

Vestry service at St. Mary's has always included serving on one of several teams that focus on one aspect of church life. Within the last two years, we've adjusted our vestry size down to nine members, and realigned our teams to reflect who we aspire to become as a parish. All five vestry teams welcome parish members who feel especially called to give their time and talents, whether it be as a member of a team or being available for an occasional project. That way, our ministries at St. Mary's will be resilient and take advantage of the diversity among our members. Over the next five issues of The Messenger, we will shine a spotlight on each of these vestry teams to share their goals, initial projects and what they are planning for the rest of 2022.

Spotlight on Outreach

Saint Mary's has a long tradition of generosity, donating countless hours of service, food, clothing, money to pay overdue bills, school supplies and much more for our neighbors in need. We want to tap that loving spirit to make Outreach a broad and rich ministry that offers something to engage each of us.

Our team currently consists of Senior Warden Pat Weaver and Sarah Gable. We began last fall by identifying the portions of our church vision and values that would fuel our energies, then jumping in with a few projects to get started. Nothing ventured, nothing gained!

Our mission is simple: identify and foster projects that allow us to *be a beacon of Christ's love*. When we reach out our hearts and hands to our neighbors, we not only help address their need but bring us closer to Christ and so reflect his light. Our church's vision to become a place where *ministry empowers* also resounded with us, since outreach work not only lifts the recipients but lifts our confidence in ministering to those who need our care.

We are focusing our efforts on the Abingdon neighborhood as we continue to research other prospects that match our parish's unique gifts. Our first adventure is a partnership with Old Post Road/William Paca Elementary School (OPR/WP), located just south of St. Mary's on Old Philadelphia Road. We're still working on what that partnership will look like, but we started with a donation of fresh food for 20 families to help them make it through the President's Day long weekend. We have committed to more food drops for spring break and the Memorial Day holiday.

When we can once again safely gather for Christian Education, we plan to invite speakers from various non-profits who either already partner with St. Mary's or would like to, plus those who just want to educate us about their mission and programs (knowledge is power!).

If you want to join the Outreach Team or have ideas to share, send us a message at outreach@stmarysharford.org, or speak to Pat or Sarah. There is work for many hands!

Outreach
Congregational Development
Stewardship
Fellowship
Formation