

The Church of the Common Ground

Annual Council Ministry Report

This past year has been a special time of spiritual growth for Common Ground parishioners and ministry. This amazing group of people has found gifts untold and previously undiscovered and in doing so come to the acknowledgement that they are indeed “the church”. And what a church!

The faithful parishioners have heard and responded to God’s call to service, to supporting one another in prayer and deeds, to profound worship and to quiet listening for His voice and guidance.

At the annual Homeless Requiem at the Cathedral of St. Philip Common Ground operates a foot clinic for those attending. Here feet are washed, massaged, tended and covered with fresh socks. Fellowship and relationships are equally important features. Parishioners often take part in the service as well.

In keeping with the tradition of the past few years we partnered with St. Anne’s on a habitat build offering physical and pastoral support. Our partnerships also extend to Georgia State students in providing a foot clinic to veterans as part of an observance of Veterans Day.

Twice weekly we gather for Morning Prayer in the courtyard of Central Presbyterian Church to share fellowship, coffee, and prayer offerings. The liturgy for this service is written by a different parishioner each month. While there is a core group always present we are an open place to anyone who might be there needing a human connection. Even if they don’t stay individuals will often confidently leave their cares and burdens for us to raise up in prayer. These things will often reach us by text as well. We receive them all to this holy and sacred space.

Our week is full with two foot clinics outside in warm weather at Central Pres and St. Luke's and one inside at the Gateway Center in winter. This is a time not only to minister to the all important feet of those on the streets but a time of fellowship and practicing being a presence.

We continue with a Bible Study in Woodruff Park on Wednesday afternoons. In significant times of the church calendar such as Lent different presenters will bring special programs of study.

Parishes around the diocese make every Sunday service in Woodruff Park a celebration and a feast day. They come to visit us at our church bringing lunches and beautiful relationships. With 75 or more people at worship we raise a joyful noise of praise.

This past Easter saw our first ever Easter Vigil in Woodruff Park and it was indeed glorious.

August brought the start of our vicar's, the Rev. Mary Wetzel, sabbatical and a time of spiritual journey for the entire parish. While Mary found paths of seeking in Michigan, The Camino de Santiago, and Ireland we also went on pilgrimage here at home. The Monastery of the Holy Spirit was our first destination followed by Kanuga Conference Center and finally the Memorial Pilgrimage to Macon, GA to recognize and lift to martyrdom victims of lynching in that area. With all three journeys parishioners had decided they wanted the theme to be one of encountering God on the way and listening for His still voice.

This is a robust and vibrant worshipping community dedicated to heeding God's call to be His hands and feet in our broken world. We truly see the face of God in every person we meet and strive to make God known to others through us. All of this is lived out on the open streets of Atlanta-the place we call home.