



ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ANNUAL REPORT

2025

Our Mission:

We are called to be disciples of Christ, revealing his life, love, and light to the world.

Our Vision:

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church is a welcoming, inclusive faith family, sharing and teaching the love of Jesus Christ through our worship, actions, and outreach: transforming ourselves and the world.

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
16275 Pomerado Road
Poway, CA 92064

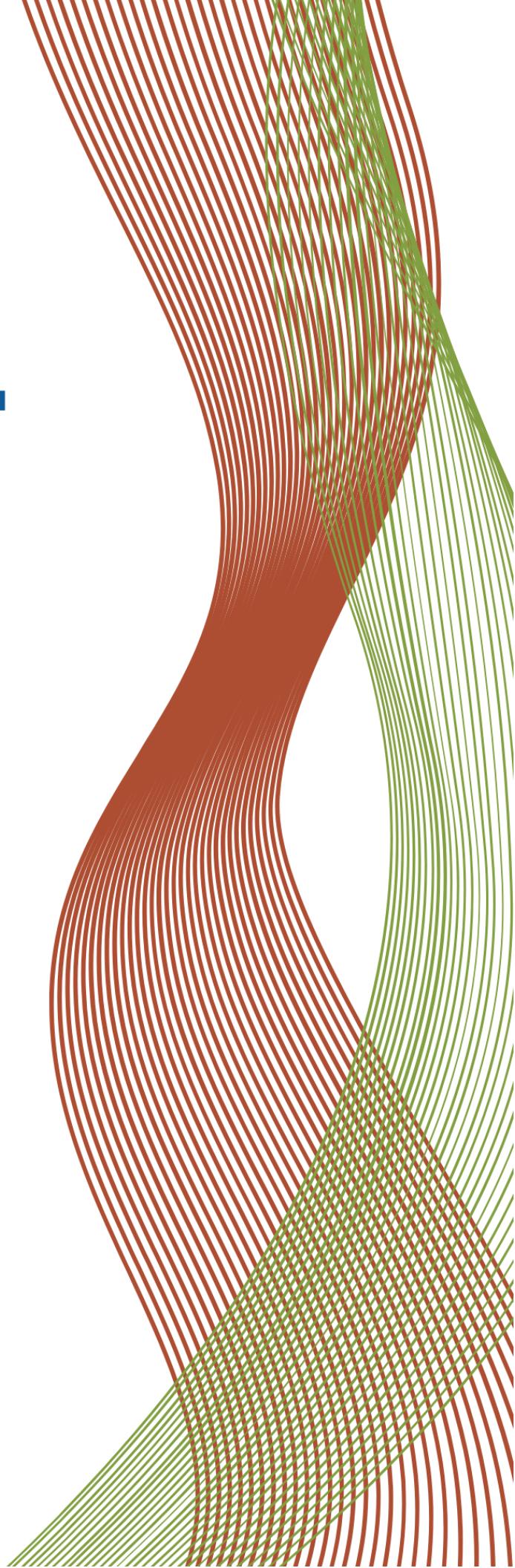


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LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

THE REV. NINA BACAS

What is the kingdom of heaven like? One time when they asked him, he said, *"The kingdom of heaven is like when a person took the tiniest of seeds, a grain of mustard seed, a seed so small that if I had one on my finger you would not be able to see it. The person put the tiny seed in the ground, and it began to grow. The shrub grew so big it was like a little tree, and the birds of the air came and they made their nests there."*

—The Parable of the Mustard Seed, Jerome Berryman, Godly Play

As you look through our 2025 annual report, you will get a glimpse of the kingdom of heaven sprouting at St. Bart's. Our little tree in God's kingdom has so many nests that express the work of our faith community. With such variety, everyone can find their calling here at St. Bart's. My sense is that the happiness index is very high at our church.

Just like the seed in the parable, we can't help but grow. Since I joined you, our average weekend attendance has been increasing annually by about 20 worshippers. We have five newcomer brunches per year, and I collect fresh newcomer cards almost every Sunday. Our new members generously contribute their time, treasure, and talent to St. Bart's. This is excellent news and a sign of a healthy church. But for 2026, my message to you is this: The financial vitality of St. Bart's depends on our rate of growth increasing.

Here's why: As with all churches, the pandemic was hard on St. Bart's. The change in leadership during that time made its impact even stronger. Not everyone has returned to church, and while overall attendance is increasing, it is still at less than prepandemic levels. Because of this, every year since then, our annual giving has not fully covered the church's expenses, and we have been carrying a budget deficit.

Thankfully, we have a savings account from years when there was excess funding (imagine that!). We have been dipping into this reserve account to cover our deficits, but in 2026, it will be nearly depleted. By 2027-28, we will need to have a stewardship campaign that completely meets the funding needs of the church. I believe we can do this through accelerated church growth in 2026.

I hold this belief because I believe in this church and in all of you. I'm not asking for more money. I'm asking for you all to help grow the church by gathering in more people. This shouldn't be a burdensome task, because you know as well as I do how wonderful our church is. Newcomers make comments like "I didn't know a church could be so kind," "The vision statement on the wall says it all," and "I came to see if your banner statement is really true, and it is." People are happily finding their nests and flourishing at St. Bart's. We simply need more people to flock here.

I ask that you go to the website store, or the table on the patio, and order items with our church logo. Wear them proudly. It may seem like a small action, but spreading our name into the community is key to our growth. (When you wear them, though, be sure to be on your best behavior!) Invite your friends, neighbors, and family. Don't be shy about why you love St. Bart's and how they might love this church as well. If they seem skittish about worship, then invite them to a concert or to the pet blessing. I met a newcomer last Sunday who found us in just this way. Take part in fulfilling the plans laid out in our strategic vision document—it's packed with ideas that just need some organization and leadership.

While we are in a financially pivotal year, the overall news is good and hopeful. Spread the word so that more people can be a part of God's growing story at St. Bart's, and the church can continue its good work into the future.

Faithfully yours,

The Rev. Mother Nina Bacas
January 2026

LETTER FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

JERRY GRAY

Last year, 2025, was my second year as Senior Warden and my third year on the Vestry.

Thank you to each Vestry member who navigated the duties of financial and fiduciary responsibilities of parish governance, while working through the ongoing secular challenges of being followers of Jesus Christ. And on behalf of the Vestry, I thank all of you for giving your time, energy, and financial support to St. Bart's. YOU ARE THE CHURCH.

Items of note:

- The pledge goal for 2026 is \$980,000, which is an increase of 9% from the 2025 pledge goal of \$900,000. This increase is to cover long-term maintenance reserves, rising utility bills, and cost-of-living allowances for our clergy and staff. Pledging receipts to date are short of our goal, and this deficit will present a challenge to the Finance Committee and Vestry. Solutions that may mean reducing or deferring projects are being considered. If you have not yet pledged, please do so! Through our faith in Christ and our discernment, we can successfully meet the growth needs of St. Bart's.
- Our commitment to environmental stewardship led to increasing our solar system capacity to 100 kW, which resulted in savings of approximately \$40,000 in utility charges last year. Since the system was installed, we have eliminated 379 **tons** of CO₂ emissions. Additionally, the eight gas-furnace and air-conditioning units in the education building, all 23 years old, were replaced with electric heat pumps, eliminating additional CO₂ emissions and improving safety.
- The Gala and Rummage Sale were great successes, reaching new revenue records for disbursements to our Outreach partners.
- The strategic plan for St. Bart's future, which is composed of three pillars—Grow the Church, Community Connections, and Resource Management—is being implemented. We need your participation in one or more of the pillars! Keep an eye out in the eNews and Adult Forums for information on how you can participate.
- The Learning Treehouse Preschool is fully operational; please refer young families to them.
- Curate Jacob Robling was ordained, and St. Bart's now has two full-time priests.
- Property maintenance projects completed, among others, included replacing the rotted wood trellises with sails, adding parking lot signage, repairing wood trellises in the upper parking lot, and conducting an emergency repair of a broken water pipe.
- The long-term maintenance reserve deficit has been prioritized.
- Through generous gifts, the sacristy was remodeled, and the sanctuary was enhanced with the addition of a tabernacle, a gradine, and organ-cabinet extensions.



Faithfully yours,

Jerry Gray

January 2026

FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP REPORTS

ANNALISA PARKER (TREASURER), BILL ANGUS, TERRY MCCUNE, ANNE HAND, JUDY MACEMON

Treasurer's Report: This report is intended to accompany the financial statements of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Poway, CA, for the year ending December 31, 2025. (These financial statements are preliminary and subject to normal year-end adjustments.)

Net Operating Loss: 2025 net operating loss was (\$29,121), compared to a budgeted loss of (\$47,797). That represents a favorable variance of \$18,676 versus budget.

Income: 2025 income was \$1,165,391, which is \$33,280 higher than budgeted. Of note, unpledged member and pledge contributions were \$16,612 greater than budgeted. Facilities use fees, concert series income, and other income were also greater than budgeted.

Operating Expenses: 2025 operating expenses were \$1,194,512, which exceeded budget by \$14,604. One of the largest factors was a sharp increase in water rates during 2025, which resulted in utility costs exceeding budget by \$8,227.

Vestry Designated Reserves: St. Bart's funds its deficits with Vestry Designated Reserves, which consist primarily of surpluses from prior years. After funding the 2025 deficit of (\$29,121), the reserve balance as of December 31, 2025, was \$30,553. In January 2026, St. Bart's received a memorial gift of \$15,945, which the Vestry designated to the reserves. This increased the reserve balance to \$46,498.

Ministry Funds: Ministry Funds totaled \$185,809 in net assets as of December 31, 2025. These funds represent net assets dedicated to Outreach and specific-purpose ministries at St. Bart's and reflect the consolidation of funds formerly known as Outreach Funds, Working Funds, and Rector Funds. Significant Ministry Fund balances include General Outreach, \$75,388; Rector's Pastoral Needs, \$43,336; Quilting Ministry, \$15,233; Youth Mission, \$8,736; Flower Guild, \$6,822; Thanksgiving Baskets, \$4,490; and Altar Guild, \$3,682.

Capital Funds: Capital Funds reported net assets less fixed assets totaling \$2,506,235 as of December 31, 2025, of which \$2,408,629 is held in cash, government money market, or CDs. These funds include Campus Redevelopment (HFBF)-Restricted, \$1,889,724; Campus Redevelopment (HFBF)-Designated, \$218,206; Long-Term Maintenance Reserve, \$247,840; and Columbarium Perpetual Care, \$120,465, with an additional \$30,000 designated for construction of new niches.

Endowment & Investment Fund: The Endowment & Investment Fund reported total net assets of \$667,608 at year end. This includes \$95,655 with donor restrictions and \$571,952 in the Vestry Designated Endowment Fund. The endowment achieved a 10.40% net time-weighted return for 2025.

2026 Budget Overview: The attached 2026 budget anticipates total income of \$1,170,108, an increase of \$4,718 (0.04%) over 2025 actual income, and total expenses of \$1,207,243, an increase of \$12,731 (1.1%). The resulting projected operating loss is (\$37,135).

The Vestry has chosen to move forward with the deficit budget for 2026, as it provides a basic and sustainable level of staffing to support Mother Nina Bacas, our church programs, and the ongoing maintenance of our facilities. The projected deficit will be funded from the St. Bart's Vestry Designated Reserve, which currently stands at \$46,498 following the January 2026 memorial gift. Please note that after the Vestry's approval of the budget, additional pledges continue to be received, which are expected to reduce the projected deficit.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
2026 BUDGET (with 2025 actual and budget)

	BUDGET	ACTUAL	BUDGET	DIFFERENCE
	2026	2025	2025	2025 Actual vs. 2025 Budget
INCOME				
Pledge Income	895,720	879,075	882,000	(2,925)
Other Support/Contributions	77,000	98,212	73,000	25,212
Music Income	33,000	29,505	35,759	(6,254)
Formation Income	-	3,332	-	3,332
Facility Use Income	100,092	99,021	96,000	3,021
Other Income	1,200	6,814	3,000	3,814
Transfers from Other Funds	63,096	49,432	42,352	7,080
TOTAL INCOME	1,170,108	1,165,391	1,132,111	33,280
EXPENSES				
Pastoral & Worship Expenses	262,253	267,031	254,665	12,366
Music Expenses	204,063	210,099	195,043	15,056
Congregational Life Expenses	50,193	49,096	58,800	(9,704)
Christian Formation Expenses	24,738	26,196	18,748	7,448
Administrative Expenses	266,974	245,248	261,800	(16,552)
Maint. & Utilities Expenses	284,658	266,434	260,444	5,990
Episcopal Church Obligations	114,364	130,408	130,408	-
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,207,243	1,194,512	1,179,908	14,604
OPERATING SURPLUS (LOSS)	(37,135)	(29,121)	(47,797)	18,676

Finance Committee: The Finance Committee is a working committee that reports to the Vestry and supports the Treasurer. Its purpose is to provide guidance, analysis, and expertise in making decisions that will have financial consequences for the church. In 2025, the committee continued to develop and approve accounting policies to ensure appropriate internal controls, implemented the diocese's audit guidelines, and provided oversight to ensure donations were recorded as intended by the donor. On a monthly basis, the committee reviewed the financial results, compiled by the controller, to ensure that funds were being disbursed in accordance with Vestry authorizations and donor requests. Accounting policies and procedures approved by the Vestry provided guidance to the controller and accounting staff as financial transactions were recorded.

Counting Ministry: Donations provide St. Bartholomew's Church the ability to offer ministries, improve our services and campus, and invest in our future. Members of the Counting Team account for cash and checks received at the various church services and report amounts to the finance staff. In coordination with the accounting staff, procedures are improved each year to ensure that member donations are handled with care, accounted for accurately, and posted to funds as designated by the donor. In 2025, two members of the team continued to meet each week to perform the count, document checks received, and deposit the cash at St. Bart's bank.

BIBLE & BOOK STUDIES

JERRY BLANTON, BOB CAPETTINI, MIKE JEWETT, MARK PATZMAN, FATHER JACOB ROBLING,
ANNE SNYDER, DEACON BILL ZETTINGER

Tuesday Morning Book Review: This group meets every Tuesday morning at Starbucks (at the corner of Rancho Bernardo Rd. and Pomerado Rd.) to fellowship and to read and discuss books related to Christianity and The Episcopal Church. New members are always welcome. In 2025, the group consisted of four or five St. Bart's members; book selections included *Seven Men and Seven Women*, by Eric Metaxas, and *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, by John Bergsma, with Bishop Michael Curry's *Love Is the Way* ending the year.

Tuesday Night Education for Ministry (EfM): EfM is a four-year theological education program grounded in the belief that every baptized Christian is called to ministry. Through weekly small-group seminars, participants learn to reflect theologically on Scripture, tradition, and contemporary life. The curriculum follows a four-year cycle: Hebrew Bible, New Testament, Church History, and Theology. In 2025, EfM introduced its first new curriculum in nearly 15 years, retaining its core strengths while offering timely updates. The 2025-26 EfM group at St. Bart's, led by certified co-mentors Cynthia McCormick and Mark Patzman, included six participants, all members of St. Bart's.

Zoom Bible Study: This class meets on Wednesday mornings via Zoom. The 12-week spring 2025 course, "The History & Archaeology of the Bible," included participants not only from St. Bart's but from other churches in the San Diego diocese and from Oregon, Maryland, and the UK. Average attendance was 30, with over 100 on the interest list. The group was on hiatus in the fall, as class leader Bob Capettini and his wife, Jane, relocated to North Carolina in November. Once Bob settles in with a new church, classes will resume and become bicoastal. Exact timing is yet to be determined.

Podcast & Evensong Bible Study: A Year with the Bible: In 2025, St. Bart's launched The Fig Tree Podcast, which quickly established a steady audience of weekly listeners that continued to grow throughout the year. Hosted by Father Jacob Robling, Mother Nina Bacas, and Mike Jewett, it began with a thoughtful and accessible survey of the books of the Bible, offering listeners a structured yet engaging entry point into Scripture. Alongside this core series, bonus episodes explored a range of pressing theological and pastoral topics such as "Who Is My Neighbor?" and "Meeting Christ in the Poor." As the podcast matured, it branched out into more extended conversations focused on specific biblical books, enriched by guest appearances from scholars such as Dr. Elisabeth Koenig and Dr. John-Luke Addison. The combination of biblical scholarship, pastoral reflection, and practical application helped to shape The Fig Tree Podcast into a dynamic and well-rounded resource for listeners seeking deeper engagement with faith and Scripture.

In conjunction with the podcast, the church began a Wednesday night Evensong-Potluck-Bible Study series that offered a carefully curated and in-depth exploration of the books of the Bible within a richly communal and liturgical setting. Each gathering opened with a beautiful service of Choral Evensong, led by the Schola Cantorum, that grounded the evening in prayer, Scripture, and sacred music. Following the service, participants shared a potluck meal that fostered fellowship and conversation, and then moved into a guided Bible study built upon themes introduced in the podcast.

Wednesday Night Women's Bible Study: This group meets on Wednesday evenings both in person and via Zoom and is open to all teenage girls and women. Topics focus on making the Bible relevant in daily life—together, participants learn interesting biblical facts, share their perspectives on what that knowledge means to them personally, and encourage each other in their faith. Book selections in 2025 included *An Intimate Good: A Skeptical Christian Mystic in Conversation with Teresa of Avila*, by Laurel Mathewson, and *Lazarus Awakening: Discovering the Life You Were Always Meant to Live*, by Joanna Weaver. The 2026 winter session begins on January 14 with *Turn Your Eyes: A Bible Study on the Psalms*, by Winfree Brisley and Sharonda Cooper.

Men's Ministry: The St. Bart's Men's Ministry is an open, friendly group that meets on Friday mornings, with a focus on service as well as on fellowship, study, and discussion to deepen faith. The group is led by a different volunteer each week. In 2025, members gathered in person on the first Friday of each month to prepare, pack, and deliver 100 lunches for Interfaith Community Services in Escondido. Meetings on the other Fridays were held virtually, with some participants joining from out of state.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

JOE SNODGRASS (JR. WARDEN), MIKE JEWETT, MARK DAVIS

Property Committee: The St. Bart's Property Committee works with the facilities manager and both the Finance Committee and Vestry to repair and improve the buildings, parking lots, and landscaping across the whole campus. The following major projects were completed in 2025:

- The worn-out tops of the old wooden trellises that run from the chapel to the sanctuary, and also into the lower parking lot, were removed and replaced with sail shades, which provide better protection from the sun and rain. The much-newer trellis tops in the upper parking lot were also repaired, as they were starting to noticeably sag only a few years after installation. The original designers and construction company agreed to subsidize the repair and redesign costs, so the church now has much-better-built trellis tops in that lot at fairly little expense.
- The biggest project of the year was removing eight air-conditioning units from the roof of the education building and replacing them with heat pumps, requiring the setup of a large crane in the upper parking lot. Upgrading to heat pumps eliminated the natural gas heaters and enabled the building to be heated efficiently with electricity. St. Bart's has very significant solar generation, so using extra solar capacity in this way also results in financial savings.
- Much of the carpeting in the Sunday school part of the education building, including the carpeting on the staircase leading up to the top floor, was also replaced.
- In June, the main underground pipe that leads from St. Bart's water meter to the education building burst at a 90° fitting under the lower parking lot. This required excavating about five feet down, having plumbers do the required repairs, and then having a commercial asphalt company build up and compact five feet of dirt, gravel, and asphalt to completely restore that part of the parking lot.
- In August, through a generous gift from a donor, a major improvement to our main worship space was completed. The same craftsman who did all the fine woodworking in the chapel and sanctuary built a gradine, which was installed behind the sanctuary altar, and extended the wooden facades above the organ-speaker cabinets to reach the top of the cross.
- In November, St. Bart's received its federal solar rebate of over \$50,000 for installing additional solar panels in 2024. The committee completed the prefilings authorization in January and filed for the actual rebate in the spring. The funds have been applied to future long-term maintenance.



In 2026, the Property Committee plans to complete stucco repairs near the chapel and repaint the steps and handrails leading to the main church area from the lower parking lot. A spring project will be to add more support for the climbing vines between the upper parking lot and the sanctuary. A water barrier will also be installed on the back of the wall where the flower beds are watered, and repairs are planned to the irrigation piping throughout the campus to save as much as possible on water bills.

Architectural Committee: The Architectural Committee coordinates and provides committee and as-needed consultant review and input to the Vestry on master planning, feasibility, and construction administration for potential campus building and grounds improvement projects. In 2025, the committee continued to modify conceptual and phasing options for the approved parish community center and future campus development to integrate with St. Bart's updated strategic plan. In 2026, the chair and committee will continue to develop alternative conceptual modification and phasing options for the parish community center and future campus development.



Columbarium: During 2025, in addition to continued physical maintenance of the columbarium, a review of the fee structure for columbarium spaces was completed, which verified that St. Bart's was charging less for its services than the current usual fees in the local area. Starting on January 1, 2026, sales prices for new contracts were increased, with plans for similar price increases phased in over the next two years, until rates reach parity with other similar churches in the area. Plans for 2026 are to keep improving and expanding the columbarium, working in collaboration with the Property Committee.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

MOTHER NINA BACAS, FATHER ISAIAH DAU, ELLA CRANE, FATHER JACOB ROBLING



You may have noticed the noise level at our 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist. It means that the Children's and Youth Ministry is thriving at St. Bart's! It is a growing ministry that supports our families at all ages and stages of life. Children and youth are active throughout the year with worship, acolyting, choristers, and loads of special programming.

Sunday School & Children's Chapel: We had an influx of new and returning members, along with devoted volunteers, in 2025. Together with Father Isaiah Dau, they brought great energy to our church. Father Isaiah and another volunteer served as our Godly Play storytellers at our 9 a.m. Sunday School. And Children's Chapel, held during the 10 a.m. Choral Eucharist, became a hub not only for formation but also for service to our parish—the "Chapel Kids" were an active bunch who wanted to make a difference in our community! They made posters welcoming new babies and new pets. They assembled gifts bags for

homebound seniors on Easter, St. Bart's Day, and Christmas. They sent care packages to our members who are away at college and made care bags for our local campuses.

Cherub Chapel: New in 2025 was the Cherub Chapel for toddlers and preschoolers. Ella Crane joined our staff as a Sunday-only children's assistant, and she led Cherub Chapel with great enthusiasm, with the help of one or two volunteers. The Cherubs started each week with an age-appropriate Bible story that included song and movement, followed by playroom time. Our Cherub population grew monthly!



Youth CREW: Under the guidance of Father Jacob Robling and committed volunteers, St. Bart's 6th-12th graders had a busy and wonderful year, too. Every week of the program year, our youth gathered at Youth CREW on Wednesday evenings for food, games, community, and prayer, and at our Youth Forum on Sunday mornings for a lesson and discussion about faith. Once a month, as part of their regular Wednesday meetings, the youth made

100 bag lunches to feed those in need at Interfaith Community Services. In August, thanks to generous donations by St. Bart's parishioners, they took a trip to Universal Studios to celebrate the beginning of the new school year. Youth CREW parties were also held throughout the year—for the New Year, the beginning of the program year, Halloween, and Christmas. Our youth also participated in exciting events with our diocese. Several went to Camp Stevens in February for the Epiphany Retreat, and in March attended the annual Nightwatch overnight lock-in with games, food, and lots of prayer. In June, three of our youth and Father Jacob joined the diocesan youth delegation on a mission to Ecuador. And in the fall, six of our youth went through the diocesan Collaborative Confirmation program to prepare to be confirmed in April 2026.



Our Children's and Youth Ministry has much to be proud of, and we thank you for your continued loving support as we move into 2026!

COMMUNICATIONS

DR. JOHN-LUKE ADDISON, DENISE CESOLINI, JUDY MACEMON, AKIKO TAMANO

The purpose of St. Bart's Communications Ministry is to clearly and faithfully share the life of the church. The team connects people to worship, community, and service by telling the story of God at work among us. Through thoughtful, welcoming communication, we support the church's mission, strengthen relationships, and invite others to participate in what God is doing.

In 2025, the Communications Ministry promoted parish events through a variety of print and digital channels, such as local newspapers, classifieds, and social media, including a monthly advertisement in the *Scripps Ranch News*. The team also displayed street banners and distributed flyers for major music events, parish gatherings, and liturgical feasts, increasing St. Bart's visibility within the surrounding community.

The church's website and social media platforms were regularly updated to ensure access to timely information. The ministry also focused on outreach to local businesses and community organizations by inviting them to participate in parish events such as the Blessing of the Animals. Additionally, the Musical Theatre Summer Camp and Rummage Sale were successfully promoted through advertising in local school publications and neighborhood social media pages. These combined efforts strengthened awareness, participation, and community connection throughout 2025.

In 2026, our Communications Ministry aspires to strengthen collaboration and wisely use creative tools to enhance clarity and consistency across all platforms, so that both longtime members and newcomers feel informed, welcomed, and invited into deeper participation in the life and mission of the church.

CURSILLO

MIKE JEWETT, LARRY SALVADORI

Cursillo, which stands for a short course in Christianity, was started in Spain in the 1940s to renew and enrich laypeople's faith. By building stronger relationships with God and fellow believers and moving faith from a purely intellectual to a heart-centered experience, members of the Cursillo community are inspired to become apostles in their own home and work environments.

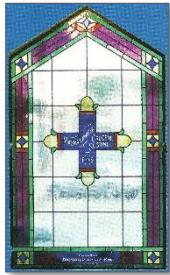
Annual Cursillo Weekends, which bring together a diverse group of people in worship and fellowship, are a key element of the Cursillo Ministry. San Diego Episcopal Cursillo held a successful Cursillo Weekend in February 2025 at the Whispering Winds conference center in Julian, with talks and group discussions focused on the Cursillo tripod of piety, study, and apostolic action. Mike Jewett was also appointed president of Cursillo Secretariat, a leadership group that includes both clergy and laypeople.

Another great Cursillo Weekend is planned for 2026, with hopes for more involvement from the St. Bart's parish.



DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

SANDY MORRISON



The Daughters of the King is an order for women who undertake a Rule of Life, incorporating the Rule of Prayer and the Rule of Service. Members participate daily in spreading Christ's kingdom through prayer and service, and wear the Cross of the Order daily as a constant reminder of their vows. The Ruth and Naomi Chapter of the Daughters of the King has been an active part of St. Bart's parish life for 33 years. The group meets twice a month for prayer and study and serves the parish and community in multiple ministries. In 2025, there were four active members, with a Daughter from Florida also attending meetings while spending the winter in our parish.

In January, members began reading *Praying with Julian of Norwich* and wrote rosaries based on each meditation. In September, a prayer from *Women's Uncommon Prayers* was revised for the Pastoral Care Ministry. This prayer is now given out at pastoral care visits and lets recipients know that the chapter prays for them regularly. And in October, the Daughters of the King acquired its own meeting space, a small room in the education building that is happily shared with other small groups when needed. October 18 was also the celebration of the 33rd anniversary of the Ruth and Naomi Chapter; that weekend, Mother Nina Bacas gave a brief overview of the Order at all services, and several women stopped by the Daughters' information table to chat and receive information about the Order. The year ended with special prayers for immigrants, refugees, and those seeking asylum.

In 2026, the chapter plans to create a memorial in the small garden area near the education building to honor Daughters who have entered God's presence; participate in the ministry fair; have the Daughters of the King meeting room dedicated by Mother Nina Bacas; find additional ways to support St. Bart's clergy; attend more diocesan Daughters of the King events; and possibly host a rosary prayer workshop.

FIBER ARTS

SALLY LYONS-ABBOTT

The Fiber Arts Ministry fosters fellowship and connection through creative expression. By gathering regularly to knit, crochet, needlepoint, and create together, the group provides a welcoming "third place" where members build relationships, share stories, and support one another in faith and life. Its work nurtures community and strengthens the bonds that make St. Bart's a spiritual home.

In 2025, the Fiber Arts Ministry met monthly with a consistent group of three to five participants. The regular rhythm of meeting together strengthened relationships and sustained participants through the ordinary challenges and joys of life. While the primary focus remained fellowship, the group explored potential creative projects and ways to extend its work beyond the circle. The year concluded with a strong sense of continuity, trust, and shared purpose, providing a stable foundation for gentle growth in the year ahead.

In 2026, the Fiber Arts Ministry hopes to welcome more participants of all experience levels and backgrounds. In addition to maintaining its focus on fellowship and offering a space for creativity and connection, the group also hopes to explore meaningful ways to use its members' creative gifts to support the life of the church and the wider community through shared service projects.



FELLOWSHIP

BETSY & DAVID GOFF, FATHER JACOB ROBLING, MIKE JEWETT, JD COWART

Fellowship Groups: Fellowship Groups are St. Bart's way of experiencing the fellowship of the body of Christ, helping members form deeper relationships and friendships and grow together as a church. These groups are the ideal place for those looking for connection or just a safe space to be in—there are different groups based on age and interests.

In 2025, our Fellowship Groups continued to grow! Kicking off in February, groups of 10-14 people met regularly and reported a continued sense of deepened friendships and strengthened connections. We had 11 active groups with 90 participants in all. Different groups had different focuses, with some focused on Bible study and prayer and others mainly on fellowship and building community. Some walked together, some had meals together, others had game nights, and still others went on outings.

Young Adults Fellowship: Our Young Adults Fellowship, led by Father Jacob Robling, continued in 2025 as part of our Fellowship Groups program. Over the year, members had coffee and meals, enjoyed Halloween and Christmas parties, and welcomed several new members.

Let's Go Be the Church+: St. Bart's lives into the phrase "All are welcome, no exceptions!" in many ways—few more so than through our fellowship group of LGBTQ+ parishioners, which grew to two dozen members in 2025. For those—out or not—looking to share their Queer Christian joy in a safe, loving space, this group offers a warm haven. In Pride Month, the group had its "Out on the Town" dinner and an "Anticipating Christmas" party. In July, members carried the St. Bart's banner in the San Diego Pride Parade.

In 2026, St. Bart's looks forward to the continued growth of its Fellowship Groups. Plans are in the works to reorganize and reshuffle some groups, and to find even more leaders so more groups can be added as our church grows. As we move into a new year, we are excited to see the creative ideas for fellowship that parishioners come up with!



FUNDRAISING FOR OUTREACH

ANNE HAND, JUDY MACEMON, CONNIE CROSS, WIDNEY HAWTHORNE, PAULA KRINER

Martin Luther King Jr. believed that "life's persistent and most urgent question is 'What are you doing for others?'" St. Bart's Outreach Ministry and partners—Interfaith Community Services, Episcopal Community Services, Project Mercy, RefugeeNet, Vida Joven de Mexico, and Miramar Navy-Marine Corps Relief Service, and several others—are wonderful examples of God's spirit of giving and doing for others, providing food, shelter, and resources to those in need within our community and beyond. Following the closure of the St. Bart's Thrift Shop, which for over 50 years supported our Outreach partners and activities, the church envisioned new, creative ways to ensure continued funding for this vital ministry. The two mainstays of these fundraising efforts are an annual Gala and Rummage Sale.

Gala: The fourth annual Gala in May 2025 was an evening of fellowship and fun for a great cause, including games, raffles, and live and silent auctions. Thanks to the generosity of our parishioners and friends of St. Bart's, the event raised \$80,000 for Outreach.

A fifth annual Gala with a "Tropical Nights" theme is planned for April 11, 2026, at the Country Club of Rancho Bernardo. It promises to be a joyous and philanthropic evening! Tickets will be available for sale online at stbartschurch.org/gala.



Rummage Sale: St. Bart's third annual Rummage Sale, a two-day community sale event, was successfully hosted on October 3-4, 2025. A Preview Night was also held for St. Bart's members on October 2. As in years past, goals were to raise money for our Outreach partners, bring the parish together in service to God and the community, and provide good-quality, affordable items in the spirit of the St. Bart's Thrift Shop.



The sale, which was marketed through social media, other faith communities, and local newspapers, drew large numbers of customers from the surrounding community. Keeping prices low to provide the best thrifting bargains and entice sales proved a highly effective strategy—so much inventory was sold on the first day that many team members went home to find more items to price so they could fill the merchandise tables for the second sale day!

The 2025 sale—our first two-day event—was a great success, largely due to the wonderful donations and volunteer efforts of St. Bart's members. Sale proceeds netted \$14,358.

Another two-day sale is planned for September 25–26, 2026, with a Preview Night on September 24.

HOSPITALITY & COFFEE HOUR

JUDY MACEMON, WIDNEY HAWTHORNE

The Hospitality Ministry is the hands and feet of Christ, showing love, kindness, and generosity to every visitor, newcomer, and church member at all-parish meal events and memorial receptions. Hospitality teams plan and host these events with the help of many volunteers.

All-Parish Events: Events coordinated by the Hospitality Ministry in 2025 included:

- Zydeco Shrove Tuesday celebration with Cajun food and pancake station
- Lent and Advent soup suppers
- Easter Vigil wine-and-cheese reception and Easter Sunday breakfast following each service
- Hot breakfast to celebrate Bishop Susan Brown Snook's annual visit
- Deaconate and priesthood ordination receptions for Father Jacob Robling
- Newcomer brunches with the rector held every 8-10 weeks



Alphabet Coffee Hour: A coffee hour following Sunday morning worship is a tradition in The Episcopal Church. In 2025, St. Bart's continued its Alphabet Coffee Hour, which expands the usual donut offering and creates more time for socializing after Sunday morning worship. Each month, parishioners with last names beginning with an assigned alphabet range provided baked goods and savory offerings.

In 2026, the Hospitality Ministry aims to expand its leadership team and volunteers so it can connect more members of our parish community.

MUSIC

DR. JOHN-LUKE ADDISON, TIM MCLELLAN, ANNA LETTANG

The Music Ministry at St. Bart's glorifies God and enriches worship through musical excellence, beauty, and prayerful leadership. Through diverse ensembles and a wide range of liturgical offerings, the ministry supports the church year, enhances major feast days and services, and invites both the parish and community into deeper spiritual engagement through sacred music.

In 2025, the Music Ministry experienced another year of vibrant growth, artistic excellence, and deepened immersion in both worship and community life. From regular liturgical offerings to ambitious concerts, education programs, and international touring, music continued to serve as a central expression of prayer, beauty, and outreach at St. Bart's.

The music staff—John-Luke Addison, Tim McLellan, Sean McCormac, Hannah Arevalo, Danielle Evans, Dr. Seiran Sohn, and Anna Lettang—provided consistent, high-quality musical leadership throughout the year, supporting and collaborating with our dedicated volunteer singers and instrumentalists. Together, this team sustained a broad range of ensembles and offerings that enriched worship across the liturgical calendar.

Ensembles: Our core ensembles remained active and strong. The 30-plus member Parish Choir continued as the principal choral ensemble, singing weekly Sunday liturgies, major feast days, and special services. The Schola Cantorum offered contemplative repertoire, including plainsong, Taizé, Renaissance motets, and other meditative

works. Our Children's Choir School, led by Tim McLellan and following the RSCM America program, sang monthly at Sunday services and continued to nurture young musicians in a liturgical context. The Handbell Ensemble, Strings and Brass Ensembles, and rotating woodwinds and guitarists supported both Sunday worship and special services, while Celtic woodwinds and guitarists provided music for our weekly Saturday Celtic liturgies.



Concerts: The 2025 concert season was especially robust and diverse. Offerings included the Section Lead Soirée, the world premiere of *Precious Stones*, Haydn's *The Creation*, Mauder's *From Olivet to Calvary*, *Chess* (the musical), a Disney Cabaret Night, Rutter's *Requiem*, the annual *Messiah Sing-Along*, and the world premiere of *A Christmas Cantata*. These performances featured collaborations with the Greater San Diego Music Coterie, the Poway Symphonette, and guest artists including pianist Bryan Verhoye, organists Dr. Chris Cook and Dr. Bruce Neswick, and baritone Michael Sokol.

A particularly meaningful highlight was the recognition of Tim McLellan, who was honored for his 20 years of service to St. Bart's with the presentation of a St. Bartholomew icon. To celebrate this milestone musically, he conducted Rutter's *Requiem*.

Our Friends of Music program continued to thrive, growing to over 120 subscribers. Members enjoyed special benefits, including the annual garden party, graciously hosted in 2025 by Anne Hand and featuring a private concert by section leaders.

Youth Programs: Education and youth engagement expanded significantly with the launch of a new Musical Theatre Summer Camp. Thirty children ages 8-14 participated in a two-week camp that culminated in a production of *Matilda*, supported by staff Anna Lettang, Ella Crane, Father Jacob Robling, and John-Luke Addison, with technical assistance from Allen Adams and Vernon Hunt. The camp was successful both artistically and financially.

New Zealand Tour: In July, 34 parishioners and singers traveled to New Zealand for a North Island tour, with 20 continuing to the South Island. The North Island tour included Auckland, Rotorua, and Napier. It concluded in Wellington with a four-day residency at the Cathedral of St. Paul, which included Evensong services, a Sunday Eucharist, and two concerts, one in collaboration with the cathedral choir and Director of Music Michael Stewart. Planning is now underway for a June 2027 performance tour of Italy, including cathedral performances in Venice, Florence, and Rome.

Community Outreach: Community engagement remained a priority throughout the year. Highlights included caroling in the local community, participation in the Seven Oaks Talent Show, singing Evensong at St. Paul's Cathedral in San Diego, and supporting parish life through a Thanksgiving meal.



Together, these endeavors reflect a year marked by faithful service, artistic excellence, education, and joyful collaboration, affirming the vital role of music in St. Bart's worship and outreach.

In 2026, the Music Ministry aims to continue strengthening its role in worship, education, and community life. Goals include expanding the Musical Theatre Summer Camp to two sessions to serve a wider age range, broadening weekly liturgical music offerings, and growing participation across all ensembles. We also seek to build on the success of our concert series and Friends of Music program, foster new artistic collaborations, and continue using music as a meaningful bridge between parish and community.

OUTREACH

FATHER JACOB ROBLING

The Outreach Team helps St. Bart's fulfill Jesus's call to love and serve our neighbors. Through the generosity of parishioners, this ministry provides grants to various service organizations, holds monthly drives to collect needed supplies for our partners, and sends St. Bart's out into the community to act as the hands and feet of Jesus. In 2025, the Outreach Team had an impactful year not only in our surrounding neighborhoods and city but also globally.

Community and Diocesan Partnerships: The Outreach Team continued to support many established community partners, such as Interfaith Community Services, Episcopal Community Services, and RefugeeNet. This year, two new partnerships were added: Comunidad de Luz, a shelter founded by our diocese for women and children in Tijuana, and Miramar Navy / Marine Corps

Relief, an organization that provides emergency funds to families in military service. The team also supported St. Mark's in City Heights and St. Luke's in North Park—two parishes in our diocese that are making a real difference in their communities—as well as our diocesan camp, Camp Stevens.



Drives: Over the course of the year, the Outreach Team held drives to provide ministries such as the Vida Joven orphanages, St. Mark's food pantry, RefugeeNet, Project Mercy, and Interfaith Community Services with vital supplies to help their communities. Thanks to parishioners' generosity, families in need were blessed with full Thanksgiving dinners through the Thanksgiving Baskets drive, and with food and personal hygiene items through the Reverse Advent drive.

Global Outreach: International causes the Outreach Team supported were Epiphanie School in Loranette, Haiti, the Vida Joven network of orphanages in Tijuana, and the Project Mercy house-build program in Tijuana. The Epiphanie School was in need of a new water system—without access to clean water, the World Food Program would have had to cut aid to the school. Thankfully, a St. Bart's family partnered with the Outreach Team to make a very generous gift that enabled the school to construct a new water system. And in May, through

Project Mercy, Outreach members and other St. Bart's parishioners teamed up for the sixth time to build a house in Tijuana for a family in need.

In 2026, the Outreach Team hopes to continue supporting its partners and to add a couple of new ones. Beyond the international partners listed above, the team is looking at supporting the Palestine Children's Relief Fund, which provides assistance to Palestinian children in need of prosthetics. Also under consideration is the introduction of a food pantry at St. Bart's in partnership with Feeding San Diego, to assist members of our community who are food insecure.

2025 ST. BART'S OUTREACH BY THE NUMBERS



PEACE & JUSTICE

SUSAN McCORMICK-DAVIS, JILL HENDERSON, PAUL & IVY CONRY, PARTH DOMKE

In accordance with our baptismal covenant, the Peace & Justice (P&J) Ministry seeks to strive for justice and peace among all people. Justice issues to focus on as a parish are identified through education, action, and community engagement.

P&J began 2025 with three core work groups focused on gun violence prevention, racial justice, and environmental stewardship. Midyear, a fourth work group on migrant issues was formed. Strengthened leadership led to an increase in members supporting this ministry's missional work—by year end, the email interest list had grown from 10 to 16, and average monthly meeting attendance increased to 9. In October, P&J also began presenting monthly reports at Vestry meetings to increase its visibility and offer an opportunity for questions and discussion.

Gun Violence Prevention: The Gun Violence Prevention work group assists the St. Bart's congregation in making their homes, place of worship, and community safe from gun violence, and helps effect common-sense changes in laws and policies to decrease gun violence.

Accomplishments in 2025 included providing gun safety information and resources to the congregation; preparing an application for a California State Nonprofit Security Grant Program award to improve facilities security and emergency response at St. Bart's; promoting Wear Orange Sunday in observance of National Gun Violence Awareness Day on June 15; and screening the PBS News gun violence prevention film *Run, Hide, Fight: Growing Up Under the Gun*. The group also represented St. Bart's on the diocesan Gun Safety Working Group, hosting a gun safety information table at the diocesan annual convention, assisting with the 2025 Nationwide Vigil to End Gun Violence at St. Paul's Cathedral, and presenting forums on what congregations can do to prevent gun violence at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in February and for the Lutheran Pacifica Synod gun violence prevention working group in October.

In 2026, the group plans to host a Sunday forum on gun safety and gun violence prevention, assist with implementing the St. Bart's Nonprofit Security Grant Program award (if received), and participate in local and national gun violence awareness and prevention activities.

Racial Justice: The Racial Justice work group focuses on education, awareness building, and action on issues of racism guided by faith, not only in our parish and diocese but also nationally. In 2025, the group hosted a racial justice table at the annual diocesan convention and continued to organize and promote diocesan study groups for Sacred Ground, The Episcopal Church's dialogue series on race, including training a new facilitator. At the national level, group leaders collaborated with The Episcopal Church's Sacred Ground coordinator and other organizers to expand the program ecumenically. Other areas of focus included working with the diocese to support the 2026 relaunch of Community Conversations, based on the Living Room Conversations program, and researching resources for film discussion events on Christian nationalism and other relevant topics in 2026.

Because of the intersectionality of racial justice and migrant ministry issues, the Racial Justice group was instrumental in developing St. Bart's new Migrant Issues work group, helping to organize, develop, and promote its activities.

Migrant Issues: This group began to organize in June 2025, identifying new leadership and members. In November, the group held a Sunday forum on migrant ministry, featuring a video of Bishop Susan Brown Snook and Bishop Craig Loya (Minnesota) discussing theological aspects of immigration; EDSD Migrant Missioner Robert Vivar was present to offer support and answer questions. Attendees received a handout with theological points and reflection questions, and a discussion ensued. In December, a Sunday postcard-signing event was held on the

church patio to support bills H.R. 1061 and S. 455, which would restore protections from immigration enforcement for sensitive locations like churches. Several members also attended or registered for January 2026 training sessions for volunteers who wish to stand with immigrants going to court hearings.

In 2026, the Migrant Issues group plans to organize a tour of Comunidad de Luz for interested parishioners, and to begin regular visits to Border Church, an outdoor church that meets on both sides of the Tijuana-San Diego border, and invite other churches to join in. Also being explored are discussion events of culturally popular films, such as the recent movie *Superman*, with a message around the theme of migrant issues.

Environmental Stewardship Community: The Environmental Stewardship Community work group seeks to maintain a sustainable world so future generations may benefit from and enjoy God's abundant creation. Spurred by the core belief that the common values of all faith traditions call us to care for creation and act compassionately for the most vulnerable through environmental justice work, the group focuses on educating people, fostering connections, and acting to protect and restore the planet and promote enduring solutions to the climate crisis.

In 2025, the group collaborated with the EDS Creation Care Community to host a spring book study of *The Serviceberry*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer, and a fall book study of *When No Thing Works*, by Norma Wong, as well as a fall roundtable in October.

August saw the launch of the inaugural edition of *Creation Care News*, a newsletter for St. Bart's parishioners focused on environmental issues.



The Season of Creation, a monthlong ecumenical celebration of God's creation that takes place every September and culminates with the Blessing of the Animals on the Feast of St. Francis, was a highlight of the year. Worship services during the month featured special liturgy focused on Creation Care, and the Environmental Stewardship Community hosted a table with prayer, educational, and advocacy resources. Events held throughout the month included a raffle, a recycling drive for hard-to-recycle plastics, a forum on sustainability at St. Bart's, a community conversation on climate change, and a field trip to the Kumeyaay Ipa Interpretive Center. Capping off the celebration was a special visit from Critter Encounters and several of its animal ambassadors, hosted by the Children's Ministry. Our visitors—which included a tegu, a great horned owl, and a fennec fox—were a huge hit with St. Bart's parishioners!



In 2026, the Environmental Stewardship Community plans to continue its educational and advocacy work throughout the year, with a particular focus on the Season of Creation, as well as to implement an ongoing recycling program at St. Bart's.

PRAYER & PASTORAL CARE

NANCY PETERSON

The Pastoral Care Ministry at St. Bart's serves parishioners through prayer, personal contact, fellowship, and communion. Services provided by this ministry in 2025 included:

Prayer Chain: The Prayer Chain is composed of clergy and parishioners who pray daily for members of the congregation and their loved ones who were sick, dying, or in any need. Prayer requests are received and disseminated by the Pastoral Care Team liaison.

Pastoral Care Team: The Pastoral Care Team is composed of clergy and a few select parishioners. Members meet twice a month to discuss pastoral care needs within the congregation, and assignments are given for visits, phone calls, and mailing cards. The team also maintains the Prayers of the People list, which changes weekly.

Saints Alive! Luncheon: A Saints Alive! luncheon was held in June in celebration of Mother's Day and Father's Day, as well as our seniors at St. Bart's.



Casa de las Campanas: The clergy and Pastoral Care Team liaison facilitated a communion service monthly for St. Bart's members at Casa, a continuing care community near the church, and anyone else who wished to attend. A dinner was also held at a restaurant with Casa parishioners to foster fellowship.

In 2026, the Pastoral Care Team hopes to establish a Ministry of Saints, which will involve video interviews of older St. Bart's parishioners, with special emphasis on their relationship with God and how the Holy Spirit has worked in their lives. Other plans under consideration include hosting a table at the Casa Fair to welcome new people to our services and expanding the Pastoral Care Team.

PRAYERS & SQUARES

HOLLY GRAY

The mission of Prayers and Squares is to "cover" people who are in crisis with quilts encompassed with words of prayer. Members create lap-sized quilts for men, women, youth and children; recipients are often St. Bart's members but can also be friends, neighbors, family members, or coworkers. The group meets twice a month and periodically holds workshops to learn a new quilt pattern or revisit an old pattern from the group's "library."



Prayers and Squares' motto is "It's not about the quilt, it's all about the prayers." Each quilt is blessed by our clergy at a church service, and then the congregation is asked to tie knots in the ties that hold the quilt together, using words of prayer requested by the recipients. This ministry holds to three tenets: 1) the recipient must be asked if they want to receive a quilt; 2) it's important that the recipient provide specific words of prayer; 3) there is never a monetary charge for a quilt.

In 2025, 33 quilts were gifted to individuals, and quilts were also created for caregivers at a Vida Joven orphanage—one of a St. Bart's Outreach partners—in Mexico. Prayers and Squares hopes to continue this project in 2026, gifting quilts to the caregivers at other Vida Joven orphanages, as well as to provide quilts to the Moores Cancer Center for patients undergoing chemo or radiation treatment.

WELCOME & CONNECT

DONNA WATSON



The Welcome and Connect Ministry was created in 2023 to intentionally grow St. Bart's membership. The Welcome and Connect team looks at the church through the eyes of first-time visitors to improve our welcome to newcomers, and works in tandem with clergy, staff, and other ministries to increase St. Bart's visibility in the community.

In 2025, the church's website and social media presence were supplemented with notices in the local papers for special events open to the public, and all printed materials were kept up to date and conveniently displayed around the church property. First-time visitors were welcomed with a large red envelope containing a letter from Mother Nina

Bacas and information about St. Bart's, the upcoming music season, and offerings for children and youth. The team also made follow-up calls to welcome newcomers and reconnect with returning members.

Sunday morning newcomer brunches and newcomer dinners, attended by staff and Vestry members, were also held to allow people new to St. Bart's an opportunity to connect with the church and with each other.

WISDOM CIRCLE

SHIRLEY BUNCH, PATTY FUQUA

The Wisdom Circle was formed in 2022 to give seniors an opportunity to share stories and enjoy fellowship in a casual lunch setting. This ministry enables members to form close bonds, pray and look out for each other, and be there for friends in need. All senior newcomers are contacted and invited to participate.

In 2025, meetings were held on the first and third Tuesdays of each month; members could come at will, with no obligations or sign-ups. Before each meeting, reminder emails were sent to about 35 people, and about 15 came regularly. Each participant brought their own brown-bag lunch, and individual members took turns providing cookies; the church supplied drinks and paper products. On the second Tuesday of each month, after enjoying lunch together, members made 100 peanut-butter-sandwich lunches to donate to Interfaith Community Services, to be distributed to homeless clients. A Christmas party and gift exchange—a fun annual tradition—was held at the end of the year.

Other 2025 senior activities affiliated with the Wisdom Circle included chair yoga classes, taught by a St. Bart's member every Tuesday morning for a nominal fee, and a ministry to provide transportation to church activities.

WORSHIP GUILDS

NANCY PETERSON, BOBBIE DAVIS, SHARON ROSS

Altar Guild: The Altar Guild serves an integral role in all worship services, setting up and cleaning up for communion, maintaining the candles, and handling the vestments and altar paraments. The group ended 2025 with 20 members. In September, Cyndi McLelland stepped down as Altar Guild Director after over three years of service, and Nancy Peterson took on the role. Through generous donations this past year, the Altar Guild was gifted white, purple, and blue vestments and paraments, as well as two candelabras. The working sacristy was also beautifully remodeled by Christine Cowart. In 2026, the Altar Guild hopes to bring a tabernacle and sanctuary candles to the chapel, and to continue its faithful service maintaining the beauty of the church and the sacredness of the Holy Eucharist.

Flower Guild: The Flower Guild enhances St. Bart's worship services through flower arrangements and greenery that reflect God's bountiful creation. No flower experience is required to join; volunteers receive training and work with a partner, and the flowers



turn out beautifully regardless of experience level. Each member arranges flowers four or five times a year on dates of their choosing.

In 2025, the Flower Guild's 14 members created 42 weeks of flower arrangements for the sanctuary and chapel, as well as decorating with lilies for Easter and poinsettias for Christmas. They also repurposed Sunday's flowers each week, creating several small arrangements to be delivered during pastoral care visits. They also provided the centerpieces for the Outreach Gala.

In 2026, parishioners will continue to be offered the opportunity to sponsor flowers on particular weekends in honor/rememberance of family, friends, or special occasions, as well to make special flower offerings for Easter and Christmas. The Flower Guild also hopes to add new members to this fun, creative ministry.

WORSHIP TEAMS

NEENIE CASTNER, LANCE CLEVELAND, DAN CRANE, JANICE MILLER, STEVE NATOLI

Acolytes: Acolytes at St. Bart's serve as thurifers, crucifer, torchbearers, and gospel-bearer, as well as carrying the occasional banner, to support our worship services. Additionally, a more senior acolyte assists the deacon and

verger in setting the table for communion. Junior acolytes (2nd-4th grade) serve at Children's Chapel and sometimes in the main services. This ministry enables our youth to learn about service to God and St. Bart's and to develop communication, teamwork, and responsibility.



St. Bart's had 20 acolytes who were active throughout 2025. Our senior acolyte graduated, and another youth member assumed the role of senior acolyte and serve as thurifer when needed, and six more acolytes were added. All acolytes underwent continued training, accepting greater responsibility as they grew. This year, they also had the opportunity to serve at a very special service: Father Jacob Robling's ordination.

Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEMs): Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEMs) assist the deacon and vergers in preparing the altar for communion, as well as in distributing communion more efficiently—a particularly important function at St. Bart’s, where we have a large community and multiple services. Another major responsibility for LEMs at St. Bart’s is the appropriate dispensation of the common cup. They are also often called on to step in for acolytes, bearing the torches, gospel, or crucifix in our processions. They perform their duties at ordinary worship as well as occasional services like baptisms and funerals.

In 2025, St. Bart’s had 14 active LEMs who served at all regular weekend services as well as other extraordinary services. Our LEM corps proved ready to serve whenever called upon and continues to be a blessing to St. Bart’s.



Lectors: At St. Bart’s, lectors serve with the understanding that the role is not just to “read” assigned lessons, but rather to bring them to life. One of many gifts this ministry offers is an opportunity for lectors to deepen their spiritual lives as they study and prepare each week’s lessons. By taking time for reflection and practice, they shift from being readers to proclaimers.

In 2025, there were 40 parishioners who served at all the weekly worship services, plus Evensong and other special services. Lectors were scheduled to read once or twice every three months, and those who were available to read for the 5 p.m. Saturday and 8 a.m. Sunday services had the opportunity to be scheduled more often.

Greeters: The Greeters Ministry is dedicated to bringing to life St. Bart’s motto: “All are welcome, no exceptions.” Greeters’ main purpose is to make people feel welcome and comfortable. This includes giving friendly greetings, answering questions, giving directions, and escorting people as needed. They also enroll newcomers and are equipped to inform people of the many opportunities to connect and get involved at St. Bart’s. Also part of the Greeters Ministry are the Bartmobile drivers, who shuttle congregants from the lower parking lot up to the sanctuary in a three-seater golf cart at every 10 a.m. Sunday service.

In 2025, the Greeters Ministry had 15 trained volunteers, most of whom served one service a month. The ministry achieved its goal of having greeters at all Sunday services. At the 5 p.m. Saturday services, ushers served a dual role, acting as both greeters and ushers. There were also six drivers certified to drive the Bartmobile, with four driving once a month and the other two available as substitutes.

Ushers: The Ushers Ministry is a sacred calling dedicated to serving and enhancing the worship service. Ushers are responsible for such duties as counting the official attendance at each service, bringing up the bread and wine at offertory, taking up the collection, and directing worshippers to the altar for communion. Ushers are dedicated to assisting congregants and clergy in all ways that will ensure a holy and seamless worship experience.



In 2025, the Ushers Ministry had 30 volunteers, most of whom served at one service per month. The ministry achieved its goal of having multiple ushers scheduled for each service.

Vergers: Vergers are lay ministers who assist the clergy in organizing and conducting public worship and ensuring services run smoothly. In 2025, St. Bart’s had a solid core of five “Vergers Fellows” who served at a multitude of services, both low and high—from our weekly Eucharists to baptisms, funerals, and Father Jacob Robling’s ordinations to the diaconate and then to the priesthood. Our vergers also continued to work with Lay Eucharistic Ministers and helped train new acolytes as they came on board. St. Bart’s Verger Team is one of the largest in the diocese and lent assistance to St. Paul’s Cathedral on special occasions when asked.