



2025 Vestry Report

(for the year ending Dec 31, 2024)

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ST NICHOLAS
ANGELICAN CHURCH, BIRCH CLIFF

Annual Vestry Meeting Meeting details

Sunday, February 23, 2025
12:15pm, in-person & via Zoom

Just like last year, this year for Vestry we'll gather in our beautiful worship space, and continue the work of ministry that flows both from our liturgy and this meeting.

For those unable to attend in person, you can attend the meeting via Zoom. If you hope to attend the meeting virtually, we'll have a screen projecting in the church, showing those who are in attendance. Details to log in to the meeting are below.

How a hybrid vestry meeting works

If anyone in the church wishes to speak, they'll need to come up to a microphone set up in the church so that those attending virtually (and those of us in the church) can hear clearly. Anyone who speaks on Zoom will also be heard throughout the church.

If you're attending virtually, there are two ways to participate in the meeting – on your computer/tablet, and by phone.

If you want to join us virtually by computer or tablet:

Simply join the meeting by going to:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89515733105?pwd=CwJrEQXovX4qUGR6RhP5viLWKoJ6mj.1>

(This link will also be sent out in an email so you don't have to type this whole address into your browser.)

Or, manually enter the meeting details into Zoom:

Meeting ID: **895 1573 3105**

Passcode: **953047**

If you want to participate in the meeting by phone:

Just dial **(647) 558-0588**.

When asked for the meeting code, dial **895 1573 3105#**

When asked for the meeting passcode, dial **953047#**

You can mute and unmute yourself at any time by dialing *6 (Star-6).

To ask a question, dial *9 (Star-9) and the chair will see that you have "raised your hand."



ST NICHOLAS
ANGLICAN CHURCH, BIRCH CLIFF

Annual Vestry Meeting

**Sunday, February 23, 2025
12:15pm In-Person & via Zoom**

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Opening Prayer
3. Appointment of Vestry Clerk
4. Procedural Motions
 - a. Review & adoption of Agenda for 2025 Vestry Meeting
 - b. Review & Adoption of Vestry Minutes from February 25, 2024 meeting
5. Acknowledgement of Letters & Reports
6. Incumbent's Report
7. Churchwardens' Report
8. Financial Reports & Motions
 - a. Motion to receive 2024 Financial Statements
 - b. Motion to approve 2025 Budget
 - c. Motion to approve Review Engagement
9. Envelope Secretary's Report
10. Social Justice Vestry Motion – Harm Reduction in Ontario
11. Appointments and Elections of 2025 Parish Leadership & Ministry Teams
12. Parish Ministry Reports
13. Thanksgivings and Celebrations
14. Other Business
15. Adjournment
16. Closing Prayer

Minutes of Annual Vestry Meeting, February 25, 2024

Opening and Prayer

The meeting was called to order by Fr. Andrew at approximately 12:30pm.

Laura lamundo was appointed as vestry clerk, though due to a family matter, she was unable to attend. A recording of the meeting made by Zoom is to be provided to her for the purpose of creating minutes. In Laura's stead, **Janet Baron** was appointed to record the essential details of the meeting, including names of movers and seconders, issues raised, and speakers. The minutes were prepared and reviewed by Fr. Andrew.

Fr. Andrew confirmed that a sign-in sheet was circulating, in addition to attendance being taken on Zoom. He verified that everyone attending by Zoom could hear and be heard.

Fr. Andrew read the Vestry declaration, confirming that all in attendance had been worshipping at St. Nicholas for the past 3 months, were over the age of 16 and had not voted in the vestry meeting of any other parish.

Approval of Agenda

Jennie Tippett moved, **Arthur MacLean** seconded.

Approval of Vestry 2024 Minutes

Sarah Brown moved, **Cheryle Pollock** seconded.

Letters and Statistical Reports

Fr. Andrew commended to everyone's attention the letter from the College of Bishops.

The attendance report was briefly discussed. A working group of the diocese (of which Fr. Andrew was a part) released guidelines on how to count virtual attendance, which are reflected in the numbers.

The report on the renovations on the rectory was considered. **Fr. Andrew** expressed his deep gratitude to the parish and executive team for the renovation work done on the rectory in 2023. He emphasized the importance of the rectory in maintaining a visible presence in the neighborhood, as well as its role in strengthening the personal connections between church leaders and the parish community.

The results from 2023's *Just One Question* survey series in June were reviewed, along with questions for consideration. These surveys were designed to help the parish better understand how seekers and visitors perceive the church. The results were included in the vestry report, and **Fr. Andrew** encouraged members to read through them and consider the included questions.

Rector's Report

Fr. Andrew directed Vestry to the livestream of the 10:30 service to hear his Charge to Vestry, celebrating an ambitious year of ministry.

He invited offerings of thanksgiving and celebration from the floor of Vestry. **Sarah Brown** spoke about her pride in the growth of the parish, especially in the children and youth ministry. **Sonia Halloran** also shared her appreciation for the volunteer efforts of those who participate in, and respond to calls for additional help for the Community Lunch program.

No other thanksgiving or celebrations were mentioned. With no questions, the rector's report concluded.

Wardens' Report

The wardens report as offered in the Vestry Report was received. There were no questions.

Financial Report

2023 Financial Statements

Brian Jones presented the financial summary for the year, explaining that the parish had ended the year with a surplus of approximately \$49,000, marking a significant recovery from the prior year's deficit of \$50,000. He explained that a large part of this surplus came from the increase in market value of investments. Brian clarified that when excluding the fluctuation in market values, the actual surplus was closer to \$16,500, a positive turnaround from the prior year's deficit of \$8,200.

The capital expenses for the rectory renovation were also discussed. **Brian** shared that approximately \$65,000 to \$70,000 had been spent on necessary upgrades to the rectory, which included structural and aesthetic improvements.

Freda Gearing moved to approve the financial statements, and **Doug Goss** seconded. The motion to accept the 2023 financial statements was passed.

2024 Budget

Brian Jones presented the proposed 2024 budget, noting that the parish was forecasting a \$30,000 deficit due to anticipated rising costs across various operational areas. Despite this, he was optimistic about the parish's financial position due to consistent revenue from offerings and expected income from a bequest.

Brian encouraged members to consider increasing their parochial offerings, particularly by signing up for pre-authorized giving, which would help bridge the anticipated deficit. He explained that while the parish's costs were rising, these increases were being managed carefully.

Brian Jones moved to approve the 2024 budget, and **Anne Moir** seconded. The motion to approve the 2024 budget was passed.

Review Engagement motion

Fr. Andrew explained that, due to favourable changes in provincial legislation, the parish now had the option to conduct a review engagement instead of a full audit, and

the diocesan canons which govern our operations were changed to align with legislation.

A review engagement involves a less intensive review of the financial statements and is considerably more affordable than a full audit. A motion of Vestry is required to authorize that course of action.

Stephanie Ford moved the motion to authorize the parish executive to explore a review engagement for the 2024 financials, and **Doug Goss** seconded.

The motion was passed, allowing the parish executive to pursue this option.

Envelope Secretary's Report

Fr. Andrew asked if there were any questions about the report of the Envelope Secretary. There were none, and the report was accepted in to record.

Parish Leaders for 2025

Fr. Andrew introduced the slate of nominees and appointees for the year, which was included on page 29 of the vestry report. He noted that there were no contested elections. **Mary Kearney** moved to close the nominations, and **Ken Campbell** seconded the motion.

With no further nominations:

Sonia Halloran and **Brian Todd** were acclaimed as canonical wardens.

Katherine Ferrante and **Sharon Endugesick** were acclaimed as deputy wardens for the coming year.

Fr. Andrew acknowledged the tremendous contributions of **Suzanne Lehtinen**, who was stepping down after years of faithful service as a warden, and **Stephanie Ford**, who was stepping down as deputy warden. He thanked them for their dedicated work and leadership.

The new leadership team was welcomed, and Fr. Andrew invited the congregation to keep them in their prayers.

Social Justice Vestry Motion

The Social Justice Vestry Motion was presented, calling on the parish to support actions to address the growing housing crisis. The motion proposed that:

- The federal government direct subsidies toward affordable housing projects.
- The Real Estate Investment Trusts program be realigned to promote affordable housing development.
- The provincial government implement rent and vacancy controls and restrict rent increases.
- The provincial government place restrictions on the use of affordable rental housing for short-term rentals.

There were no questions to the motion. **Sarah Brown** moved to approve the motion, and **Cheryle Pollock** seconded it.

Ministry Reports

The reports from parish ministry teams and organizations were received. Additional reports from the floor were invited, but none were offered. No questions were asked in relation to any of the reports.

Thanksgivings and Celebrations

Ken Campbell raised concerns about global violence, particularly the situation in Ukraine, and urged the parish to speak out more forcefully against such conflicts. He called for the church to use its voice to condemn actions rooted in greed and violence.

Suzanne Lehtinen thanked everyone for their support over the years and expressed deep gratitude for the opportunity to serve in the parish's leadership.

Freda Gearing spoke about the joy of the Wednesday morning Eucharist service, inviting others to attend and enjoy the informal yet spiritually enriching time.

Fr. Andrew spoke about something he heard from **Jamie Ferrante**, about a person in a local Facebook group who asked for suggestions of a family-friendly church, to four people named our parish. He named it as a sign of the identity that we are building in the neighbourhood, and he thanked everyone for their work.

He concluded by encouraging everyone to consider the banner (which will hang in the parish hall), and see all that we have accomplished in the past year.

Adjournment

With thanks to Laura Lamundo, Janet Baron, the Exec, and Duncan Wood for their preparations for the day's meeting, Fr. Andrew closed the meeting.

Jennie Tippett moved to adjourn.

The meeting ended with a prayer at 1:05pm

The College of Bishops Pastoral Letter to Vestries, 2025



Diocese of Toronto
Anglican Church of Canada

To the clergy, churchwardens, and parishioners of the Diocese of Toronto:

Beloved Siblings in Christ,

“...be renewed in the spirit ...” – Ephesians 4:23

In this Season of Spiritual Renewal, the Diocese of Toronto is exhibiting a burgeoning health and vitality that inspires us daily. To God be the glory! As your bishops, as we travel around to visit our parishes, we have witnessed the Holy Spirit engaging in marvelous ways with people, groups and ministries right across this Diocese – from Mississauga to Minden, from Cobourg to Collingwood. The Season of Spiritual Renewal, this invitation to spiritual growth, has been enthusiastically received in so many ways, including the sharing of prayer resources, participation in online workshops, and our bishops’ Advent study online. We are also looking forward to *#LiveLent: God’s Story, Our Story*, a daily Lenten resource with a helpful guide for small group use.

We are excited that the next phase in this Season of Spiritual Renewal is called “Lift Up Our Hearts.” Over the coming year, large worship services will take place across the Diocese on five Saturday afternoons at 2 p.m. Each celebration of the Eucharist will feature excellent music, moving testimony, and preachers from within our own Diocese, each with their own unique approach to spiritual renewal. We hope you will plan to join us for one or more of these marvelous gatherings. Come on your own, bring a friend, or hire a bus! We will see you there:

- **March 22 – St. James Cathedral** (preacher: the Rev. Molly Finlay)
- **March 29 – Trinity Church, Streetsville** (preacher: the Rev. Canon Stephanie Douglas)
- **May 31 – All Saints, Whitby** (preacher: the Rev. Gerlyn Henry)
- **September 27 – St. James, Orillia** (preacher: the Rev. Dr. Rob Hurkmans)
- **October 25 – St. Paul’s, Bloor Street** (preacher: the Rev. Dr. Alvarado Adderley)

The call to spiritual renewal, however, was just the first of 20 Calls articulated in the *Cast the Net* strategic vision adopted by Synod and this Diocese in 2023. Over the coming year, you will hear us repeatedly emphasising the need for each congregation to review and consider all of the 20 Calls and then choose which two or three your parish will focus on. As you gather today for Vestry, this could be the perfect opportunity to start considering the question. A small group – the Netminders – has prepared resources to help you, which you can find on the [Cast the Net web page](#). While it’s important to remember that no congregation could possibly answer all 20 Calls, we strongly believe that each congregation can consider two or three. Leading up to our diocesan Synod in November, we hope that every parish will be able to identify which of the Calls they are living into.

We are pleased to welcome our new Executive Director, Varun Balendra ODT. A familiar face around the Diocese, Varun has served in many volunteer capacities over the years, and we look forward to working together in this new capacity. By the time of our diocesan Synod on Friday, Nov. 7 and Saturday, Nov. 8, we expect that we will be introducing a new Secretary of Synod and a new full-time Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisor, whose primary focus areas will be supporting the work of the Anti-Bias, Anti-Racism (ABAR) and other DEI training, and supporting individuals and parishes to grow, build community, educate and engage.

Some other new faces at Synod may include guests from the Diocese of Brasilia. This past June, at the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection in the city of Brasilia, the two diocesan bishops of Brasilia and Toronto signed the covenant that brings our two dioceses into a companion relationship. Since the signing

of our agreement, a small representative group from each diocese has been meeting monthly – in both Portuguese and English – to pray together and to plan events. For example, clergy from both dioceses will gather online for a joint study day on liberation theology on March 25. In the fall, a youth delegation from Brasilia will join our own youth at the Re-Charge youth retreat at Muskoka Woods camp. And we anticipate sending a delegation from Toronto to Brasilia in 2026. We have even developed a shared logo for our relationship that combines elements of each of our own logos: our Diocese of Toronto dove springing from their Ipe Tree. You can expect to hear more about this companion partnership as we enter into the second year of it.

Closer to home, the partnerships within our own Diocese continue to flourish. When we speak of casting the net, we are referring to the supportive, creative and collaborative ministry that occurs in each deanery and regionalization, between parishes and congregations, amongst church neighbours and colleagues. We are grateful to our hardworking and devout clergy and our dedicated lay leaders, especially churchwardens, treasurers, administrators, musicians and the countless church staff and parish volunteers who are Christ’s hands and feet of ministry in our communities. We are so grateful for all of your faithful work in our parishes and beyond.

We have embarked on a feasibility study to discern if this is the right time for the Diocese to conduct a major financial campaign. Over the next six months, M&M International, a Toronto-based fundraising firm, will listen to parishes large and small, soliciting feedback on a case for support. It is proposed that if a campaign does go forward, the majority of funds raised will remain in the parishes, with a smaller portion supporting the 20 Calls at the diocesan level. Your feedback and commitment will make the difference as we look into this additional way of working together.

Lastly, we want to encourage each Vestry meeting to consider this year’s social justice motion: “Protecting and Expanding Harm Reduction in Ontario.” The Church has a role to play in calling on government for responsible actions in caring for our most vulnerable neighbours, to ensure life-saving protections for those experiencing addictions and other challenges. Please consider how your parish can speak up, and out, for those who require advocacy. As we anticipate going to the polls in the coming year – federally and provincially – let us remember our baptismal promises as we cast our ballots, choosing candidates who align with our values. And let us pray for them.

For it is in praying that we are drawn ever deeper into relationship with the Triune God and become more attentive to the will of our Heavenly Creator. In this Season of Spiritual Renewal, we ask every reader of this letter to commit more deeply to a life of prayer, that it may infuse your every day with Grace as you witness to the Love of Christ in your life and to the world.

In your prayers, please pray for all three of us, your College of Bishops, both in your personal daily devotions as well as your parish’s weekly intercessions. Know that we are praying for you too, giving thanks for our common life together across our wonderful diocesan family.

Yours faithfully in Christ Jesus,



The Right Rev. Andrew J. Asbil
Bishop of Toronto



The Right Rev. Riscylla Shaw
Suffragan Bishop of Toronto



The Right Rev. Kevin Robertson
Suffragan Bishop of Toronto

Attendance and Statistics Report for 2024

Each year, we are required by the Diocese to submit a statistical return reflecting the average Sunday and weekly attendance for the past calendar year. These numbers can be used as indicators of our congregational and missional health. They are also used to calculate the number of delegates we are entitled to send to Diocesan Synod as we share in the wider ministry of the church.

Attendance numbers are not the only indicator of a parish's health, nor are they the best. Attendance always fluctuates with due to vacations, weather events, and the ongoing shifts in what "regular church attendance" means to the average person. **A parish's health should also be gauged by opportunities for involvement, the programs it runs, its willingness to talk openly about finances, its broader ministry of outreach, discipleship and engagement.** To wit, a parish of 20 people could be "healthier" than a parish of 150. That said, where Sunday liturgies are among the most public-facing of what we do, the attendance statistics have particular merit.

Methodology

In-person attendance is easy to calculate. Counting online viewers is trickier, because people don't always watch the service live, or watch the entirety of the service (they may listen just for the hymns or the sermon). So in order to capture a fairly reliable weekly attendance, we use a practice called "Live +24," which adds the total number of live views to those within 24 hours of the service, which includes people who preferred to pray the service later in the afternoon, evening, or the next day.

<u>Service</u>	<u># services</u>	<u>Avg. in-person</u>	<u>Avg. Live</u>	<u>Avg '+24'</u>
Sunday 8:30 services (Jan 1 to Dec 31)	51	12 (<i>13 last year</i>)	n/a	n/a
Sunday 10:30 services (Jan 1 to Dec 31)	52	56 (<i>52 last year</i>)	6 (<i>7 last yr</i>)	8 (<i>6 last yr</i>)
Wednesday services (throughout the year)	38	9 (<i>9 last year</i>)	n/a	n/a
Average Sunday Attendance	81 people	(71 in 2023)		
Average Weekly Attendance	89 people	(78 in 2022)		

Feasts and Fasts by the numbers...

<u>Service(s)</u>	<u>In-person</u>	<u>Live</u>	<u>'+24'</u>
Ash Wednesday (<i>10am and 7pm combined</i>)	47	5	6
Holy Week (Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat)	126	27	48
Easter Day (<i>8:30 and 10:30 combined</i>) [‡]	101	7	11
Blessing of the Pets [§]	38	n/a	n/a
Quiet Christmas	14	5	7
Christmas Eve 4pm Family Service	123	4	15
Christmas Eve 10pm Midnight Mass	37	7	18
Christmas Day	40	7	8

[‡] In-person number includes both 8:30 and 10:30 services that day. 8:30 services are not livestreamed.

[§] Does not include 21 dogs, 3 cats and 2 stuffies (of which 1 was a proxy for a fish).

St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff
Pastoral Offices Report 2024

Marriages

Lorraine Pollard & Philip Gearing
Radikha Patel & Kester Munro

Baptisms

Finn James Murphy
Lily Rose Murphy
Ethan Hunter Ewers

Funerals & Burials

Ros Gray
Louise Niles
Robert Andrew
Don Thomas

Wardens Report - 2024

By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established, by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches. (Proverbs 24:3-4)

2024 was at times a challenging year for your team of Wardens. We are however very grateful for the wisdom, understanding and knowledge which God has given us that have helped us to face and deal with these challenges both directly and through the many people whose work is highlighted in this Report. We are especially grateful to Fr. Andrew for his leadership and ministry in carrying out the work of building the Church, and for the help and support provided by our Honorary Assistant, Joan Wilson. It also has been our great pleasure to work with Laura Lamundo, our Parish Administrator, and Christine Hanson, our Parish Musician. They help make our Church function day to day as a warm and welcoming place for all.

Unfortunately, both the church and the rectory required considerable maintenance in 2024. Summer storms resulted in leaks in the flat roofs requiring extensive repair, the Kingston Rd. and Manderley doors were finally repaired and refinished, the office doors will be entirely replaced in the near future and necessary tree trimming was carried out at both the church and the rectory. In addition, the lift, dishwasher and heating system all needed maintenance work. Essential updates and repairs were also carried out at the rectory. Thank you to all who have helped in keeping both the church property and the rectory inviting and in good order.

The parking lot and laneway owned by St. Nick's presented the most significant challenge to the Wardens in 2024. After approving the parking lot as "surplus" in 2023, the Diocese recommended selling it on the open market. A realtor was retained but the marketing of the property was halted in the fall of 2024 when a court application was brought by the owners of land on Kingston Rd. against the Nova Ridge Condo development over laneway rights and access. As the property owner, St. Nick's was named as a party to the application. The Wardens retained a legal firm to respond to the litigation. The matter was argued in court on January 10, 2025, but the judge's decision is still pending. The Wardens however do expect to recover legal costs from the other parties to the application.

With Fr. Andrew's lead and our open front door (when the weather is good), St. Nick's has been actively inviting people to join us and experience the love of God in both our worship, and our community outreach activities. We are truly grateful to all who have contributed and whose efforts have enriched those experiences.

We are especially thankful to the heads of the various committees and projects that have been undertaken throughout the year, details of which can be read elsewhere in this Report. We are also grateful to our representatives on Parish Council and to the Diocese. Our work on the building of the Church in 2024 has rested on a firm foundation laid by Wardens, clergy and many, many parishioners in years gone by. We pray that the things done in 2024 continue to provide rooms filled with the riches of the Spirit for years to come.

Brian Todd, Sonia Halloran, Sharon Endugesick Katherine Ferrante

Treasurer's Report - 2024

From a financial point of view, St Nicholas did not have a very good year. Our deficit for the year is over \$100,000. Even if we exclude the legal fees described in note 6 to the financial statements, the deficit for the year was still over \$60,000. We did not come close to the budgeted amount for regular offering.

On the expense side, we were over budget in repairs, outreach and capital expenditures. For 2025, we are projecting a significant deficit of \$85,000, which will require a withdrawal from our investments held by the Diocesan Trust Fund. I am sure you can see that this trend can not continue.

I will be working with the wardens to develop plans to reduce the projected deficit and get us back on a firmer footing.

I would like to thank Brian Todd who has stepped for me on several occasions as I have been away a fair amount this past year. Also, thanks to Laura in the office for assisting on that front.

Brian M Jones

Treasurer

CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS, BIRCHCLIFF

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2024

(with comparative amounts for December 31, 2023)

	2024	2023
ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 18,989	\$ 31,637
Investments (note 2)	369,239	346,163
Prepaid expenses and deposits	<u>813</u>	<u>911</u>
Total Assets	389,041	378,711
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	54,574	267
Total Liabilities	<u>54,574</u>	<u>267</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>\$ 334,467</u>	<u>\$ 378,444</u>
Consisting of		
Operating Fund	\$ (32,199)	\$ 47,438
Capital Fund	(5,848)	(77,577)
Memorial Fund	369,239	405,429
Altar Guild	3,209	2,933
Outreach Fund	<u>66</u>	<u>221</u>
	<u>\$ 334,467</u>	<u>\$ 378,444</u>

On behalf of the Church's management

Warden

Treasurer

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is for the Warden and the second is for the Treasurer. The signatures are written over the printed labels 'Warden' and 'Treasurer'.

CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS, BIRCHCLIFF

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS & DISBURSEMENTS AND NET ASSETS

For the year ended December 31, 2024

(with comparative amounts for 2023)

	Operating Fund	Capital Fund	Other Funds Schedule	2024 Total	2023 Total
RECEIPTS					
Open / Canada Helps	\$ 10,543			\$ 10,543	\$ 7,911
Parochial offering	160,330			160,330	165,611
Donations & Rentals	11,500		30,541	42,041	35,429
Fund raising	10,397			10,397	9,827
Investment income - note 5			15,258	15,258	12,814
Capital donations		4,535		4,535	510
Other - note 4	38,806	15,326		54,132	142,819
Total Receipts	231,576	19,861	45,799	297,236	374,921
EXPENDITURES					
Personnel costs					
Incumbent, assistants	73,554			73,554	71,164
Organist, Caretaker, Secretary	65,409			65,409	58,190
Synod assessment	25,944			25,944	27,087
Rectory taxes, utilities, and repairs	12,087			12,087	11,780
Utilities	18,778			18,778	19,731
Insurance	18,313			18,313	17,483
Office supplies	17,481			17,481	13,698
Repairs	35,035			35,035	22,791
Parking lot expenses	50,366			50,366	5,461
Choir, Altar and Organ	2,274		3,834	6,108	6,167
Christian Education / Outreach	455		32,686	33,141	25,342
Other	675			675	2,347
Capital expenditures - note 3		47,399		47,399	77,129
Total expenditures	320,371	47,399	36,520	404,290	358,370
Realized and unrealized (devaluation) appreciation of Investments - note 2			63,077	63,077	32,719
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) for year	(88,795)	(27,538)	72,356	(43,977)	49,270
Opening Fund Balance	47,438	(77,577)	408,583	378,444	329,174
Inter-fund transfers (note 5)	9,158	99,267	(108,425)	0	0
CLOSING FUND BALANCE	\$ (32,199)	\$ (5,848)	\$ 372,514	\$ 334,467	\$ 378,444

CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS, BIRCHCLIFF

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended December 31, 2024

(with comparative amounts for 2023)

	2024	2023
OPERATING		
Donations and other receipts	\$ 297,236	\$ 374,921
Expenditures	(356,891)	(281,241)
Increase in Accounts payable	54,308	(1,956)
Decrease in Prepaid expenses	<u>98</u>	<u>(661)</u>
Funds from operations	(5,249)	91,063
FINANCING		
INVESTING		
Proceeds from sale of investments	40,000	(5,750)
Expenditures for capital assets (Note 3)	(47,399)	(77,129)
Decrease in Cash	(12,648)	8,184
Cash, beginning of year	31,637	23,453
Cash, end of year	\$ 18,989	\$ 31,637

CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS, BIRCH CLIFF

Summary of Significant Accounting Policies and Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2024

1. The Church of St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff has several funds through which it conducts its religious and charitable activities. These funds include:
 - a) Operating Fund. This is the general fund for the day-to-day operations of the church.
 - b) Capital Fund. This fund receives capital donations, HST refunds, and funds designated for capital purchases. All expenditures of a capital nature are expensed through this fund, as is the usual policy followed by charitable organizations. Significant capital assets of the Church of St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff include the rectory, the church building, church and rectory property, the laneway and parking lot, and all furnishings and fixtures of the church. These assets were expensed in the year of acquisition.
 - c) Memorial Fund. This fund receives memorial donations, to be used for specific items or projects as specified by the donor or the wardens of the Church.
 - d) Outreach Fund. This fund receives outreach donations, including for Faithworks and the local food bank, as well as funds raised specifically for outreach projects.
 - e) Altar Guild. This fund receives donations for flowers, and other items used in the chancel.
2. Investments are recorded at market value. The difference between the carrying value of the investments and the quoted value on December 31 is recorded in the Statement of Receipts and Expenditures and Net Assets as an unrealized appreciation or devaluation of investments.

The details of the investments are as follows:

	December 31 2024		December 31, 2023	
	Cost	Market	Cost	Market
Diocesan Trust Fund	\$ 238,807	\$ 358,647	\$265,441	\$338,283
Marketable securities	<u>4,000</u>	<u>10,592</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>7,880</u>
Total	<u>\$ 242,807</u>	<u>\$ 369,239</u>	<u>\$269,441</u>	<u>\$346,163</u>
Cumulative adjustment to market		126,432		76,722
Adjustment to market in current year		49,710		15,693

During 2024, some investments were sold. This resulted in a realized gain of \$13,367 (2023 - \$17,026).

3. The capital expenditures in 2024 were:

Rectory utility room	\$ 2,825	
Rectory patio	6,747	
Hearing units	1,090	
Church entrance doors	11,742	
Roof	20,418	
Tree trimming	<u>4,577</u>	
	\$ 47,399	(2023 - \$77,129)

4. The church received an HST rebate of \$15,326 (2023 - \$15,542), which has been included in the Capital Fund.

Other Revenue includes a bequest, and air-rights payment regarding the parking lot.

5. As in past years, the income earned on the investments (\$15,258) in the Memorial Fund has been transferred to the Operating Fund. (2023 - \$12,814). In addition, an amount of \$6,100 was transferred from regular operations to outreach to help cover the cost of the 2024 outreach program. Also, in 2024, the wardens approved the transfer of \$99,267 from the Memorial fund to the Capital fund to cover the capital expenses incurred in 2023 and 2024.

6. The Church is a co-respondent in a court application regarding access to the laneway and availability of the parking lot. To date, legal fees have been incurred by the Church in the amount of \$44,716. It is the opinion of the Church's lawyers that these funds may be recoverable from the other parties to the application. For 2024, the legal costs have been included in the parking lot expense.

7. The Church manages its exposure to the credit, liquidity, and interest rate risks associated with financial statements by maintaining financial instruments that may be promptly liquidated. The Church's cash is on deposit with a bank that is a member of the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation.

The Church believes its exposure to credit, liquidity and interest rate risks is not significant.

SCHEDULE

2024	Memorial	Altar Guild	Outreach	Total
Opening	405,429	2,933	221	408,583
Receipts				
Donations		4,110	5,771	9,881
Faithworks			5,270	5,270
Food bank			1,820	1,820
Community lunches			100	100
Christmas feast			13,020	13,020
Other			450	450
Investment income	15,258			15,258
Subtotal	15,258	4,110	26,431	45,799
Disbursements				
Faithworks			4,516	4,516
Food bank			7,200	7,200
Community lunches			1,110	1,110
Flowers		3,724		3,724
Supplies		110		110
Parish outreach			6,278	6,278
Christmas feast			13,082	13,082
Other			500	500
Subtotal	-	3,834	32,686	36,520
Excess of receipts over expenditures	15,258	276	(6,255)	9,279
Unrealized appreciation of investments	49,710			49,710
Realized gain on investments	13,367			13,367
Interfund transfer	(114,525)		6,100	(108,425)
Closing	369,239	3,209	66	372,514

CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS, BIRCHCLIFF
OPERATING, CAPITAL, AND OUTREACH FUND BUDGET

For the year ended December 31, 2025

(with comparative amounts for 2024)

	2024 ACTUAL	2024 BUDGET	2025 BUDGET
RECEIPTS			
Open offering & Canada Helps	\$ 10,543	\$ 8,000	\$ 10,000
Parochial offering	160,330	175,000	165,000
Donations & Rentals	11,500	10,500	11,500
Fund raising	10,397	10,000	11,000
Investment income	15,258	13,500	12,000
Capital donations	4,535	1,000	2,000
HST rebate	15,326	15,000	18,500
Other (note 4)	38,806	23,000	18,000
Outreach	<u>26,431</u>	<u>25,000</u>	<u>25,000</u>
 Total Receipts	 <u>293,126</u>	 <u>281,000</u>	 <u>273,000</u>
EXPENDITURES			
Personnel costs			
Incumbent, assistants	73,554	75,000	77,000
Organist, Caretaker, Secretary	65,409	65,700	69,200
Synod assessment	25,944	25,944	26,022
Rectory taxes, utilities, repairs	12,087	12,500	12,700
Utilities	18,778	21,200	20,700
Insurance	18,313	20,000	20,000
Office supplies	17,481	15,600	17,700
Repairs	35,035	25,000	35,000
Parking lot expense	50,366	1,500	25,000
Choir, Altar and Organ	2,274	4,000	3,500
Christian Education	455	500	500
Outreach	32,686	25,000	30,000
Other	675	3,000	1,500
Capital expenditures	<u>47,399</u>	<u>16,000</u>	<u>20,000</u>
 Total expenditures	 <u>400,456</u>	 <u>310,944</u>	 <u>358,822</u>
 Surplus / Deficit	 <u>\$ (107,330)</u>	 <u>\$ (29,944)</u>	 <u>\$ (85,822)</u>

Envelope Secretary's Report 2024

Donations include Parochial Offerings, Memorial Gifts, Outreach and Capital Offerings and exclude Visitors. Donations for 2024 were \$185,333 up from \$173,973 in 2023. In addition, approximately \$14,400 was donated through Canada Helps and similar agencies.

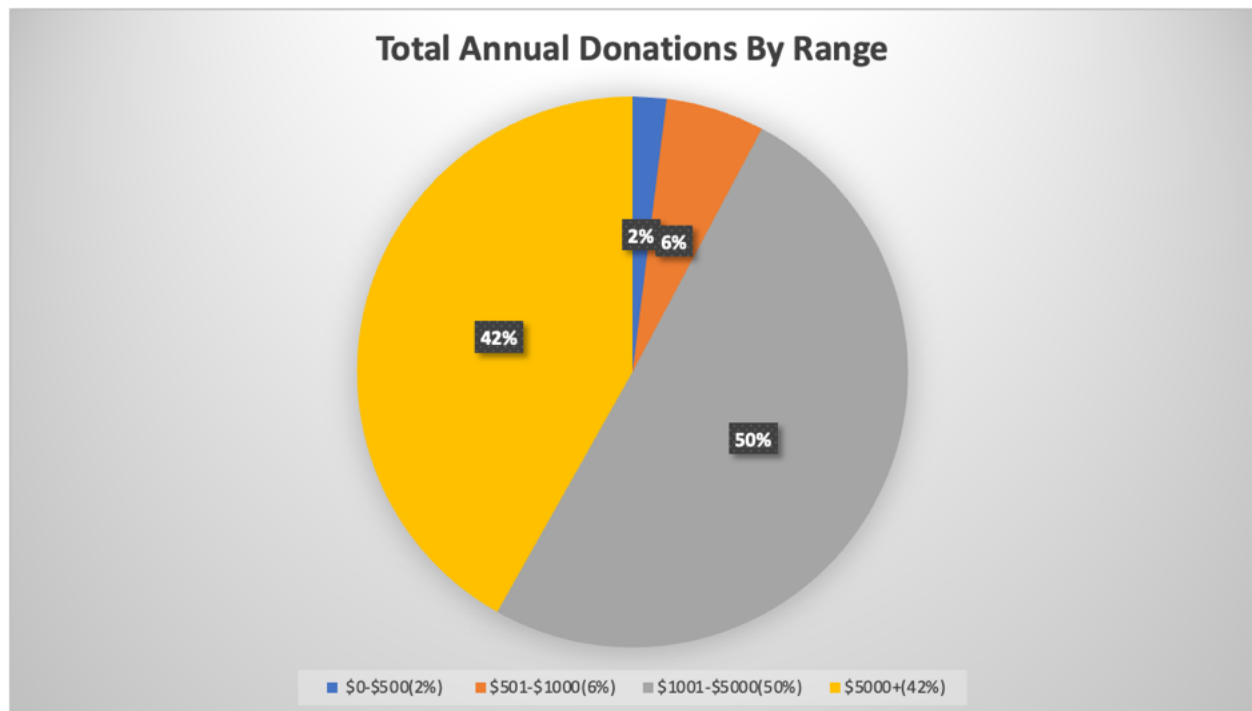
Envelopes and Pre-Authorized Gifts

In 2024 there were 85 parishioners who made contributions either using weekly envelopes or through the monthly pre-authorized giving program. This is down from 87 in 2023.

Out of the 85 parishioners 36 used weekly envelopes (down from 66 in 2023) and 49 used the pre-authorized giving program (up from 47 in 2023). Some used both.

I would encourage as many parishioners as possible to take advantage of the monthly pre-authorized giving program. It is simple to use and saves the church considerable time and expense. Forms are available at the back of the church or from the church office.

Duncan Wood



Social Justice Vestry Motion 2025: Protecting and Expanding Harm Reduction in Ontario

We, the parish of _____ in the Diocese of Toronto, urge the Province of Ontario to reverse the planned closure of safe consumption sites in Ontario, and to lift the ban on the creation of new sites, in order to expand life-saving harm reduction services to Ontarians.

Ontario is currently in the midst of a deadly overdose crisis, which claims an average of seven lives every day.¹ Safe consumption sites, also called supervised consumption sites, (SCS) are on the front lines of this crisis, having reversed more than 21,000 overdoses in the province between March 2020 and January 2024.² Each one of these is a life saved. The sites offer an indoor, supervised space for people who use drugs to do so safely, with clean equipment and boxes for the safe disposal of used needles. They also have healthcare workers and other staff on hand to reverse overdoses, address other health issues, and connect people to other supports, including treatment. No death has occurred within an overdose prevention site since they were opened.

In 2018, the province put in place a cap of 21 such sites in Ontario, but has only funded 17. A few other supervised consumption sites in the province have received federal approval but no provincial funding. Two of these, in northern Ontario, have closed due to a lack of funds, while one in Toronto has continued to operate through donations. Other communities, such as Barrie, Cobourg, Oshawa, and Orillia, remain without such sites, despite demonstrable need in those communities.³

In August 2024 the provincial government announced a ban on supervised drug consumption sites within 200 metres of schools and childcare centres. On Nov. 18, 2024, the province introduced Bill 223, the “Safer Streets, Stronger Communities Act,” which, in addition to implementing this geographic ban, prohibits municipalities or any other organizations from starting up new sites. As a result, ten SCS are slated to close by March 31, 2025, five of which are in Toronto. Another Toronto SCS, the Moss Park site on Sherbourne St., will also close, as the location is subject to redevelopment and a move to a new location would count as a “new” site under the ban.

Concerns about safety near the sites reached a fever pitch after a mother of two was killed by a stray bullet not far from the South Riverdale site in July of 2023. This is indeed a tragedy. Yet the external review commissioned by the province in the wake of the shooting, while making recommendations concerning safety, security, and community engagement, did not recommend the closure of the site, but noted “a clear need for the services” in that location and recommended that the site continue to receive provincial funding.⁴

The province claims that crime rates are higher near supervised consumption sites, but has not provided statistics to back up this claim, despite repeated requests to do so. Rather, analysis of

¹ Ontario Drug Policy Research Network, <https://odprn.ca/occ-opioid-and-suspect-drug-related-death-data/>

² <https://amho.ca/amho-news/addictions-and-mental-health-ontario-calls-for-community-driven-and-evidence-based-approach-to-expanding-addictions-care/> These figures are a lower estimate than that given by the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario

³ <https://www.orilliamatters.com/local-news/city-push-for-treatment-services-harm-reduction-marred-by-provincial-announcement-9391095>

⁴ <https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-08/moh-consumption-treatment-service-review-unity-health-en-2024-08-19.pdf>

data from the Toronto Police Service indicates that incidents of most types of crime dropped in neighbourhoods with SCS, often to a greater degree than in neighbourhoods without sites, and for crime rates which did not drop, there was no significant difference in the change of crime rates between neighbourhoods which had opened sites and neighbourhoods without them.⁵

It is also worth noting that supervised consumption sites are located where they are because these are areas that already see high levels of drug use. Closing the sites will not change that fact. Indeed, the sites' closure would lead to more public drug use, in parks, alleyways, and coffee shop washrooms; more discarded needles and other drug paraphernalia in public spaces; more blood-borne disease from the sharing of needles; and more likelihood of people overdosing and dying in public. This does not equate to greater safety for anybody in the community, including the children the province ostensibly wishes to protect.

Moreover, by responding to overdoses quickly, safe consumption sites reduce the strain on first responders and emergency services, saving taxpayer dollars. Without these sites, demand for ambulances and emergency rooms will only increase, leading to longer wait times for anyone who needs emergency medical treatment.

Along with the announced closures, the province announced an investment of \$378 million to open "Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment" (HART) hubs. While investment in treatment is welcome, several aspects of the announcement are problematic. Firstly, the name unjustly conflates the issues of homelessness and drug addiction. Most people with a substance use disorder are housed; and even though the experience of homelessness can cause people to increase their substance use, many people experiencing homelessness do not have substance use disorders. Moreover, the amount to be invested in the HART hubs is insufficient to meet the need for either treatment beds or supportive housing across the province. Further, the proposed HART hubs would be barred not only from providing supervised consumption, but also from providing sterile injection equipment, a proven public health measure which has been in place for decades, which is known to be a crucial tool in preventing the spread of blood-borne disease and infectious and bacterial complications. This flies in the face of medical best practice.

Supervised consumption sites take a harm reduction approach to drug use. Recognizing that some people use drugs, and may not be ready, willing, or able to stop doing so entirely, harm reduction focuses on meeting people where they are, without ignoring or condemning them. By offering a place of support that meets people where they are, and respects the inherent dignity of each human being, these sites not only keep people alive to get treatment, but offer a place of community and compassion. These sites should not be seen in opposition to addiction treatment, but as part of a continuum of care available across our province.

"Jesus met people on the margins where they were, with compassion and respect," says Keren Elumir, an Anglican who works as a nurse at the Moss Park site. "Everyone we meet is made in the image of God and loved by God. Harm reduction is holy work."

⁵ Centre on Drug Policy Evaluation. Supervised Consumption Services in Toronto: Evidence and Recommendations (Toronto, November 2024).

St. Nicholas Anglican Church
Leadership & Ministry Teams 2025

Parish Executive Committee		
Position	Nominees	Rector's Appointee
Rector's Warden	-	Sonia Halloran
Deputy Rector's Warden	-	Sharon Endugesick
People's Warden	Brian Todd	-
Deputy People's Warden	Gord MacPherson	-
Treasurer	Brian Jones	
Envelope Secretary	Duncan Wood	

Parish Council		
Position	Ministry Lead(s)	
Christian Education	Sarah Brown (<i>children/youth</i>)	Fr. Andrew (<i>adult</i>)
Outreach	Ken Campbell	Sonia Halloran
Pastoral Care	Freda Gearing	Fr. Andrew, Cheryle Pollock (<i>ex officio</i>)
Property Review	Mike Hill	Wardens (<i>ex officio</i>)
Mission/Neighb. Engagement	Andrew Reeves	Mary Kennard
Communications	Kathy Roberts	Suzanne Lehtinen
Members at Large (3)	Joan-Mary Spencer	Suzanne Lehtinen
	Ken Thompson	
Chair of Council	<i>duty shared with wardens/incumbent</i>	
Secretary of Council	<i>to be appointed as determined by council</i>	
Lay Members of Synod (1)	Dennis Newman	
Alternate Lay Synod Reps	Arthur Maclean	

Other Ministries		
Parish Nurse	Cheryle Pollock	
Counters	Sue Hill Charlie Cutts Wardens (<i>ex officio</i>)	Suzanne Lehtinen Ken Campbell Andrew Reeves
Financial Review	<i>to be appointed at Vestry</i>	
Vestry Clerk	Laura lamundo	

Parochial Tribunal		
Members (5)	Suzanne Lehtinen Sarah Brown	Fr. Andrew Canonical Wardens (2)

St. Nicholas' Ministry Reports

Altar Guild Report

Altar Guild is the behind-the-scenes ministry responsible for setting up and tidying up after services in the church. We look after the bread and wine as well as the fair linens and silk hangings which change with the liturgical seasons, as well as the flowers and candles.

On March 16, 2024, we met with Father Andrew to review, with the members of the Altar Guild, how things were going. Suggestions were made and recommendations were decided on and placed in the sacristy so that members can review them should they have any questions.

Once again, we have had Altar flowers only on the weeks when someone signed up for them. There were no flowers during Lent and Advent, and 36 weeks with flowers. As is the custom, the church was decorated for Easter and Christmas. We thank Canadiana Florists for accommodating us from week to week.

The members of the Altar Guild are divided into four teams, each responsible for the same week each month. Each team also has an extra month of duty, which accounts for the months that have five weeks. Extra services are dealt with by each team as they occur. Members are also asked to help with cleaning and decorating at Harvest, Christmas and Easter. We currently are looking for new members as many of our current members are sometimes finding it difficult to complete the setting up and clean up after the service. If you are interested, please contact Father Andrew or any member of the Altar Guild.

Many thanks go to Lynda Cottenden and Iris Hogan for looking after the laundry and to Barb Cutts for co-ordinating the flowers.

The altar guild finances are as follows:

Opening	2933
Donations	4110
Flower expense	(2553)
Easter flowers	(606)
Xmas flowers	(565)
Supplies	(110)
Surplus for the year	276
Closing balance	\$3209

Faithfully submitted,
Betsy Jones, Lynda Cottendon, Jane Roberts

Children's Ministry Vestry Report

The iconic line from *Field of Dreams* "If you build it, they will come"— is often quoted, but few realize the actual phrasing is "If you build it, He will come." This subtle difference shifts the focus from mere human action to divine intervention. In the context of Children's Ministry, this distinction is especially powerful. As we have worked to build a strong presence in the community, we have not only seen families come through our doors, but we've also witnessed God's presence among us. Through our efforts to create a welcoming environment for children and families, the Holy Spirit has been moving in ways that remind us that, when we build with faith, God will always meet us there. And this has been the backbone of Children's Ministry at St. Nicholas Church.

As we reflect on the past year, our Children's Ministry has experienced significant growth and outreach, thanks in large part to our focus on engaging with the local community and inviting families into the life of the church. Our efforts have not only strengthened relationships within our congregation and surrounding community but have also paved the way for higher attendance at some of last year's events, such as our Caroling in the Church Yard and our Christmas Eve Family Service.

This year, we continued to place a strong emphasis on increasing our visibility and engagement in the local community. By hosting several fun and interactive events, we were able to connect with families and children who might not have been previously involved in church activities. We held themed events such as Family Game Nights, Halloween Party, Blessing of Backpacks, and Easter Egg Hunts, which drew families from the community. These events were great opportunities for children and parents to connect with our church as we opened the church for exploration giving us the opportunity to introduce our St. Nick's Nook.

These outreach efforts helped us build meaningful relationships, and many families who joined us for these activities then began attending a service or two afterwards. As a direct result of our outreach and community engagement, we saw a marked increase in participation at two key events: Caroling in the Church Yard and Christmas Eve Family Service.

- **Carolling in the Church Yard:** This year, our caroling event saw a 25% increase in attendance, with many first-time visitors joining us to celebrate the season. Even though it was a cold and bitter night many of the families with young children braved the cold and found a warm reprieve in our St. Nick's Nook! We received a lot of positive feedback as many families thought it was amazing to have a dedicated space stocked with stories, toys, and craft materials that allows movement and free play all while still be connected to the service with their child.
- **Christmas Eve Family Service:** Our Christmas Eve Family Service was one of the most well-attended in recent years. In addition to our regular families, we welcomed several returning families from the previous year and many new visitors who had joined us throughout the year due to our increased community presence. The service was a highlight, with children participating in the tree decorating and Fr. Andrew's Jenga Sermon, making it a special occasion for all who attended.

Building on the momentum we have gained; we look forward to continuing our community outreach and growing our Children's Ministry in 2025. Our goals for the coming year include:

- Expanding our community presence through more community events.
- Continuing to host family-friendly events that invite newcomers to experience the joy of being part of our church family.
- Refreshing our Church School room and St. Nick's Nook with updated furnishings and supplies.
- Anchoring our visibility as the Community's Church and our message that all families and children are welcomed here.

We are excited to continue our mission of providing a welcoming space for children and families to connect, grow in faith, and become an integral part of our church community. To the many amazing parishioners and volunteers that help make our community events so successful, I thank you for your continued support and prayers as we work together to nurture the faith of the next generation. 2024 has been a year of growth and meaningful connections. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve and look forward to an even more fruitful year ahead.

As we build with purpose and faith, we are reminded that "If you build it, He will come," and through that promise, God's presence and the Holy Spirit will continue to guide and bless our ministry. In the same way, as we continue to build a foundation of faith and love for the families in our community "If we build it, they will come".

Yours in faith,



Sarah Brown
Children's Ministry and Church School Coordinator

Communications Report

And Jesus said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15)

We continued, in 2024, to try to share as much good news as efficiently, timely, and accurately as possible, to be a witness to God's presence here. Our task of showing the neighbourhood who we are and how we fit in with the community, is combined with keeping us informed and connected with each other. We used Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter), YouTube, email, outdoor lawn signs on parishioner's properties, our digital street sign, portable outdoor signs, our website, and our service leaflet to share information. We encouraged relationships by inviting people to join us in social activities, outreach, and times of worship, both in person and virtually. An example of this is The Greatest Hymn Challenge (v2.0) was back, with a fun way to engage with hymns in our tradition.

While we are blessed with Fr. Andrew contributing the vast majority of this content, all of this is made better with the additions of content by members of the parish. Thank you for your contributions of ideas, pictures, lawns, shares, and likes.

In Christ, Suzanne Lehtinen

Gardening Team

In 2024 the Gardening Team at St Nicks once again met one morning a week for most of the May through October growing season, planting, weeding, pruning and generally working to keep our gardens looking beautiful. And, despite our ongoing struggle with black spot on the roses, judging by the very positive and enthusiastic comments of parishioners and passers by alike, we succeeded.

Much thanks are due to our small but dedicated group of gardeners whose sometimes aching backs and knees testified to their hard work and commitment to maintaining the gardens. In addition, special thanks is due to our 'muscle' and heavy duty pruner, Mike Hill, and to the indefatigable Bill Alkerton who, besides coming every week to weed and rake was also responsible for the perfectly trimmed hedges and perfectly groomed lawn. We are looking forward to the start of this year's growing season and to introducing more native pollinator plants into our existing plantings. Keep watching. And join us if you're so inclined. No previous gardening experience necessary.

Sonia Halloran

Livestreamers Report

Years ago, long before the pandemic, my father-in-law, a retired priest, would come home from the parish he served, would sit in the den, get on the computer, and watch the services from Trinity Wall Street in New York, and Washington National Cathedral. It was a novelty, to be able to go online and not just see glance at the bulletin, but watch the full services online from the comfort of suburban Winnipeg. He particularly enjoyed the organist at Trinity Wall Street.

What in 2015 was a novelty has become now a core ministry for almost every parish, and ours is no exception. We have a faithful team of livestreamers that broadcast our 10:30 service weekly, in addition to feasts, weddings and funerals.

Their ministry has an impact far beyond the doors of our parish. When you're sick and not able to come to church, it's their ministry that enables you to pray the service with us; for those who can no longer be with us in person, either from distance or circumstance, it facilitates an important connection to our community. The livestream gives seekers and prospective visitors a "peek in the window."

This year, we welcomed Ella Penton to our team, to bring us to a team of five, and we're always looking for more people to join the team. If you, or someone you know might be interested in taking on this ministry, speak to Fr. Andrew. Training is provided, and it's not as hard as it might seem!

Yours in Christ, Fr. Andrew MacDonald

Mission Team Report

The Mission Team has been focused on growing the presence of St. Nicholas in the surrounding community of Birch Cliff and beyond. It has been our goal to become the neighborhood parish church. The small group meets to discuss ideas and plan events to engage the community in the life of the Parish.

The team has organized several fun community events, most of which are advertised on the card in the pews. It has been wonderful to welcome people to the events and to see how much the community appreciates and looks forward to them.

While we try to develop a schedule of events for the year so we can publish them early, there is always room to add more! A great example was last year's highly successful Solar Eclipse viewing party when we welcomed almost 60 community members to the church's front lawn to view the eclipse and share a glass of lemonade. If you have other ideas that come up through the year please share with Fr Andrew or myself.

We are thankful for the many members of the parish who make all of these events possible through making hot chocolate, bringing board games, painting faces and being warm and welcoming to all who attend.

Respectfully submitted, Andrew Reeves

Outreach Report

As we have done every year, the Outreach Ministry at St. Nicholas supported three longstanding initiatives in the Amazing Christmas Party, the Community Lunch and the Food Bank. But in 2024, we added a Mother's Day Gift initiative to our efforts, something that was a great success and we will definitely continue in future years; and the Bike Drive in support of the Migrant Worker Ministry

We are always looking for new ways to help the community and are open to any and all ideas.

Outreach – The Amazing Christmas Party

The need was greater than ever in 2024, but so was the generosity shown by the members of this great place we call St. Nick's. The Amazing Christmas Party helped make the season a little brighter for 157 families in need in the community, totaling more than 400 people.

Robinson Hall was abundant with Christmas cheer on Sunday, Dec. 15, 2024, as we hosted our annual event. As always, we partnered with the Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre, with more than half of the families that attended being part of their Share 365 program. Clients of the Churches by the Bluffs Food Bank were also invited to attend, with others coming from various other community groups and the Community Lunch.

Those who attended were treated to an afternoon filled with Christmas music, an audience with Santa Claus himself, desserts and a giveaway table, with the bulk of the items coming from donations provided to us from Blantyre Public School and Birchmount Heights Elementary

School. Each child in attendance received an age- and gender-appropriate wrapped gift and each family received a \$30 grocery gift card. Each teenage child also received a Walmart gift card. The gift cards were paid for with donations and the gifts were provided by the Toronto Police Auxiliary.

All told, the generosity of our parishioners (along with a sizeable donation from someone outside the parish who wishes to remain anonymous), we managed to raise more than \$12,000 for the event and, because of a number of unforeseen costs, we managed to finish with only a very small deficit. At the last minute, we had to purchase several thousand dollars' worth of gifts to supplement what we received from the Police Auxiliary, and unfortunately we had to replace a number of coats that were taken during the event. We obviously could not have predicted we would incur those costs.

The good news is the Outreach Committee has already held a debrief and it spawned a number of ideas that will make the 2025 Amazing Christmas Party (which is scheduled for the afternoon of Sunday, Dec. 14) even better. Special thanks to Sarah Brown for all of her last-minute work in helping to make the event run smoothly. And, as always, thanks to Rev. Andrew for his continued and unwavering support of the event. There are too many others to thank individually here, but you know who you are. And the biggest Thank You goes out to members of this parish who continue to realize the importance of this event and support it, both financially and in their involvement.

Ken Campbell, Chair, St. Nick's Amazing Christmas Party

Outreach - Bluffs Foodbank (Churches by the Bluffs Community Services)

Reaching out to others with the love of Christ is a core aspect of who we are as a Christian Community and St. Nicholas parishioners have demonstrated this by donating to the foodbank on a regular basis either through individual donations or through our annual commitment.

This past year has seen many changes to our operations. Daily Breads prediction of a 40% increase in clients has become a reality this year. At one point during the year, we served 400 families. This was not sustainable. We conducted much needed research as to where our clients were residing. So, because of that research, we implemented boundaries based on certain postal codes. Therefore, clients must live in Southwest Scarborough. We encouraged clients to access foodbanks closer to where they live. This resulted in a reduction of our cliental to 250-300 clients per week. We now provide the equivalent of over 40,000 people with food annually. This is not the total number of individual people that we serve, but it represents the annual number of people that we feed (250-300 clients per week X an average of about 3 people per household X 52 weeks/year).

Last year, when we celebrated our 20th Anniversary, we set a goal to reach \$120,000 in donations. I am happy to announce that we reached that goal and surpassed it.

We are a 100% volunteer-run organization. We have no paid staff. All the money we receive goes directly into purchasing food and running the foodbank.

Daily Bread provides about 80% of the food distributed to our clients. The rest is purchased with much needed donations of either food or money. Donated money is much more helpful to us because we can purchase the food that our clients need. We can purchase food wholesale (so our dollar goes farther) and we don't have to deal with food past its best before dates (which is an ongoing problem with food donations) and donors get the benefit of a tax receipt.

We have 80 volunteers who perform tasks such as serving as board members, receiving deliveries of food, sorting and packing food baskets, registering clients and providing food to clients. We honour our volunteers by hosting a Volunteer Appreciation Dinner annually. The last two events were held at St. Nicholas.

We also run an income tax clinic for our clients. This ensures that clients can access government benefits to which they are entitled, such as, Child Tax Credit, Trillium, Sales Tax Credit and Carbon Tax Credit.

Again, thank you for your continued support of the Bluffs Foodbank.

Pauline Glasgow, Vice Chairperson, Bluffs Food Bank

Outreach – Community Lunch Program

As has happened for more than ten years, in 2024 the Adult Community Lunch Program was held from 11:00 to 12:00 in Robinson Hall every second Tuesday until the 24th of May weekend and restarted following the Thanksgiving weekend in October. However, because some people are still not comfortable coming inside to eat, we have also continued to hand out a bagged lunch to those who want one. Our numbers have been somewhat lower in 2024 than in past years but on average about 25 people join us to eat lunch in the hall with another 10 or 12 taking a bagged lunch to go.

As always, keeping the program running is only possible because of the dedication of the people involved. First and foremost, thanks are owed to the wonderful team who faithfully turn up for each lunch to make it all happen. They bring sandwich fillings, soup, casseroles, salad makings and desserts, help set up tables, slice the bread, make the sandwiches or salads, serve the food and clean up (special thanks to Sue Hill and Bill Alkerton for their above and beyond contributions... whether Monday food pick up, making soup or anything else). In addition, many others contribute by donating items ranging from eggs to brown paper bags to juice boxes and granola bars. And this year we would be remiss to not mention the very tasty contributions of Gord MacPherson who has been developing his baking chops most impressively. We are also grateful to continue to receive Cobs bread and to be able to purchase soups and casseroles from The Daily Bread Food Bank through our membership in the Beaches Interfaith Outreach Committee.

All of us involved feel blessed to be a part of this ministry providing a valuable service for all those who attend, particularly in these difficult times. It couldn't happen without our terrific

team of volunteers and the wholehearted support, both prayerful and financial, of the Parish. Thank you.

Sonia Halloran

Outreach – Migrant Workers’ Bike Drive

In April this past year, we ran a Bike Drive in support of the Durham Region Migrant Worker Ministry, a FaithWorks ministry. Over two months, we collected bikes from parishioners and neighbours, to be given to the workers who come from Mexico and Central America to work in the agricultural sector. We did this in partnership with the Rev. Jillian Ruch at St. Bride’s Anglican Church in Clarkson, and together, we collected more than 25 bikes that were taken up to the Rev. Augusto Nunez at St. Saviour’s, Orono on the afternoon of April 20th.

It’s not a ministry that we’re likely to run every year because the supply of used bikes isn’t static each year; but in 2025, we expect to do another drive (of bike-related items like helmets, bells, repair kits and Canadian Tire gift cards) to support the ministry in other ways, and we’ll collect bikes in another year. Stay tuned for more details.

Respectfully submitted,
Fr. Andrew MacDonald

Outreach – Mother’s Day Initiative

Beginning in 2024, we decided to add a Mother’s Day Gift initiative to our Outreach efforts and the first one was an unqualified success. We partnered with Roz’s Healing Place and were able to donate Mother’s Day gifts to the 18 women who are housed in its women’s shelter. Parishioners were asked to donate gifts that would be appropriate for Mother’s Day – pajamas, slippers, beauty products and toiletries – that were wrapped and passed on. As always, the generosity of parishioners was instrumental to making it happen. As a result, we plan to continue the initiative in 2025 and beyond.

Ken Campbell

Parish Musician’s Report

On December 1, 2024, I marked the beginning of my second year as Music Director at St. Nicholas Anglican. Over the past year, I have felt increasingly at home in this role and deeply grateful for the opportunity to lead and grow our music ministry.

One of our major accomplishments has been the continued commitment of our choir to offering anthems every Sunday. Despite limited rehearsal time, our choir members have worked diligently to prepare beautiful and meaningful music for our services. To support them, I create piano recordings of individual vocal parts, allowing singers to rehearse at home. Their dedication and willingness to put in extra effort outside of rehearsals have been instrumental in maintaining the quality of our music program.

A significant new development this past year has been our participation in a rotating Choral Evensong series in partnership with our neighbouring Anglican churches, St. Aidan’s and St.

John Norway. This initiative has added a new dimension to our music ministry, fostering collaboration and strengthening connections within our wider church community. We began by hosting the first of these services at St. Nicholas on November 3, celebrating All Souls Day. Most recently, we participated in a Candlemas Evensong at St. Aidan's on February 2, which was another successful and spiritually enriching service.

Looking ahead, we are preparing for our next Choral Evensong, which will take place on Sunday, June 1, at St. John's Norway in observance of Ascension Sunday.

As we continue into this next year of music ministry, I remain deeply appreciative of our choir's commitment, the congregation's support, and Fr. Andrew's encouragement. I look forward to further strengthening our musical offerings and fostering even greater engagement in worship through music.

Respectfully submitted, Christine Hanson

Pastoral Care - Faith Community/Parish Nurse Report

It is always interesting to review the year and rediscover it. Community luncheons, community events, outreach opportunities, meetings, home and telephone visits, institutional visits, various meetings – in person and 'Zoom' as well as educational events were a few of the activities attended in 2024. Despite what might appear to be busy, it has been a pleasure to serve as the parish nurse at St. Nicholas Birch Cliff and to serve part of the broader community.

The generous congregational gifts of warm scarves, socks and hygiene supplies were appreciated by our community lunch guests. One guest stated that she feels warm, cared for and welcomed. Thank you to all who provided these items and to the anonymous donor for their monetary gift. Thank you to our volunteers for providing a safe and welcoming space. Your care and compassion shines through your dedication and smiles.

Lunch and Learn speakers included Father Andrew and Constable George from 41 Division who provided insight on protecting ourselves from scams.

SOAR (Support and hOpe through fAith and conveRsation) group continues to meet the third Thursday each month.

The Season of Spiritual Renewal sessions offered by the Toronto Diocese were an invaluable tool for spiritual health. These continue in 2025.

I have heard people say, "I am not a theologian". We are not all theologians; however, I believe here at St. Nicholas 'practical theology' is alive and well. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as parish nurse.

Respectfully submitted in love and compassion ~ Cheryle Pollock R.N.

Pastoral Care – Greeting Card Ministry

Although you may not be able to attend church in person, you are still part of our loving faith community. Every month cards and prayers are sent to our shut ins as a sign that they are missed and loved. If you know of someone who needs a connection to our church, please give the details to Stephanie Ford for inclusion in this list.

Stephanie Ford

St. Nick's Market Report

In September we held our fourth annual outdoor market. We raised just over \$7, 000. The frozen entree feature was a big success, as were the meat pies. While much work is done behind the scenes in the months preceding the market by jam/preserve makers, crafters, knitters and meat pie makers, to name a few, there is much work that needs to happen on the day of the market. Because it's outside, nothing can be set up until the morning of the market, which makes it very important to have many people to help with both the putting up and taking down of tables, and tents. Thank you to all those who helped make the 2024 market a successful event.

Thank you, Janet Baron

Server's Guild Report

The server's guild is a small group of dedicated people that assist Fr. Andrew in the execution of the weekly 10:30 a.m. service. From carrying the processional cross to assisting in preparing the Eucharist, and assisting in the clean up after the Eucharist has been administered. Though our group is small we are always happy to have new members! The time commitment is about once every six weeks, and we would be happy to show you how it all works.

Respectfully submitted Aimee Delavigne

Sidespeoples' Report

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:10)

A very dedicated and helpful group of parishioners do good every week at St Nicholas, our household of faith. The congregation will not notice all the duties performed by the sides people very week. That is a good thing because we do not want to draw attention to ourselves but instead allow everyone to focus on the worship service. Whenever one of our members is ill or on holiday, there is always another sides person to take their place. We may put a friendly tap on your shoulder and ask you to take up the elements. The willingness to help each other and assist in the services is sincerely appreciated. Every sides person is someone you can turn to for help and we welcome any suggestions that you may have to improve our service.

Stephanie Ford