

## Church of Saint Clement

1701 N. Quaker Lane  
Alexandria, VA 22302

The Rev. Robin Razzino, Rector

### Annual Report 2024



Annual Parish Meeting  
January 26, 2025

*All are welcome at the Lord's Holy Table*

## Rector's Report

I feel that this past year has been one of real growth for our parish; it felt like things were finally “clicking” after the pandemic and several years working with less-than-ideal outside contractors and vendors. This year we moved to working with a new bookkeeping company and auditor and have finally received consistent, thorough and correct financial reports each month. It has made my life so much easier not having to learn a bookkeeper’s job along with being a rector!

We are also working with a new trash company, a new landscaper, a new HVAC company and a new pest control company – all of whom are proactive, conscientious and provide excellent service. As you will see below we have also hired three new custodians; having staff to work with (rather than outside contractors) has been life changing. I feel that with all this new help in managing our administrative and building needs, I can better focus on being your spiritual leader in the years to come. It is wonderful and refreshing.

These administrative changes were all necessary, but they cost money. We really had to stretch this year in order to move into this new reality. We ended 2024 about \$30,000 in the red and passed a budget for 2025 that has a deficit as well. Luckily we did not need to dip into our small endowment (\$90,000) to address this deficit. But we would like to continue to work to build up our reserves over the next few years – while we also anticipate increased costs.



In 2025 and 2026, we will need to try to make up the loss of \$40,000 in annual rental income. And when we have done so, it will be important to continue to grow so that we might be a congregation that can have a full-time rector. I have been  $\frac{3}{4}$  time since coming on board – by choice (!) – but we soon need to start thinking of this position as a full-time one - both because of the work required – and because in the future you all will need to be able to support a full-time rector when I am gone. (I have ZERO plans to leave anytime soon; You are stuck with me for years to come!)

There was a moment in our life this year that our financial position changed dramatically over night! One day we were muddling through with an old pipe organ and the next day we had secured a new \$500,000 organ and learned that the sale of a property (left to us by Jim Kincheloe) was moving forward – bringing in about \$450,000. It was hard to believe our nearly million dollar luck!

But in reality – this good fortune was due not to luck – but faithful stewardship and faithful giving on part of the parishioners of St Clement. We chose to raise and invest \$50,000 in the new organ (on the heels of having to raise \$35,000 for a new HVAC system in 2023) because we knew it was necessary for the future of the parish – for being able to worship God in the beauty of holiness – and for being able to attract a new music director whenever Anne retires (also not for awhile we hope!!!).

And though the sale of the Kincheloe property fell though this year – it will eventually be sold and that gift will eventually come to the church and support new ministry in our community. We would not be able to dream about this if it were not for Jim’s generosity in his planned giving to the church.

*I would encourage everyone to please please consider adding St. Clement to your will so that your legacy can help this community thrive in the decades to come.*

## **Membership:**

Though we welcomed about 55 folks on most Sundays last year, our attendance increased during Advent, when our average attendance was closer to 70. In addition to having several visitors come back repeatedly, we welcomed several new households into the life of our parish this year.



From the preschool community we welcomed five new families: Kaelin and Tyler Campbell with sons Nolan and Carson; Beth Bosecker with her daughter Hope; Kathryn and Jordan White and their children Danny and Ewan; Trish and John Tolly with their children James and Patrick; Ben and Leah Kiernan with their children Maddie and Makayla. We also welcomed Amy Cloud and Amy and Scott Nelson (baptized on All Saints Day!!).

We also said goodbye to some parishioners this year: notably Claire and Dan Fundakowski and their children; Ted and Susan Burkhalter who moved to Jordan with the State Department; and our seminarian, Claire Wang, who returned home to Taiwan after two years with St Clement.



## Pastoral Care:



Our community showed up to care for one another in countless ways over the past year. We made meals for Joe and Sarah when they welcomed two foster children into their homes unexpectedly – going from zero to sixty in the space of a matter of weeks! We prayed for each other during the season of Lent when those who wanted to participate were given a prayer buddy to pray for – drawing closer to one another as we brought each

other into the light and love of God.

Our community showed up to celebrate the life of our brother Cliff Beasley who died over the summer. We also lost long-time member Merle Thompson, part of the Goodwin House community (or what I like to think of as our satellite campus). We currently have eight members of our community living there. One of the highlights of my week is joining many of them for an online service of Compline on Tuesday nights.

There are two other members of our parish who are unable to worship with us on Sunday morning but are held in our hearts each week: Jim Payne and Marion Mangus. I take them communion throughout the year and if any want to join me on these visits please let me know! They both value all connections with the Saint Clement community.

## Formation

Our Godly Play program for children ages 2.5 through about eight (2nd grade) continues to go well. We have about six kids who regularly participate. The class runs from September through May and has been taught by Ben Brown, Jenny Darlington, Eleanor Patterson and Brian Razzino. This year we welcomed two new teachers as well: Beth Bosecker and Sara Caniglia. I am grateful for the time they put into learning and presenting the lessons each week.

We also restarted the Lego Class for kids in third through sixth grade. For the most part this class skews a little younger and the students haven't come as regularly – it can be two or three



kids one week and a different set of two or three kids the next. But it is so important to have this option as we welcome new families into the church. It is the “if you build it, they will come” mentality. I am grateful for all of our wonderful teachers who pivot each week as they work with the students who attend. Next year there should be more consistency as students in Godly Play age up.

When we expressed the need for more teachers to teach this class, this community responded enthusiastically. Every person who was invited to teach this class said yes. This shows the commitment of all of us to care for the children in our midst. Teaching church school can be scary (What if the kids ask questions about the bible or God that I can’t answer? How do I manage a group of eight year olds?!). For this reason I am especially grateful for Joe Calizo, Tom Greco, Lisa D’Archangelo, Lisa Lundborg, Deirdre Brou, Virginia Pasley and Coleman Bacon who answered the call this year.

During Lent our seminarian Talley Banazek led a Lenten program where we reflected and discussed the book, *Have a Beautiful, Terrible Day!* by Kate Bowler. This group study was an honest and real reflection on what it means to follow Jesus through the ups and downs of our lives. Beginning on Ash Wednesday and going through Holy Week, participants worked through parts of the book that contained a daily scripture verse, reflection, prayer, and a reflection prompt. This group met for six discussion sessions with the themes: Entering the Wilderness, The Limitless Love of God, Transformation (Not Perfection), The Depths of Renewal, The Compassion of God, and Truth and Trials. With over 20 participants, this was one of the most well attended programs we have had in my eight years here! Thank you, Talley, for your leadership and for the wisdom and love you shared with the parish!



In the fall, 24 Clementines attended the parish retreat at Shrine Mont. This weekend is always a highlight of the year for many of us; if you’ve never been I hope you will consider joining us this coming year for two days of fun, fellowship, exploration, and worship.

In 2024, we gathered on Friday night for dinner and a short program (introductions and a Service of Compline). On Saturday morning, those who choose to gathered to reflect on the meaning of Spiritual Friendship and the impact these friends can have on our lives. After lunch was free time to sit on a porch and read, visit a local winery, hike up North Mountain, walk the labyrinth, go fishing (or hunting

for salamanders), etc etc. After dinner we gathered for a bonfire and S'mores. On Sunday morning we worshiped in the outdoor shrine with our friends from the Falls Church.

## Worship



We had a wonderful year of worship at St Clement and we are seeing numbers like we did prior to the pandemic. We are still a small family-sized congregation but we are growing and the new folks who are joining are enriching our worship and our lives. We had record setting attendance in Holy Week, Easter, Advent and Christmas.

It has been a joy to welcome youth acolytes back into the service and I am grateful for Isa Brown, Jack and Crosby Caniglia, Simon Darlington, Evan Johnson, Leo Patterson, and Anna Razzino for their willingness and enthusiasm in taking on this new ministry.

It is so important for a congregation to hear the Word of God preached from different perspectives and with different voices. This past year we had several preachers from within our community preach the Word: previous and current seminarians Pearson Nhayo, Claire Wang, and Talley Banazek; priests who worship with us regularly Tricia Lyons and Jim Puryear; and other friends from outside our community: Elizabeth Rees, the Upper School Chaplain at Saint Stephen's Saint Agnes School and Tom Montgomery, a priest from Glasgow Scotland who was with us the Second Sunday of Christmas.

One of the worship highlights for me this year has been the new monthly Taize services led by St Clement and friends from Fairlington Methodist and Arlington Presbyterian. Each month beginning in November we have come together to sing, chant, pray and be in silence with one another. I am especially grateful for Anne's Leadership in working to bring this idea to fruition and for her and Lee leading the music for these services. All I have had to do is show up. It is an incredible hour of quiet and feeds me deeply. I invite you all to experience this service on the first Wednesdays of the month.

Obviously the other big worship piece is the new organ that is being installed over the next few weeks (as I type this sentence the old organ is being dismantled and packed away to be given to a local music student studying at Harvard). The new organ was delivered in October, but before we could have it rebuilt in our sanctuary we had to have two Schwimmer plates releathered.



This was done in late 2024 and the new plates were delivered to the church in January 2025. Having this new organ will greatly enhance our worship in the years to come and I can't wait to write all about it in NEXT YEAR'S Annual Report.

## Mission and Outreach



We continue to serve our community in countless ways. Our Brown Bag Lunch program and Carpenter Shelter Dinners are currently the foundation of our outreach efforts. Both of these ministries meet real needs, they were born of longstanding relationships in the community, they allow for many folks to help, and they provide opportunities for folks brand new to the church to help and serve and

become connected to the parish. You can read more about these ministries in the reports which follow the Rector's report.

Much of our other outreach efforts go to supporting our longtime partner ALIVE! This year we held a successful canned food drive and formed two groups to help move furniture into new homes for families in need. We also support ALIVE! through fundraising efforts – like sponsoring a basket for their Empty Bowls fundraiser. A group of walkers also joined the ALIVE! Walkathon to raise money and awareness for this wonderful organization (founded in part by Harry Williams and other Clementines decades ago).

In addition to these important ministries we hosted a school supply drive in August and a Christmas toy drive during November and December to help Alexandrian children. As we were cleaning out our shelter closet, Tom and Raymond delivered our old sleeping cots to a shelter in Fairfax that could use them.

In June we joined other Episcopal churches in hosting a table at the Alexandria City Pride Festival. In November we joined with neighboring congregations for a Thanksgiving walk for peace. The relationships with our neighboring congregations continue to grow and strengthen through these and other ministries.



As part of a delegation from Churches for Middle East Peace, Kathy Keenoy and I went to Capitol Hill to advocate for a ceasefire between Israel and Gaza and for the restoration of funding for UNRWA and increased humanitarian aid to combat the approaching famine.

## Building and Grounds

In addition to the regular maintenance of an aging building, much of our work this year was focused on addressing long-standing needs for pest control and building and grounds clean up. None of this was sexy work but it was all necessary – and all interrelated.

We had a rodent problem and a moisture problem in the basement of the building. We had to address it through several means. Internally through the removal of all junk and debris from the basement; mold remediation; asbestos testing; and deep cleaning. Externally through addressing how moisture and rodents were coming into the building (cleaning out and then covering up window wells; fixing holes and cracks in the outside of the building and cleaning the grounds - cutting back bushes and trees and weeding around the perimeter of the building,) In this work we also sought out new contracts for trash removal, pest control and grounds clean up.

We are now working with three excellent companies and feel confident this work has been addressed in meaningful and lasting ways.

## Stewardship



Our Fall Stewardship campaign was based on the theme: *You Welcomed Me*. As I have led this congregation over the last eight years I have heard over and over that one of the most meaningful and primary aspects of our life together is the warm welcome that we give to our neighbors ... and receive ourselves. For us, it is not a cliché to say we are a welcoming congregation. We live it – in the ways we reach out to our neighbors, care for one another, celebrate each other, and greet each other. So I was thrilled that the theme for this year’s Stewardship campaign, set by the diocese, was “You Welcomed Me.”

Taken from Matthew 25:35, “for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,” this theme gave us the



opportunity to share the stories of all the ways in which we are a welcoming congregation - and how that welcome impacts us and moves us to faithful action in our world.

As we considered how we could be good stewards of our church – its programs, its spirit, and its spaces – and how we could continue to promote welcome and community, we asked that each household prayerfully consider how they could help the church in our work together. We invited 76 households to pledge and to date we have received 49 pledges. The total amount pledged was \$175,710; the average pledge was \$3585.

Three households pledged \$10,000 or more (total \$30,000)

Three households pledged between \$7501 and \$10,000 (total \$26,400)

Six households pledged between \$5001 to \$7500 (total \$38,800)

Fifteen households pledged between \$2501 to \$5000 (total \$53,920)

Thirteen households pledged between \$1001 to \$2500 (total \$21,120)

Nine households pledged under \$1000 (total \$5470)

## **Finance**

We brought in about \$412,500 in income in 2024. Not including the organ donations, this is about \$23,000 more than in 2023 which means we are trending in a healthier direction.

However, we need to keep growing our income by between \$20,000 and \$40,000 a year to be able to pay our bills and invest in our staff and our future. For 2025, we need to do the best we can to make up the \$40,000 in income we were getting from renting our space to Bethel Evangelical Church – who relocated to Springfield in the fall.

We spent about \$426,500 in 2024 and ended the year \$14,000 in the red. However the reality was worse because that amount includes organ money we haven't yet spent. In reality we were more like \$32,000 in the red. We had a lot of unanticipated expenses this year having had to address long standing maintenance issues (as described above).

As of December 31, 2024, we had a balance of \$81,511 in our checking account. However this number does not include what we owed the school for salaries for December 2024. Thus a more realistic picture would have the checking account balance be around \$66,000 at the end of the year (compared to around \$100,000 for 2022 and 2023). We would like to be able to keep a balance of \$100,000 but there were too many unexpected and expensive maintenance issues this past year for us to be able to do so.

The vestry knew that we COULD dip into our small endowment reserve (about \$90,000) to balance the budget and ensure we ended the year with \$100,00 in the checking account, but since we didn't HAVE to do that to pay our bills we kept the money there as it makes money for us if we keep it there.

We submitted a combined 2022 and 2023 audit to the diocese in August of 2024. We are all up to date with our audits and in good standing with the diocese.

## Vestry and Staff

### Vestry

It has been a joy to work with the Saint Clement Vestry and Staff for an eighth year! For the vestry, we recruited three outstanding vestry members for three-year terms beginning in 2024: Joe Calizo, Bonnie Dragotto and Amanda Fanning. These three joined Eleanor Patterson, Tom Greco, Wendy Harper and Lee Dreyfus. Joe agreed to serve as our Senior Warden. Tom agreed to serve as our Junior Warden and Eleanor agreed to be the vestry secretary/registrar.



As of the 2025 Annual Meeting, Wendy Harper and Lee Dreyfuss will have completed their terms on the vestry. I am so grateful for everything Wendy and Lee have given to the church during their vestry terms. Both were always up for providing good ideas to move us forward and to step up to help in countless ways.

We all know her best for her magnificent flute playing each week, but did you know Lee was always the first to sign up to flip pancakes at the pancake supper (some of these things go unnoticed!) That is not an easy task – but she loved doing it and I know how much my children enjoyed flipping pancakes beside her! I am also so grateful for Lee accompanying me to Fredericksburg for diocesan convention this past November.

In addition to showing up at each meeting with good questions and good ideas, during her term Wendy helped us plan for a fun summer game night – so thoughtfully choosing prizes for every age group. It was such great fun. I am grateful for the joy she brings to our time together.

We will elect two more vestry members at the upcoming Annual Meeting on January 26, 2025: Virginia Pasley and Debbie Tatum Johnson.

After the resignation earlier this year (and *faithful* work over the last several years!!) of Christopher Kent, we are in the process of filling the role of treasurer for the church. This person does not have to serve on the vestry (through he or she can).

## Staffing

Bria Fournier completed her first year as our Parish Administrator and has done an excellent job in learning and implementing all of the systems that make our office run smoothly. She has been especially helpful as we transitioned to a new bookkeeper and began relationships with several new vendors - most notably new trash, pest control, landscaping and HVAC companies.

We also hired three individuals to take over the cleaning and maintenance of the building. For many years we had contracted out this work to a company who matched us with a staff person, but we ended up paying a lot in overhead expenses with this arrangement. Because we did not have a staff person we could talk with regularly we also did not have as much flexibility in ensuring that the most pressing needs were prioritized.

Our new Head Custodian is Angel Ferrufino and he has been a godsend since he began in the summer. His son Josmar also started at the same time, helping his dad several days a week. When his studies and soccer team responsibilities prevented Josmar from being able to come as often as originally planned, we hired a third custodian to make up the difference. Edgar



Alvarenga came highly recommended by Angel and has been a huge asset.

In addition to his work keeping our building clean and safe, Angel is a trained electrician and has also helped us update most of the lighting in the building. Gone are the days of calling in parishioners to purchase and change our fluorescent lightbulbs.

[Around the time we hired Angel and Josmar, we also hired John Herrera as our new Facilities Manager for a three-month contract beginning in August. Working every other Friday, he was going to help us oversee the maintenance of the building – helping us discover and develop a timeline of needed

maintenance items while also undertaking small “handyman” type jobs while he was here. He completed that contract and we mutually agreed not to extend it. The commute was a lot for John and we ended up not needing his expertise as much as we originally thought we would].

I am grateful for the support of the vestry as we made this transition, worked on several job descriptions and ultimately hired these new staff members for the church. The church building has never been as clean as it has been the last four or five months and I am so grateful.

## Preschool

I can't say enough what a delight it is to work with Jenny and dream alongside her about what the future of the preschool might hold – especially as it relates to the church and to reaching families that need a connection to a faith community – whether they join the church or not. That said it has been a delight to welcome so many preschool families into the life of our parish over the last year.



Chapel remains one of the highlights of my week. If you ever want to feel like a rock star – become a priest and lead preschool chapel. The kids light up when they come to chapel and run to me with hugs and high fives. And it is not because I (!) am awesome – I stumble through stories and sing off key – it's that the children are just full of joy – they are happy and well cared for and just love being at school and being seen, recognized and known by all the staff.

As you all know, I see the Preschool as one of our primary mission fields. The world is a mess right now and the preschool community needs our prayers. In late 2024, we started a new prayer initiative inviting the families to bring prayers in and allowing us to pray for them on Sunday mornings during worship. The first week we did this we had over 20 prayers from the community. We are continuing to get more prayers every week.

*Faithfully submitted by Rev. Robin Razzino, Rector*



## Senior Warden's Report



It has been a joy to witness all that has unfolded in our beloved community this past year. On a personal note, Sara and I were deeply moved by the support we received when we became foster parents to twin baby girls. This experience has forever changed us and underscored the kindness that defines St. Clement. This warmth and care are what make us a spiritual home, including to the new

families we welcome each week. I believe this sense of community is the cornerstone of who we are and why people are drawn to journey with us in faith.

Speaking of families and children, we celebrated exciting developments this year. The return of children serving as acolytes has been a highlight, with the torch-bearing and bell-ringing adding a special vibrancy to our worship. It has been heartwarming to see our young people take on these roles, reminding us how they can lead us in faith.

Additionally, we launched the Lego class for older kids, complementing the ongoing Godly Play program. These initiatives are enriching the spiritual lives of our youth and fostering a sense of belonging. I want to express my gratitude to all the teachers who dedicate their time to this ministry. Investing in the spiritual development of our young people is vital, and I hope to see these programs continue to develop in the years ahead.

Serving on the vestry has given me a deeper appreciation for the many ways individuals contribute to making St. Clement the unique and special place it is. I must particularly recognize Robin's leadership. She gives of herself in countless ways: guiding us in worship, offering pastoral care, supporting the staff, engaging deeply with preschool families. Her dedication often extends to behind-the-scenes work to support the well-being of the church such as all her efforts this year to tend to the much needed upkeep and maintenance of the building. We are truly fortunate to have her, along with Anne, Bria, Jenny, and the entire church and preschool staff. Their gifts and commitment enrich our community in immeasurable ways.

The joy that defines St. Clement is something I experience in so many facets of our life together. Whether singing in the choir, helping sell Christmas trees, teaching Lego class, or simply catching up with friends over coffee, these moments fill my heart and soul. This joy is something

I hope resonates with each of you and that we continue to share with those who find their way to us.

When I look around on a Sunday morning, I am encouraged by the energy of our community. We are in a good place, and I am excited about how we will continue to grow and develop in the coming year. I invite each of you to join me in seeking ways to deepen your engagement with our church family—whether through service, worship, or fellowship. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Senior Warden this past year. It has been an honor and a blessing.

*Faithfully submitted by Joe Calizo, Senior Warden*

## Music Director's Report

2024 was another robust year for music at Saint Clement. The choir continued to be our leaders in singing. We offered 28 anthems throughout the calendar year, including some congregational singing. Rehearsals continued to be held on Wednesday mornings and Sunday before the 10:00 am service. The repertoire continued to expand into new contemporary settings of scripture from the African-American canon as well as traditional works for soloists and choir.

In November, St. Clement joined with Fairlington United Methodist and Farlington Presbyterian Churches and began monthly Taizé services. This meditative service, using chant, bible verses, prayers, and silence is a very spiritual form of worship. Hosted by Fairlington United Methodist, the service has been successful and will continue through spring of 2025.

The most exciting news was the acquisition of a new organ. Built in 1950 this Aeolian-Skinner organ was given to us by the Church of the Transfiguration in Dallas, Texas. In October, the organ was successfully moved to St. Clement by Michael Hart, organ builder extraordinaire. The organ will be ready for use in worship during Epiphany 2025.

Big thanks go out to these faithful musicians: Joe Calizo, Martha Crawley, Lee Dreyfus, Anna Dvorchik, Betty Livingston, Nancy Marriner, Peggy Nigon, Virginia Pasley, Brian Razzino, and John Tyler. The ever ready Lee Dreyfus also doubled as the flute soloist and obbligato player on hymns and anthems, as well as accompanying the monthly Taizé services. We also welcomed



Zac West, an established clarinetist in our area, as guest artist. We look forward to continuing to bring in musicians to help enhance our worship.

*Faithfully submitted by Anne Tyler, Director of Music*

## **Carpenter's Shelter Dinner Program**



Thank you Clementines for another year of faithful ministry to the Carpenter's Shelter. We hit a nice serving rhythm this year - though controlled chaos may be a more apt description of the dining hall full of young families. Carpenter's success at placing families in housing meant we met a lot of new arrivals to our beautiful city. And the abundance of kids challenged us to create healthy entrees that appeal to their discerning young palates.

The Carpenter's Shelter supports families experiencing homelessness and those at-risk, to achieve sustainable independence through shelter and housing placement, guidance, education, and advocacy. St. Clement continues to partner with the Beverley Hills Community United Methodist Church to provide hot and healthy dinner to families at the Carpenter's Shelter of the third Sunday of every month. We contributed to and served around 600 meals this year.

Many thanks to the following Clementines that shared their talent, time, and resources: Lauren Borden and Dan Ziegler, Sara Caniglia, Amy Cloud, Bonnie Dragotto and Lisa Lundborg, Tom Greco, Wendy Harper, Carole and Jim Puryear (and anyone I might have missed). Your thoughtfulness, culinary talents, creative choices, and friendly spirits were well appreciated.

This year we served a homemade soup dinner, an enchilada dinner, juicy grilled and rotisserie chicken dinners, and several great chicken and tuna casserole dinners, not to mention some lovely salads and delectable home made desserts. Serving at Carpenter's continues to be a rewarding ministry for me, and I hope for all who participated this year. Our ministry provides a positive example for the kids and assures the newly arrived immigrant families that Alexandria is community that takes care of each other.

If you would like to learn more about the Carpenter's Shelter, our dinner service ministry, or other ways you can support the Carpenter's Shelter (specific donations, tutoring services, job counseling, etc), you can speak to me (or many of the above mentioned individuals) or check out <https://carpentersshelter.org>. A ministry FAQ in the Parish Hall provides additional information. We will be serving on Easter and on Father's Day - great opportunities to bring a little extra love!

2024 was my fifth year coordinating this ministry for St. Clement. I would love to give someone else the opportunity to take on the role. If you are feeling called to lead and are looking for a discreet, predictable ministry to manage, please chat with me.

*Faithfully submitted by Monica Rusk, CS Dinner Coordinator*

## **The Brown Bag Lunch Program**

St. Clement Church collaborates with seven other faith-based organizations—Christ Episcopal, Emmanuel Episcopal, Westminster, St. Paul's Episcopal, The Old Presbyterian Meeting House, Faith, and Grace Episcopal—in supporting the Brown Bag Lunch (BBL) program. This program operates out of Meade Memorial Church on Alfred Street in Alexandria, VA, and provides over 50 meals daily every weekday throughout the year.

The 2024 Brown Bag Lunch program highlighted a consistent and growing need for meal services in our community. While the average number of daily meals served in the fall and winter was around 50, this number surged to over 70 during the spring and summer months. During St. Clement's 3 day rotation alone, approximately 200 people came to receive meals. St. Clement parishioners actively contribute to the program, participating in meal preparation, delivery, and service three days a week, every other month. Each bagged lunch includes a sandwich, cookie, fresh fruit, and chips, with additional options like extra sandwiches, fruits, and desserts offered based on guest preferences or requests. Popular items such as kosher hot dog chili and chicken tenders have been particularly well-received.

Under the guidance of Rev. Robin, young helpers and parishioners prepare and pack meals in the church kitchen or Parish Hall when St. Clement is assigned to serve on Mondays. On other days, volunteers sign up to make 50 sandwiches at home or in the church kitchen, often working in pairs to meet the required total. When guest turnout exceeds 50, alternate meals or food items are distributed to ensure everyone is served.



A team of 4–5 parishioners deliver the meals to Meade Memorial Church and stays to assist with serving. This hands-on approach fosters a sense of connection between St. Clement parishioners and the guests, encouraging social interaction. During these interactions, guests have expressed additional needs for items such as scarves, light jackets, and socks. On several occasions, St. Clement has provided preference-based clothing options, allowing guests to choose from a selection of jackets, shirts, socks, and scarves.

Guests frequently assist the BBL team by setting up tables and umbrellas for outdoor meals, bagging groceries on “grocery day,” and helping others make dietary-appropriate food choices. This collaboration not only supports the program’s operations but also fosters a sense of community and shared purpose.

Lauren Borden and Deborah Tatum-Johnson coordinate the BBL program for St. Clement, and they extend their heartfelt gratitude to the parishioners who consistently prepare sandwiches, assemble lunch bags, and deliver meals to Meade Memorial Church. The program also deeply appreciates the contributions of all St. Clement parishioners—both those actively involved and those working behind the scenes—whose dedication, talents, and generosity make the BBL program meaningful and impactful.

Thank you for making a difference in the lives of those we serve.

*Faithfully submitted by Debbie Tatum Johnson and Lauren Borden, BBL Coordinators*