

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
OF THE REDEEMER
GREENSBORO, GA

REPORT FOR
ANNUAL MEETING
OCTOBER 25, 2020



REACHING OUT · REACHING IN
REDEEMER

Rector's Report – Bill Combs

As the COVID-19 pandemic hit this spring, and Georgia entered a state of lock-down in late March, Bishop Rob Wright suggested that the Biblical story of the Exodus might best exemplify our situation. God is leading us from a known way of being into a period of wandering. We have been asked to let go of the familiar and embrace one another and those in our community in a journey. As this journey continues seven months later, we find ourselves still in a pandemic wilderness. Yet what has characterized this past year has been that incredible embrace by this incredible parish, the ongoing and guiding presence of God, a hard and rugged landscape, and the very real promise and hope that we will arrive in a place of new love and new life.

What follows is not intended to be an exhaustive outline of our journey this year. The Vestry Liaison reports that make up the bulk of this Annual Report will provide much better detail, and I would encourage you to read these carefully.

Worship

The coronavirus pandemic has touched every aspect of our life together, but arguably our worship has been most affected. In late March, Bishop Wright organized a diocesan committee to set forth protocols for our worship and every aspect of parish life. This committee was (and is) made up of clergy, lay parishioners, doctors, and epidemiologists from urban and rural parts of the diocese. For several weeks, at the end of Lent, we celebrated our Eucharist remotely, with a skeleton crew livestreaming from the church sanctuary. The diocese then ordered us to refrain from clergy or lay presence in any of our church buildings, and so I began livestreaming and recording our Sunday Morning Prayer service from my home, with my daughter Emily accompanying my attempts at singing with her keyboard. This continued from Palm Sunday through Holy Week, Easter, and Pentecost. On Trinity Sunday we were able to return to the church sanctuary for remote services only.

During the months from June through early October, we have used an “Ante-Eucharist” rite; this is the Holy Eucharist service up to the Eucharistic Prayer. More recently we have been able to pray the Eucharistic Prayer, with me receiving the consecrated bread and wine on behalf of the parish. In the middle of October, the diocese approved having outdoor Holy Eucharist (masks, social distancing, no singing, bread only, with no more than 50 people), and we are excited to celebrate our first official Holy Eucharist on All Saints’ Day! The diocese has maintained tight control over this process of slowly reopening, moving at a much slower pace than other denominations in our area. While this has been frustrating for many of our members, and satisfactory for many others, we acknowledge and are grateful for the bishop’s focus on the health and well-being of every parish and parishioner in the diocese. We hope to have in-person services in our beloved sanctuary once again very soon.

Throughout all of this, Connie Karpinsky and John Fox have faithfully shown up every week since early June, making sure that our livestreaming on Facebook goes as smoothly as possible (within their control). We also have recorded the Sunday service, posting it later for our members who do not participate on Facebook, or on those occasions (mercifully rare) when the livestreaming did not work (whether because of internet difficulties or the rector forgetting to plug in the laptop!). Without their incredible help, we would not have been able to have the online presence we have enjoyed this year. And what a presence has occurred! Early in the pandemic, we had as many as 200 “thru plays” each week (people viewing the service online all

the way through), and even now, when almost all other churches have returned to in-person services, we still have 80-100 weekly thru-plays!

With this in mind, the vestry determined to spend roughly \$5,000 to upgrade our visual-audio equipment. The new camera and sound system will be used for the first time on October 25! We intend to continue having this online presence going forward, even when the pandemic is over. Clearly, this has been an unanticipated positive outcome of this terrible disease. Going forward, our task will be to find ways of inviting these new participants into a deeper and in-person relationship with our church.

From the first weeks of the pandemic lockdown, I decided to offer the Daily Office online. This consisted of Morning Prayer on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and Compline on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. I sought to create a consistent, stable, daily worship experience for our members during a time of great uncertainty and upheaval. Streaming this live on Facebook allowed us to be available widely, and we have had from 3-15 people joining in the services daily.

Most recently, the diocese has opened the possibility for what they call “pilgrimage”: since our sanctuaries are to be shut except for times of remote worship, we now are able to open the doors at specified times for our parishioners to visit the space for devotions and prayer. These have been held on Tuesday mornings.

Amid all of this, one of our organists, Sam McDaniel, took a position with a very large church much closer to his college and home. This was a wonderful opportunity for Sam, but it did leave us in need of a new organist to join Jenny Moore. Well, God heard our prayers, and brought us Bill Goad, who joined us in early August. We are thrilled to have Bill as a part of our Redeemer family!

Renovations

In the fall of last year, we began exploring the possibility of repairing and restoring the sanctuary’s foundation, steeple, windows, and flooring. We also envisioned the prospect of connecting the Activity Center to the Remembrance Garden via a walkway, and renovate the Activity Center with a large parish hall, classrooms, a kitchen, offices, and AD-accessible bathrooms. The earliest phases of a capital campaign were begun with the help of consultants from Sinclair and Townes. When the pandemic began, we had to put much of this on hold. But because the sanctuary was suddenly idle, and because we were able to secure funding through some pre-paid capital campaign pledges and a line of credit from BankSouth, we began the sanctuary renovation work in the spring. The flooring was removed to allow access to the foundation. The foundation along the North Street side was largely replaced, and repairs were made to much of the rest (some of the brick pilings dated back 150 years!). While we had the access, the HVAC ductwork was replaced with a much more efficient system, and the HVAC unit itself was replaced as well. The flooring was then returned and refinished beautifully. Finally, the raised platform that the altar rested on was removed, to allow for safer navigation for the priest and the servers.

Attention was then turned to the steeple, which required some internal structural repairs. The steeple’s stained-glass window was removed and completely renovated. It looks so lovely!

The clear side windows and front door of the sanctuary also needed to be addressed, and they are currently being restored piecemeal. We hope to have that phase of our renovations done in the next 4-6 weeks.

Meanwhile, Bill Sinke applied his gifts and skills to refurbish all the church pews (which had been removed for the foundation work). They look fantastic. Bill also repaired the holder for the sanctuary candle, completely replacing the chain from which it hangs in the process. And to top all of this off, Bill made a new elements table in the back of the church, to replace the old one, which had deteriorated beyond repair. We are so grateful to Bill for his time, efforts, and energy!

Overseeing all of this – tirelessly – has been John Fox, our Junior Warden. Our heartfelt thanks go to John for his incredible knowledge, presence, patience, and attention to details.

Christian Formation

Zoom has been our great friend in the midst of this pandemic. Sunday morning Christian Education has met remotely for most of this year, and our weekly Bible Study has been very well attended.

Late last year, Cathy Crosby began offering a weekly Yoga Class for our parishioners (as well as friends and family) at all levels of experience. When the pandemic forced us to close our buildings, Cathy moved us online with Zoom. Her group continues to meet every week, and is growing in participants.

The Centering Prayer group has continued to offer the opportunity to meet via Zoom, and our participants have found this to be very meaningful. Whereas we thought that remote contemplative prayer would be but a shadow of our experience together, we have found this to be a deep and rich time together. Indeed, we have added another day of meeting during the week!

With the death of George Floyd, and the increasing awareness of the Black Lives Matter movement, several of our parishioners were interested in exploring ways to deepen our knowledge of race and race relations in our community and country. Eleven of our members began a series, “Faith and Racial Equity,” during the summer, and our group continues to meet every other week to explore and discuss systemic racism.

Finally, our Aging Gracefully has continued to meet on a weekly basis via Zoom. They have explored several books, and even underwent a name change: the group is now “Living Gracefully”, which they do indeed!

Reaching Out

With this pandemic has also come a recession. The need has been great in the Greensboro community, and our members have been very responsive. In the spring and early summer we have had several food drives, bringing many trunk-loads of nonperishable foods (and over \$1,000) to the Food Pantry.

The Heartfelt Harmonies fundraiser occurred in February, and it was a great success. The proceeds were divided between the music programs at Georgia College, and several non-profit ministries in the Greensboro and Eatonton areas. Many thanks to Stan Mileski and Christine Young for another wonderful night of fun!

The Soup and Sandwich Saturdays have been “hot and cold” during the summer months. We have learned that passing out flyers during the monthly Second Harvest food distribution makes a huge difference. When we have done this, we have fed as many as 30 or more people during the two hour “lunch time.” Because of COVID-19, everything is “to-go”, but the recipients are very grateful.

Approximately \$5,000 of designated gifts were received following the death of Jean Reed last year. These were given to be used for Outreach, since our involvement with these ministries were so dear to Jean. After much discernment and conversation, the Outreach Committee has allocated these funds for the Circle of Love – a domestic violence shelter in Greene County that serves five counties. The money will be used to create a new outdoor pavilion, so that the women and children can prepare and eat meals, and enjoy the outdoors, in a nice and shaded environment.

And quietly, seemingly imperceptibly, but with great impact, our other ministries continue to serve. Our quilting group continues to provide quilts to the women and children of Circle of Love. The Car Ministry continues to provide transportation for people in need. Our volunteer and financial support of Meals on Wheels, the Boys and Girls Club, the Christian Outreach Thrift Store, Habitat for Humanity, along with cards and notes from our Care Team, and Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas baskets have continued with care and love. What a blessing all of you have been to our community!

Transitions

Since last October, we have had our share of transitions. This is an expected part of the life of a church parish, and it is even more prevalent during times like these.

As I noted earlier, Sam McDaniel has joined the staff of Mulberry United Methodist Church in Macon. This is a wonderful opportunity for Sam, and we wish him every blessing in his college studies and this new ministry in music.

In August of this year, Charlotte Waters passed on after a lengthy bout with ALS. Charlotte was such a dear soul to all of us, and she is certainly missed.

A month earlier, Nettie McKinley, the mother of our Parish Administrative Assistant, Elaine Hall, passed on. Our prayers have been with Elaine in this time of grief and mourning.

Last month we said farewell to three of our members who have moved away from this area. Mike and Josie Dingee have moved to North Carolina to be near family, and Linda Disosway has moved to Dallas, Texas. Josie's position on the vestry will be filled by parish election (Josie was to rotate off at the end of this year).

Most recently, Naomi Montgomery has returned to Crossroads Baptist Church, where she was a founding member. Naomi's position on the vestry will be filled by vestry appointment.

We will certainly miss Sam, Charlotte, Linda, Mike, Josie, and Naomi. They have been such blessings to us all!

In terms of new members here, we are delighted to welcome our new organist, Bill Goad! What a Godsend Bill has been, and a joy to work with. I cannot wait until you all are able to meet him.

Now, typically this is where I give a long-ish list of new folks that have joined Redeemer. However, because of the pandemic, our usual ways for people becoming members through confirmation or reception have been put on hold. But we do look forward to the day when the diocesan confirmations and receptions resume, because then we can welcome Cathy Crosby officially into our church (although she has already become such an integral part!). And – as I noted earlier – we have a whole group of folks online who may not be known to us now, but hopefully will become so when we are able to meet again in person.

Looking Ahead

None of us can know for certain what the next few months – or perhaps the next year – will look like. But we will continue to journey together, loving one another, looking out for the needs of those who are suffering, worshipping our God every week, and trusting that God will continue to lead us. New opportunities will open for us. New life awaits. Together, with Christ guiding us, we will find our way.

I could not be more humbled and joyous to continue to serve you as your rector. May God bless us all.

Senior Warden's Report – Ed Coleman

The year began on an optimistic note with the development of a facilities plan to make necessary changes to the church buildings. Phase I of the plan called for correction of serious structural problems with the sanctuary. Phase II called for improvements in accessibility (including handicap accessible restrooms) to our facilities plus an expansion of the activities center to better handle church gatherings.

The church engaged the firm of Sinclair, Townes and Company to determine the feasibility of our conducting a capital campaign to raise funds for the facilities renovations. After interviews with a substantial number of parishioners, it was determined it would be feasible to raise \$550,000, which would be sufficient to complete both phases of the project. Planning then began to develop and execute the capital campaign.

And then came Covid-19! As a result of the restrictions necessitated by the pandemic it was determined to delay the formal campaign until the virus situation improved. It was also determined that we should proceed with the sanctuary renovations. A \$100,000 line of credit was obtained from BankSouth and a number of parishioners made advance donations to the capital campaign in the amount of \$80,700, which provided sufficient funds to complete the project. The renovations are nearing completion.

Other pandemic related activities included the obtaining of a Payroll Protection Program loan in the amount of \$25,000. This government sponsored loan is to encourage the retention of employees during the course of the pandemic and will be forgiven when we demonstrate it was used for that purpose.

With the current restrictions on in-person worship, all worship services have been virtual through either streaming on Facebook or recording for viewing later on our web site. In anticipation of returning to in person worship as soon as permitted, a worship steering committee has been meeting regularly to develop protocols for in-person worship as soon as permitted by the Diocese. Hopefully, we will be able to implement these plans soon and return to the in-person worship we all miss.

Junior Warden's Report – John Fox

2020 Has been an eventful year for our Church. The planning for the renovation continued for the first three months and the contract was signed with Whitsel Construction Services in April.

We started moving all of the hymnals, pews, kneelers and everything that that was not nailed down on April 18th, 2020. On April 23rd the movers came in and moved the pews and alter down to the metal building. It was determined that the pews were in poor shape and Bill Sinke was charged to refinish the pews as construction was on going.

The carpet was removed on April 23rd and construction was started on April 27, 2020. The first two windows were removed on the 27th along with the flooring along the perimeter walls. For the purpose of this report I will refer to the main entrance of the church as the north wall and the street side wall as the west wall, the children's center wall as the east wall the wall behind the alter as the south wall.

We exposed all of the east and west wall footings and it was determined that three footings on the east wall needed some work and all of the footings on the west wall needed to be replaced and the wall needed to be jacked up and pulled back into place. The entire support beam of the west wall also had to be replaced

On May 1 the HVAC equipment was installed and the new ductwork would go in after the footing work was completed

Work started on the stain glass window behind the alter on May 15th and it was feared that this window was going to require a lot of work. As it turned out the main support framing was in great shape and required a minimal amount of work.

The new west wall beam was started on May 4th and completed on May 20 which was when the new ductwork was started. The ductwork was completed on May 21st and the flooring was put back into place.

The floor refinishing was started on May 25th and finished May 27th. Work than focused on the outside repairs and steeple repairs.

The carpet went in on June 5th and we started moving the pews back in as they were getting refinished and Jenney Moore was able to come test out the organ which made it through the ordeal. The garden club was also busy removing bushes around the north end of the church so we could bring in equipment to work on the steeple.

As the exterior repairs went on the painting of the church started and on June 24th the stain glass window was removed from the steeple and sent to Athens for repair. Repairs in the steeple continued thru June 30th

The painting continued thru July 18th and the first two of the six windows were reinstalled.

The new frame for the stain glass window in the steeple took over a month and the stain glass was sent to the shop in Mid-August and was reinstalled on September 30th along with the third window in the sanctuary. The front door was also removed and sent to the shop. We are hoping to get it installed the week of the October 25th.

Once this is finished the last three windows on the east wall need to be completed and this will complete the Renovation.

Other Items that started but are currently on hold is the design of the Activity Center Renovation by Carter Watkins Architectural Firm. Once this Covid issue gets behind us the

Capital Campaign will start up again and we have the Architects prepare the first set of schematic documents.

We also have been dealing John McGarity who owns the slice of property east of the Children's Center because some of his trees have landed on our Activity Center and the roof leaks have gotten worse.

Treasurer's Report – Heather Kennerson
(In Separate Attachment)

Christian Education for November 2019-October 2020 – Liaison: Lucy Ogletree

Father Bill and Karen Klomp have given the parishioners of Redeemer a year filled with hour long mind, heart, and soul enriching Christian Education classes on Sundays from 11:00-12:00. We started off the end of the year and the first couple of months of 2020 upstairs in the Activities Center transitioning to Zoom once the Covid 19 restrictions were in place. Beginning with the last two months of 2019 continuing through October of 2020, Christian Education class has been packed with diversity.

Below is a summary of our Adult Education lessons:

1. Contemplative Prayer
2. Conversations with two of our outreach partners' directors: Circle of Love's Kimberly Bennett and ATLAS Ministries' Ryan Gibadlo
3. Bible Study on the Gospel readings.
4. Reading and discussing Barbara Brown Taylor's book Holy Envy
5. A study of the Book of Genesis using Walter Bruggeman's commentary
6. Discussion of the "Seven Ways of Love," as outlined by our Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry: Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go, and Rest.
7. Late Spring/Summer/Fall Bible Study

Be sure to join in on Zoom each Sunday from 11:00-12:00 for Church of the Redeemer's Christian Education class. If you have a suggestion for an adult education class, please share with Father Bill or Karen Klomp.

Aging Gracefully, which has metamorphosed into Living Gracefully, meets on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. At this point in time, they meet on Zoom from 3:00-4:30. Aging Gracefully discussions focused on the later years in life using Mary Pipher's book, "Women Rowing North: Navigating Life's Currents and Flourishing as We Age", as a guide. As the group transitioned into Living Gracefully In August 2020, they began Robert Fulghum's classic "All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten". Besides discussion of the book, they enjoy Group Sharing time. Please contact Karen Klomp, or Connie Karpinsky if you wish to join in on the conversation.

In July 2020, we began a curriculum entitled "Faith and Racial Equity" to help guide us through the issues and structures that continue to contribute to racism in our country. Those who signed up for the program have met from 1:00 – 3:30 on every other Tuesday to discuss that week's reading assignment and our own personal walks. We are on our 4th session. Father Bill's goal for us coming out of this program is that the work will not only enlighten us, but will also prepare us to be allies with people of color, and alongside them, assist in addressing systemic racism in our own community.

Congregation Growth and Development – Liaison: Everett Price

This report has been written and submitted by Everett Price, vestry liaison to the committee this year. I had consultation from committee members Elizabeth Hassell (who provided good leadership pre-COVID) and Carol Gordon.

First, my thanks to Elizabeth Hassell for her leadership on this committee and her many efforts in our parish, planning for the beautiful flowers that adorn our sanctuary, Thrift Store volunteering/adviser and food pantry planner and provider, just to name a few. Elizabeth has reduced her involvement in the committee this year and going forward but will remain just as involved in her other activities that have contributed so much to our community. I thank her and, I'm sure, you all do too.

The committee members include Elizabeth Hassell, Carol Gordon, Suzie Hudson, Ann Goff and Connie Karpinsky. All of these folks contribute not only to this committee but, as you all know, many other areas of importance to our parish and the community.

The committee's activities have been curtailed very much since March but conversations continue on plans that are within the realm of possibility next year. Areas being worked on include signage for the campus but especially focused on the Activity Center (before and after renovations) and plans for usage of the social areas of the parish for the joy of our members and to enhance the attraction of the campus for families that might visit us.

This report is submitted for the consideration of the parish on and after October 25, 2020.

Outreach – Liaison: Mimi Vickers

Redeemer opened wide its heart this past year, with COVID's outfall requiring a larger than usual amount of family and individual assistance. Monies were spent on rent, temporary housing, healthcare, Ingles gift cards and utilities, all in addition to help through Father Bill's Rector Discretionary Fund.

The Greene and Putnam Co. food banks also received steady and generous donations of money and food, with various pickups from parishioners, friends and neighbors taking place.

Our volunteers continue to support the Meals on Wheels program and Christian Outreach, the latter closed down for several months but now back up and running. At the request of Jim Borland, \$250 was donated to the Pete Nance Boys and Girls Club for their current capital campaign directed at building a new facility. Money for Thursday night dinners was contributed as well.

In 2019, we delivered baskets to five different families filled with enough food for the entire weeks of Thanksgiving and Christmas. Coins for Caring during those months also went toward turkeys, hams and non-perishable items. During Easter week 2020, four families received gift cards in the amount of \$100 each.

Partial proceeds from this year's Heartfelt Harmonies went to the Greene Co. Food Bank., Putnam Co. Habitat for Humanity, with the larger share going to Circle of Love, our local women's shelter that serves four counties.

Redeemer's connection to Circle of Love continues to be strong. Outreach is still collecting toiletries (the small hotel size) and paper goods for the women and children there.

This is an ongoing project that honors the memories of Noni Coleman and Jean Reed, both having been so active in this ministry.

A small but dedicated group of parishioners meets regularly with Carolyn White to sew quilts for Circle of Love. Well over 30 quilts have been delivered thus far.

Also at Circle of Love, a special memorial to Jean Reed is now in the works thanks to funds donated at the time of her death. The project aims to improve and beautify outdoor living space at the facility with an upgraded pavilion, seating arrangement, and attractive planters. This will offer a peaceful gathering spot for those who need it.

Les Reed continues to shepherd the car program. Earlier in the year a donation was received and a sizable payment made on an old loan, and the one car donated was later sold. The program is open to qualified buyers.

In September, Soup and Sandwich Saturday marked its one-year anniversary under the leadership of Elizabeth Hassell, though changes were made from a sit-down lunch to take-outs due to COVID. Jenny Moore has taken the helm going forward and anticipates steady participation by the community.

Funds were also donated to Greene County Family Connection for school supplies. A yearly contribution was also made to Camp Mikell, as well as to Father Bill's Seminary of choice.

In October Redeemer sponsored lunches for the volunteer crew building for Greene Co. Habitat.

As has been said before, Redeemer is a church of doers and great heart. Thank you all for your continued generosity to our community!

Outreach Funds and Disbursements 2020 – (Submitted by Lucy Ogletree)

Outreach Funds Budget -	\$5000.00
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Donated Monies from Parishioners	\$1040.00
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Total Funds for year 2020	\$6040.00
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Expenses From January 2020 – October 19, 2020:

Family Assistance

Rent	\$942.00
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Electricity	\$1126.96
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Hotel	\$789.00
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Healthcare	\$60.00
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Ingles cards for Easter	\$400.00
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Total Family Assistance	\$3317.96
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Community

Pete Nance Boys and Girls Club - (Thursday Night Dinners)	\$450.00
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Pete Nance Boys and Girls Club pledge (matching fund to be paid this year for new building)	\$250.00
Camp Mikell	\$300.00
Father Bill's Theology School of Choice	\$100.00
Total Community	\$1100.00
Total Spent -	\$4417.96
Total Funds Remaining -	\$1622.04

For info:

Funds for the gift to Greene County Family Connection for - \$200.00 - School supplies were taken out of the remaining \$1000.00 from the Arline Davis Tutoring Program which has been designated to use to help students in our area with supplies, etc.

Stewardship – Liaison: Stan Mileski

One of the problems with having the annual meeting in October is that we cannot tell you how everything will work out. Certainly, when we asked you to make a commitment of time and money for 2020 the possibility of the occurrence of a pandemic did not head the list of things to be considered by you. Nonetheless, I am grateful to all of you for your response with all the trauma and uncertainty we have gone through this year.

The Church of the Redeemer's giving history is given below.

Year	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2019</u> (9 mos.)	<u>2020</u>	<u>2020</u> (9 mos.)
No. of pledges	56	59	—	59	—
Amt. pledged	169,000	196,000	—	206,000	—
Amt. paid	170,000	190,000	124,000	—	129,000
Checks from non-pledgers	27,000(est.)	24,000	—	—	21,000

Unfortunately, expenses incurred were not significantly reduced by not having services and other events at the church so, our budgeted shortfall for 2020 will be larger than anticipated.

Hopefully those who can will check their "Piggy Banks" and petty cash stashes and increase what they normally give at this time of year so that we can minimize this shortfall.

Despite the turmoil, the response of the congregation to address the needs of those less fortunate in the community has not diminished. Members have continued to be generous with their time and their money through our outreach programs.

A few of the things we are continuing to do include:

- Food Baskets to needy families at Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.
- Contributions of food throughout the year to the Food Pantry and to the Circle of Love. The church held a very successful food drive this Fall in response to the increased needs because of the pandemic.

- The church began a Soup and Sandwich Program on the last Saturday of each month for anyone in the community. This has been very well received.
- Contributions to Habitat for Humanity to help their scholarship recipients (profits from Cash Calendar).
- Contribution to Georgia College Music Department for music scholarships (profits from Heartfelt Harmonies).
- Food Pantry (profits from Upscale Jewelry and accessories sale).
- Contributions to Pete Nance Boys and Girls Club.
- Car Program
- Funds for Fr. Bill's Discretionary Fund
- Contributions to COTS.
- Other miscellaneous programs by members

One pleasing and surprising benefit coming from the COVID shutdown is the response we have been getting to our on-line services. We are averaging over 100 people who watch our entire Sunday services. Obviously we are filling a need for those with no church home or those who cannot get to a church. This is exciting. Now we have installed new video and audio equipment to make the service better to watch and hear and to be more meaningful.

Let us pray that 2021 will be a year that we can return to normalcy.