

CHURCH OF THE HOLY COMMUNION 2014 ANNUAL STAFF REPORT



January 25, 2015

*Church of the Holy Communion,
an Episcopal Church in the center of Memphis,
seeks to be a sacred presence, grounded in the servant ministry of Jesus,
offering spiritual growth opportunities for all.*



“Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine...”

Dear Friends:

Can you believe that we have been together for eighteen months? In some ways, I feel as though I have only just arrived at Holy Communion. In other ways, it feels as though we have been together for years. Whether long or short, it remains my great and abiding privilege to be your priest.

It is a great time to be at Holy Communion! The Year of our Lord 2014 saw a complete overhaul of parish communications and newcomer ministry, along with the introduction of an entirely new Compline service on Wednesday evenings led by your youth and offered as a gift to the parish. We rethought our approach to children’s ministry, renovated the third floor of the Cheney Building, and commissioned a fabulous new set of Sarum blue vestments for Advent. We hired several new members of the parish staff, and committed ourselves to the formation of a new priest who took her vows on the Tenth Day of Christmas.

All of our accomplishments aside, my greatest joy in the last year has been watching a spirit of hope and expectation wash over us all. I can see this spirit in the eyes of children processing out to children’s chapel. I can feel it in the warmth of adults greeting each other after the dismissal. And, I can hear it in the laughter and joy that fills our hallways.

Do you remember when our summer concert was rained out in June? We all pitched in to move the concert indoors; not one member of the audience left, and we all had a great story to tell. Thus is the spirit of Holy Communion. As always, however, the continued growth and vitality of our congregation depends on us. Each one of us has a role to play in engaging with parish life, in giving of both our time and our money to support the church, and in inviting others to get connected with this remarkable fellowship.

Holy Communion’s new year is promising to be one of its best. Already, we know that we will be bringing the Episcopal Service Corps to Memphis, through an historic partnership with our friends at Grace-St. Luke’s. We know that we will be hosting a major sacred arts festival in May, re-launching adult Christian formation in February, and holding the first annual Variety Show and Chili Cook-Off in January. If this is what we know already, just think what God has yet to reveal!

I conclude our weekly staff meetings with a prayer from the Letter to the Ephesians: “Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine...” My prayer for our parish in the year ahead is that we will continue to be astounded by what God can do in and through us for the advancement of the Kingdom.



Yours in faith,

The Reverend Sandy Webb
Priest-in-Charge



DEACON'S REPORT

The Reverend Dr. Randy McCloy | *Deacon*

Today, I see an attitude of renewed interest, activity, and responsiveness in our congregation; I see more people greeting each other in the aisles and in the parish hall, and I sense more people caring about the health and purpose of our church. I feel an increasing affirmation of our clergy, not only myself and Sandy, but also our newest priest, Hester (witness the huge, spontaneous applause shown her when I referenced her in my sermon the day after her ordination).

Although our Pastoral care teams have been kept very busy by an ever-increasing number of people on our prayer lists, and although our staff and clergy have planned and executed a large number of funeral services within our parish, these matters have been handled with promptness, courtesy, and respect for the dignity of all concerned. It has been an honor for me to work with all who help minister to the needy among us. I often hear from parishioners who are extremely grateful for the friendship and support they have received from Church of Holy Communion.

I believe the eagerness, the dedication, and the hard work of our staff is at an all-time high, and we are very fortunate to have our current staff team in place. I encourage everyone to thank them whenever possible. As our leader has repeatedly told us, "this is a great time to be at Holy Communion."

CURATE'S REPORT

The Reverend Hester Mathes | *Curate*

I am immensely grateful to all of you for welcoming me and my family to Holy Communion with such amazing hospitality. You have shepherded me through the first steps in ordained ministry during my six months as a transitional Deacon. I have learned a great deal, and continue to learn from the strong team of ordained and lay leaders in this parish.

My ordination to the priesthood on January 3rd at Holy Communion will be a celebration that I will forever cherish. The support and encouragement that I received from members of this community, both in person and in spirit, was truly humbling. I feel very blessed to be your Curate.

As we begin the new year together, I look forward to continued ministry with our young adult group, and being a part of welcoming five young adult interns to our inaugural year of "City of Soul: Episcopal Service Corps in Memphis." Grace-St. Luke's and Holy Communion will be partnering with MIFA, Bridges, The Shelby County Public Defenders Office, St. Columba Conference Center, and Emmanuel Center to place these interns in direct service to the poor and underserved of our area. We will also be developing ways to invite the entire congregation to participate in hands-on, relational outreach with our ministry partners as a part of this initiative.

Energy is swirling as we celebrate the gifts and talents of our members in The Variety Show and Chili Cook-off at the end of this month, kick-off multiple book study and discipleship groups, and prepare for The Sacred Arts Festival in May. As a wise man has been known to say around these parts of town, "This is a GREAT time to be at Holy Communion!"



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY REPORT

Alice Hollis | *Minister to Children*

The Children's ministry includes the Nursery, Sunday formation classes, the Children's Chapel, and other special programming throughout the year. It also offers support for the children's choir and directs children's activities during Church Family Together.

The Nursery has five active employees. In addition to its usual Sunday morning hours, it is also available on special occasions. We average 8-12 per Sunday, but have had as many as 20 on special occasions.

The Children's Chapel (ages 3-2nd grade) averages 24 children. Jeanne Russell offers church music, a lesson and a related craft for the children during that time. We've added the position of "banner bearer" this year to accommodate older children who still want to participate once a month. We must have at least one adult in the room with Jeanne and, this year, we have encouraged all adults, not just current parents, to help in this ministry.

Sunday formation breaks down as follows:

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd had two levels at the beginning of the formation year. **Level I** (Good Shepherd atrium) is designed for ages 3-6. Paula Payne, a Montessori kindergarten teacher, was recruited by our new Minister to Children to replace our former lead catechist who is now in seminary. Paula and Martha Klee, have been averaging 15-16 children per Sunday. This group is thriving. We are searching for one or two adults to train as catechists so we can ensure this class's continuance into the future. **Level II** (True Vine atrium) is for 1st-3rd grades. This group averages 16-18 students per week. Due to the catechists' unexpected need for a transition in November, we were left with no trained catechists to carry this class into the Winter/Spring semester. A new curriculum has been developed particularly for this age group at Holy Communion and will be headed by Jennifer Vasil, assisted by at least five rotating volunteers. It will maintain an "atrium" feeling, but has added an in-depth look at significant Bible stories.

Crossings is a class especially designed for our 4th-5th graders here at CHC, which began this fall. So far, we have had very good feedback with this group, which started out with three children and has had as many as nine. The class is led by Katie and Ward Collier with assistance from Evelyn McGahey.

YOUTH MINISTRY REPORT

Matthew Arehart | *Minister to Youth*

The youth ministry program here at Holy Communion encompasses all activities offered for youth in grades six through twelve. Activities include middle and high school Sunday formation, Wednesday evening worship and fellowship (WoW), Sunday evening activities (EYC), various trips and retreats, Youth Confirmation, Youth Pilgrimage and fundraising, Christmas luminaries, Trunk-or-Treat, and special programming for youth throughout the year. If we had to choose one word to summarize our year it would be change. We continue to make changes to our program in hopes of constantly growing and adapting to the ever changing world. This theme of change also continuously appears in our conversations and lessons dealing with how we as the youth can effect change in our society.



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In early 2014, we made a huge change by moving the youth room to room 323 in the Greenwood building. While some miss the indestructible quality of the old youth room, the advantage of having central heating and air, windows, and other amenities of the 21st century have been a huge benefit. We quickly made the new space our own by adding some paint, curtains, new furniture, and even an EYC mural! Feel free to stop by anytime for a tour of our space!

We continued to adapt our Sunday morning formation offerings, reducing the number of classes from three to two classes, one for middle school and one for high school. Both classes reported steady attendance figures, and the middle school class started to show an increase during the fall of 2014. I would attribute this increase mostly to the dedication and commitment of the teachers of this class and also to the newly developed lesson plans written solely for the youth of Holy Communion.

Worship on Wednesday (WoW) continued with the success that it had in 2013. We continue to offer dinner to any youth that is available during CFT and have added a service of Compline in the Chapel. All three clergy of Holy Communion, various youth leaders and volunteers, and high school seniors have shared reflections during this beautiful service.

Holy Communion supported the youth in another Youth Pilgrimage this past year. Between May 26 and June 4, 21 youth and 5 adults traveled to Germany and Luxembourg while they explored their faith and searched for God in new ways.

Overall, 2014 was a great year in the youth ministry department, and we look forward to continuing to change and grow!

PARISH LIFE REPORT

Kate Schurch | *Minister of Hospitality*

Looking back at 2014, one who has been a member of Church of the Holy Communion for some time recognizes that many new activities have occurred over the past year. But longtime members and recent newcomers alike also know there are events in the natural life of any church that occur year after year; only the numbers change. Our Church Registers reflect these numbers for the year past:

Confirmed	Received	Reaffirmed	Baptized	Married	Buried	Transferred in	Transferred out
20	1	2	13	4	17	18	26*

**Note: 9 of these were due to relocations outside of TN*

The Vestry began 2014 by identifying four work areas to be their priorities for the year, and Newcomers Ministry was one of those. In response, a Newcomers Leadership Team was formed comprised of Sarah Cowan, Vicki Park, Mandy Rough, Amy O'Dell and Kendra Propst to work with me on the development of an intentional and engaging Newcomers Ministry. Highlights of our initiatives include:

- The training and implementation of a Greeting Team for Sundays and special events
- The initiation of a twice-a-year (spring and fall) Newcomers Reception in the home of a parishioner
- The development of a "Welcome to our Neighborhood" postcard campaign directed to MLGW utility lists of new residents in our three surrounding zip code areas



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- The creation and approval of a budget to refurbish the reception area, with the assistance of Linda Kay McCloy, to make it a more welcoming and comfortable space for guests

In addition to the Newcomers Ministry, there were other exciting events in 2014 that expanded the borders of hospitality within Holy Communion, namely:

- Gailor Guild “Souper Bowl” Sunday
- Brotherhood of St. Andrew’s Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
- Parish Picnic preceded by Eucharist on the Lawn, which included a baptism performed at our outdoor baptismal font
- All Saints’ Sunday Shrimp Dinner
- ECW-hosted “Downton Abbey” High Tea
- Evensong, followed by Parish Advent Party, that opened the season of Advent at Holy Communion

Last, but certainly not the least in our parish life, are the Outreach Ministry activities that have had an impact both inside and outside our walls:

- **Pastoral Care:** A total of 90 Pastoral Care team members made 2,611 contacts in 2014, reaching a total of 199 people. *Coordinators: Marilyn Arensberg and Heather Stemmler*
- **Knitting Ministry:** Over the past year, 25 knitters made 41 new shawls and prayer bears, and 44 were given out. In addition, 45 caps, scarves, dolls and other items were distributed to various outreach organizations. *Coordinator: Linda Christopher*
- **St. Luke’s UMC Food Pantry:** On Thursday mornings in January, March, July and October, volunteers continued our long-standing commitment to St. Luke’s Molly O’Kelly Food Pantry by filling brown paper bags with groceries for the hungry referred by MIFA. *Coordinator: Jeanne Crawford*
- **Outreach Grants:** In June, the Outreach Grants Allocations Committee announced that \$72,035 from Holy Communion’s endowment fund was approved by the Vestry for distribution to 18 of the 22 organizations who had submitted applications.
- **Stop Hunger Now:** In August, volunteers responded to Bill Falvey’s call for help with the Memphis Rotary Club’s “Stop Hunger Now” project at the Cook Convention Center in honor of the organization’s 100th anniversary.

All of these varied ministry activities show the depth of love for Holy Communion of the people who made them happen. Our parish life is enriched by all who have been involved in ways both big and small to make this a welcoming and sacred place in the center of Memphis. We are better for your presence among us.

MUSIC AND LITURGY REPORT

Dr. David Perry Ouzts | *Minister of Music and Liturgy*
Jeremy T. Warner | *Assistant Minister of Music*

“So has the church in liturgy and song...born witness to the truth in every tongue, Alleluia!” (Hymn 420, *The Hymnal 1982*) On Choir Appreciation Sunday each May, the congregation sings these empowering words of 20th century British hymnist Fred Pratt Green. Weekly throughout the year, members of our choirs and liturgical ministries faithfully bear this witness as they share in some of the most fulfilling op-



portunities for service in our parish.

In 2014 the Parish Choir returned to a regular schedule of singing each Sunday morning, while the Motet Choir explored a new ministry of offering several Choral Evensongs each semester, all of which have been well-received. The Children’s Choir sings one Sunday per month, often singing two anthems, and the Taizé Schola continues to lead music for the 5:30 service every other Sunday.

For the first time, the Holy Communion Ringers participated in “River City Ring,” a local handbell festival held each March and sponsored by the Memphis chapter of Handbell Musicians of America. Wearing new royal blue polo shirts with the CHC logo, our ringers enjoyed an entire day of making music with 15 other Memphis area handbell choirs.

Our liturgical ministries are led by dedicated parishioners for whom we are most grateful: Altar Guild (Milton Rogers, Sarah Doyle), Acolytes (Barton Lynch, John Lewis, Neely Mallory, Tim McCormack), Eucharistic Ministers (Bill Falvey, Louis Jehl), Lectors (Mike Murphy), and Ushers (Tom Cowens). These groups provide vital assistance for all our worship services, and these leaders spend many hours facilitating our liturgies from behind the scenes.

Pratt Green ends his profound text with “And may God give us faith to sing always, Alleluia!” May it ever be so at Church of the Holy Communion.

RECREATION AND WELLNESS REPORT

Julie Fike | *Director of Recreation and Wellness*

Holy Communion offers team sports for children and youth in baseball/softball, spring and fall soccer, basketball and kickball. We host practices for our teams on our field and in our gym; and we host league games. We offer Health & Wellness classes year round. Below is a summary of the Holy Communion teams for 2014 and the classes that we offered.

2014 Holy Communion Team Recap

Sport	# of teams	# of children/youth
Baseball/Softball	5 teams	66
Spring Soccer	24 teams	291
Fall Co-Ed Kickball	3 teams	29
Fall Soccer	17 teams	215
Winter 2014-2015 Basketball	22 teams	197
Totals for 2014	71 teams	798

Health & Wellness Classes

Class	# of classes per week
Tai Chi	2
Yoga	4
Zumba	3
Small Group Personal Training	1
Pilates	2



Summer Conditioning

In June and July, Holy Communion hosted a conditioning program for 5th through 8th graders. Forty one students got up early enough to hit the track at 7:00 a.m. twice a week for the conditioning program.

Summer Soccer Clinic

CBU coach, Clint Browne, led a soccer clinic at Holy Communion for 84 children ages 5-12 in August.

Holiday Basketball Clinic

St. Mary's Varsity basketball coach, Emily Owens, led our one day winter basketball clinic for 15 children over the holiday break.

Book It 5K

Holy Communion hosted our 4th annual 5K event on September 20 that benefited the Emmanuel Center and Shelby County Books from Birth. The race raised \$30,550.00, which was split evenly between our beneficiaries. There were 465 people that signed up for the 5K, 41 children that signed up for the 200-meter dash and 58 that signed up either as spirit runners, to donate or to sponsor an Emmanuel Center child to participate in the race. We had 95 volunteers, 42 race sponsors, 11 in-kind race sponsors and 12 donated door prizes. As part of the Book It 5K, we offered the Book It Health Challenge, an 8-week walking/running training program. Seven teams and 62 people competed for points and prizes. Robert Propst also led a men's walking/running group that met on the Greenline for a devotional and a run once a week.

Zumba-thons

Holy Communion hosted two community-wide Zumba-thons. The first had 185 in attendance and raised \$1,260.00 for the Susan G. Komen Foundation. The second Zumba-thon had over 190 in attendance and raised \$1,500.00 for Cystic Fibrosis.

OFFICE OF OPERATIONS REPORT

Mary Beth Darrow | *Director of Operations*

The office of the Director of Operations schedules and coordinates all events, meetings, classes and receptions at Church of the Holy Communion. This includes booking the facility space on the church calendar and customizing setup needs for each event. These activities would not be possible without the dedication and work of our facility staff. We would like to recognize and thank Martha Earnest, Marshall Fonda, Buford Harbin, Ann Morehead, Jim Sawicki and Jamie Shaw. Their attention to detail in cleaning, setups, security and general maintenance allow us to take pride in the church we cherish.

This year we will continue to enhance the elegance, beauty, and refreshment variety of our receptions and hospitality following each service.

Last year we renovated the third floor of the Parish Building and are completing the finishing touches. The upstairs rooms now have a fresh, new and updated look that is attractive and inviting for holding our formation classes, meetings and a variety of other gatherings. We encourage and invite people and organizations in the community to use this new space and think of it as a welcoming place where they will want to gather to meet.



Last year we upgraded our database software in an effort to disseminate information more quickly through electronic media. Among the added features of this upgrade are the ability to view the church's scheduled of events on our website and the ability to register for classes, recreation, special events and service opportunities online. We invite members to register on our system to be able to view and update their personal profile. These new features do not compromise in any way the privacy and security of our data, and member information continues to be kept secure.

We continue our partnership with St. Mary's Episcopal School with whom we share the time and talent of Wayne Roland, St. Mary's maintenance manager, and his staff. We are grateful for their skill and professionalism in maintaining our facilities.

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Cara Ellen Modisett | *Minister of Communication*

In spring of 2014, I came to Memphis to interview for the position of Minister of Communication, was offered the position and accepted. I began part-time in May and full-time in mid-August/September; at that point, Katie Clark's title shifted to Assistant Minister of Communication. Her creative design work and commitment has been invaluable as we've re-visioned Holy Communion's approach to communication, both internal and external.

At the diocesan/national level, we have been involved in strategic communications for our Episcopal Service Corps collaboration with Grace-St. Luke's. I have been involved with a social media project for General Convention with Society of St. John the Evangelist, and have been invited to be the Wednesday contributing editor for Episcopal Cafe, beginning in January 2015.

We are building relationships with local, regional and national media. We have scheduled four Checking on the Arts spots on WKNO in 2014-2015. Father Sandy's writings have been placed in *The Living Church* and the *Commercial Appeal* online. Additional media coverage has included *4Memphis*, the Episcopal News Service, Episcopal Cafe, the *Commercial Appeal* (print) and the Lipscomb-Pitts Breakfast Club radio show.

Katie Clark's projects in early 2014 included early re-visioning of the monthly *Communicator*, increased work in social media, the redesign of welcome cards for pews and the completion of the parish membership directory. In the summer, we redesigned and reorganized the monthly *Communicator* to be more readable and more visually appealing.

We have continued to expand our social media presence. The parish Facebook page now has nearly 1,100 likes and a high level of engagement, and we are live-tweeting 10:30 services. I have taught two Sunday afternoon workshops and two forums on social media and ministry.

Recognizing the importance of visuals, we have refocused on photography and our image files have grown in quantity and quality. We will be contracting a still photographer to build our image inventory. We have begun the planning and negotiations for redesigning the parish website and have launched Sandy's Calling, a weekly phone outreach.

Fall saw the launch of three blogs that will be folded into and further developed once the new website



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comes online: A Sacred Presence, NOTES on Music and Liturgy (written by David Ouzts) and Booking It in Memphis.

The parish has been kind enough to allow me to be involved in programming and outreach, including developing and working with a literary element in the Festival of Sacred Arts and launching Words3, a monthly series of readings.

We're exciting about finding more ways to tell our church's story in 2015, inspiring those already part of our family and extending our welcome and ministry beyond these walls.