Please contact Anne to volunteer or if you

have any questions. She will add your name to serve with others, and will send out a schedule well in advance of your assignment.

Below, Christmas Eve 2023 – for more photos please see p. 11





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Faith and Issues resumes meeting on Zoom on Saturday mornings from 9:00-10:30, beginning on 13 January. We will offer Jay our feed-back, in person, on his incredible Elijah manuscript.

The suggested breakdown for our discussions over four weeks:

13 January - Chapters 1-11; 20 January - Chapters 12-16; 27 January - Chapters 17-20; 3 February - Chapters 21-23.

We will not meet 10 February. Beginning on 17 February, we will discuss a compelling Issue book,

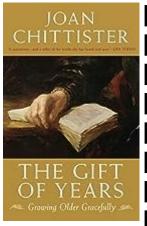
The Alignment Problem -- Machine Learning and Human Values by Brian Christian. This will be read and discussed roughly in its three main sections: Prophecy, Agency and Normativity (each a mystery to me at the moment).

Please be in touch via the St. Andrew's office if you'd like to read and join the discussions on "Elijah" or on any of the up-coming Faith and Issues books during the New Year! We'd love to see you! -- *Katrina Wagner*

Another book discussion group is also forming. Join us on 18 January at 4 PM to discuss Joan Chittester's *The Gift of Years* (available at Morgan Hill at a 15% discount or online). At this initial meeting we will also discuss the best day and time for monthly, in-person meetings as well as topics and authors for future meetings. Alison Seward has agreed to coordinate the group and lead the discussion of *The Gift of Years*, but we will be looking to rotate discussion leaders.

Tentatively named "Composing a Life" (from Mary Catherine Bateson), going forward the group will focus on a range of topics related to living well in the last decades of life. Topics and books will be chosen according to the interests of those who choose to participate. Participation is not limited to those in those last decades, but is for anyone who wants to read about, discuss and enact ideas for living a meaningful and purposeful life.

Please contact Alison Seward with questions.



<u>The Outreach Commission</u> meets in person on the first Thursday of even-numbered months to receive and consider suggestions for our *Last Sunday* offering. We have agreed that our efforts should be focused on humanitarian needs, both domestic and international; and we welcome suggestions from parishioners. At our meetings we discuss potential recipients and decide who among us will do the required research and the writing.

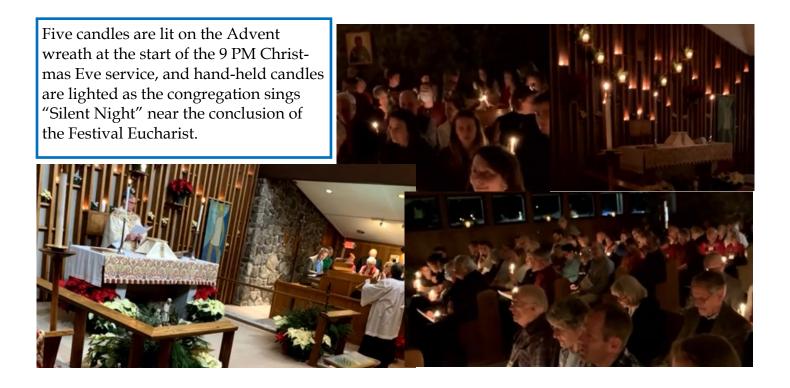
Committee members are Elizabeth Lowell, Jerry Coogan, Jim Mathias, Russ Potter, Tom Rubin, Becky Rylander and Karen Zurheide. Their contact information is in the 2022 St. Andrew's Parish Directory.

PAGE II



The Rev. Celeste Hemingson was preacher at Joe Rose's ordination to the diaconate at St. Andrew's Church on 9 December, with Bishop Rob Hirschfeld presiding.





ST. ANDREW'S

NETWORK NEWS

To the St. Andrew's Community,

I am pleased to introduce myself as the teacher who is working on starting a <u>**Montessori preschool**</u> in New London. The need for more early education options in our area has aligned with my drive to cultivate the most enriching learning community to match the most critical years in human development, and as you have likely heard by now, I am in conversation with church leadership about the possibility of housing the preschool at St. Andrew's. A brief description of the proposal can be found at https://files.constantcontact.com/ba1f7283201/98d522ae-36a9-4ce2-bc0c-a48571485e02.pdf.



A partnership between St. Andrew's and the school is attractive for several reasons. First, I find there is great alignment between the St. Andrew's mission and the mission of the school. Your community radiates inclusion, belonging, love, service and dedication to the most vulnerable members of our region. Likewise, the school is committed to enrolling a truly economically diverse cohort of children and families, making sure that those who otherwise would never have had the opportunity to access high-quality early education are welcomed into and supported within the school.

Second, St. Andrew's central location would enable the preschool to be fully embedded in the community. Families from all over the region would find comfort and belonging within the church building, and from Gould Road children would be able to enjoy walkable access to the town green, Tracy Memorial Library, Kidder-Cleveland-Clough trails, Fire Department, Barn Playhouse and Spring Ledge Farm. Regular opportunities for children to practice navigating and building connections to people and places in their community during the school day are foundational to the school design.

I understand that to some parishioners the idea of St. Andrew's bursting with young life Monday through Friday is exciting, while to others the idea of leasing part of the downstairs space to a school raises some concerns. Likewise, some parishioners are greatly acquainted with Montessori education already, while others are wondering what exactly the method entails. Please know that I am grateful to each of you for thoughtfully considering what a preschool at St. Andrew's would mean to you, your church, and your church's service within our community.

Entire lifetimes are built upon the roots we grow during the first six years of life, and I am elated that the school will be able to offer high-quality, enriching, connected, and awe-inspiring early education to the children of our region, regardless of socio-economic status. The possibility of St. Andrew's integral role in launching and supporting this community resource is thrilling.

I look forward to meeting many more of you over the course of the winter. Thank you again for considering this preschool vision alongside the spirit of St. Andrew's.



Here are a few links for those interested in learning more:

The school is affiliating with <u>https://wildflowerschools.org/</u>, a network of Montessori microschools that centers educational equity in their mission. <u>https://montessori-nw.org/about-montessori-education</u>, where I completed my Montessori 3- to 6-year-old training, has a plethora of resources to help orient folks to Montessori.

<u>https://montessoriguide.org/video-listing#primary</u> videos wonderfully illustrate the learning and living that takes place inside Montessori classrooms. *— Liz Niehaus* As part of our work and commitment to Becoming Beloved Community and following Jesus in the Way of Love, the Diocese approved a resolution at Convention to establish a Reparations Task Force. This land acknowledgment is offered as a way to help us repent and repair our relationships with indigenous peoples and the land and waters where we live. *We acknowledge the spiritual and physical connection the Pennacook, Abenaki, and Wabanaki Peoples have maintained to N'dakinna (N-DAH-kee-nah) and the aki (land), nebi (water), olakwika (flora), and awaasak (fauna) which the Episcopal*

Church of New Hampshire strives to steward today. We also acknowledge the hardships they continue to endure after the loss of unceded homelands. We

Another resolution passed at the November Diocesan Convention, proposed by the Commission for Earth Care, calls for reducing the production of and our use of plastics which have deeply and adversely impacted human and non-human health as well as planetary ecosys-

tems – not entirely unrelated to the land acknowledgment, above. Congregations will be asked to report back to the Commission (and Diocese) on progress towards achieving the goal.

Please do what you can at church and at home to reduce use of plastics!

A Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominion and glory, now and forever. Amen. *BCP*, *p.* 815

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in New London, NH

P.O. Box 294

52 Gould Road,

New London, NH 03257

The Vestry

<u>Wardens</u> Karen Zurheide (expires Jan. 2024)

Claire Pace (expires Jan. 2025)

Vestry Members

Term Expires Jan. 2024 Morris Edwards Alice Perry, Clerk Linda Potter

Term Expires Jan. 2026 Fifi Mitchell Nonie Reynders Nancy Rollins

Treasurer

Mike Quinn (expires Jan. 2026)

Parish Office

Office 603-526-6344 Fax 603-526-8623 Email office@standrewsnl.org

Rector

The Rev. Jay MacLeod Director Of Music William Ögmundson Dir. of Music for Children and Youth Nicole Densmore Verger

Anne Hall Parish Administrator Shelly Boucher



Resident Clergy The Rev. Lucretia Jevne The Rev. Canon Jim Ransom The Rev. Dr. Kathleen Rusnak The Rev. Leslie Smith The Rev. Charlie Tirrell The Rev. Dr. Katrina Wagner Term Expires Jan. 2025 Billy Kelly Russ Potter Russ Register

Western Convocation Delegates

Term Expires Jan. 2024 JoAnn Hicks Barbara Smith Susan Schweizer, alternate

Term Expires Jan. 2025 Marni Eaton Alice Perry

Committee Chairpersons

Altar Guild JoAnn Hicks Becky Rylander

Buildings & Grounds Harvey Best

Craft Group Rosie Best Barbara Smith

Eucharistic Ministers Anne Hall Finance & Investments Mike Quinn

Hospitality Janet Miller Haines

Newsletter Alice Perry – Editor

Outreach Becky Rylander

Stewardship TBA