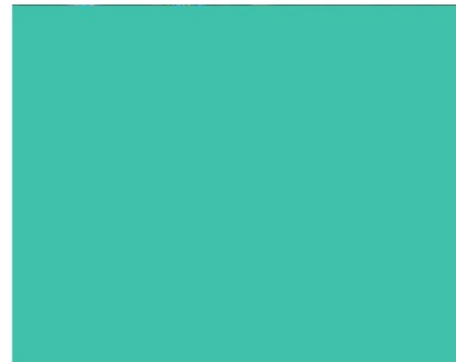
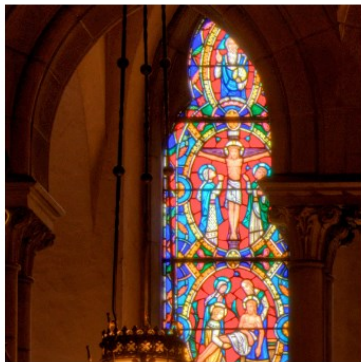
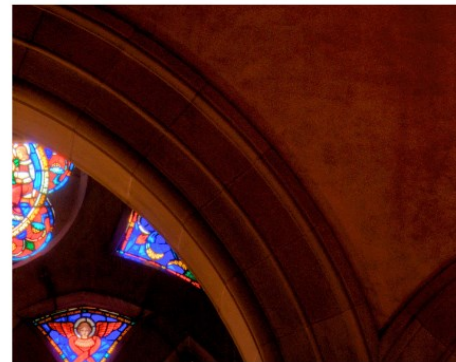


Annual Report

2023



Old South Church
in Boston

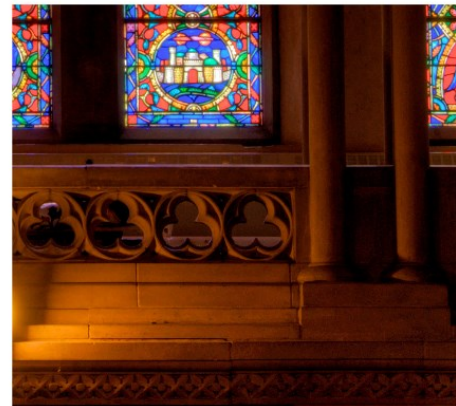




Table of Contents

Minutes of the 353rd Annual Meeting of the Congregation	3
Ministers Reports	
Senior Minister	6
Associate Minister	8
Minister of Music	10
Assistant Minister and Nancy S. Taylor Fellow.....	12
Theologian in Residence	14
Vespers Healing Worship Minister	16
Wedding Minister.....	17
Report on the Transition	18
Special Congregational Meeting Minutes	22
Staff Reports	
Director of Children & Family Ministries.....	24
Director of Operations	26
Preschool Director.....	27
Multimedia Director.....	30
Church Administrator	32
Staff Accountant	34
Archivist.....	35
Reports from Church Officers & Boards	
Church Council	36
Treasurer.....	39
Historian	42
Board of Ministers & Deacons	44
Board of Trustees	46
Report from Mt. Vernon Church	50
Reports from Committees & Task Forces	
Christian Formation Committee.....	52
Christian Service & Outreach/Outreach Grant Recipients	55
Micah Mission.....	58
Climate Change Task Force	60
Congregational Care & Support Committee.....	62
(G)RACE Speaks	64

Table of Contents

Music Committee	65
Membership Committee	67
Columbarium Committee	68
Operations Committee	69
Finance Committee	70
Leadership Committee & Slate for 2024	71
Reports on Stewardship	
Stewardship Committee	72
Planned Giving Committee	73
Listings	
Baptisms and Weddings	75
Membership Records	76
Ministers, Staff & Officers	77

Credits

Report compilation, layout, design and editing by Jamie Garuti Sage. Proofreading by Kate Nintcheu, Mitchell Crawford, David Story, Corey Spence, Rachel Barton, Ashley Popplerson, and Rémy Hatfield-Gardner. Photography by George Delianides, Jamie Garuti Sage, and Dan Kossmann. Collage by Kate Nintcheu. Lovingly written by a host of angels.

Minutes of the 353rd Annual Meeting of the Members of Old South Church in Boston March 5, 2023

12:15 p.m., in-person and via Zoom (virtual)

Separate Accompanying Documents

- Agenda/Program
- 2022 Annual Report

Call to Order and Opening Prayer: Old South Moderator Phil Stern, appearing virtually, called to order this 353rd Annual Meeting of the membership of Old South Church in Boston. The establishment of a quorum was determined by the Clerk. Phil led us in prayer:

...We pray for courage to do your will. We pray for hope to lean forward into your future. We pray for joy to set as a beacon before this city and the world. And, again, we humbly dedicate to you the work of this old, young, timeless, time-full congregation - in the name of Jesus, and of all that is sacred to us.

A Word from the Moderator – Motion: Phil moved that Rob Gabler, who was attending in-person, be appointed Moderator *Pro tempore* for the remainder of the session. Seconded, the Motion Carried. Rob moderated the meeting from this point forward.

Acceptance of the Minutes of the 352nd Annual Meeting: Rob requested a Motion to Adopt the Minutes of the 352nd Annual Meeting. That Motion was accepted, seconded, and Passed. The Minutes were adopted.

Receipt and Acceptance of the 2022 Annual Report: Rob formally acknowledged the 2022 Annual Report, which had been made available to the full Congregation beforehand. He thanked Helen McCrady, retiring Senior Church Administrator, for her painstaking assembly of the 92-page document, the last time she will carry out this enormous annual task. He called for a Motion to Accept the 2022 Annual Report. That Motion was made, seconded, and, upon vote of the full Congregation, the Motion Passed. Accordingly, the Annual Report was accepted.

Leadership Report and Election: David Becker, Leadership Committee Chair, presented a brief overview of his written report and introduced the slate of nominees advanced on behalf of the Leadership Committee. Upon his Motion, the following slate of candidates was proffered:

Officers

Phil Stern, Moderator, 2023
Bill Bulkeley, Treasurer, 2023
Rob Gabler, Clerk, 2023
Kate Silfen, Historian, 2023

Deacons

Tish Dragonette, 2025

Kurt Gaertner, 2025

Lauren Nackel, 2025

Laurie Stickels, 2025

Leadership Committee

David Story, 2025

Council At-Large

Mark Chitty, At-Large, 2025

Kristi Geary, At-Large, 2025

Trustees

Dan Kossmann, 2025

Donna Matson, 2025

Standing Committee Chairs

Phil Dearing—Christian Service and Outreach, 2025

Todd Krohne—Stewardship, 2025

With no further nominations from the floor, the Motion which was seconded and, upon full vote of the membership, the Motion Passed.

Report of the Trustees: Board of Trustees co-Chair Tom Grant highlighted portions of co-Chair Kristi Geary’s written report. In short, after enjoying two years of strong economic growth, we experienced a difficult 2022 with rising inflation, worsening economic indicators and a diminishing stock market. Old South’s investment portfolio endured an overall decline of 16.1% on the year. Despite that setback, Old South’s financial foundation remains strong and we are fully equipped to support our vast mission. We were reassured by an independent financial audit in early 2022.

Report of the Treasurer: Treasurer Bill Bulkeley also summarized his report, which reflected strong finances and a sound operating budget. “Old South Church enters 2023 with significant financial resources,” he reflected. We are not immune to the inflationary pressures which bedevil every sector of the economy, but are comforted by a healthy rainy day fund, about \$900,000. Bill pointed out that the budget “contemplates a deficit in the \$300,000 range by year-end. But our goal is to maintain the church staff and operations in peak condition for our new Senior Minister.” He noted that our careful budgeting consistently results in smaller than expected deficits or surpluses.

Report from the Search Committee: The multi-faceted task of finding and eventually recommending a qualified, settled Senior Minister was described in some detail by Maren Batalden, Senior Minister Search Committee Chair, in her written report. By December, the committee had selected a pool of diverse candidates to invite for a virtual interview during a 4-6 week period in January and February. That group will likely be winnowed down further before in-person interviews commence.

Farewell to Outgoing Leaders and Installation of New Leaders: The following persons, outgoing leaders, were thanked for giving their time and talents over the past year: Tom Grant and Kristi Geary (Trustees), Pam Roberts and Rica Reyes Black (Councilors at Large), Paul Brouillette and Sarah Cowles (Deacons), Stephanie LaShoto-Westfield and Megan Smith (Christian Formation), Caitlin Callahan (Christian Service and Outreach), Carolyn Arrington and Kay Davis (Columbarium), Ruth Purtilo ((G)RACE Speaks), Anne Dearing (Membership), Marcia Gregg and Stephanie Petras (Music), Lois Corman and Kurt Gaertner (Operations), and Kathy Wade and Nancy Kulkan (Stewardship).

In addition to thanking Helen McCrady for her organization and assembly skills in preparation for today's meeting, Rob also thanked Ralph Watson who once again donned an apron and prepared a wonderful meal for those in attendance. Appreciation was offered for Katherine Schofield, Interim Associate Minister, who deftly managed the hybrid technology.

The following persons were welcomed (or welcomed back) as incoming leaders: Phil Stern (Moderator), Bull Bulkeley (Treasurer), Rob Gabler (Clerk), Kate Silfen (Historian), Dan Kossman and Donna Matson (Trustees), Tish Dragonette, Lauren Nackel and Laurie Stickels (Deacons), Mark Chitty and Kristi Geary (at Large Council members), David Story (Leadership).

Act of Memorial: We remembered the following souls, known and loved, who departed us in the past year:

- Alice Arnett Andrews
- Coleburt L. Andrus
- Josh Michael Cahill
- Neil Edmund Dugas
- David Lee Ebert
- Thomas Francis Hehir
- Connie Hodgkins
- Duncan MacDonald
- Della Mae McGraw
- Gloria Platt
- Elizabeth Pugh
- Elinor Lockwood Yeo

We celebrated them all by singing the hymn "For All the Saints."

Adjournment and Benediction: The Moderator *Pro tempore* thanked those in attendance and invited them to next year's annual meeting. Interim Senior Minister Rick Spalding was then called upon to deliver the Benediction.

With no further business, the session was adjourned. Our next Annual Meeting will be in 2024.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Gabler

The Report of the Senior Minister



I am thrilled to present my first annual report as Senior Minister of Old South Church in Boston. By the time of the annual meeting, I will have been serving in this role for six months. So I'd like to structure my annual report in the form of things I have noticed and learned in this time.

The members of the church are engaged and hungry for connection.

One of the first things I did was embark on a church-wide pizza tour, seeking to connect and reconnect with members of the church. Through these gatherings—and a host of other experiences small and large—I've seen that the congregation

rejoices with the opportunity to gather and be together. The committees and lay leaders of the church have seen this as well, and we're working to make all our programming relational and joyous. The Deacons are committed to the work of supporting the spiritual life of this church (please sign up to usher!), the Trustees are wisely overseeing the assets of the church, the officers of the church and Council members are thoughtful and engaged with discerning right paths.

The staff is amazing.

Our church's staff is talented, passionate, and hard-working. Jamie Garuti Sage does amazing work overseeing the church's communications, which crucially now includes supervising our congregation's livestreamed services. Amelia Gerrard has stepped into the shoes of Helen McCrady with great aplomb and astounding energy: they've been up to the task and eager to learn. Kate Nintcheu has stepped into her role as Christian educator to the whole congregation—yes to the young Old Southerners, but she is invaluable as a teacher and thought partner in all our programming.

The Ministerial team is strong, and also in transition.

We bade farewell to Katherine Schofield, our Interim Associate par excellence. After five years of dedicated and beautiful service, it was bittersweet to fête her and bless her on her way to her new role as the Pastor of First Parish Church in Manchester by the Sea. Since Katherine's departure, Rachel Barton—our Nancy Taylor Fellow—has stepped into a larger role and is doing excellent work. It is also the case that the congregation is weary of pastoral transitions, and is eager to see our pastoral team be composed entirely of called, settled ministers. To that end,



Revs. Edgerton and Schofield during Katherine's last First Worship service.

the work of 2024 will include two streams of work: calling Ashley Popperson to her role, and conducting a national search for a settled associate following Katherine’s departure.

As you’ll see in the agenda and materials elsewhere in this report, Church Council has voted to recommend to the congregation that we call Ashley Popperson as a settled pastor here at the church, to the role of Associate Minister. I am beyond excited by this development. Ashley is a gifted minister, with a pastor’s heart and a deep love for God and God’s people. Ashley has a deep well of experience to draw from, as well as a strong network of interfaith relationships here in Boston. With a dual-degree of an MDiv and an MSW, Ashley brings a unique and valuable set of skills to this church in the heart of the city. I enthusiastically join the Council in calling on us as members of the church to vote to call Ashley as a settled minister.

What would then follow is a search for a settled Associate Pastor. I know that the congregation has been through a number of searches and transitions. I would ask you to dig down deep and engage enthusiastically with the search process and to pray for the search committee.

I’m striving to keep this inaugural annual report brief, but I can’t let this go by without saying one final thank you—to Willie Sordillo and Zoë Krohne. Thank you both from the deepest place of my spirit. Thank you for your faithful, creative, inspired leadership of worship. The church is stronger, and more joyful for your service. And a lot jazzier to boot.

Respectfully submitted,
John M. Edgerton



Rev. Edgerton’s family joins him on the chancel on Candidating Sunday after the congregational vote on the 21st Senior Minister.

Associate Minister



It is hard to believe that I have spent a year in ministry with Old South Church in Boston. I am grateful for the staff team who offered their skills, experience, and expertise to my first few months. Rick Spalding, Katherine Schofield, and Kate Nintcheu guided me into the ministries of Old South and through the various stairwells one might get lost in at 645 Boylston Street! I spent my first few months spending as much time as possible meeting with staff and lay leaders at Old South, learning from their stories, their ministries, and how I might best support them in our shared ministry. In each conversation, I have been awed by our leaders' faithfulness, tenacity, and vision for what the church has been and what we may yet be.

Worship

Worship is the heartbeat of Old South. The building comes to life on Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings with God's people worshiping in song and prayer, preaching, and communion. In 2023, my primary worship responsibility was Jazz Worship. This year Jazz endured—along with much of the life at Old South—a season of change, loss, and the beginnings of new life. Upon learning that Willie Sordillo intended to retire, I knew we would need to send him out with a bang. I am grateful for the Music Committee, in particular for Marie Hurd, for stewarding Willie's farewell party in September.

With members of the staff, we discerned two needs: the need to continue a Thursday evening service, and the need to enter into a time of re-imagining that service. The ever-skillful Zoë Kronhe committed to serve as the interim director for Jazz Worship through December. We gathered a diverse group to serve as our Dreaming Team: Rachel Barton, June Cooper, Rory Razon, Sarah Cowles, Mitchell Crawford, John Edgerton, Ethan Moore, and Laura Walker Dunn. This team gathered throughout the Fall to listen for God, to one another, to the congregation, and to the wider community. The group provided the foundation from which the new service is being planned: "Our deepest hope is that this service will provide rest for the weary, anchor us in God's hope, and fill our spirits with the Holy Spirit through modern music, tenderhearted liturgy, and prophetic preaching." I am grateful for the Dreaming Team's work of building the conceptual foundation of this service and for all who participated in the congregational conversations. I am focused now on working with Mitchell Crawford to hire a new music director, move forward in building a house band, and formally launch the service in 2024.



I also play a role in supporting the Festival Worship service by attending to weekly details and aligning our vision with the necessary logistics. It is a joy to gather the program team throughout the year to plan services and bring our creative skill to cultivate lively, faith-forming experiences of worship that change us, heal us, and send us out to change the world.

Teaching Church

In the winter and spring months, I worked with local divinity schools and our partners in the Metro Boston Association and the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ (SNEUCC) to cast a wide net in our search for the inaugural Nancy S. Taylor Leadership Fellow and our Seminarian. It has been a delight to welcome Rachel Barton (Taylor Fellow & Youth and Young Adult Leader) to the team. Her deep faith, abiding joy, and pastoral acuity have already made significant contributions to the life of the church. In the Fall, we were thrilled to welcome Madison Chau as Seminary Fellow. Madison brings her theological wisdom and a solid social work background to her preaching and liturgy leadership.

Trans Affirming Church

Old South is working with the SNEUCC to become a Trans Affirming Church. With the leadership of William Mian Wei and Stephanie LaShoto-Westfield, we have been meeting with other churches monthly to discuss how we might grow in our skill and care for trans people here at Old South. If we are to be the Church of the Open Door, we must commit ourselves to continued learning and growth so that all of God's children will find sanctuary among us. This programmatic work will continue in 2024 and beyond.

It has been a year of transition, in a season of great transition here at Old South. Through it all, we trust in that ancient phrase carved into the stone of this building: *qui transtulit sustinet* – the God who has brought us this far will continue to sustain us. God has long been calling Old South Church to great works. Works of praise that sing of the beauty of God's presence, works of justice that reshape the city of Boston, bending it toward justice; works of mercy that heal the hearts and feed the bodies of our most vulnerable neighbors. God is still calling us to great works. I cannot wait to see what They'll do with us next.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley J. Popperson

Minister of Music



The Old South Music Ministry recorded a number of highlights in 2023, and I recommend to all the companion report of Music Committee Chair, Marie Hurd, which points to the remarkable breadth of, and activity within, our program. Rather than attempt a full accounting of those highlights, I have selected three areas of note for additional commentary.

Special Services

On Good Friday, for the second year in a row, the Old South Chamber Chorus presented a passion oratorio: this time, *The Seven Last Words of Christ* by composer Théodore Dubois.

At around 45 minutes in length, the musical work was perfect for inclusion in a no-frills Good Friday liturgy (sparse and solemn, as one would expect). It also proved an excellent means by which to showcase the talents of individual singers, made up, as it is, of numerous passages for soloists.

All Saints' Worship this year must be considered a program high point to-date. Performing the Brahms *Requiem* was an immense undertaking by our music program's "Festival Worship" apparatus, placing considerable demands on the professional and volunteer singers, and resulting in additional expense beyond what we conventionally budget for. Examples of the latter include various in-house moves of pianos to effect both rehearsal and performance; additional tunings of all four pianos used in both the rehearsing and performing of the piece; three additional rehearsals for choir preparation; purchase of the vocal scores used by the choir. Nevertheless, it was a tremendous success, the Choir's all-in investment clearly expressed in a polished, secure performance — entirely in German. The day was a high watermark, and showcased the heights to which our talented, hard-working Festival Choir can climb.

Within the context of celebrating these successes, it is nevertheless important to note the choir program has over the years expanded its footprint relative to the rehearsal/worship schedule I inherited in 2018; certain new initiatives — like performances of works on the scale of the Brahms *Requiem* and Dubois *Seven Last Words of Christ* which require additional rehearsal — will need to be ratified by those with funding authority if they are to continue.

Old South's trail-blazing Jazz Worship and the Willie Sordillo Legacy

Thursday, September 7 marked the final Jazz Worship service with founding music leader, Willie Sordillo. Willie's retirement from Old South after 18 years of incredible, above-and-beyond service, is a huge loss to the church and music program. In the simplest terms, Willie has been an absolute rock and creative powerhouse, not only imbuing Jazz with an endless string of rich, diverse musical selections, but offering generous collegiality to all along the way. He simply has been the best colleague anyone could hope for — to even attempt an assessment of



Willie Sordillo taking a quiet moment during his final Jazz Worship service.

his remarkable legacy within this small-scale report would be an injustice to its enormity. Suffice it to say, Willie's departure is a seismic one, which we'll be contending with for some time to come. I also wish to heap praise and appreciation on Jazz Worship song leader, Zoë Krohne, for taking the reins of a newly constituted Copley Corner Quartet to keep Jazz Worship afloat during the waning months of 2023. Zoë's willingness to serve in this capacity bought Old South's staff and Tuesday Night Worship "Dreaming Team" crucial time to reposition ourselves for the inevitable transition away from Jazz Worship.

Conclusion of a major phase of work on the E. M. Skinner Sanctuary Organ

Several efforts involving the Sanctuary organ were concluded during the month of May. Remediations centered on two of the organ's divisions: the Gallery, located in the rear of the sanctuary, and the Swell, located in the front "Boylston side" tower.

The gallery pipes, installed in 1983, aid congregational singing by providing an independent source of tone at the west end of the sanctuary. The mechanism beneath these pipes began to fail in 2018; engaging any stop made random pipes sound without any key being depressed. All options were considered; the choice to provide new mechanics was driven by the new equipment's space-efficient nature, in turn allowing three wide walkways (in place of a single, narrow one) and safe access to every pipe. Adjustments to the pipes themselves have provided a clearer tone, together with a soaring solo flute and elegant new 'tremolo' (vibrato) effect. The Schantz Organ Company of Orrville, Ohio, undertook this portion of the project, assisted and coordinated by organ curator Jonathan Ambrosino.

The organ's Swell division is the instrument's largest single section, with almost 2,000 individual pipes (n.b.: the term "Swell" refers to the large shutters that open and close to "swell" the tone). The focus here was to restore every pipe, most having received no such treatment since their construction in 1920. All but the very largest were removed to the curator's workshop, thoroughly cleaned and reconditioned, re-finished as new, and reviewed for timbre. With the pipes out, certain mechanisms only then accessible were restored, the entire chamber cleaned, and the shutters themselves fitted with new bearings. With the pipes returned, each was auditioned, adjusted and tuned, to revived luster and clarity. Two non-Skinner registers (Plein Jeu, Mixture) were replaced with vintage Aeolian-Skinner pipes from 1935. All this work was undertaken by curators Jonathan Ambrosino and Joe Sloane, ably assisted by Peter Rudewicz (pipe reconditioning), Ortloff Organ Company (mechanical embellishments), the Organ Clearing House (installation and shipping), and most critically Broome & Co. LLC, reed-pipe specialists whose work is nationally renowned.

In closing this report, I wish to thank my colleagues George Sargeant, Tim Harbold, Peter Coulombe, and Aislin Anderson for their dedication to our shared ministry. Likewise, Old South owes a great debt of gratitude to all those who so generously give of their time and talent to the benefit of this program and its ensembles — without them, none of what we've achieved would be possible.

Respectfully submitted,
Mitchell Crawford

Assistant Minister and Nancy S. Taylor Fellow



I'm grateful to report on a season of fruitful and joy-filled ministry for our youth and young adults in worship and the Christian Formation committee. Whether in worship or in social action, our congregation has blessed us with creativity, passion, and vision for a more just world.

Youth Ministry

Our Youth Ministry has been a site of community, curiosity, and a willingness to wrestle with big and important questions. In September, the Youth Group expressed desires to spend the year prioritizing social justice, connections, and learning about other faiths. By December we'd served with *common cathedral*, planned to participate in Winter Walk, and spent time together in games, at brunch, and in conversations

about living out our faith in a multi-ethnic and multi-faith world. I look forward to continuing to support these creative humans as they learn and grow together.

Young Adult Ministry

This has been a fall of growth for Old South 20s and 30s. Our monthly small group regularly gathers fifteen to twenty young adults from across the city for conversation, prayer, and food. As a group, we've spent our fall learning about restorative justice, playing get-to-know-you Jenga, watching the Addams Family at Halloween, and decorating Christmas cookies. These opportunities to gather and share life have led to real friendships and a growing sense of community. I'm excited for all that will continue to grow as we deepen in relationship in 2024.

Worship - Jazz Transitions into Twilight

Throughout the fall I participated in and helped lead worship at First Worship, Festival, and Jazz Worship services. Learning the "Old South" liturgies and prayers was a gift indeed, particularly the expansively welcoming Communion liturgy. I participated in the Jazz Dreaming team, a group in discernment and prayer around the function, purpose, and shape of the Thursday evening worship service. This prayerful and fruitful work has led to a new order



of worship, and a new rhythm for a service we're calling Twilight Worship. I will step into leadership for that service when it launches in January of 2024.

Zoë Krohne's term as Worship Leader for Jazz Worship came to a tender and well-celebrated close on December 21, 2023. In this transitional season, Tim Harbold has graciously agreed to step in as Worship Leader for Twilight Worship. He is coordinating musicians and soloists for worship and providing guidance and advice on the shape of the service.

Pastoral Care

Care for our congregants is an ongoing joy and gift of ministry. I am grateful to have opportunities to connect one-on-one with youth and with young adults seeking prayer, care, and support in the midst of their lives.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Barton



Theologian in Residence



It has been a great privilege for me to serve as Theologian in Residence for yet another year; a position I have held since the fall of 2008.

The underlying premise from which I work is that our faith journey is not primarily about belief but about following Jesus. As Franciscan Theologian, Richard Rohr, has said: 'it's not so much that we say it right, but that we do it right'. Any faith articulation that might emerge comes only as we follow. Thus, our faith commitments, in both the inward and outward dimensions, are always in process. Older understandings, while comfortable, might not always be the best for our journey today. In 2023, our faith had much to say about loving our neighbor as ourselves. That brought us into confrontation with deeply embedded racism, white nationalism, American

exceptionalism, and the severe consequences of climate change. To live out God's love in the world means to have a faith that addresses more than just personal salvation. 2024 will certainly see these challenges continue.

Education

I continue to convene the Theological Book Group which meets Monday evenings via zoom. The books we read in 2023 create an impressive list: *The Universal Christ*, by Franciscan Theologian Richard Rohr; *The Remarkable Ordinary*, by Frederick Buechner; *Faith After Doubt*, by Brian McLaren; and *Kneeling in Bethlehem: Poetry for Advent and Christmas*, by Ann Weems.

These books challenged us as they addressed important issues in our journey of faith. The group is limited to 20 participants who engage one another and the text in spirited and insightful discussion.

Mentoring

It has been a privilege to be the Ministerial Advisor to several Old South members over the years as they work their way through the Ordination process in our United Church of Christ. For example, Martha Schick, who graduated from Boston University, passed her Ecclesiastical Council and was Ordained in February, 2023. Further, I have continued working with a sub-committee of the MBA's Committee On Ministry, to assist Carlos Aoun, an Old South member, who resides in Beirut, Lebanon, prepare for Ordination. He passed his Council in early 2023 and is now in a pastoral search. We are blessed to have such talented and faith filled people preparing to take leadership roles in the UCC.

Worship and Related Events

Prayers and related liturgies help in the shaping of our faith. I am always glad for the opportunity to help lead in this way including occasional preaching and leading in prayers and other liturgical elements. I also participate in the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday out on Boylston St.: a very moving pastoral experience.

In addition, on December 3rd, I led our annual Advent and Poetry Fest, both in-person and online, where Old Southers read prose and poetry selections to help us prepare for the Advent and Christmas Seasons. Now in its 12th year, it has proven to be a very special event.

Area Clergy Leadership

I continue to convene the Central Boston Clergy Group, bringing together clergy from a dozen faith communities including Protestant and Roman Catholic congregations and a Jewish Temple. The conversations relate to issues we all face as we seek to do ministry in today's world including clergy self-care, concern for unhoused neighbors, the insidious nature of White Supremacy, and the issue of reparations. Indeed, much to discuss at several levels as we move into 2024.

Great challenges await us here at Old South as we move into 2024. But whether the issues we face are personal, institutional, theological, or societal, the prophetic tradition, based on Jesus' call to follow him, is what both beckons us and sustains us. I am pleased to be part of this ongoing journey.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Wells



Revs. Don Wells and Frankie Doolittle offering "Ashes on the Way".

Vespers Healing Worship Minister



Old South Vespers Healing Worship continued to be held throughout 2023. We met 12 times, on the Second Sunday of the month at 5 p.m. on Zoom. Due to the COVID epidemic, we continued to meet on an online platform hosted by the church. This allowed all who wanted to join the Healing Worship to first attend First and Festival Worship as well as other offerings on Sunday mornings, and then be able to join the Vespers Healing Worship later in the day.

This also meant that individuals who feel more at risk with COVID due to weakened immune systems or have difficulty traveling to the church had the opportunity to join together on Zoom. We also discovered that in offering Healing Worship by Zoom, people from further distances who had once been part of Old South as well as retirees and new people seeking a time of quiet prayer were able to join the service. Our format also allowed people who do not have a computer to join us by telephone.

We welcomed between 8 and 20 people each month of 2023, offering a confidential space to bring our sorrows as well as our joys, and our grief and suffering as well as our celebrations before God and one another to be met with others willing to “be with, stay with, and cry out with one another.”

We attempted to offer a healing sanctuary where we practiced holding the Christ-light for one another, “weeping with those who weep and laughing with those who laugh”, engaging in the spiritual practice of redemptive listening and sacred speech, releasing our old patterns of shaming, blaming, criticizing, embarrassing, or even “giving others our own advice”—which may be more from an ego place rather than an open heart to God’s great Love that guides us into a more loving space.

As leader, I was able to light the candles which then shined virtually into our homes for each of our concerns and our sharing. We prayed for this Light of Christ to guide us and remind us God’s love is for all, regardless of circumstances. It is the Mystery of Unconditional Love that God offers for us.

As we move forward into 2024, we hope to continue to offer this time of silent and healing prayer, which is grounded in a place of steadfast wisdom and Love.

Submitted with humility and gratitude,

Ken Orth

Wedding Minister



From our first wedding on January 14 to the last one on December 2, we have had a banner year of 24 ceremonies in the Chapel and Sanctuary of Old South. We have united couples from all over the world, from as far away as China and Thailand, to the South End of Boston. Over and over we heard from couples and families that they come to us because of our welcoming statement and our longstanding policy of welcoming all who come to us. The couples appreciate that we accept everyone, and their families have expressed to me many times that they so much appreciate that Old South was here for their kids when they needed a church.

Amelia Gerrard is each couple's first contact usually, and they are made welcome from the first hello. They meet with me as their officiant, with Karen Hand as the coordinator, and with Mitchell Crawford and George Sargeant who guide them in music choices. Behind the scenes, the receptionists and the sextons continue to make the day special. It is a special ministry that we do in the Wedding area and our goal is always that people will leave feeling good about their choices for this important day in their lives.

Thank you for the opportunity.

Blessings,

David Story



Report on the Transition



In June 2022, the congregation blessed the Old South Church Senior Minister Search Committee and charged us with our awe-inspiring responsibility. We were a group of fourteen: Deb Washington, Bill Matson, June Cooper, Jonathan Aleshire, Anne Dearing, Stefanie Pietras, Allen Gifford, Rory Razon, Tracy Keene, Quinn Grant, Phil Stern, Erin Hull, Jake Maliel, and myself. The group – diverse in many ways – age, gender, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, family constellation, professional experience, personality, style – was united in our deep commitment to the church, to this church, and to the holy work of discerning a candidate to present to the congregation to serve as our 21st Senior Minister.

We made a covenant to one another, committing to:

- Engage the process as a spiritual journey
- Offer radical welcome and hospitality to one another, cultivating curiosity about our differences, seeking and offering forgiveness when necessary
- Give the gift of our time generously and receive the gift of time from one another with respect
- Honor the sacred trust of the congregation, the conference and ministerial candidates, maintaining confidentiality about our discussions
- Acknowledge openly any potential conflicts of interest
- Determine at every meeting what we will share about our deliberations with members of the congregation
- Challenge implicit and explicit bias within ourselves and our processes that might limit our ability to discern God’s voice speaking to us across boundaries of race, class, gender, geography, and other categories of social construction
- Invite conflict, question assumptions, listen for what is not being said, and turn to wonder
- Engage fully, being attentive about when to move forward and when to move back, knowing that ultimately, we must all join in full support of the candidate we recommend

We were aided in our work by thoughtful work done by others before we started – a team that worked to celebrate Nancy Taylor, our 20th Senior Minister; a team that found us a wonderful Interim Senior Minister, Rick Spalding; and a team that conducted over 30 listening sessions with congregants and wrote our church profile.

Our Committee spent the summer getting to know one another, immersing ourselves in the church profile, and learning from our conference minister about the UCC process of search and call. In September, we released our church profile and began receiving letters of interest and profiles from ministerial candidates. Committed to building a diverse pool, we engaged in active outreach through a wide variety of networks. We continued reviewing ministerial profiles for several months. From a pool of 50, we chose a subset of thirteen to meet for initial interviews. We watched video sermons and read

samples of written correspondence they had sent to congregants in past times of crisis. Through prayer and discernment, listening to the voice of the still speaking God in our own hearts and in our conversation, we extended invitations to four candidates with whom we wanted to engage more deeply. Three of those candidates accepted our invitation.

The three final candidates came to Boston for a day and a half of engagement that included:

- conversations with ministerial staff with observed simulations – a worship planning exercise, and a discussion of our church budget with the task of articulating principles for generating revenue through building use
- a dinner and a Bible study with the Search Committee
- an experience on Mass and Cass engaging with a community clean up team and a few Search Committee members
- sharing meals with small subgroups of the Search Committee
- a two-hour interview with the Search Committee
- a closing vespers service with the Search Committee

Following our weekend experiences with each of the three final candidates, the Committee entered into the work of deep discernment, requiring multiple meetings and several hours of honest and sometimes difficult dialogue before we reached consensus about a candidate.

Early in the process, the Committee developed a rubric – based on the profile of the congregation that emerged from the listening tours – that we used to evaluate ministerial profiles, to develop interview questions, to design the immersive experience, and ultimately to guide our discernment about our final candidate. The rubric had four domains:

1. **Faith:** the candidate’s own spiritual journey and understanding of progressive Christianity; ability to lead vibrant worship and preach the Gospel
2. **Leadership:** the candidate’s ability to develop talent and cultivate teamwork; set boundaries and manage conflict and make decisions; vibe and leadership style; facility with organizational operations and financial stewardship
3. **Building community:** the candidate’s ability to grow a congregation in breadth, depth, and diversity; engage children and youth; creativity in managing new post-pandemic realities
4. **Championing social justice:** the candidate’s commitment to anti-racism, climate justice, and interfaith partnership; demonstrated public leadership on social issues; ability to mobilize congregation and community members to faith-based action.

Our process produced a strong and diverse pool. Fifty candidates – 34 male and 16 female – from 20 states across the US and one from Canada representing almost every mainline Protestant denomination. At least 13 identified as people of color (though information on race and ethnicity is not formally collected on the UCC ministerial profile template); at least 5 identified as members of the LGBTQ community (though information on sexual orientation and gender identity is also not formally collected on the profile template). Among the 13 candidates that we met for initial interviews, we had both men and women, members of the LGBTQ community, and people of color. Among the four we invited to Boston in the final round, we had one woman and three men, one person of color.

John Edgerton impressed the Committee with his deep personal **faith** and commitment to progressive Christianity, his compelling sermons, and his collaborative approach to vibrant worship planning. Most importantly, perhaps, the committee felt profoundly ministered to during our weekend immersion with him. John Edgerton impressed the committee with his collaborative and mature approach to managing

staff, his courage in making bold institutional **leadership** decisions, and his humility. One committee member observed that he “carries his light less like a comet and more like the myriad stars in the night sky.” John Edgerton impressed the committee with his experience **building community** in his previous congregation, growing and diversifying church membership even through the difficult years of the COVID pandemic. The committee experienced his willingness to make himself vulnerable and felt – after our immersive weekend with him – more deeply bound together. Finally, John Edgerton impressed the committee with his readiness to **champion social justice**. He made national news for his work “fasting from whiteness” for Lent with his congregation in Illinois and has emerged within the national church as a leader supporting other pastors to take prophetic stands for love and justice. He shared a challenging and exciting vision with the Search Committee about potential directions for Old South’s future.

Ultimately, at a congregational meeting on June 25th, the Search Committee made the following recommendation:

The fourteen members of the Search Committee recognize that neither John Edgerton nor Old South is perfect. We are confident, however, in the process that produced our candidate and unified in our belief that God is ready to use us and John’s collaborative leadership to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly into the next chapter of our life together in this church and in this city. We recommend that the congregation call John Marlow Edgerton to serve as our 21st Senior Minister.

The congregation voted overwhelmingly to accept the Committee’s recommendation.

John Edgerton began his formal tenure as our Senior Minister on Sunday, September 10.



John receives a backpack full of blessings on Welcome Back Sunday, September 10.

A small subgroup of the Search Committee (Erin Hull, Bill Matson, Rory Razon, Deb Washington, and myself) assumed responsibility for helping to welcome Pastor Edgerton to his new role at Old South. We set three broad aims for ourselves – helping John to develop relationships with the congregation and different subgroups within the congregation, serving as a sounding board for John’s relationship-building in Boston outside of the congregation, and laying a relational foundation for John’s work to begin crafting a strategic vision for Old South’s ministry.

We created several opportunities for informal relationship building this fall, including:

- An informal “ask me anything” session in a community hour forum
- A virtual coffee hour with members of our online community
- A series of “cookies with John” in his office between the services on Sunday morning
- A series of neighborhood pizza parties in members’ homes that engaged 9 member hosts in Roslindale, the South End, Charlestown, Brighton, Newton, Somerville, and Cambridge and included nearly 100 guests
- A series of fun, informal video shorts introducing John shared on social media



Screenshot from a video with fun facts about John

Our relationship-building endeavors continue, knowing that the holy work of the Old South community in partnership with our 21st Senior Minister is only just beginning!

Respectfully submitted,
Maren Batalden

Special Meeting of the Congregation

June 25, 2023 at 11 a.m. in the Sanctuary and via Zoom

Separate Accompanying Documents

- Report of the Senior Minister Search Committee, as “Welcoming a 21st Senior Minister”
- “John M. Edgerton: Candidate for the 21st Senior Minister of Old South Church in Boston”
- June 14, 2023 Call of a Special Meeting (Email) to the Congregation

Call to Order and Preliminary Determinations: Phil Stern, Old South Moderator, called this Special Congregational Meeting to order, convened for the sole purpose of formally receiving the Report of the Senior Minister Search Committee and voting on the Committee’s recommendation of Rev. John M. Edgerton for the position of Senior Minister. The Committee’s recommendation was warmly welcomed and overwhelmingly adopted by Church Council on June 13. Phil explained that anyone present should feel welcome to ask questions or offer comments about the report; however, the making of a motion, as well as its discussion and vote, are reserved for full members. The candidate was not present for today’s discussion or vote.

At the outset, Phil asked Clerk Robert Gabler to certify a quorum and certify that the meeting was properly called, pursuant to the Bylaws. Rob’s hand count of full members present in the sanctuary alone exceeded the requisite number for a quorum. Accordingly, quorum was established and certified as such. Referencing the call by email which the Moderator released on June 14, 2023, the Clerk also determined that the meeting had been properly called and certified it as such.

Phil briefly outlined the single-issue agenda and requested that persons choosing to speak should keep their questions and comments to two minutes.

Receiving the Report of the Senior Minister Search Committee: Formally acknowledging and receiving the report of the Senior Minister Search Committee, Phil asked Committee Chair Maren Batalden for a presentation.

Maren particularized the written report which was displayed overhead, a report presented as part of her Church Council presentation. A process which began in June 2022 led to the Committee’s framework for their evaluation and a strategy for outreach. Of note, diversity was interwoven through the very composition of the 14-person Committee as well as throughout each piece of the search.

In time 50 individuals applied for the position, 34 males and 16 females from 20 states and Canada. 13 identified as people of color, 5 as members of the LGBTQ community. 10 males and three females were invited to participate in an initial virtual interview. Four of these identified as people of color and four identified as members of the LGBTQ community.

Four were invited to attend an immersive, in-person interview experience: three males and one female. One of the four identified as a person of color. Three finalists actually underwent the experience which, Maren reflected, became more of a discernment than a try-out. Candidates led Bible study, planned worship, led vespers, reviewed the church budget, shared ideas on generating income and attendance, toured the property in detail and interacted about the church’s physical condition, engaged with staff, ate meals with the Committee, and even traveled to Mass and Cass where they ministered to our unhoused neighbors struggling with substance abuse. One candidate, John Edgerton, emerged as the clear choice of the Committee.

John is well known to us, having served as Associate Minister from 2012 until 2019 when he left to assume the role of Senior Minister at First United Church in Oak Park, Illinois. That fact was “equal parts burden and blessing in the Search Committee’s deliberations,” according to Maren.

She reassured that “he was vetted in the same way and through the same lens we used to look at all the candidates.” Upon discernment, “the Committee embraced both his deep knowledge of the church and its history, his love for the congregation, and his impressive growth as a leader and pastor over the years he has been away from Boston.” In Oak Park he gained a national reputation with a Lenten series he created on “fasting from whiteness.” The Committee received a bounty of encomiums from persons who knew and worked alongside John in Illinois.

Discussion and Vote: After Maren’s presentation, Phil welcomed questions and input from attendees. Although most comments and questions reflected strong support for the candidate, a few members expressed some displeasure, mostly because of the choice of a straight, white male. Eventually, with no further questions or comments noted, the following was recorded: **MOTION** that John Edgerton be chosen as the next Senior Minister of Old South Church in Boston. The Motion was seconded. Discussion of the Motion then ensued with little further substantive debate beyond that offered previously. Phil then proceeded with the vote, asking for a show of hands by full members only. Upon observation, the show of hands was overwhelmingly in favor of the Motion, with a handful of persons opposed and two abstentions. Accordingly, the **MOTION CARRIED**.

John was then invited into the sanctuary where he was greeted by a standing ovation. Phil welcomed him to the pulpit where he was introduced as the 21st Senior Minister of Old South. He invited John to the pulpit to say a closing prayer. At its conclusion, Phil thanked Maren and the Search Committee for their prodigious contributions, and he thanked the congregation for their conscientious work today. He adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Gabler



The congregation voting on Candidating Sunday

Director of Children & Family Ministries



I'm delighted to report that 2023 was a "mostly normal" year in the life of Old South's children and families. After multiple years of upheaval, we were able to celebrate a year of regular programming!

January through June made up the second half of our program year, and regular church school at 10 a.m. was complemented by several new or returning events. Our children's choir regathered in February under the direction of Old South member Aislin Kate Anderson. They sang in worship services roughly every six weeks, in both First and Festival worship. In February some of our families and youth participated in the Winter Walk, a fundraiser that highlights the plight of our unhoused neighbors and invites folks into experiencing what it's like outside during Boston winter. We celebrated the regular Palm Sunday shenanigans with palms, confetti, and hollering, and enjoyed a beautiful Easter together. The Marathon Fun Run between services on the Sunday prior to the BAA race was fun to bring back, and we celebrated Phillis Wheatley with cupcakes, promenades, and special learning opportunities in May. The end of our program year was extra special because the Youth Group led worship on that Sunday in June,

with high school junior Quinn Grant preaching and other youth members leading liturgy and prayers. The students centered their message around the dilemma of homelessness, and their own struggle with what we can do on the micro and macro levels to help or enact change. This service wrapped up my time as the official Youth Leader as well, which, despite overloading my capacity, was also a blessing to spend those hours with these amazing students.

Our summertime programming was streamlined this year, with a single worship service, and I chose not to offer any church school classes for the first time in a decade. Instead, we added periodic "Family Picnics" open to anyone at Old South, following worship in the Public Garden. These relaxed, bring-your-own-lunch affairs brought a mixed group of folks together each time, and served to be a really excellent way of connecting across age groups. I was also on the planning team for Christian Formation's one-day retreat on Juneteenth weekend led by Wee the People, where we examined monuments within and around Old South, thinking about systemic racism and power structures.



Children's Choir singing at Festival Worship

In August, I hired Rachel Barton as the new Youth and Young Adult leader, in conjunction with her being selected as the first Nancy S. Taylor Fellow. Right away we began collaborating on what this program year could look like for our students, and she is an immensely kind, motivated, and deeply faithful leader.

In September we not only welcomed John Edgerton (back) to Old South, but kicked off the program year with our regular potluck brunch. Our youngest students, age 3 – 2nd grade, are still combined into a single Godly Play classroom, while our Older Elementary students in 3rd and 4th grades also practice Godly Play, but in a hybrid setting, enabling students to log in from home. The 5th and 6th graders began their 2 year curriculum in Meet the Ancestors while the 7th and 8th graders were each invited to join our Confirmation Class. These two older classes are also hybrid, and every week students are both in person and on zoom – which works quite well. Rachel met with our Youth Group, who are in 9th-12th grades. The All-Church Retreat in September was a joyful time, as usual, as we returned to Craigville Conference Center in Centerville, MA. Our children led worship for Children’s Sabbath in October, with 8th grader Declan Grant preaching an excellent message at both services.

The holidays brought about the regular whirlwind of tinsel and carols, but with fewer programs this year due to Christmas Eve falling on the 4th Sunday in Advent. The children’s choir led worship by presenting their Christmas Pageant at First Worship, reprising their 2018 in-house written script, led by Aislin Kate Anderson. Christmas Eve family worship was back to its pre-pandemic high, with a packed sanctuary and joyful spirits.



Scenes from the Christmas Pageant - a different take on Angels!

I continue to write, act, and produce pre-recorded Children’s Message videos each week during the program year. They are fun to conceptualize, and give me a chance to speak to the children (and the congregation) in a way that I otherwise wouldn’t be able to. In a survey this summer, two-thirds of respondents among families asked us to continue providing these messages for worship services. I also continue to write a weekly newsletter for our families called Make Belief, which remains a great way to communicate and connect individually with folks. The Baptism program remains under my direction as well.

The real stars in my programming are the teachers and volunteers who spend their time memorizing stories, planning lessons, and praying with and for our students. Coming in a close second would be the fantastic parents, who trust us, support us, and jump in when we need it. We’ve had a lot of folks out at various times, and sometimes I am desperately pulling people out of worship to help. What is astounding to me is the positive nonchalance with which my requests are met – people at Old South are ready to hold a baby, sit at a greeting table, or serve up a meal when I’m in need, and I do not take it for granted.

Personally, I am weary of the transitions that we are still weathering among the staff, and am very grateful that I have not experienced as many transitions within my families and volunteers. I know that we’re building a great team, and I also mourn the loss of some of my colleagues. That being said, I’m really happy with the team we have now and truly enjoy collaborating with them. I look forward to what the future brings for us at Old South Church in Boston!

Respectfully Submitted,
Kate Nintchen

Director of Operations



Much of the past year was devoted to navigating staff transitions. Most notably, the retirement of Helen McCrady, Senior Church Administrator, after 23 years. Helen's impact on every aspect of operations at Old South Church cannot be overstated. It was unthinkable that any one person could come in and fill the giant void left by her departure. Because of this, a team of staff and lay people put considerable effort into redistributing the responsibilities of the Church Administrator position and making the role more sustainable for a new hire. In May of 2023, we hired Amelia Gerrard, who has capably filled the position. Around the same time, we navigated a staff transition in our financial operations with the hiring of Kathleen Steen as our Staff Accountant, and we are working with outside consultants, Your Part Time Controller, to help us streamline our financial processes

and systems in the wake of Helen's departure. All of this, of course, occurred against the backdrop of anticipating the arrival of our new Senior Minister, John Edgerton, in September.

From a facilities standpoint, the most notable happening in 2023 was the replacement of the parish house roof and the roof in the belfry. The work was done by Feeley, McAnespie, Inc. and was completed in about three weeks without incident.

Energy usage and carbon emissions are always of importance to the operations at Old South Church, and in 2023 we were successful in keeping energy costs low (thanks, in part, to mild winters), and we are well within compliance of the City of Boston's carbon neutrality ambitions.

One thing to keep an eye on is the increasingly recurrent incidences of water infiltration in the building. Of particular concern is rising groundwater levels due to record breaking rain falls over the past two years. To help mitigate the effects of this, we had two groundwater observation wells decommissioned (filled with concrete) in 2023. The primary source of water infiltration is along the wall that runs parallel with Dartmouth Street, likely due to redirected water from the MBTA or obstructed runoff drains at street level.

Additionally, great pains were taken in 2023 to lay the groundwork for a major renovation of our sanctuary with particular attention to our acoustics and livestream capabilities. This, and other projects, will be incorporated into the developing 20 year capital plan, which will be the major emphasis of the Operations Committee, led by Lisa Loveland, in the coming year.

Special appreciation must always and often be extended to our sexton team of Ozo Nwodo, Richard Serebour, and David Brode, who are led by our Senior Sexton Elias Perez. Our open door ministry would not be possible without their work and faithfulness.

Respectfully submitted,

John Braught

Preschool Director

*“Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.”
-Dr.Seuss*



Here are some of our favorite memories of 2023:

Winter

The New Year brought our donation drive for the Baypath Humane Society, inspired by the Red Room students, who had recently transformed their dramatic play corner into a bustling veterinary clinic. They showed themselves to be true animal lovers who demonstrated an appreciation for all creatures great and small. In order to honor and build on the compassionate nature of the children as well as Old South Preschool's commitment to instilling a sense of community, kindness, and civic-mindedness, we launched this drive. It allowed the children to take a hands-on approach and really get involved in the spirit of giving and helping those in need, in a way that related directly to current curriculum.

In this case, those in need were animals! My family had recently adopted two rescue kittens from Baypath Humane Society of Hopkinton, a wonderful shelter with many caring workers and

volunteers who have helped countless dogs and cats find new forever homes. This was a great organization for us to partner with, and they were grateful for our efforts and the many donations from all three classrooms as well as others throughout the building.

Spring

In March, we celebrated National Reading Month. We welcomed parent guest readers in each classroom, held schoolwide Pajama Days, visited the library, and designed bookmarks. We opened our brand new “Little Library” at the end of the Preschool hallway.

Additionally, we held our first ever Used Book Fair. We requested donations of gently used books (all genres and audiences) from our families and even from church members, and everyone really came through! We had such a wide variety, and something for everyone. The Book Fair was held in the Guild Room. Books were organized on tables and available for purchase for a small price, and there was even a cozy reading area with beanbags. Classes were able to visit and browse during the school



A student holds donations to the Baypath Humane Society.



Cash register fun at the Book Fair!

day, and children could bring their families before and after school. This fundraiser directly supported Arts & Literacy here at OSP, and also captured our spirit of recycling and upcycling. Plus, the children got to take turns running the cash register, which was a huge hit. We loved our Book Fair so much that we hope to make it an annual tradition. This year, we are even planning to add a puzzle swap component.

An added bonus of this event was the opportunity for some of our beloved alumni families to come back for a visit. We always love keeping in touch and watching our former students grow through the years. We like for them to know they are always welcome back to the place where their learning journeys began.

We wrapped up the 2022-23 school year with a celebratory ice cream social, where families from all the classrooms joined together. Spirits were high as children danced along to some upbeat music, chatted with friends, and enjoyed an ice cream novelty (or two or three; was anyone really counting?). We bid farewell to a few future kindergarteners at our Red Room Graduation, and wished everyone a happy summertime.



Cash register fun at the Book Fair!

Getting some reading in at the Book Fair

Summer

Summerfest 2023 saw the welcome return of a beloved warm weather tradition: visiting fountains! Campers donned their swim gear and trekked to the Boston Common Frog Pond Spray Pool as well as the Splash Fountain at Christian Science Plaza. Of course, our six-week program also saw plenty of other outdoor excursions, and more than its fair share of the classic sidewalk chalk and bubbles. The Red Room, our home base, was decorated in a beach theme, and new and old friends alike bonded over sand play, playdough ice cream and pizza, and yes, popsicles!

In a full-circle moment, one of the big Summerfest helpers was our new part-time assistant teacher, Kendall Walsh. Kendall was a student in one of my earliest Old South Preschool classes back when I was teaching in the Green Room. Now a college junior, she has returned to her roots since her mom came back to us as a Green Room teacher in 2022.



Splashing around at Frog Pond

Fall

Thanks to robust admissions events and referrals from our loyal families, past and present, the 2023-24 school year kicked off with classrooms filled with students, three solid returning teaching teams in place, and a happy energy all around. After Opening Days and a short period of settling in, our emergent curriculum ramped up right away. Topics of study included skeletons, frogs, spiders, pumpkins, farm animals, trains, cars, and apples, to name a few. The season was bustling and productive, and peppered with plenty of excursions to check out the fall foliage, collect leaves and acorns, and visit the Copley Square Farmers Market.

We held a well-attended Open House in November, and met some wonderful prospective families. Our holiday show and family gathering in the Gordon Chapel in mid-December was a lovely way to close out the year before the holiday break. We all returned in the New Year ready and refreshed, eager to delve back into our days with our two, three, four, and five year old students and see what new academic and social pursuits might be on the horizon.

I am grateful for our strong and enduring team of teachers: Leslie Caputo, Raela Gjecka, Natalie Logan, Sharon Reardon, Jane Salamin, and Katie Walsh, and grateful as always to my Old South Church colleagues for the support, trust, collaboration, and laughter.

Respectfully submitted,

Summer Marsh

Multimedia Director



While 2023 was yet another year of transition, I felt a sense of hope that we would soon find ourselves more settled. Amidst the retirements of Old South pillars Helen McCrady and Willie Sordillo, and farewells to the much-loved Reverends Rick Spalding and Katherine Schofield, we welcomed incredible new team members — Rev. Ashley Poppersson, Amelia Gerrard, Rachel Barton, and of course the new 21st Senior Minister, Rev. John Edgerton. In addition to my regular duties throughout the year, the following projects have stood out.

Audio Improvements

We accomplished major improvements in the audio/visual realm in 2023. Most significantly, we upgraded the sound system in Gordon Chapel. The upgrade consisted of installing a digital rack mixer, controllable with an iPad, and a 40-input stage box. This new system allows us to have more than one audio feed. This is critical, because we have two distinct audio destinations that have differing balance needs: the livestream and the sound in the room. For example, in order to hear a saxophone on the livestream, you need to pick it up with a microphone. In the room, however, mic'ing a saxophone may hurt listeners' ears. Before this audio upgrade, we only had one audio feed and constantly struggled to find a good balance for the competing needs of the livestream and the sound in the room. With the upgrade, we have more control over audio levels and balance than ever, and we are quite happy with the new system. With new capabilities at our disposal, we hired Berklee audio engineering student Ava Welling to run the sound at Jazz Worship. Ava has been a brilliant addition to the Multimedia Team, and our audio mixes have never sounded better.

This audio project is considered a stepping stone for a much larger sound overhaul plan. Throughout the year, we worked with audio experts at Acentech to evaluate our current audio situations in both the Sanctuary and the Chapel. They conducted many tests using specialized instruments, measuring things like decibel level and audibility of words from different places in the room. They documented their findings and recommendations in an extensive report, which will be used to help determine next steps.

Art and Design

We continued the tradition of creating a poster series throughout Black History Month, this year highlighting our six Black-led partner organizations: Alternatives for Community & Environment, *common cathedral*, Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition, Fathers' Uplift, Young Man with a Plan, and Union of Minority Neighborhoods. It was great to use our platform to celebrate the incredible work of these organizations.

During the summer, we embarked on a church-wide art project. The goal was to create five 9 foot tall banners to be displayed at church, as well as used in any climate change-related marches and rallies. The design of the banners (adapted from designs by Look Loud) mimics stained glass, and the words say things like, “Fight fossil fuels with faith” and, “Heal the Earth, our sacred home”. Once the Fall came around, things got busy and we put the project down, but we will finish them in 2024 in time to bless them on Care of Creation Sunday.



The other notable design project this year was our new Pride t-shirts. The shirts are a line-drawing of a face with a rainbow for hair, and words that say “Queerly Beloved”. They were well-received and we sold about 100 of them. Selling these shirts marked the opening of our online merchandise store, which will be very useful for years to come.

Conclusion

In a year of many changes, our church accomplished great feats in 2023. I am grateful to all of my colleagues, and proud of how we pulled together to fill in transition-related gaps. Special thanks to our incredible Multimedia Team - Rémy Hatfield-Gardner, William Wei, and Ava Welling - who tackle any and all tech challenges that are thrown at them.

Sincerely,
Jamie Garuti Sage



Church Administrator



As the 2023 season comes to an end, I have so much gratitude for the community of Old South, who welcomed me into this position with open arms. One experience sums up my introduction: at my first exposure to Jazz Worship, I introduced myself to Willie and he said, “Welcome to Old South, Amelia. We love you already.” Willie’s words embody the open and wondrous love that Old Southerners bring to each other and this world. This kind attitude is one of the many reasons I am grateful to work for Old South Church as the new Administrator.

Transitions

As Helen wrapped up her 23 year-long tenure at Old South, I onboarded with her for a month and a half, beginning in May. I am grateful for the long hours Helen and I spent side-by-side, as she unraveled her secrets and systems that sustained the life of this church for so long. After a wonderful retirement party, celebrating Helen’s service to this church, I began the process of writing contracts for our building users, giving wedding tours to newly engaged couples, and executing worship logistics. Then, in July, Alex Pickering made the decision to leave after two years of service as Old South’s Administrative Assistant. After an extensive search, I hired Rémy Hatfield-Gardner into the position. Rémy had already worked at Old South for a year and a half as a Multimedia Assistant at Old South; Jamie Garuti Sage and I worked together to make their position full-time, with time spent doing both multimedia and administrative work. I am happy to report that Rémy has been a wonderful success in this position thus far. All of our administrative staff truly keep this church running.

Duties

With my first Old South Meeting House Sunday, Christmas and Advent season, and stewardship campaign behind me, I continue to adjust to the many hats of this position. For the church, I lend my services to the Stewardship, Leadership, and Columbarium Committees, as well as to Church Council. I manage pledges and donations, oversee our flower ministry, and coordinate worship and special event logistics. I continue to recruit more building users to rent our lovely space, annually and on a one-time basis. I also oversee logistics for weddings and memorials. As my first year comes to a close, I can’t wait to continue to grow and become the best administrator for Old South Church that I can be.

Appreciations

Front Desk– Martha Coleman, Tish Dragonette, Brenda Gailhouse, Janet Nolan, Sue Pepin, Grace Rousseau, and Ralph Watson were wonderful welcoming receptionists this year! Thank you so much for your time. Lunch relief receptionists Kay Davis, Shelia Randolph, and Charlotte Simpson continue to provide their hospitality to our staff. I am so grateful to all of you!

Offering Counters– Donna Matson continued scheduling our Sunday counters. Donna, Randy Billings, Katie Corrigan, Paul Dutton, and Vicki Newman rotated counting the week’s offerings every Sunday. Vicki and Donna make sure these deposits get made during the week. Thanks so much for this faithful, behind the scenes, important work.

Other appreciations– Katie Spurlock, for the second year in a row, showed up to help us get all of our printing for Christmas Eve done. David Story, our beloved Wedding Minister, and Karen Hand, our beloved Wedding Hostess, showed up whenever asked to do whatever asked, beyond their myriad of regular commitments to the church. You are all priceless! Thanks.

Staff appreciations - Our receptionists Corey Spence, Shirley Bivins, Shelia Randolph and George Sargeant are the welcome gateway to our church. Our sextons Elias Perez, Ozo Nwodo, Richard Serebour and David Brode literally hold the building together. They are a great team.

Building use income totaled \$228,155.92 and expenses were \$50,217.89, netting \$177,938.03. A breakdown of the income can be seen below.

Type of Use	Amount Raised	Groups
Weddings	\$47,812	24 weddings: 24 nonmember and 0 member weddings. 16 weddings were in the Sanctuary and 8 in Gordon Chapel.
Performances	\$82,356	Fever Up, Masterworks Chorale, St. Botolph Club, Chorus Pro Musica, Coro Allegro, Berklee College of Music, Boston Children’s Chorus, Back Bay Ringers, Back Bay Chorale, Apollo Club, American Recorder Society, Les Bostonades, Boston Chorale, Case Western, Morehouse College, Les Canardes, Northbridge Brass, Boston Gay Men’s Chorus, Boston Choral Ensemble
Music Rehearsals	\$19,820	Chorus Pro Musica, Coro Allegro, Boston Choral Ensemble, Boston Gay Men’s Chorus, Back Bay Ringers
Meetings	\$13,725	Toastmasters, Boston Public Health Commission, Snowden High School
Graduations	\$5,375	Snowden High School, Bay State College
Lectures and Conferences	\$15,250	Boston Book Festival, Harvard Book Store, Queer Justice Summit
Classes	\$20,408	Snowden High School, Newman School
Worship	\$7,615	Ancient & Honorable Artillery of MA, memorial service fees
Support Groups	\$4,555	Al Anon, 4 AA groups, Ignatian Spirituality Program, Bruno Groenig Circle of Friends
Miscellaneous	\$12,539	Office & storage space, photo sessions, voting

Respectfully submitted,
Amelia Gerrard

Staff Accountant



I joined the Old South Church family in June of 2023 and after a stint in corporate America, I am very happy to work for a nonprofit again, especially for such a historic church whose values align with my own.

The finance office continues to update our accounting practices in numerous ways: electronic storage of records, streamlining accounts, and consolidation of tasks. Since I came to Old South Church, I have been fortunate to work in concert with Your Part Time Controller in streamlining and bringing more of our accounting functions into the finance office, which had previously been completed by the Church Administrator and other consultants.

In closing, I would like to thank my co-workers and the extraordinary team of volunteers at Old South, especially Treasurer Bill Bulkeley and the Counting Team:

Donna, Candace, Katie, Nancy, Paul, Randy and Vicki.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Steen

Archivist



2023 was a big year for new additions to the Archives. Before they departed, Rick Spalding, Helen McCrady, and Katherine Schofield dutifully handed over their materials to the archives and much of this year was spent getting those sorted and indexed into the collection. Jim Crawford's print sermons, published through the efforts of Alex Pickering, were another new arrival.

As the Archives is a very finite space, these new arrivals have heightened the importance of continuing to migrate the church's older records off-site, to the Congregational Library, which has greater capacity and more ideal environmental conditions for

long-term storage of posterity materials. The Trustees have approved a proposal to continue this initiative in 2024, shifting more low-use materials over to the Library, while keeping higher-use and more contemporary records on-site.

Aside from the above activities, other main accomplishments in the Archives in 2023 have been the organization and indexing of 780 architectural plans, and devising a heritage assets inventory for the Board of Trustees that involved some treasure-hunting around the building to find where



some of the historical artifacts had ended up. This prompted the creation of Special Collection files for the records about particular artifacts and items: the organs, the silver, the Bay Psalm books, and the Prince Library, which will make it easier to answer future inquiries about these pieces of Old South's history.



Next year, one of the projects I will be undertaking is a Special Collection about the Boston Marathon Bombing and how Old South Church responded. If you have anything you want to contribute to the collection, I'll be accepting materials until the end of April. You can drop them off at the office or email me with digital content and photos at emily@oldsouth.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Ross

Gallery clock made by Samuel Willard, installed in the Old South Meeting House in 1805. Moved to Boylston St in 1875. Currently resident in the Gordon Chapel.

Church Council - Moderator's Report

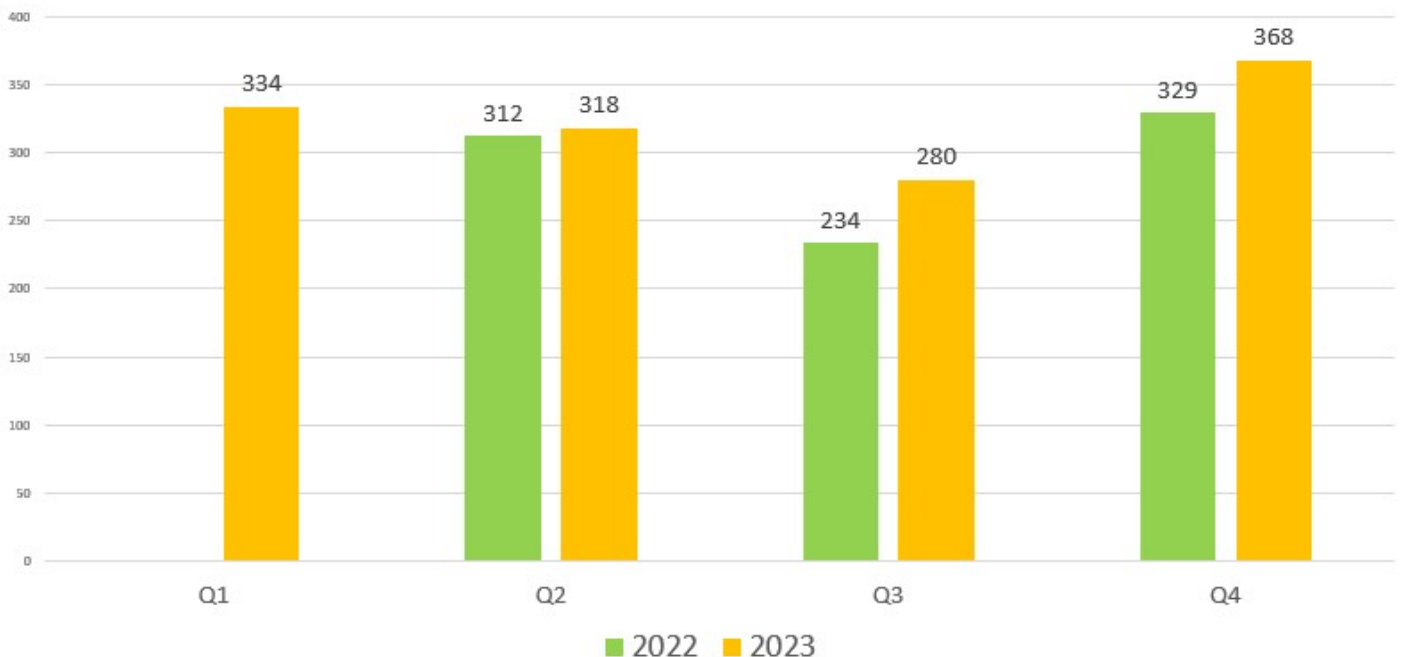


With the departures of our Interim Minister, Rev. Rick Spalding and Associate Minister, Rev. Katherine Schofeld, and arrival of our new Senior Minister, Rev. John Edgerton, and Associate Minister, Rev. Ashley Popperson, much of Old South's Church Council's attention was devoted to ensuring smooth transitions for those key roles. However, in addition to leadership concerns, Council also paid close attention to the worship life, operations, finances, and mission of the church. This report will cover the status of our worship, the organizational changes, and finally, our interim priorities and some key activities during the year.

Worship

We began 2023 under the interim leadership of Rev. Rick Spalding, one of whose priorities was to rebuild community following the impact of remote worship. A key component to that was getting us back into the church habit, and one way of tracking that is to look at total weekly attendance, including both in person and livestream attendees. Median weekly attendance in 2023 rose to 325 from 291 in '22 with online views accounting for just under 30% of total attendees. Moreover, we had significant gains in the two quarters after the announcement of our new Senior Minister.

Post-Covid Total Attendance



Organization

Of top priority to Council was the preparation for the arrival of our new Senior Minister. With the tremendous efforts of the Senior Minister Search Committee led by Maren Batalden, we were able to call a congregational meeting on June 25, 2023 for a vote to call Rev. John Edgerton to be Old South's 21st Senior Minister. With Rev. Edgerton's start date slated for September, Rev. Rick Spalding continued in his role through July, when we celebrated his able leadership and guidance through our transition period.

One of Rev. Spalding's main goals with us was to ensure that we put an HR committee in place, so that the new Senior Minister would have a committee of lay leadership to assist the Senior Minister on key personnel issues. Council voted to approve the formation of an *ad hoc* Human Resources Committee in June and the initial members of that committee, approved in July, are Bill Bulkeley, Candace Kosturko, Lisa Loveland, and Bill Matson.

We had a few other key transitions in the year. An interim minister search committee led by Randy Billings and working with Rev. Spalding identified and selected Rev. Ashley Popperson, who council approved as a two-year "designated term" associate minister to fill the position previously vacated by Shawn Fiedler. Next, we celebrated the many years of service of Helen McCrady in a joyful event on May 21, as planned by Candace Kosturko. Helen had helped prepare us well, along with John Braught, in planning a new Church Administrator role which was filled by Amelia Gerrard. Finally, we selected Rachel Barton as the first Nancy S. Taylor Leadership Fellow.

While we have not yet fully identified how we will fill the position left by Katherine Schofield, who left Old South for an opportunity to serve as the minister at another church, we have asked Rachel Barton to step into the role of Assistant Minister and Nancy S. Taylor fellow during the interim period.

The church council mainly continues to meet virtually every month; however, in the spirit of rebuilding community, once each quarter we hold a "hybrid" (both in-person and online) meeting of council with approximately half of the members being able to attend in-person.

Council Members

Phil Stern, Moderator

Rob Gabler, Clerk

Bill Bulkeley, Treasurer

Kate Silfen, Historian

Maren Batalden, At-Large 2023

David Becker, Leadership

Mark Chitty, At-Large 2025

*David Connaughton,
Membership*

*Phil Dearing, Christian Service
and Outreach*

George Delianides, Deacons

Kristi Geary, At-Large 2025

Cathryn Griffith, Planned Giving

Marie Hurd, Music

Tracy Keene, G(R)ACE Speaks

Todd Krohne, Stewardship

*Tim Longman, Christian
Formation*

Lisa Loveland, Operations

Manuel Navia, Trustees

Janet Nolan, Columbarium

Niels Peetz-Larsen, Finance

Chris Roughton, At-Large 2023

Brad Swing, At-Large 2024

Ralph Watson, At-Large 2024

John Brought, Operations

John Edgerton, Senior Minister

*Ashley Popperson, Associate
Minister*

*Mitchell Crawford, Minister of
Music*

Finances

As is made abundantly clear in the various committees' reports, the church's finances have remained strong. Our finance leadership, headed by Bill Bulkeley, Niels Peetz-Larsen and Kristi Geary, once again developed a budget that seemed aggressive, as it called for a deficit of \$295,000. Despite this large expected deficit, Council agreed to make no structural changes because we believed it was important to maintain our program vitality and because we had a "rainy day" fund of over \$1 million. However, given the continued strength of the congregational support, lower spending than expected in several areas, and a larger-than-expected contribution from the preschool, we ended the year with a \$121,000 surplus.

Summary

We at Council are excited to enter the year with such a strong ministerial and administrative team in place. I remain immensely grateful for the work of the many standing committees as well as the ad hoc committees that served the church so well during this time of transition. The church leadership remains vibrant, engaged, and committed to our ongoing service as a community bound together in the covenant.

Respectfully submitted,

Phil Stern



The congregation blesses incoming officers at Annual Meeting 2023.

Treasurer



Old South’s strong financial foundation helped keep operations steady in a year of major transition among ministers and staff. After some unexpected ups and downs during the year, we ended up with a much better financial situation than we expected.

We ended the year with a \$121,000 surplus, a dramatic reversal of the \$300,000 deficit we had originally expected. Congregational support through pledges and gifts held up, despite operating with interim ministers. Costs were held down by delays in filling positions, which reduced salary costs. In addition, the Preschool, which we have started showing as part of regular operations, produced a significant profit.

We started 2023 planning for a large budget deficit. We knew we could handle that because of our \$900,000 accumulated surplus. We hoped maintaining operations would present the anticipated new Senior Minister with a fully staffed, fully functioning church. The added surplus leaves us in a strong position for planning the next few years.

Old South Church enters 2024 with robust financial resources. The endowment recovered strongly with the stock market growth and stood at \$47 million at year-end, just 9% below its all-time high in 2021. We have liquid assets of over \$1.1 million in our “rainy day” fund — the product of years of accumulated surpluses, profits at the preschool, and \$301,000 from forgiveness of our federal loan under the Paycheck Protection Program. For the new year, we have again budgeted for a deficit, but we have an ample cushion.

Our budget for 2024 projects an expense increase of 8% from the 2023 actual number. We expect much fuller staffing for 2024, raising costs. Inflationary pressures are a challenge. Insurance costs rose sharply last year. We boosted payroll across-the-board in each of the last two years with cost-of-living increases. With inflation slowing, we are giving 3% raises for 2024.

The tables below show the revenue and expenses of church operations. It compares the actual results in 2023 to the results in 2022 to the budget expectations for 2023. My goal is to show the actual direction of church income and spending by comparing to the previous year. I also show how we did relative to our expectations by comparing to the budget.

This first table (next page) shows the main sources of income. These are unaudited numbers that may be changed slightly. Preschool shows total revenue in 2023, but only building use payment for 2022.

The endowment income excludes the annual payment of over \$400,000 to the building capital reserve fund. That fund, which was drawn down significantly in 2022 to pay for the repairs to our tower, is reserved for capital expenditures for the building and the organs.

Major Revenue Sources	2023 actual	2022 actual	2023 budget
Endowment	1,072,248	983,459	1,074,843
Cong. Support	1,303,276	1,238,990	1,212,500
Preschool	735,087	60,000	548,080
Building Use Income	228,156	273,808	225,000
Other	4,533	40,548	17,542
Total	3,343,300	2,596,805	3,077,965

The contribution of the endowment to the operating budget is based on the trustees' spending rule. This states that 4% of the endowment, computed each September based upon an exponential average of the past 12 quarters, may be spent each year. Roughly 40% of these endowment funds go to the building capital reserve, and 60% go toward the church's operating budget.

One way to look at the church budget is to break it down between income from the endowment and income from the Congregation. The money we get from the endowment roughly pays for the costs of running the building year to year, including sextons, insurance, utilities and the long-term capital expenses of the building. Congregational support and building use income pay for the costs of worshiping God with ministry and music, educating and communicating with members and making grants to other organizations.

Our legacy of a large endowment supports our most important legacy asset, the church building itself — the pulpit from which we share the word of God. Our Congregation, through pledges and gifts, supports everything we do.

Worth noting here is the decline in building income. Most years we get several movie companies renting our space for a few days, either for shooting scenes or as a place for cast and crew to rest and eat. Last year, the writers' strike eliminated that revenue source.

The next table shows the main areas of expense. Overall spending in 2023 (excluding the preschool) rose 6% from the prior year, but it was still 6% below our budget expectations. Miscellaneous spending includes unallocated expenses like parking reimbursements, workers comp, consulting expenses, and the audit.

On the expense side, church maintenance was below budget because gas and electricity costs were both less than our pessimistic assumptions. Understaffing within Christian Formation contributed to underspending. Minister costs were below expectations because of periods when we had only two full-time ministers on staff.

As we face 2024, we are in a strong financial position. The budget for the year contemplates a deficit in the \$135,000 range by year-end. That sum is easily covered by our accumulated surplus.

Major Expense Categories	2023 actual	2022 actual	2023 budget
Church Maintenance	618,269	626,883	702,739
Church Office	753,742	724,294	781,845
Ministers	426,731	417,506	466,587
Music	352,002	322,874	344,546
Christian Formation	158,601	166,001	196,972
Outreach	207,148	182,769	194,948
Preschool & Other	704,848	128,027	675,535
Total	3,221,341	2,570,380	3,363,172
Net Income/Deficit	121,959	26,425	(285,207)

One significant change in our budgeting process is the treatment of Old South Preschool. The preschool has long made a payment in lieu of rent to the church — \$60,000 last year. Going forward, we will treat the preschool as a part of church operations, and its profits — which amounted to \$195,000 last year — will be used to defray operating expenses. Future profits will likely be smaller, due to changes in the state’s grant program, but we think the preschool will help results.

Church financial operations changed considerably in the past year. Long-time Senior Administrator Helen McCrady, who had informally functioned as Chief Financial Officer, retired, and our bookkeeper departed as well. Our new accountant, Kathleen Steen, has improved our financial discipline. We have been using an outside consultant, Your Part-Time Controller LLC, to provide additional support and guidance on financial matters. We are in the process of evaluating our next steps in financial management.

As treasurer, I meet monthly with the Senior Minister, operations manager John Braught, financial administrator Kathleen Steen, and our consultant from Your Part-Time Controller. We review financial operations line-by-line and examine any discrepancies between budget plans and actual income and outlays.

The treasurer also delivers a monthly report on financial operations to the Church Council and attends the monthly meetings of the board of trustees. I also participate in finance committee meetings where Niels Peetz-Larsen oversees the preparation of the annual budget, and in HR committee meetings as requested by the Senior Minister.

Old South’s finances are guided by principles of security, integrity, and transparency. Watching them wouldn’t be possible without the smart and extensive involvement of many people. I am grateful to all of them.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Bulkeley

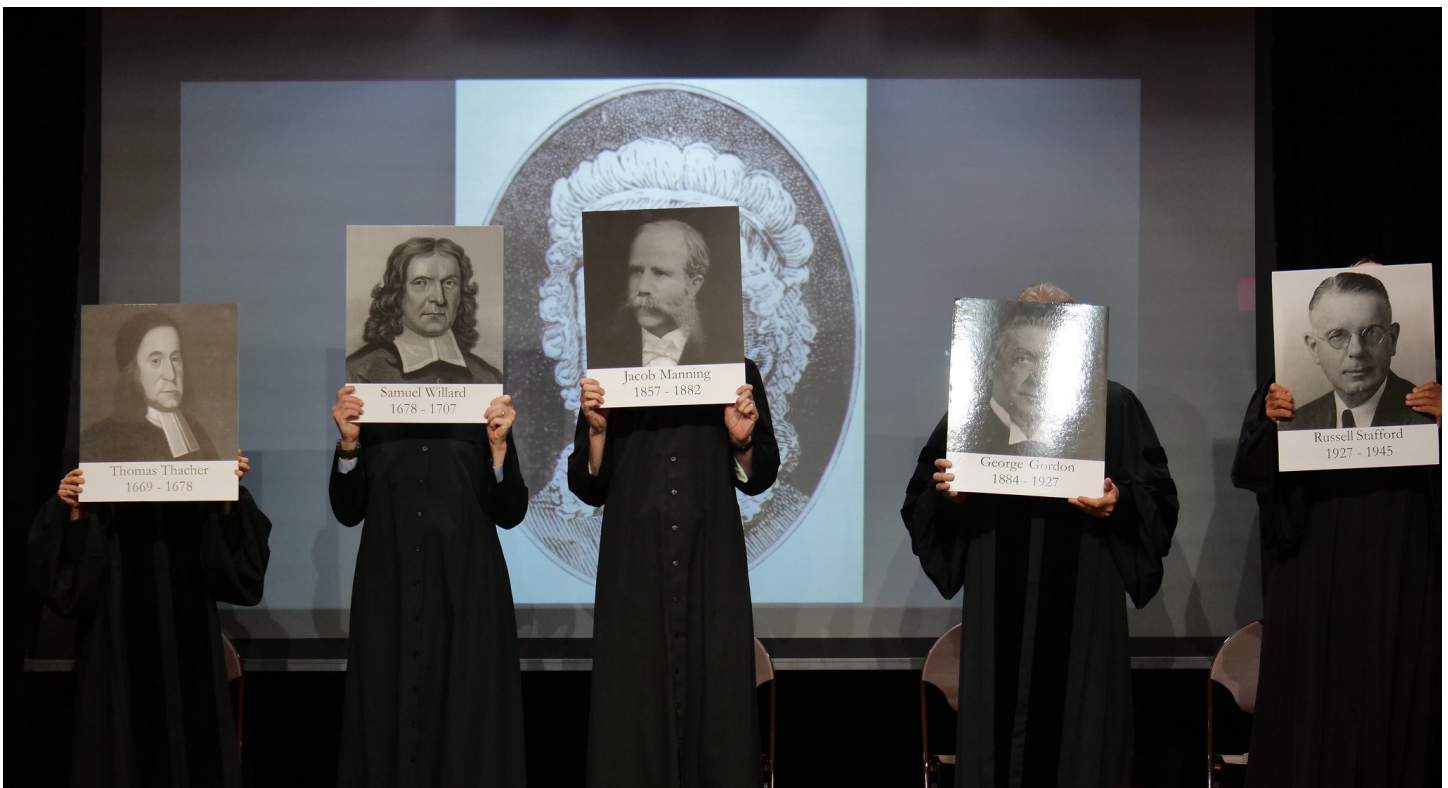
Historian



It has been a pleasure to serve as Old South’s Historian for another year. I have been involved in several fun events and projects. For me, the highlight of the year was working with the Planned Giving Committee to plan the Annual Mary Norton Society event in October 2023. This year’s event focused on showcasing the stories of several of our past senior ministers. In order to lend some color and humor to this event, I helped plan a skit featuring the “ghosts” of Reverend Thomas Thacher, Samuel Willard, Jacob M. Manning, George A. Gordon, and Russell H. Stafford. These five distinguished ghosts paid an earthly visit to Old South to tell stories about their ministries, and to welcome our 21st Senior Minister. I would like to thank Phil Stern, Tom Grant, Don Wells, and Larry Bowers, who so generously agreed to play our ghostly guests. I also thank Cathryn

Griffith for inviting me to dream up this event, and for Rebecca Bowen for her collaboration on the script for the skit.

Last year, Moderator Phil Stern noted that we will soon be celebrating 150 years of worship in our beautiful Boylston Street location. At Phil’s suggestion, I drafted a timeline of key events that have taken place in the life of Old South since we moved into this space in 1875. I would like to thank our Archivist Emily Ross for helping me to identify several key events. I also consulted backfiles of historical newspapers to find additional, noteworthy events. This is a work in progress, and I invite anyone to look at the timeline and make suggestions for additional events for me to highlight.



From left to right: Kate Silfen as Thomas Thacher, Phil Stern as Samuel Willard, Tom Grant as Jacob Manning, Don Wells as George A. Gordon, and Larry Bowers as Russell Henry Stafford at the Annual Mary Norton Society Event in October of 2023

On June 18, I was pleased to join Old South for a “Monumental One Day Retreat.” I gave a 10-minute presentation titled: “A Mixed Legacy: Race & Racism in New England Churches & the Old South Church in Boston.” As the title suggests, this was a historical overview of race and racism at Old South and the wider New England Congregational churches. I would like to thank Katherine Schofield and the Christian Formation Committee for putting together such an informative program and for inviting me to participate.

Last June, Bill Bulkeley called the church officers’ attention to the following article in the Boston Globe: “King’s Chapel in Boston reckons with complicated roots as it honors more than 200 enslaved connected to congregation.” The article describes an ambitious plan for a public art exhibit to honor church members who had been enslaved. In response, Rick Spalding, Rob Gabler, and I collaborated on a letter to the editor to praise the leadership at King’s Chapel for this memorial, and to call attention to our own Memorial Tree. Our letter appeared in the Globe on June 22, 2023.

I look forward to serving as your Church Historian for another year. Please don’t hesitate to reach out if there is something you would like me to research or highlight about Old South’s history.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Silfen

Board of Ministers and Deacons

The Board of Ministers and Deacons is charged with supporting and promoting the religious and spiritual life and growth of the congregation. Deacons counsel with the ministers on worship initiatives, assist with baptisms and accepting new members to the church, serve on various church committees, and coordinate ushers, greeters, communion, and hospitality of all kinds.

Calendar year 2023 was a year of technological transition and volunteer development for the deacons. On the **technology** side, we began using SignUpGenius (SUG) as our hospitality scheduling system, moving away from the quarterly mailed sign-up sheet and schedule. We have seen tremendous efficiencies in having a real-time view into volunteer signups - no longer are we referencing a document printed weeks (or months!) earlier that is now out of date. SUG is online (and has an app) so changes in the schedule are immediately visible to all. As a side benefit, this transition has reduced the staff and volunteer time required by the previous scheduling process and is less costly to Old South, saving on printing and postage costs. We hope all members will view the SUG via the links on the church's website (one for each service) and sign up to join in this vital and rewarding form of service to our church community.

Another technology improvement has been expanding our use of Google Drive. All deacons now have access to view, create, and update all our materials at any time, making us more informed volunteers and more efficient in our work and meetings.

Realizing that one of Old South's greatest resources is our people, our second focus has been on **building knowledge and leadership within our board**. To better accomplish our work and give more deacons the opportunity to lead and serve, we've established areas of responsibility. This includes organizing support by worship service so that each now has two primary contacts; one for usher training and another for usher recruiting and scheduling. Other volunteer roles include building the SUGs (three are needed for each term) and leading the annual review of our membership roster, with additional roles being created as needed.

A priority for the year ahead is to **grow Old South's roster of hospitality volunteers**. During the pandemic, many beloved past volunteers moved out of the area. As we have (blessedly!) returned to in-person worship, there is an increased need to recruit and train new volunteers. We are grateful to the many dedicated volunteers who have remained or recently joined. Please encourage your friends to consider serving in this ministry.



It has been especially rewarding to return to in-person Deacon meetings (when weather permits) after gathering on Zoom during the pandemic. We've enjoyed deepened fellowship through our time in person (including potluck dinners) and look forward to our strengthened connections enabling us to better serve our church.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Del Favero & Tony Rich



Deacons

*Christine Del Favero,
Co-Senior Deacon*

*Tony Rich,
Co-Senior Deacon*

Jonathan Aleshire

John Clark

Amy Coe

George Delianides

Sara Donahue

Tish Dragonette

Kurt Gaertner

Kathy Hassinger

Jer Jurma

Richard Ling

Lauren Nackel

Susan Navia

Board of Trustees

The Trustees of Old South Church are responsible for overseeing the Church’s assets—financial assets, property, and legacy assets. Key updates from 2023 include:

- The investment pool earned a return of 16.4% in 2023.
- Approximately \$1.5 million was distributed from the endowment to support church operations.
- The Capital Reserve fund supported \$713,000 in repairs to the tower, roof and elevators.
- The board of the City Mission Society voted to wind down its operations and transfer its endowment to Old South Church. During 2023, approximately \$632,00 was added to Old South’s endowment to be used for mission and outreach.

ENDOWMENT

Performance & Value

The investment pool overseen by the Trustees includes endowment funds directed by the Trustees and Deacons, as well as the endowed assets of Mount Vernon Church. The 2023 recovery in equity markets resulted in a 16.4% return in the investment pool. Given the portfolio’s long-term orientation, comparisons with longer periods are most relevant. As the table below illustrates, Old South’s investments have outperformed a benchmark constructed to reflect the policy targets of stocks, bonds and other assets over the last one, five and ten years.

Investment Returns as of December 29, 2023

	One-Year	5-Years	10-Years
Old South Endowment	16.4%	9.0%	5.9%
Old South Composite Benchmark	14.3%	7.2%	5.0%
S&P 500 Index	26.3%	15.7%	12.0%
Bloomberg Long-term Treasury Bond Index	3.5%	2.3%	2.3%

At the end of the year, the value of the investment pool had increased to \$47.1 million. The increase in value reflects investment gains, \$1.522 million in distributions to Old South and \$135,000 to Mount Vernon, \$37,000 for expenses related to managing the endowment, and a \$632,000 gift inflow from City Mission Society.

Old South Church Investment Pool

	12/31/22	12/29/23	Difference
Trustees Funds	\$36,393,622	\$41,454,401	\$5,060,779
Deacons Funds	2,028,436	2,279,398	250,962
Old South Total	38,422,058	43,733,799	5,311,741
Mount Vernon Church	<u>3,264,649</u>	<u>3,399,906</u>	<u>140,487</u>
Total Investment Pool	41,689,707	47,133,705	5,452,228

City Mission was founded in 1816 by members of Old South Church and served as the social justice arm of the 64 churches of the Metropolitan Boston Association of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ. In 2022, City Mission’s Board of Directors stepped back to consider the future of the organization and the best way to use the assets of City Mission to continue the work towards justice. The Board voted to relocate programs where they could grow and to transfer remaining assets to Old South Church to continue to use them for justice work in Boston. The Mission and Outreach Committee will oversee the use of the distributions from the City Mission endowment.

Investment Approach

The Trustees manage the investment pool with the objective of providing ongoing support to the Church’s mission and preserving the purchasing power of the endowment. To achieve this aim, the portfolio is broadly diversified across asset classes and is rebalanced as needed to operate within the target allocation parameters. Working with the church’s investment consultant, Cambridge Advisors, the Trustees evaluate the target allocation and ranges periodically with the aim of creating a mix that supports investment objectives.

The pool’s assets are placed with fund managers that have been evaluated with the help of Cambridge Advisors based on the quality of their investment strategies and management teams, their track record, and cost. When evaluating investment strategies, the Trustees have sought funds that pursue socially responsible strategies while delivering competitive returns. During 2023, approximately 63% of Old South’s portfolio consisted of environmental, social and governance (ESG) investments. ESG funds are shown in italics in the table below.

Spending Policy

When spending from the endowment, the Trustees aim to balance the current and future needs of the Church. That means matching spending with the long-term real rate of return of the endowment while minimizing year-to-year changes in spending. To achieve that goal, the Trustees follow a policy of spending 4% of a weighted moving average of the market value of the endowment as of the end of September of the prior year.

Old South Church Endowment Spending

	2023
Distributions from Trustees	\$1,435,774
Distributions from Deacons Funds	\$86,445
Trustee financial and other services	<u>37,000</u>
Total distribution	1,559,219

Trustees

Debby Kuenstner, Chair

Priscilla Geigis

Ashton Goodfield

Paula Hammond

Dan Kossman

Donna Matson

Manuel Navia

Bill Bulkeley, Treasurer

*Rick Spalding, Interim
Senior Minister*

*John Edgerton, Senior
Minister*

Asset Allocation & Management Structure, 12/29/23	Allocation	
	Actual	Target
US Equities	37.6%	34%
<i>Dimensional Fund Advisors Sustainability Core</i>	14.9	
Vanguard S&P 500 Index Fund	11.7	
<i>Calvert Equity Fund</i>	10.9	
Non-U.S. Equities	34.2%	31%
<i>Dimensional Fund Advisors International Sustainability Core</i>	20.5	
Vanguard FTSE Emerging Markets ETF	9.4	
Fidelity International Index	4.3	
Fixed Income	20.6%	19%
<i>Breckenridge Sustainability Fund</i>	15.5	
USAA Bond Fund	2.3	
Vanguard Inflation-Protected Securities Fund	2.2	
<i>UCC Cornerstone Fund</i>	0.5	
Alternative Assets	7.0%	15%
Forester Opportunities Fund (hedge fund of funds)	5.6	
Forester Strategic Opportunities (hedge fund of funds)	0.7	
<i>Illumen Capital (private equity fund)</i>	0.7	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	0.6%	1%
UBS	0.4	
Vanguard	0.2	
Total	100.0	
<i>ESG Subtotal</i>	63.1	

LONG-TERM CAPITAL NEEDS

Capital Reserve

Old South’s historic building and sanctuary organ are critical to Old South’s mission, and timely maintenance contributes to our financial sustainability. To that end, each year the Trustees allocate a portion of the distribution from the endowment to fund the Capital Reserve. The amount set aside is informed by the estimated long-term average annual costs of maintenance (evaluated in conjunction with the Operations Committee, Director of Operations, and the Minister of Music); the rate of construction cost inflation in the Boston area; and the amount of interest earned on reserve balances.

At the beginning of the year, the reserve stood at approximately \$1.2 million, and \$447,000 was added as part of the endowment distribution. During 2023, the Trustees approved the release of \$713,000 to fund repairs to the tower, roof, and elevators. The year-end balance was approximately \$929,000.

Insurance

The Trustees are responsible for assessing the adequacy of the Church’s insurance coverage. The Trustees plan a review of coverage in 2024.

Heritage Assets

Old South Church’s heritage assets are mostly comprised of antique church silver gifted to the church by members in the colonial period, rare books, and documents. Three pieces of antique silver remain on loan to the Museum of Fine Arts Boston. The library of former minister Thomas Prince and the Old South Church rare book collection have been on loan to the Boston Public Library (BPL) since 1866.

In addition to the silver and rare books, Old South houses books and documents at the church. During 2023, Emily Ross, Church Archivist, recommended that 30 boxes of church records be moved to the Congregational Library where they will be more appropriately cared for and available to scholars. We approved Emily’s recommendation.

Audit

The Church’s audit firm, Capin-Crouse, provided an unqualified opinion of the 2020 and 2021 financials. Work on the audit for 2022 is well advanced, and the Trustees and the finance team are implementing recommendations from Capin-Crouse with the goal of improving audit timeliness.

Acknowledgements

In addition to my thanks for the hard work of all my fellow Trustees, I would like to recognize the outstanding support provided by John Braught, Director of Operations and Emily Ross, Archivist.



Respectfully submitted,

Debby Kuenstner

Mount Vernon Church

The Mount Vernon Church, Congregational/United Church of Christ, held its 181st Annual Meeting on Sunday, November 5, 2023. The congregation voted to contribute \$110,300 to Old South Church and to donate over \$78,000 to other charitable purposes.



History

The Mount Vernon Church, founded as a Congregational church in 1842 on Beacon Hill, closed the doors of its second church building at the corner of Beacon Street and Massachusetts Avenue in 1970. Mount Vernon Church contributed the proceeds from the sale of its building on Beacon Street as part of the endowment of the Old South Housing Fund. During our first 128 years, Mount Vernon served as a partner or key supporter in the creation or growth of numerous important institutions and ministries, including Doshisha University in Kyoto, Japan, City Mission Society, and Andover Newton Theological School. The first Mount Vernon Church pastor, Edward Norris Kirk, chaired the boards of trustees of both Wellesley College and Mount Holyoke College. One of our Sunday School teachers evangelized Dwight L. Moody in 1855, who was then 18 with a seventh grade education. Moody became the preeminent evangelist preacher of the late nineteenth century, founder of Northfield-Mount Hermon School, a church, bible institute, and

publishing house. In 1941, Mount Vernon Church's mission church in Chilesso, Angola listed 4,291 members. Joseph Neesima Hardy, whose American education was financed by Old South member Joseph Hardy, was a member of the Mount Vernon youth fellowship and ordained at Mount Vernon, the first Japanese Protestant minister. He went on to found Doshisha University in Kyoto, which today has thousands of students. Their student groups frequently visit Old South Church.

The Mount Vernon Church signed an affiliation agreement in September 1970 with Old South Church, providing that each church would continue as a separate entity, that members of either church could be members of both, that Mount Vernon would make a substantial annual donation to Old South and that Mount Vernon would continue to make donations to charities of its choice. The Senior Minister of Old South Church would also be the Senior Minister of Mount Vernon Church. Mount Vernon Church retains its independence as a dues-paying, open and affirming United Church of Christ congregation with its own traditions and endowment, out of deference to our proud heritage and tradition and out of affection and respect for our original Mount Vernon members, who joined Old South in 1970, but also retained their separate identity, while contributing so much to Old South Church. All current members of Mount Vernon joined from Old South Church.

In 2023, former Interim Senior Minister Rick Spalding described the relationship this way, "...The fifty-two years of conjoint history that Old South and Mt. Vernon have enjoyed could be described as a case of one community of faith 'embedded' within another.... Being 'embedded' is a way of acknowledging a kind of inter-dependence that's not just practical, but moral and spiritual – not so much about hierarchy as about ecology. Mt. Vernon and Old South, it seems to me, belong to each other – are part of each other – inhabit each other. Their respective missions are distinct from each other – yet intrinsic to each other...."

Annual Meeting

The congregation voted \$110,000 for the general budget of Old South, as well as the annual legacy of \$300 for flowers from the Charlotte Holmes Fund.

The Mount Vernon Church continued its support of the Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology with grants for scholarship purposes. Created under the will of Benjamin Franklin, baptized at Old South, the Institute prepares students with practical training in a wide range of twenty-first century technical jobs. Many of the students are people of color, first and second generation Americans, and the first person in their family to attend college.

Congregational Action

The congregation approved the Deacons' selection of nine organizations to receive grants totaling \$30,000. The organizations included:

Boston Seafarer's Friends Society	\$1,000
Church World Service	5,000
Doctors Without Borders	5,000
Farrington Memorial	2,000
Friendship Works Inc.	2,000
Gould Farm	2,000
Oxfam America	4,000
Women's Lunch Place	3,000
Greater Boston Foodbank	4,000
Congregational Library & Archives	1,000
Palestinian Children's Relief Fund	1,000

The congregation adopted Treasurer David Vogan's recommended budget of \$188,300, which included \$3,000 for UCC dues, \$3,000 for administration expenses, \$15,000 for Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology, \$3,000 for Massachusetts Power & Light, and five grants totaling \$24,000 to five UCC denominational related organizations. Those charities were:

Andover Newton Theological School- Robert H. Christenson Scholarship	\$3,000
Andover Newton – General Fund	3,000
Andover Newton – Joseph Hardy Neesima Scholarship	3,000
Congregational Library	5,000
Our Church's Wider Mission, Mass Conference of the UCC	10,000



Respectfully submitted,

Larry Bowers

Moderator, Mount Vernon Church in Boston

Christian Formation Committee

The Christian Formation Committee is charged with supporting the spiritual growth of the Old South Community. The committee oversees programming for both children and adults, as well as intergenerational activities such as the All-Church Retreat. With the worst of the Covid crisis behind us, most of our activities returned to pre-Covid practices, though we have integrated online opportunities into much of our programming.

Children's Programming

We offered a range of Children's classes on Sunday mornings, skillfully organized by Kate Nintcheu, Director of Children and Family Ministries. We adjust the classes annually based on the cohort. For the Fall, this included two Godly Play classes — one for younger children (pre-K through second grade) and a second for older children (third and fourth grade); Meet the Ancestors (fifth and sixth grade), Confirmation (seventh and eighth grade), and Youth Group (high school). Building on our experience during the Covid crisis, we have continued to make classes hybrid, offering an online option for students in all but the youngest classes. We depend on a large group of dedicated volunteers to teach these classes. Observing best practices to keep children safe requires that at least two adults be present for every class. Paid staff work in the nursery, which provides childcare all Sunday morning, and we have ordinarily hired a staff person to lead the Youth Group. Unable to find anyone last year, Kate Nintcheu herself led Youth Group during 2022-2023, while in the fall, the Nancy Taylor Fellow Rachel Barton led the youth.

Confirmation class is held in alternate years and involves an exploration of basic Christian beliefs, church history, and an opportunity for students to explore their own beliefs. The class includes visits to several different churches in the area to help students understand how different Christian communities practice the faith and how it compares with traditions at Old South. In the other years, we offer Our Whole Lives (OWL), a human sexuality course, on Sunday afternoons. In Fall 2022 and Spring 2023, OWL classes were held in conjunction with First Church in Cambridge for seventh and eighth graders.

This year we hired a director and were able to relaunch our children's music program. Aislin Anderson leads a Children's Choir that has provided music at both 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services. Beginning with only four singers for their first performance, the Children's Choir has steadily grown. Ms. Anderson also organized a very large and successful



Children's Choir singing on Children's Sabbath, accompanied by Tim Harbold on piano. Photo by Dan Kossmann.

Christmas Pageant held during 9 a.m. worship during Advent, with participants also singing in the 11 a.m. service.

In addition to the Children's Choir, our children participate in several other worship services each year. The Youth Group plans and leads the annual Youth Sunday, which was held June 4, 2023. On this day, our children lead the entire service, and we take time to recognize our graduating seniors. The children also lead worship on Children's Sabbath, which was held October 22, 2023, at both 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services.

Adult Programming

The Community Hour Forum is held most Sundays at 10 a.m., between the two morning worship services. We offer a variety of programming, from introductions to diverse theologies to discussions of current films. We devoted several sessions this past year to introducing new staff members and learning about their spiritual journeys. Each year, we intentionally include several sessions focused on issues of race and racism and ways in which our church can engage on the enduring related challenges. We also regularly introduce the church to the work of organizations sponsored by the Christian Service and Outreach Committee and include sessions on climate and environmental issues as well. Rev. Katherine Schofield took the lead in organizing the Forum, and we grieve her departure.

The Christian Formation Committee also formally oversees the church's Small Groups program, though most of these groups, once organized by church staff, are self-directed. This year, the church had nine small groups. The Sunday Bible Study is led each year by the seminary intern, Theologian-in-Residence Don Wells leads the Theological Book Group, and this year we hired a seminarian to lead the Through the Bible group that is methodically reading the entire Bible. The other groups were lay-led and included a cinema group and book group, among others. At the beginning of each year, a call is made for members interested in participating in small groups, and adjustments are made, adding people to some groups, creating new groups as necessary, and occasionally phasing out groups.

In addition to these more formal groups, a staff member each year takes the lead in organizing a Young Adult group. This group periodically gathers at an area bar or at church for fellowship and activities. The membership of the group is quite flexible, with the high mobility of young people moving in and out of the Boston area. This fall saw an expansion of group engagement under the leadership of Rachel Barton.

Christian Formation Committee Members

Timothy Longman, Chair

Neil Miller

Frankie Doolittle

Clara Kim

Dante Spurlock

Kevin Guy

Hillary Mull

Matthew Sobiesk

Kate Nintcheu

Katherine Scholfield

Rachel Barton

Intergenerational Activities

Our committee has organized the All-Church Retreat, held at the Craigville Retreat Center, for about a decade. The retreat includes programming for both adults and children. This year's retreat welcomed Rev. Mary Luti as our facilitator, with a program focused on communion and its meanings. In addition, there was worship on Saturday night and Sunday morning, skits on Saturday night, and fellowship time, with games and other activities.



While the retreat has remained meaningful for those who attend, the numbers of participants are about half of what they were prior to the Covid crisis. Because of Covid, we canceled the 2020 retreat, then in 2021, we held a well-attended one-day retreat at an alternate location that allowed us to hold activities primarily outdoors. Since 2022, we have gone back to Craigville, but with much smaller numbers of participants. We had 39 show up at the 2023 retreat (though we had 54 register), compared to over 75 in 2019.

Seeking to increase engagement and create opportunities for those who can't make a weekend-long event on the Cape, we planned a one-day retreat at the church in the spring. A local organization that works on racial awareness, Wee the People, led an all-ages workshop on understanding memorials and their meanings. We explored our own church to see what our community memorializes and what messages our physical space carries. About 20 people participated in the spring retreat.



Hoping to engage more church members, we are exploring revisions to our retreat format. This coming fall, we are planning to begin the retreat on Saturday morning rather than Friday night and to hold the retreat in a location closer to Boston. We hope that these changes will allow more people to participate.

Thank you to the Committee for all of their many contributions.

Respectfully submitted,
Timothy Longman

Christian Service and Outreach Committee

The Christian Service and Outreach Committee (CSOC) is grateful to be able to support Boston-area nonprofits doing important work in our shared community, respond to emergency needs around the world, and partner with other Old Southerners who are engaged in our broader community.

This year, CSOC granted over \$100,000 to community partners working to address many of the most pressing challenges that we face. We were glad to be able to talk with members of the congregation and highlight our grantee partners and Old South's broader community engagement work at the Outreach Fair in the Fall. We look forward to engaging with the congregation more in 2024.

2023 New Grants and Awards

In 2023, we were able to fund one new organization with a multi-year grant: Justice 4 Housing (J4H), with a grant of \$40,000 over two years (\$20,000/year). J4H is a grassroots organization that provides housing and family reunification to Justice Involved Individuals (JIIs) through policy, advocacy, and service. J4H believes in a Housing First approach because a safe and stable home is crucial for a successful reentry to society. They are dedicated to the abolishment of discriminatory federal, state, and local housing policies that limit access to affordable housing for JIIs. J4H is also a partner in the advocacy work that Old South is doing with the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization.

We awarded the Robert Christenson Outreach Award plus a one-time mini-grant for a total of \$3,277 to the Boston Higher Ed Resource Center. They are a nonprofit that provides enhanced support to Boston Public School students to thrive academically and reach college.

We awarded the Duane Day Award plus a one-time mini-grant for a total of \$12,000 to Legacy Lives On. This organization has been doing restorative justice work for over a decade, providing support to victims of violence and encouraging repair across communities where violence has occurred.

Renewed Grants

In 2023, we renewed grants to four organizations, awarding \$20,000 each to *common cathedral*, Fathers' UpLift, Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition, and Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE). *common cathedral* is a perpetual grantee, as they are doing critical work in our community in partnership with our congregation and have long-standing ties with Old South Church.

common cathedral

In 2023, *common cathedral* remained steadfast in their 5 core programs: Sunday Outdoor Worship, BostonWarm day center, common art, discipleship groups (Feed Your Spirit, Bible Study, etc.), and CityReach.



Youth Group at common cathedral's Sunday Outdoor Worship service

Christian Service and Outreach Committee Members

*Philip Dearing,
Co-Chair*

*Virginia Berman,
Co-Chair*

Toby Bottorf

Paul Brouillette

Carolyn Clark

*Amy Cleaveland-
Hudson*

Sara Donahue

Erica Meyer

Katherine Schofield

They have had significant staff turnover, but remain committed to their mission and work. Several different groups of Old South members provided lunch on Sundays this year.

Fathers' UpLift

Based in Dorchester, Fathers' UpLift “provides mental health counseling, coaching, advocacy, and resource support to assist fathers with overcoming barriers (racism, emotional, traumatic, and addiction-based barriers) that prevent them from remaining engaged in their children's lives”. CSOC looks forward to identifying ways to further amplify and support their work in 2024.

Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE)

ACE's work in 2023 built off the strategies they moved forward during 2022. ACE continued to work toward a variety of key strategic initiatives and offer programming focused on environmental justice. As they shared with CSOC, “ACE was proud to share our expertise, experience, and best practices with our larger community. We were grateful to learn from the critical work our allies are doing as well. Locally, we worked with groups that represented different neighborhoods, communities, and issue areas. We prioritized work with groups led by the most affected people. ...Our work has shown time and time again that building the efficacy of those most affected by an issue and using a systemic analysis of problems fuels changes that benefit all. This vision helps frame our mission to build the power of communities to eradicate environmental racism and classism, create healthy, sustainable communities, and achieve environmental justice.”

Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition

The Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition is “a collaborative organization, bringing together Mattapan residents, organizations, and others to work on improving the food and physical activity environments in Mattapan”. Their activities fall into five areas: Food Access and Nutrition Education, Physical Activity, Youth Development, Built Environment, and Community Empowerment. They will use the grant support to expand their current work, with a particular focus on further developing their youth programs.



Emergency Grants

Our committee also gave several smaller one-time emergency grants to address immediate pressing needs. Specifically, we gave \$2,000 to support recovery from the fires in Hawaii. In addition, we provided \$2,000 to the Palestine Children’s Relief Fund and \$1,000 to the Combined Jewish Philanthropies Israel Emergency Fund.

An update on City Mission

Old South supported the founding of City Mission in 1816 and has supported their evolving work in the 207 years since then. In 2023, they decided to permanently close their doors. They transferred most of their programs to other community nonprofits and transferred their remaining assets to Old South to continue furthering their efforts to advance economic and racial justice in the Boston area. Old South held an event to celebrate the work of City Mission in Fall 2023.

Conversations are ongoing for the best way to steward these City Mission resources going forward. In 2023, we used \$30,000 of those funds to support New Roots AME. City Mission had been funding a position at that church and had to cancel a grant because of their abrupt closing. This grant from Old South ensures that New Roots AME will continue to have the staffing support they need to grow their community ministry.

We are grateful to each of our current committee members for their ongoing dedication to each other, to this work, to Old South Church, and to the greater Boston and global community.

Respectfully submitted,

Phil Dearing & Virginia Berman

Micah Mission Fund 2023 Report

Micah Mission Nominator Committee Members

*Philip Dearing,
Convenor*

Carolyn Arrington

Toby Bottorf

Paul Brouillette

Pam Roberts

Bradford Swing

The Micah Mission Fund is a special fund created as part of Old South's 350th anniversary initiative to do justice in the world. Its name originates from Micah 6:8 "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Each year, the Micah Mission Fund sponsors efforts of the Old South Community to do justice out in the world. We aim to cede volunteering efforts, service work, and small grants to community nonprofits that help to build a better world.

In 2023, we were able to support some incredible efforts in our community with this fund. This included:

- \$10,000 to IFSI-USA. IFSI is working at the forefront of the migration/housing crisis in the Boston area, particularly for the Haitian community. This gift will enable them to flexibly support those that need it.
- \$1,500 to purchase gift cards for those who volunteered this year with Faith Leaders for Housing Justice in weekly clean-ups at Mass and Cass as part of their year-end celebration event.
- \$5,000 to Women's Lunch Place, doing critical work for women and families experiencing homelessness with extensive day programs
- \$5,000 to Rosie's Place, a nighttime shelter for women experiencing homelessness, founded by an Old South member in 1974 as the first shelter for women in the country
- \$2,000 to Victory Programs to support their substance abuse recovery work throughout the area
- \$6,000 for the clergy and staff to administer to members or individuals in need and crisis. A work of mercy and justice.
- \$10,000 for Ukrainian refugees through our partnership with First Church in Marlborough and their partners in Poland and Ukraine. The need continues to grow and we are grateful to work with such a strong partner on the ground to lend support.
- \$7,500 to fund the work of our Theologian in the City. June Cooper's work with Faith Leaders for Housing Justice is truly inspirational. We look forward to working closely with her to expand efforts supporting those struggling with addiction and housing insecurity at Mass and Cass
- \$5,500 to support the staff time from an Associate Minister to support service-related efforts in the community

As this is still an evolving mandate, we welcome ideas for how Old South can make its presence known in the community. If you have ideas or specific projects for how we could best use this funding to do God's work and bring justice into the world, we would love to hear from you! Feel free to reach out to an Old South staff member or any member of the Micah Mission Nominator Committee.

Greater Boston Interfaith Organization Updates

In 2023 GBIO launched a comprehensive Housing Justice Campaign to advocate specific policies with four goals: increasing housing supply, improving public housing conditions, funding affordable home-ownership and rental programs, and improving housing access for those returning from incarceration (“returning citizens”). The campaign has continued to build momentum and make important progress, including the following highlights so far:

- 300 people (including 6 Old Southerners) gathered at the State House in March for campaign launch, receiving news coverage from WGBH, the Boston Globe, and others to elevate housing issues on Beacon Hill
- GBIO coordinated thousands of calls and emails to legislators yielding a \$15 million increase for public housing maintenance in the 2023 state operating budget
- GBIO organized and trained leaders to push for and shape zoning by-laws to comply with the MBTA Communities Act and create more housing in Lexington, Brookline, Arlington, & Newton.
- 1400 people (including 43 Old Southerners!) gathered in June with Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll, Boston Mayor Michelle Wu, major real estate developers, legislators and other leaders to advocate for campaign goals
- Numerous policies advocated for at this event were directly incorporated into Governor Maura Healey’s draft Bond Bill, including \$1.6 billion to reverse chronic disrepair in state public housing, real estate transfer fee enabling provisions, and doubling of the Affordable Care Trust Fund from \$400 million to \$800 million



GBIO housing campaign launch—photo by Leah C-S Photography

Respectfully Submitted,

Harrison Reeder & Christina Gregg

Co-Leads, Old South GBIO Core Team

Climate Crisis Task Force

On an overcast November day, 15 Old Southerners, both adults and children, came together to plant trees and shrubs at a Habitat for Humanity site in Boston’s Mission Hill neighborhood. Neighbors and homeowners joined in. The tree planting, in conjunction with the Boston organization Speak for the Trees, was part of the Old South Climate Crisis Task Force’s climate justice effort called Canopy of Care. As climate change intensifies and asthma rates increase, the Canopy of Care attempts to bring carbon- and heat-absorbing tree cover to Boston’s landscape-depleted neighborhoods. This is in keeping with Old South’s efforts to work towards equity in Boston.

This was the second tree-planting the Old South Climate Crisis Task Force has participated in. The first was in April 2023 at a Habitat for Humanity site in Dorchester’s Codman Square, and another is planned in Roslindale this spring. The November Mission Hill planting, with its 10 evergreens, including two types of Arborvitae, attracted far more Old South members to participate than the April Codman Square effort; also, at the first planting in Codman Square, homeowners hadn’t been engaged or involved, and the number of trees planted was less than planned.



“We learned from our mistakes the first time around,” said Rev. Katherine Schofield, who led the effort for the Climate Crisis Task Force. “The Mission Hill planting was a huge success.”

As the Climate Task Force’s role in tree-planting gains momentum, it has also gained recognition from other activists around the city. As Susan Racine, climate activist at Bethel AME church, noted in an email to an Old South climate advocate, “I attended the dedication of the Habit for Humanity Homes on Parker Street [in Mission Hill] and I noticed the trees that Old South planted and I heard several people admiring them. It was really nice to see evidence of your good work.” In the future, Old South plans to involve other churches in tree-planting and to expand the range of these important efforts.

The tree-plantings were the highlight of the Climate Crisis Task Force’s activities in 2023. It has been a year of transition for the Task Force, with the departure of its longtime chair, Mary Ann Lape, and young environmental activist Shayna Gleason, who both moved away from Boston. At the end of November, the Task Force faced another challenge when Rev. Katherine Schofield, the mainstay of the church’s climate work, departed Old South to accept a call as minister at the First Parish Church in Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts.



Nonetheless, climate activities at Old South Church continue. In March, Old South activists and three of our ministers marched in a demonstration at Downtown Crossing, sponsored by Third Act, a group of veteran climate activists, all over 60. The nationwide action,

called Banking on our Future, was an effort to call attention to the role of large banks—Bank of America, Citibank, Chase, and Wells Fargo—in financing fossil companies and worsening the climate crisis. The banks, activists noted, have lent \$6 billion to fossil fuel companies over the years; Downtown Crossing is the site of a large Bank of America branch. Jamie Garuti Sage designed a large Old South Climate banner for the event, making the Old South presence visible.

Within the church itself, Care of Creation Sunday, at the end of Earth Week, was celebrated with Rev. Schofield delivering a sermon entitled “Resurrection People in a Climate Crisis World”. Community Hour Forums both on Creation Care Sunday and the following week focused on the environment. A February community forum discussed the work of one of Old South’s grantees, the Roxbury-based Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE), focusing on its social justice programs. At the start of Lent, cards were distributed to congregants urging them to consider a sustainable fast as a Lenten observance. Green Tips—suggestions of how to maintain a more sustainable lifestyle—continue in the weekly Friday newsletter. A summer art project, involving multiple generations of Old South members, engaged in creating fabric banners, many highlighting saving our climate.

As the Climate Crisis Task Force reorganizes in the wake of departures, the steering committee is working to bring in new people and increase the scope of its activities. A meeting to encourage the congregation to participate in greater numbers is planned for early spring of 2024.

The Task Force would like to take this opportunity to thank Rev. Schofield for her passionate advocacy of climate issues and her leadership of the Task Force during the past year. We are extremely grateful for her untiring work. I also salute the work of fellow Climate steering committee members, Bev Hanna, Rich Hassinger, and Scott McInturff.

Congregation members interested in becoming more involved in climate issues can attend an upcoming meeting, time and date to be announced, to spark increased church activism. Anyone interested can contact me (NMiller45@gmail.com) or Rich Hassinger (RichHassinger@Verizon.net). As I wrote in last year’s annual report, the dangers of climate change and environmental degradation become more disturbing with each passing year. Caring for God’s creation becomes increasingly crucial, and the Climate Crisis Task Force hopes to expand its numbers and activities in the coming year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Neil Miller

Climate Crisis Task Force Members

Steering Committee

Katherine Schofield, Staff

Bev Hanna

Rich Hassinger, Chair

Env. Stewardship

Neil Miller, Chair

Communications

Scott McInturff

Communications

Subgroup

Neil Miller, Chair

Katherine Schofield

Margaret Bush

Bev Hanna

Steve Holt

Grace Rousseau

Environmental Stewardship Subgroup

Rich Hassinger, Chair

Katherine Schofield, Staff

Laurie Appleby

Janet Chitty

Shayna Gleason

Kathy Hassinger

Steve Morgan

Caroline Murray

Stefanie Pietras

Justice & Advocacy Subgroup

Katherine Schofield, Staff

Shayna Gleason

Ryan Grieser

Diana Kim

Scott McInturff

Rachel Beth Schaefer

John Stainton

Kathy and Ted Wade

Frank Wezniak

Congregational Care and Support Committee Members

Karen Hand, Chair

Ashley Popperson, Staff

Sarah Cowles, Deacon

*Tish Dragonette,
Deacon*

Rich Hassinger

Caroline Murray

Abby Smith

Alice Verhoeven

Congregational Care and Support Committee

The Congregational Care and Support Team is a subcommittee of the Old South Church Board of Deacons. Our goal is to be responsive to the needs of our church family. We aim to foster a culture of caring for one another among our church members. Our committee tries to encourage and bring prayerful, empathetic and practical support to members of our church family. In addition to our core committee, we have many faithful crew members who participate in our outreach to the congregation. Recognizing the personal nature of our ministry, we are respectful and sensitive to the wishes of those to whom we minister. The committee mostly meets on Zoom but we look forward to in-person interactions, including visits, rides and food delivery.

Members of the Call Crew are in regular touch with church members who are still “Old Southerners” but are no longer able to attend church in person. We have about eight callers and about fifteen callees, although frequency and participation changes as needs require.

Caroline Murray leads the Card Crew who send handwritten cards for a multitude of reasons - to share messages of condolence, sympathy and recovery, marriage, birth, moves, retirement, work accomplishments and awards. We have about 35 dedicated “cardees” at the ready to share joys and concerns with our church members.

The Food Crew provides fresh and frozen meals to people who are recovering from surgery/illness or experiencing household disruptions.

The committee supports a Baby Ministry by providing an Old South onesie to

welcome our newest congregants. The committee annually sends coffee shop cards, along with expressions of support, to Old South college students and high school juniors and seniors. Nineteen handwritten cards were sent to family members of congregants who passed away in 2023.



The Committee organizes monthly birthday celebrations after worship.



The committee provides rides on an ad hoc basis.

Members and friends of Old South Church who are in need of support or who know of members in need are encouraged to send that information to care@oldsouth.org. The information reaches the Ministers and the Congregational Care and Support Committee Chair, enabling the team to respond.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Hand

(G)RACE Speaks Committee Members

Chair Vacancy

Tracy Keene

Deb Washington

Amy Coe

Tim Harbold

Eliette Hilaire

David O'Malley

Shelia Randolph

Anne Scholder

Ralph Watson

June Cooper

John Edgerton

Rick Spalding

(G)RACE Speaks

(G)RACE Speaks has been engaged in assessing its mission and vision. As a standing committee of the Church Council, (G)RACE Speaks is actively involved in several initiatives aimed at promoting antiracism within our church community. The Committee organized workshops to educate members about the history and impact of racism. It served as a resource for, and worked in collaboration with, other committee chairs to support the ongoing securing of inclusion as a core principle of our faith community.

(G)RACE Speaks has strong support from church leadership to ensure the committee's initiatives are prioritized and adequately resourced. In this post-Covid era, the committee has regained its traction with a broader vision of racism as an issue for the entire BIPOC (black, indigenous, people of color) church community. A reunion of church members who participated in a "check-in" meeting provided the committee with information establishing the importance of taking next steps that would include more antiracism training, provide opportunities for community engagement, and more pioneering work to address issues of social justice. With this information as our guide, (G)RACE Speaks is engaged in taking a fresh look at our work moving forward.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Washington



Music Committee

2023 was the first full year of in-person musical programming since 2019. Our ensembles were all active with regular rehearsals and participation in worship services and special events. With a stable committee membership, we have settled into an easy routine for working through the year.

The Music Committee updated our by-laws to focus on the support role of the committee in relationship to the Minister of Music and its more prosaic jobs of robe maintenance, ushering for musical events, and music library maintenance. These have been presented to Leadership for review.

In February, we were delighted to host David Hurd, a renowned hymn and choral music composer, for a musical service that wound its way through the liturgical year.



All Saints Sunday 2023

The Sound Project team engaged a consultant to do a detailed study of the acoustics of the Sanctuary and the Gordon Chapel. The goal was to receive recommendations for both audiovisual and acoustic improvements to ensure that the in-person and livestream audio are the best they can be. A very detailed report with recommendations was presented and reviewed. It has been passed on to the Operations Committee to be incorporated into its capital planning process.

Music Committee Members

Marie Hurd, Chair

Jonathan Aleshire

Aislin Anderson

Jimmy Kamel

Mitchell Crawford

The committee also worked on making sure that we are recognizing our ensembles and reminding musicians and the congregation that the work they do is a ministry. This includes a commissioning during worship services at the beginning of the program year and an acknowledgement of service at the close of the program year. It also includes recognizing departures with a blessing and sending. We said some big goodbyes this season: our Gospel Choir Fellows, Sayida Rivers and Jordan Pettis (pictured below), moved on to the next chapters of their lives in May; Willie Sordillo retired from Jazz Worship in September; and Zoë Daggett Krohne and Doug Rich left Jazz Worship in December. All of these musicians provided many years of ministry to Old South Church and will be greatly missed.



The time has come to consider replacement of the lower fifth bass octave of the Old South Handbells. The bells have been repaired many times and have become quite fragile. Since the manufacturer is no longer supporting additional repair of these bells, replacement is the best option.

In closing, 2023 was a magical year of music making at Old South Church. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of the members of the Music Committee for their commitment, hard work, and support this year.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Hurd

Membership Committee

2023 saw easing of almost all COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, allowing many to return to normal and return to in-person church without much fear of adverse effects. 2023 was a year of transition in many ways, with our Interim Senior Minister Rick Spalding guiding us for much of the year, and the hiring of our new settled Senior Minister John Edgerton. Despite the transition, the church was generally able to maintain a steady attendance and an influx of new members. However, new member joining remains well below the pre-pandemic levels, which poses long term concerns for the church body. Virtual worship attendance also remains robust, indicating that it will be a long-term option for many.

The committee continues to work to strengthen the existing membership community we have. This again included an all-church calling campaign to reach out to our existing members. New members who joined in 2023 were also engaged to help strengthen their connection with the community. The committee has and will continue to host events to gather groups outside of typical church time. One member of the committee carried out a survey analyzing website use along with its pros and cons, and shared the results with church staff for possible remediations. Also, the committee continued to distribute “pew cards,” which have been and continue to be well received.

In 2024, the committee will work to engage existing members as well as recruit new members, highlighting our newly settled Senior Minister and staff as an anchor to begin developing stability and a reliable routine after four long years of transition.

Respectfully submitted,

David Connaughton

Membership Committee Members

*David Connaughton,
Chair*

Ken Allan

Alliea Groupp

Candace Kosturko

Lauren Nackel

Abby Smith

Brendan Smith

Laurie Stickels

Katherine Schofield



Columbarium Committee

Columbarium Committee Members

Janet Nolan, Chair

Larry Bowers

Laura Dunn

David Story

Pam Holland

*Amelia Gerrard,
Columbarium
Administrator*

The Columbarium Committee met three times in 2023. During the February meeting, we gathered to acknowledge and show appreciation for two of our founding members as they completed their terms of service: Carolyn Arrington and Kay Davis. Working tirelessly since 2016, these individuals have helped to realize the vision of creating the Columbarium, as well as bringing to fruition the lovely Memorial Tree.

Our second meeting was in April. At that time, we welcomed our new committee members Laura Dunn and David Story, while bidding adieu to our most able Columbarium Administrator and friend, Helen McCrady. At this meeting we requested through Helen that our unrestricted funds be put into a higher interest yielding account or CD.

In September, the committee convened to welcome Amelia Gerrard as the new staff representative/Columbarium Administrator. A request was made that the newly pooled unrestricted Columbarium funds be earmarked, along with the interest accrued, for future purchase of niches and memorial leaves as the need arises for expanded capacity.

In November, Amelia reported to the committee that three new leaves had been added to the Memorial Tree in memory of Nan Tull Wezniak, David S. King, and Richard S. Bowers Jr.

Respectfully submitted,

Columbarium Snapshot 12/31/2023

Niches in Use or Reserved	49 of 82
Purchased in 2023	1
Relinquished in 2023	1

Inurnments in 2023

Elinor Lockwood Yeo

Memorial Tree

Leaves purchased in 2023	4
Leaves added to the Tree in 2023	3

Columbarium Fund Balances

General Fund:	\$58,243.16
Perpetual Care Fund:	\$28,200.00
Prepaid Columbarium Fees:	\$9800.00



Operations Committee

Operations Committee Members

Lisa Loveland, Chair

Nancy Kukulan

Sean O'Donnell

Diane Palmer

Sue Pepin

Grace Rousseau

John Salo

John Braught

Our largest project this year was the installation of a new roof for the Parish House. This project was completed quickly and on budget. It also looks great, has new drains, and clean copper flashing. The project included new lightning protection for the building and mechanical components. The roof now has additional insulation, which was needed to bring the roof to code and will also provide energy savings.



Once that project was complete, the Committee began to look at our long-term plan for building maintenance and upgrades. During the summer, the

Committee completed a full walk-through of the facility where we discussed areas of the building that need more immediate attention, and prioritized future renovations. We realized we needed more professional assistance in the process, so in the late Fall we brought in our architects, Wiss, Janey, Elsner Associates, Inc. They will be assisting us in understanding the current and future needs of the building, along with estimating costs. This will allow us to create a more accurate long-term budget.

I had the pleasure of joining the newly created HR Committee that is tasked with being a support to Senior Minister John Edgerton on issues of hiring, policy, and general personnel issues. As Operations is tasked in the By-laws with hiring and overseeing administrative staff, this appointment ties the two committees together.



Our overwhelming gratitude goes to Director of Operations, John Braught, who leaves us in February 2024. Over the last 3 years, John has quietly brought us to a place where the building runs efficiently. He has masterfully negotiated a number of transitions amongst the staff, both ministerial and administrative. During our recent tower and roof projects, John acted as project manager, ensuring the Church's interest was expertly represented. John's work here was professional and comprehensive, and he will be greatly missed. The Committee will have their hands full identifying John's replacement.

We must also thank our administrative and custodial staff for all of their incredibly hard work. Despite our numerous transitions, their dedication to the mission of this church and keeping it running is nothing less than incredible. We appreciate all you do.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa G. Loveland

Finance Committee

This year, the Finance Committee worked steadily throughout the year to evaluate our 2023 financial performance and to develop the Old South budget for 2024. We look forward to presenting a final budget to Council for approval in February.

Areas of focus for the Finance Committee during the prior year have included:

- Working with the Treasurer and Old South leadership to evaluate how best to account for and manage financial surpluses from past years, with an eye toward maintaining an appropriately conservative financial position while maximizing the impact of Old South's financial and non-financial resources.
- Working with Old South leadership to manage through a time of significant staff transition.
- Managing and monitoring annual changes in staff benefits and other administrative programs.

The Finance Committee expresses our sincere gratitude to all church staff and volunteers for their efforts to support sound financial management and planning.

Respectfully submitted,

Niels Peetz-Larsen

Finance Committee Members

Niels Peetz-Larsen, Chair

Amy Augustine

Bill Bulkeley

Jenny Keenan

Paul Kuenstner

Ted Wade

Frank Wezniak

John Braught

Linda Van Praet

Rick Spalding

John Edgerton



Rev. Schofield's Goodbye Party was a great photo opportunity of pastoral staff past and present.

Leadership Committee

Leadership Committee Members

David Becker, Chair

Carolyn Arrington

John Edgerton

Priscilla Geigis

Jer Jurma

Katie Maliel

Susan Navia

David Story

Amelia Gerrard

Katherine Schofield

Ashley Popperson

Rick Spalding

The leadership committee's primary responsibility is to develop a slate of candidates for election to church offices at the annual meeting of the congregation. Given the amazing talents of the congregation and their willingness to serve, along with the seamless staff support during a year of transition, we all feel a deep appreciation for our members, and with that have prepared a ballot with the great breadth and depth of talent to which Old South is accustomed.

Accompanying this report, we present to the congregation our slate for all offices to be elected at Annual Meeting. There is also a list of current membership in the standing committees of the church. Some offices have multi-year terms, and some committees have staggered terms for members. The year listed after nominees indicates the last full year of that person's proposed term. We've also included some images that tell the story of that work.

May God continue to bless the great work of the leaders of Old South Church in Boston.

Respectfully submitted,

David Becker

Slate Recommended by the Leadership Committee:

Officers:

Maren Batalden, Moderator, 2024

Bill Bulkeley, Treasurer, 2024

Rob Gabler, Clerk, 2024

Kate Silfen, Historian, 2024

Deacons:

Rebecca Bowen, 2025

Jer Jurma, 2026

Jennifer Keenan, 2026

Yoo-Kyung Kim, 2026

Richard Ling, 2026

Rory Razon, 2026

Ted Wade, 2026

Trustees:

Priscilla Geigis, 2026

Tom Grant, 2026

Council At Large:

Connie Lehman, 2026

Dawn Patterson, 2026

Leadership Committee

Randy Billings, 2026

Standing Committee Chairs:

David Becker, Leadership, 2026

Cathryn Griffith, Planned Giving, 2026

Ralph Watson, (G)RACE Speaks, 2026

Stewardship Committee

“Faithful Belonging” was our campaign theme for 2023. We created this theme and accompanying materials to highlight the importance and vitality of belonging to a faith community like Old South Church. This inclusion extends beyond simply going to church and hopefully means giving one’s time, talent, and treasure.

Campaign Highlights:

- 262 of our member households pledged in 2023
- \$1,111,931 was pledged in 2023
- Average pledge amount: \$1,747.53
- 141 households increased their annual commitment; 185 households decreased their annual commitment

The campaign culminated with a wonderful lunch in late January. We enjoyed a special meal, listened to several incredible Old South choral fellows, and reviewed a unique “By The Numbers” document that highlights many of the interesting facts, figures, and nuances of life at Old South Church.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge Kathy Wade, the outgoing chair of the Stewardship Committee. Her incredible leadership of the committee and her mentorship for me is much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Krohne



FAITHFUL BELONGING
Stewardship 2023

Stewardship Committee Members

Kathy Wade, Outgoing Chair

Todd Krohne, Current Chair

Brenda Gailhouse

Ashton Goodfield

Nancy Kukulian

Helen McCrady

Scott McInturff

Vicki Newman, Pledge Secretary

Rick Spalding

Peter Stokes

Katie Studer

Planned Giving Committee

Planned Giving Committee Members

Cathryn Griffith, Chair

Bev Hanna

Mary Kohak

Larry Soper-Mynatt

John Edgerton

The Planned Giving Committee’s mission is to encourage Old South Church members to establish end-of-life plans, to educate members on options for such plans, and to express gratitude to people who have informed Old South of their bequests to the church.

This committee encourages people to have a will and a health care proxy. We invite them to provide for the future financial well-being of Old South Church in their end-of-life plans, when appropriate. People who notify Old South Church that they have made such provisions automatically become members of the Mary Norton Society, which has grown significantly in recent years and currently numbers about 115 individuals.

In 2023, the Planned Giving Committee invited the Old South community for lunch and a program to welcome John Edgerton in Mary Norton Hall on October 29. About 60 people attended, of whom the majority were members of the Mary Norton Society. The program featured “ghosts” from our past. A picture of Mary Norton appeared on the screen with her recorded greetings (thanks to Pam Roberts). Then Mary Norton welcomed five black-robed actors who portrayed former Senior Ministers: Thomas Thatcher (portrayed by Kate Silfen), Samuel Willard (portrayed by Phil Stern), Jacob Manning (portrayed by Tom Grant), George Gordon (portrayed by Don Wells), and Russell Henry Stafford (portrayed by Larry Bowers).



Each in turn welcomed John Edgerton. The thoughtful and amusing scripts were based on Old South Historian Kate Silfen’s research of the Senior Ministers. As each actor was speaking, an image of the house of worship where the congregation met during their tenure (the Cedar Meeting House, the Old South Meeting House, and the Old South Church) was projected behind them.

While the Planned Giving Committee has often hosted an informational event in the Spring, this year we opted to post short blurbs in the weekly bulletin several times during the year, inviting people to join the Mary Norton Society.

The Planned Giving Committee welcomes Senior Minister John Edgerton and Church Administrator Amelia Gerrard. We thank Interim Senior Minister Rick Spalding for his guidance and contributions to our work this past year, and Senior Church Administrator Helen McCrady for maintaining the Mary Norton Society records for many years.

We are grateful for the service of our colleagues Rebecca Bowen and Brigitte Fletcher, who have left the committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathryn Griffith



Baptisms in 2023

Lilian Mae Remenschneider
Penelope Margaret Burke
Theodore John Dearing
Prisha Biswas
Felicity Aurora Barillas
Landon Lewis Read
Preethi Lepakshi

Weddings in 2023

Olivia Vehslage and Connor O'Dwyer	Saturday, January 14, 2023
Magda Laszczak and David Aviles	Friday, January 20, 2023
Carolyn Wheatley and Matthew Carey	Saturday, March 18, 2023
Kristie Conners and Jason Hartelius	Saturday, March 25, 2023
Madeline Mullholand and Anthony Caliri	Saturday, April 22, 2023
Shion Hara and Jason Hanna	Saturday, April 29, 2023
Maria Kangas and Andrew Wilson	Saturday, April 29, 2023
Amanda Hutter and Thomas Vidas	Saturday, May 13, 2023
Jimmy Ragan and Kit Hattier	Saturday, June 10, 2023
Hans Miranda Chavez and Cass Connolly	Saturday, June 17, 2023
Bryanne Simone Butler and Alexander Ford Peabody	Saturday, July 8, 2023
Elaine Kang and Trent Nelson	Saturday, July 8, 2023
Siobhan Healey and Jim Aberdale	Saturday, July 15, 2023
Yuanqin Fan and Yingzhuo Wang	Friday, August 11, 2023
Emily Burress and Travis Strickler	Saturday, August 12, 2023
Jaclyn Cappello and Colin Walsh	Saturday, September 9, 2023
Evan Laveist and Tara Nolan	Thursday, September 28, 2023
Mark Harrison and Anzhelika Kalinina	Friday, October 6, 2023
Nickie Elkins and Sean Boganwright	Thursday, October 19, 2023
Meaghan Kelly and Trevor Gorman	Saturday, October 21, 2023
Kerri Maddock and Tom Duffy	Saturday, November 4, 2023
Tara Coughlan and Sean Darden	Saturday, November 11, 2023
Sophia Pawlewicz and Pedro Martell	Saturday, December 2, 2023

Members Received and Removed in 2023

Members Received

Lee Andrews
Connie Lehman
Paul Nofer
Ashley Popperson
Gordon Postill
Dan Baissa
Preethi Lepakshi
Paul McDaniels
Tyler Read
Morgan Read
Marilyn Riedel
Donna Tesiero
Parnian A.
Simba Pasipanodya
Morgan Spaulding
Tim Lynch
John Edgerton
James Jumper
Val Snekvik
Mark Snekvik
Ninette Marzouki
Max Oliverio
Laura Cook
Matthew Sobiesk
Serinah Kingsley

Members Removed

Members Removed

Removed by Church

James Edward Anderson
Orson Wayne Watson
Kevin Ard
Raphael Astorga
Morgaan Jessell
Jaime Leigh Barnard
Sarah Jane Braverman
Peter Bross
Arlen Brown
Katie Bruner
Isabella Collins Bulkeley
Nancy Mella Bulkeley
Thomas Bulkeley
Laurence Carson
Kevin Patrick Casey
Inn Inn Chen
Erin Marie Claywell
Pamela Ann Correll
Mahalia Consuella Damm
Jahnel Davis
Carrie Luree Dvorak
Anthony Dayton Estes
Donna Ruth Evans
Katherine Leahy
MaryKate Farber
Carrie Michele Fowle
Harry Hanson
Laura Kay Hughes
Robert Edward Jr. Hughes
Catherine Elizabeth Hyden
Darren Edward Ireland
Alexandra Sage Kennedy
Lauren Kramer
Daniel Makhholm
Kory Markel
Paula Cohan Markel
Eleanor Helene Mason
Josephine Mason-Wolfe
Daniel McNamee
Jose Maria Mendez
Jessica Metz

Anh Duy Nguyen
Ann Langreth Orr
James Orr
Sarah Stratton Parker
Allyson Leigh Pyers
Diane Raymond
Sarah Gwyneth Ross
Deborah Schwartz
Ellen Elizabeth Simmons
Matthew Simmons
Madeline Jo Sorenson
Laura Spooner-Fleming
Brittany Elizabeth Spurlin
Alina Carol Tomeh
Gregory Steven Jr. Whitt

Removed by Letter of Transfer

Jessica Acosta
Phillip Harris
Laura Harris

Removed by Request

Alice Andrus
Gordon Postill
Ramona Leibnitz
Crystal Love

Removed by Death

Nan Tull
David King
Nancy Marttila
Elinor Yeo
Anna Yoder
Thalia Metalides
Janet Doggett
Steve Antrasian
Mary Kendrick

**Total Old South
Membership
as of 12/31/2023:
552 Individuals**

Ministers, Staff and Officers

John M. Edgerton, *Senior Minister*
Ashley J. Popperson, *Associate Minister*
Rachel J. Barton, *Assistant Minister and Nancy S. Taylor Fellow*
Donald A. Wells, *Theologian in Residence*
June R. Cooper, *Theologian in the City*
David Story, *Wedding Minister*
Ken Orth, *Healing Worship Minister*
Madison Chau, *Seminary Fellow*
James W. Crawford, *Senior Minister Emeritus*
Nancy S. Taylor, *Senior Minister Emeritus*

Mitchell Crawford, *Minister of Music*
George Sargeant, *Associate Organist & Choirmaster*
Tim Harbold, *Director, Gospel Choir*
Peter Coulombe, *Director, Old South Ringers*

Kate Nintcheu, *Director, Children & Family Ministries*
Summer Marsh, *Director, Old South Preschool*
Aislin Kate Anderson, *Children's Choir Director*

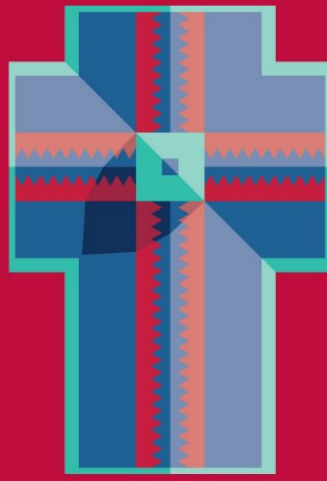
John Braught, *Director of Operations*
Amelia Gerrard, *Church Administrator*
Rémy Hatfield-Gardner, *Administrative Assistant*
Kathleen Steen, *Staff Accountant*
Emily Ross, *Archivist*
Karen Hand, *Wedding Coordinator*

Jamie Garuti Sage, *Multimedia Director*
Rémy Hatfield-Gardner and William Wei, *Livestream Production Assistants*
Ava Welling, *Audio Technician*

Elias Perez, *Senior Sexton*
Ozo Nwodo, Richard Serebour, and David Brode, *Sextons*

Corey Spence, *Weekday Receptionist*
Shirley Bivins, Shelia Randolph,
and George Sargeant, *Evening & Weekend Receptionists*

Phil Stern, *Moderator*
Rob Gabler, *Clerk*
Bill Bulkeley, *Treasurer*
Debby Kuenstner, *Chair, Board of Trustees*
Kate Silfen, *Historian*
Christine Del Favero and Tony Rich, *Co-Senior Deacons*
Vicki Newman, *Pledge Secretary*



OLD
SOUTH
CHURCH
in BOSTON

645 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116