

Holy Family Episcopal Church

Laurel Springs, New Jersey

Annual Report 2021

<https://holyfamilynj.org>

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is simple: Love God, Love One Another, and journey together as open and humble students embracing all as God's One Holy Family.

Priest's Report

Dear Friends in Christ,

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the greatest of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord, our God, the Lord is One; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (The scribe)." When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the Kingdom of God." (Mark 12:28-34)

Our calling as Christians here at Holy Family is help further the Kingdom of God by following the life, teachings and example of Jesus Christ. Everything we do needs to match this mission both in our personal lives and our communal life at Church. We are to come and see who Jesus is; learn from his life and teachings; live our lives accordingly, and share the Good News with others!

Looking over the past six months, it has been my privilege and honor to be called as your Priest-in-Charge this past summer. With the challenges we still face, it has been a true blessing to have been able to share in-person services with you upon my starting with you in July. My first order of ministry was to get to know each one of you by meeting with most of you one-on-one. The one thing I was struck by was that those who were still here at Holy Family shared a passion for leadership and outreach. It has been a delight to harness and focus that energy into a shared calling to live out the kingdom of God through our revitalized liturgy, our creative outreach, and our spreading of the good news through an intentional social media program.

For Worship, we still have one service at 9:30 with our average Sunday attendance holding steady at 30 people per Sunday Service. If we hit over 40, we will likely increase our service offerings to continue to keep reasonable "space" between families. I would like to begin looking at a number of exciting options in the coming year, but I must temper in-person events with the current pandemic sensitive environment.

For continued focus on Discipleship, we have offered an in-person God Talk program which averages about 9 attendees weekly. The program is also in webinar format which is available on You-Tube for those who can't physically attend.

The staff we brought on to grow our church and our efforts is "top notch" and continues to push communication to all our parishioners and beyond. We now have weekly inclusive bulletins being created by Joan Sanders. We have a sexton who is now taking on duties as our Office Manager and Ms. Nicole Juliano has been amazing in both roles.

Bringing in Ms. Betsy Murphy has given us a new website, a weekly newsletter and an intentional daily social media presence across multiple platforms.

Deacon Naomi Cressman has added a personalized liturgical presence, as well as routine efforts in visiting our sick and homebound.

The staff we have are focused and highly skilled and work within the current budget forded us by your generous weekly support. We will continue to connect our church with the world and keeping Christ first in all we do.

Along with our staff, our church leadership under our Senior Warden, Ms. Cathy Brackin continues to strengthen our outreach efforts both old and new. Our focus this year has been on strengthening our current outreach projects and to begin reaching out, using Try Tank methods, to our neighbors here in Laurel Springs and to the surrounding area.

Staff and volunteers continue to be our shining light here at Holy Family. We continue to have a large portion of our congregants involved in the many church activities here. I would like to thank the many volunteers who give their time and efforts for us all. I would like to thank Ms. Cathy Brackin, Ms. Madeline Juliano, Ms. Linda Macklin, Ms. Chris Botto, Mr. Roland and Ms. Annmarie Cranford, Ms. Gerry Schiavo and Mr. Bob Frederick for all they do for us on a weekly basis. Involvement here at Holy Family keeps our community vibrant and relevant.

Our Finances were strong and stable this year under our Treasurer Mr. Steve Chapman, enabling us to hire the staff and to continue to keep the church functioning at high standards. We first focused on tying up loose ends as we installed our bell and are also replacing our signage out front. We ask for your continued help and support in time, treasure, and talent as we continue to grow our initiatives outside the church. Thanks to all of you for your continued financial support during these challenging times!

Our Parish life has been kept at a minimum during this time to limit possible exposure to COVID. We have had in-person Coffee hour within strict confines after church each week. We would like to expand our time together but that is subject to our current environment, which is monitored weekly.

Our property is in good hands as we continue to keep things looking and running well. We will continue to keep things running smoothly and will look to spruce things up within the confines of our budget.

We continue to face challenges, as all churches do, but we will continue to live out our Christian calling bringing God's grace to a needy and broken world. It has been my joy to be your priest. It certainly has been, and will continue to be, a collaborative effort in living into the Gospel together here at Holy Family, in our neighborhoods and into the world. I can't wait to see what Christ is calling us to become this coming year together! We have been truly blessed, and it is our task to provide for those who are yet to come to meet us at Holy Family. (Truly, the Lord has blessed us in this place, may we continue to provide blessings and grace to those who are to come.)

With warmest regards, Your Faithful Servant, Fr. Carmen

Holy Family Episcopal Church Statistics 2021

Virtual:

Total Saturday/Sunday Attendance 1,399

All Other Services Attendance 3,314

Total Number of Daily Offices-Sunday 60

Total Number of Daily Offices -Weekday 230

In-Person:

Total Sunday Attendance 679

All Other Services Attendance 237

Total Receiving Holy Eucharist 703

Total Number of Sunday Holy Eucharists 22

Total Number of Weekday Holy Eucharists 2

Total Number of Private Holy Eucharists 12

Total Number of Daily Offices- Sunday 2

Total Number of Daily Offices- Weekday 0

Marriages 1

Burials 1

Senior Warden Report

The year 2021 was an amazing journey for Holy Family. We started off the year separated from one another, cut off from the Eucharist, and exiled from our building. Nevertheless, Holy Family persisted. We continued our Outreach ministries. Messy Church pivoted to “Messy Church in a Bag” delivered to our families. The ladies even held a flower planting event.

My prayers were answered when God sent the Rev. Carmen Viola to us. With the support of the vestry, we called Carmen as our priest in charge. Deacon Naomi Cressman soon joined our clergy team.

On July 18, 2021, we returned to in-person worship. The joy was palpable! I could not be more pleased and proud of our accomplishments during the last six months of the year. To name a few:

Weekly in-person Holy Eucharist;

Strong spiritual leadership in Carmen and Naomi;

Weekly “God Talk” discussion group;

In-person Messy Church;

Shut-ins are being visited;

Hiring of a paid communications person, Betsy Murphy;

Launch of our new website: www.HolyFamilyNJ.org;

Weekly email newsletter to keep all parishioners informed;

Daily social media postings by Betsy, to brand our church and create engagement;

Nicole Juliano is now the office manager (in addition to sexton), keeping all the moving parts running smoothly;

Return of Bob Frederick as our organist.

Participation in the Try Tank Church Innovation Lab;

Creation of teams, who work behind the scenes and report to the vestry, rather than doing everything as a committee of the whole.

Election of Deacon Naomi and Linda Macklin to the Bishop Search Committee;

Installation of the St. John's bell.

Entered into contract for new sign in front of building.

Vestry meetings that are open to all.

During our shut down, I was very concerned about whether we would have a church to which to return. I am thrilled that almost all of our regular attendees have come back.

I am thankful for the support of so many people including Carmen and Naomi, the vestry, Madeline as clerk, Steve as Treasurer, Nicole, Betsy, and all the parishioners of our one Holy Family.

Respectfully submitted:
Cathy Brackin

Mission and Ministry

Episcopal Church Women

The ECW did not meet often in 2021 due to pandemic considerations. We are looking forward to more opportunities in 2022. In September we met to plan the "Welcome Back" event. And in November we made advent wreath pins at a coffee hour. In December the mitten tree was up and was very successful. These items were given to The Angels Community Outreach in Pitman. We also are contributing 6 pajamas and books for Kid's Alley's Valentine event. In December, 12 of us met to make 200 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for St. Paul's Camden Project Interaction. This is always fun. The district ECW meetings were held on Zoom. The October meeting was held in person here. We hope to do more in the coming year.

Chris Botto

Outreach

In 2021 our monthly distribution program started with 14 people coming on the third Saturday of the month to receive a bag. We are up 20 presently, which is still modified from pre-pandemic. In the bag are dish and laundry detergent, a bar of soap, shampoo, paper towels, toilet tissue, tissues, and toothpaste. This program works with teams of two that each do two months per year. We are currently short one team. If there are two people that would like to team up and do this it would be wonderful. Also, another way to help is to donate goods. This helps to defray cost and makes the shopping trips easier also. There are also three food distributions per year, those being Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. Usually, we prepare ten or eleven bags. Last year we started collecting supermarket gift cards to be sent to our recipients. This worked very well. A huge "thank you" to everyone that contributed. Thank you to all who participated and donated to make these ministries work.

Chris Botto

Messy Church Report

In February we delivered “Messy Church in a Bag” to the doorsteps of our families. The theme was the Good Samaritan and the bags came in time for Valentine’s Day. We published our first YouTube video, a puppet show of Bob the Banana, a mugging victim, who was aided by Sam the Orange. Crafts included push pin heart plaques, helping hand coupons, “love your neighbor” band-aids, and fabric covered neighbor houses. Stick puppets were provided so the families could act out the parable. A board game, story book, and snack rounded out the Messy Church experience.

Another set of bags went out before Holy Week. We created a set of “resurrection eggs” for each family. Plastic eggs were filled with objects symbolizing the events of Holy Week and Easter. An instructional video was prepared to lead the families through the egg activity. They also received supplies to assemble a resurrection garden. Other crafts included butterflies, scripture eggs, and a coffee filter Easter sunrise. A BINGO game and Easter treats added to the fun.

On August 10, Messy Church returned to an in-person gathering. Abraham and Sarah visited and shared their story. Crafts included yarn stars, I Spy bottles, and salt paint names. We made sand pudding and shared a hot dog dinner. Three bags were sent home for families who were unable to join us.

“Happy Birthday, Jesus” was the theme for our December 11 gathering. We made paper nativities, yarn sheep, stuffed Jesus babies in mangers, and Nutter Butter Baby Jesus cupcakes. Everyone enjoyed the “Crazy for Creches” activity, filling out a questionnaire that required our families to search and discover what was unique about each nativity scene.

Our attendance in 2021 was as follows:

15 children in-person
23 adults in-person

There were an additional 11 children at home who received bags only. In total, Messy Church impacted 49 individuals in 2021. A huge “thank you” to all the members of our team:

Chris Botto	Margaret Lynch	Sabrena Caby
Linda Macklin	Margaret Cavanaugh	Rich Newman
Barbie Counts	Pat Knott	Annmarie Cranford
Dcn. Naomi Cressman		

Respectfully submitted: Cathy Brackin

Try Tank Neighborhood Outreach

In 2021 we were introduced to the “The Try Tank Experimental Lab.” It is a lab for church innovation headed by the Rev. Lorenzo Lebrija, a dynamic priest from Los Angeles. Father Lorenzo has an MBA and worked in the secular business world before entering seminary. The Try Tank is sponsored by two Episcopal seminaries: Virginia Theological and General Theological.

The Try Tank carries out experiments with volunteer church partners. If the experiment fails, that’s okay. There are lessons that can be learned. If it’s a success, then the innovation can be rolled out to more churches.

We learned that Try Tank was launching an experiment called “Involving New Friends at Christmastime” (INFACT). The experiment involved using social media to spread our message and invite folks for Christmas services. We attended Zoom meetings with our experiment leader, the Rev. Ken Kroohs from North Carolina, along with many other partner churches from across the country. Upon Ken’s suggestion we did the following:

- Joined several Facebook “groups” including Laurel Springs – NJ, Lindenwold-NJ News Group, Stratford – NJ, South Jersey LGBTQA Pride.
- Over a period of several weeks, selectively shared Facebook posts with the groups, including our events for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.
- Set up a Nextdoor Business account and ran an ad for 14 days for the Christmas services. The ad had 23,600 views and 4 clicks.
- Set up a Yelp account.
- Ran a Facebook ad for 7 days. Reach was 398 with 5 clicks and 2 messages.
- Placed a sign on the front lawn advertising Christmas Eve service.
- Created new pew cards to capture contact information from guests.

Unfortunately, we had no first time guests for Christmas services. Nevertheless, I believe that we have begun to introduce Holy Family to our surrounding community and we should continue in this direction. Thank you to the Try Tank team: the Rev. Carmen Viola, Deacon Naomi Cressman, Betsy Murphy, Chris Botto, and Madeline Juliano.

Respectfully submitted:

Cathy Brackin

Halloween Hospitality

This year we had our first ever Halloween Hospitality event. Drawing inspiration from another Episcopal Church, we thought it would be fun to offer Halloween treats to the trick-or-treaters passing through our neighborhood.

We passed out bags containing candy (of course), stickers, and a slap bracelet. Chips and drinks were also offered. Our guests had the opportunity to light a candle in memory of a loved one. We collected the names of those loved ones and prayed for them at our All Saints' service. Three parents signed up to get more information about future children's events. Many folks took advantage of our awesome photo booth!

The team had a wonderful time interacting with 50 children and their families. It was a blessing to us just to connect with our community. Note for next year: have treats on hand for our dog visitors.

Many thanks to our Halloween Hospitality team: Chris Botto, Deacon Naomi, Margaret Lynch, and all those who contributed.

Respectfully submitted:

Cathy Brackin

Property Team Report

This past year the property team took a walk around the church property to decide what our needs and wants were in regard to fixing up the property. We came up with a punch list of items that need attention.

Electrical issues

1. Security lights need bulbs to be changed outside kitchen door.
2. Recessed light at the top of the stairs outside the church needs the bulb replaced.
3. Light timer for the light outside the boiler room needs to be looked at (does not work).
4. Outlet in the kitchen and in the sacristy need to be replaced. These were fixed without being replaced.

The above electrical work was completed on December 23, 2021, by Raynor for \$219.00.

Landscaping issues

1. Bushes in the front of the church need to be trimmed to a more manageable height.
2. The Japanese holly on the side of the property will be removed.
3. The blue atlas and the dogwood trees need to be trimmed.

The above landscaping work will be completed by Ryan Banksy in January 2022 for \$900.00

Sprucing up the parish hall

1. The parish hall will be getting a fresh coat of paint on the lower part of the walls and the door frames. We are going with a medium grey. This will be done by Nicole.
2. We are looking to remove old curtains and get new ones. Possibly a sheer that will give more light to the room.

Church sign

1. We received 2 proposals for a new single sided sign that will light up. SignPros was the lowest estimate of \$5,675.00. We put a deposit down and hope to schedule installation soon.

As of right now we are putting on hold the residing of the church building. General maintenance of the building and grounds have been done by Nicole.

I would like to thank the property team for all their hard work this past year.

Nicole Juliano	Barbara Matthews
Cathy Brackin	Elaine Bryan
Madeline Juliano	Roland Cranford
Sabrina Caby	

Respectfully Submitted – Nicole Juliano

Communications
Holy Family Digital Communications Annual Report

Holy Family is currently actively engaged with several forms of digital communication, including a website, weekly newsletter, Facebook and Instagram. Our website, www.holyfamilynj.org, was created on August 15, 2021, with connected email addresses. As of December 26, 2021, it is about 95% complete. The site is updated weekly.

On September 10, 2021, Holy Family's first email newsletter was sent, and since then one has been emailed each Friday. We currently send to 66 contacts. The average open rate is 51%, much higher than the average of 25%. Thank you to everyone who reads and contributes to the newsletter.

The Facebook page, HolyFamilyEpiscopalNJ was created February 6, 2021. As of July 1, 2021 there were 20 followers; as of December 11, 2021, there were 182 followers. Our current average reach is 1,392. This is Facebook's estimate of how many people see the content from our page in a day. Currently at least one post is made each day. Our Instagram page HolyFamilyNJ was created September 21, 2021 and began with 2 followers. As of December 26, 2021, we have grown to 20 followers. Our Instagram posts mirror many of our Facebook posts, and one post is made each day.

There have also been a variety of other digital connections, including sign-ups for coffee hour, a Sunday teams schedule and a google form used to help collect names for the Christmas Memorials. All the digital forms are overseen by Nicole Juliano.

Faithfully submitted,

Elizabeth S. Murphy

Liturgy Report 2021

Status and Goals

Liturgy is defined as “the church’s public worship of God.” The term is derived from Greek words for “people” and “work.” The church’s public worship of God is the work of the Christian people. The life of Christ active in the church by the Spirit is expressed through liturgy.

The unity of the members of the church in Christ is expressed most fully in liturgy. Liturgy expresses the church’s identity and mission, including the church’s calling to invite others and to serve with concern for the needs of the world. Whether the liturgy is done by many or few, it is the corporate liturgy of the whole church.

Liturgy is sacramental. Outward and visible signs, such as bread and wine, are used to express the inward and spiritual grace of God’s presence in our lives. Liturgy is a public and social event. It engages our lives and faith, our thoughts, feelings, hopes, and needs-especially our need for salvation in Christ. Liturgy includes actions and words, symbols and ritual, scriptures and liturgical texts, gestures and vestments, prayers that are spoken or sung. It is also shaped by the seasons, feasts, and fasts of the calendar of the church year and the lectionaries, for the Liturgy, is to involve the various members and ministries of the church so that all are drawn together into one living expression of divine worship. It expresses what we believe and know about God, including belief and knowledge that cannot be completely stated in words.

As part of the Episcopal Church, our Book of Common Prayer provides us with a wide variety of ways to express our worship. Here at Holy Family, we strive to fully engage and utilize this wide diversity of worship styles. We follow a rotation of Eucharistic Prayers and Rites as part of our weekly worship services. On the first Sunday of the month we use Rite 2, Eucharistic Prayer A. On the second Sunday, it is Rite 2, Eucharistic Prayer B. The third Sunday is Rite 2, Eucharistic Prayer C and the fourth Sunday is Rite 1. On months where there is a fifth Sunday, a service for healing is used.

The Prayers of the People used in our worship are based on the Church calendar and the lectionary. They reflect the needs of the community and the world. They also currently include the Diocese of NJ Cycle of Prayer to keep us connected to the wider church. I would like to acknowledge and thank Madeline Juliano for her faithful willingness to lead us in our prayers each week.

We have made a conscious effort to provide continuity and to follow the traditions of the two former parishes. When it came time to plan the All Saints, Advent and Christmas liturgies, we asked the members of Vestry about how things were done in the past. Those conversations helped shaped our worship for those special days. The same will be done as we plan for Lent and Easter. I also incorporated special liturgies for commemorations for the 20th Anniversary of 9/11 and St. Francis Day and will continue to do so.

Our music is selected from the *Hymnal 1982* and *Lift Every Voice and Sing*. These are based on the church season and the lectionary. We are very grateful to Bob Frederick for his faithful dedication to our music.

Plans for 2022 include an Instructed Eucharist and inclusion of acolytes in the service.

We are grateful to our lectors and Altar Guild members for their quiet and dedicated service that enhances our worship experiences.

If you ever have any questions or suggestions about Worship here at Holy Family, please do not hesitate to reach out to Carmen or myself.

To God be the Glory!

Respectfully Submitted,
Deacon Naomi

Deacon's Report 2021

I began my time at Holy Family in mid-September after having been at Christ Church, Riverton for seven years. As someone who doesn't like change, it was hard to leave the people who had seen me go from student, to ordinand, to Deacon. It was difficult to say goodbye to people who I had supported, and who had supported me, through joys and challenges. Most of what I learned about being a deacon came from being at Christ Church. At the same time, I was excited to come to a parish that I knew had vibrant children's and outreach ministries. One of the roles of a deacon is to move the congregation out of the church building and into the world. Holy Family already did that. It would be my responsibility to walk along side of you in the ministries you were already doing. I was also anticipating serving together with my friend and mentor, Carmen Viola. We both believed that our skills complemented each other's and hoped that we would make a good ministry team. So far, that seems to be the case.

As your deacon, one of my primary responsibilities is pastoral care. Since I arrived, I have visited the four people who are on the shut-in list at least twice. I have shared the sacrament and have anointed them with healing oil, as well as sharing news of the parish and sending greetings for the various holidays to them. My goal is to keep them connected to parish life and for them to never feel forgotten or neglected. If at anytime you or someone you know is in need of pastoral care, do not hesitate to reach out to me.

I have also enthusiastically joined the Messy Church team. One of the highlights this year of the holiday season for me was to participate in the Happy Birthday Jesus activity. Being part of the joy that filled the parish hall on that Saturday in December, with babies in highchairs, and a great-grandmother made my deacon's heart soar.

Another one of my responsibilities is to assist with liturgy planning. There is more information on that in the liturgy committee report.

Outside of the parish, my diocesan responsibilities include being a member of Diocesan Council (which is the equivalent to serving on the Diocesan Vestry) and serving on the Bishop's Search Committee. I ask for your prayers as I fulfill these responsibilities.

These continue to be challenging times. I look forward to the joys, the challenges, and the blessings that will come to Holy Family this year. I thank you for welcoming me into your lives. It is my honor and privilege to serve you as your deacon. I ask for your continued prayers as you can be assured of mine.

Faithfully submitted,

The Reverend Naomi M. Cressman, Deacon

Music Report 2021

There isn't much to report from the music portion of worship. I would like to introduce some new hymns from both our hymnals, especially Lift Every Voice and Sing. We were treated to some special music from Rebecca Conn on Christmas Eve. If anyone would like to offer either a vocal or instrumental selection during our worship service, please see Bob. Favorite hymns can also be suggested and, if appropriate for the readings or liturgical calendar I will try to use them. However, since the bulletins are made up in advance, please get your suggestions in at the beginning of the month.

Respectfully,

Bob Frederick

Altar Guild Report 2021

The Altar Guild is a group of dedicated people that prepare the altar for the Holy Eucharist, Baptisms, weddings and funerals.

The following people gave their time and talent to serve God in this lay ministry: Madeline Juliano, Nicole Juliano, Colette Mikulski, Annmarie Cranford, Sabrena Caby and Gerry Schiavo. Thank you all!

We are always glad to have new members, if anyone is interested, please contact me.

Faithfully,

Geraldine Schiavo

STAFF MEMBERS – 2022

The Reverend Carmen J Viola, Priest in Charge
The Reverend Naomi Cressman, Deacon
Robert Frederick, Organist
Nicole Juliano, Office Manager & Sexton
Elizabeth Murphy, Communications Manager
Gerry Schiavo, Altar Guild
Steve Chapman, Treasurer

THE MISSION COMMITTEE

Cathy Brackin, Senior Warden - term ends January 2022
Sabrena Caby, Junior Warden – term ends January 2023
Chris Botto – term ends 2022
Richard Newman – term ends 2022
Colette Mikulski – term ends 2023
Gerry Schiavo – term ends 2023
Barbara Matthews – term ends 2024
Elaine Bryan – term ends 2024

DELEGATES TO DIOCESAN CONVENTION 2021

<u>Delegates:</u>	Christina Botto	<u>Alternates:</u>	Nan Moore
	Steve Chapman		Elaine Bryan
	Cathy Brackin		Barbara Matthews

DEPUTIES TO CAMDEN CONVOCATION 2021

<u>Deputies:</u>	Annmarie Cranford	<u>Alternates:</u>	Margaret Lynch
	Marilyn Pereira		Madeline Juliano
	Nan Moore		Cathy Brackin

MISSION OFFICERS

Office Coordinator	Nicole Juliano
Clerk of the Mission Committee	Madeline Juliano
Property Team Lead	Nicole Juliano
Mission & Ministry Team Lead	Cathy Brackin
Outreach Team Lead	Chris Botto
Finance Team Lead	Steve Chapman
Liturgy Team Lead	Naomi Cressman