

The Village Chapel of Bald Head Island 2020 Year End Report

Storms are always a part of island life, but 2020 brought an unexpected storm of epic proportions. Like most religious organizations, The Village Chapel had no crisis plan for a pandemic. Innovation and improvisation were key as we learned that “normal” is often transitory.

The Chapel staff including Pattie Caban, Jeannie Rodbell, Cindy Sellers and Brewse Barnard proved invaluable in managing Chapel operations and supporting the Chapel Board of Trustees. We are incredibly fortunate to have such a dedicated, capable, and caring team. Also, several island service providers and contractors made an enormous difference to the Chapel by providing services at little or no cost. Most prefer to remain anonymous, but their kindness deserves recognition. The 2020 story would be grim without the generosity of these friends.

The Chapel Board of Trustees found new ways to minister to others, support the staff, and maintain the Chapel’s financial security. Each adapted his or her committee to address current needs, and all members embraced new and unexpected roles. The Chapel Board of Trustees is, in every sense, a working board. This was never more evident than in 2020. I encourage you to read each committee chair’s year-end report. A few noteworthy items regarding Chapel Trustee committees are below.

- The Summer 2020 Committee, made up of select Trustees, came together in May to address Chapel needs and responsibilities during the pandemic. This group exhaustively researched and discussed the issues and made recommendations to the Executive Committee based on the latest information. Members included Mary Jo Walker (President) Gayle Sanders (Recording Secretary and Property Manager), Emily Hill (Worship), Elizabeth Kinney (Altar Guild), Mary Mears (Hospitality), Debbie Ward (Wedding Guild), and Pattie Caban (Office Administrator.)
- The Worship Committee, chaired by Emily Hill, also a member of the Executive Committee, created a variety of meaningful experiences including virtual services, pre-recorded messages, drive through services, special prayers and music just to name a few. Emily and her committee devoted countless hours to research, planning and execution. Emily’s commitment to meaningful, spiritual, and safe worship experiences ensured our Chapel family experienced God’s love and the love of our community.
- The Wedding Guild, under Debbie Ward’s guidance, addressed the new challenges with a commitment to helping couples create a joyous event while keeping everyone safe. This involved developing new rules and guidelines as well as increased communication with brides and planners. Debbie and her dedicated committee members are an important part of Chapel life. They ensure weddings run smoothly and extend a warm welcome to wedding parties and guests.

- Our Treasurer, Investment Committee Chair and Executive Committee member, David Beam, faced significant challenges while always keeping the Chapel Mission and Vision at the forefront. Along with unexpected office flood expenses in Q1, revenue expectations were greatly reduced. David instituted cost cutting measures and worked closely with staff to manage cash flow and to reduce expenses. Because of David's efforts and the amazing generosity of Chapel supporters, no Endowment or Reserve funds were used in 2020.
- Ben Comer and the Technology and Process Improvement Committee successfully met a myriad of challenges in 2020. These included infrastructure failures, finding new means for delivering services, budget constraints, and assisting staff while working remotely. Committee members also provided instrumental aid in the website upgrade. The can-do attitude of this group provided much reassurance.
- Gayle Sanders, our Recording Secretary, also served on the Executive Committee and joined the Building and Grounds team as the on-island property manager for the Chapel and Minister's condo. Her oversight helped reduce costs while maintaining the integrity of Chapel properties. The Summer 2020 Committee benefited immensely from Gayle's insights and thoughtful approach to problems.
- Sherry Roese and her Outreach Committee kept us grounded in our responsibility to the least, last, and lost. They continued the Chapel's traditional efforts of Bible studies, prayer requests, and support for island neighbors while also developing new and meaningful ways to address the catastrophic effects of the pandemic on marginalized communities in Brunswick County.
- The Hospitality Committee, chaired by Mary Mears, pivoted dramatically in 2020. Mary was a key member of the Summer 2020 Committee and instrumental in planning and addressing community concerns. A talented musician, Mary also participated in outdoor services and assisted with drive-through communions.
- Kevin Arata and his Communications Committee's responsibilities increased tenfold. He kept our Chapel family apprised of plans and activities as well as often filming, producing and editing virtual services. In addition, the Communications Committee produced four newsletters and coordinated a much-needed update of the Chapel's website. Kevin's unwavering commitment to the Chapel inspires us all.
- Building and Grounds, chaired by Keith Bradley, is always a difficult position, and especially so in 2020. The new and unexpected challenges began with the office flood and its significant associated expenses. Financial constraints related to the pandemic required Keith and his group to literally roll up their sleeves and do much of the

maintenance and landscaping work themselves. Tough times call for tough people. Keith and his committee fit that description well.

- Elizabeth Kinney and the Altar Guild also experienced great change, and each challenge was met with Elizabeth's well-known grace and grit. Additionally, thanks to this committee, our Chapel remains a beautiful source of solace and refuge for residents and visitors. Because of Elizabeth's foresight, the Chapel now has single serve communion cups, allowing the Chapel to provide a much welcome worship experience.

As we begin a new year, The Village Chapel Board of Trustees may yearn for what was lost in 2020, but we celebrate the achievements and take hope in the future. In the words of the Psalmist, "Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning."

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jo Walker
January 20, 2021