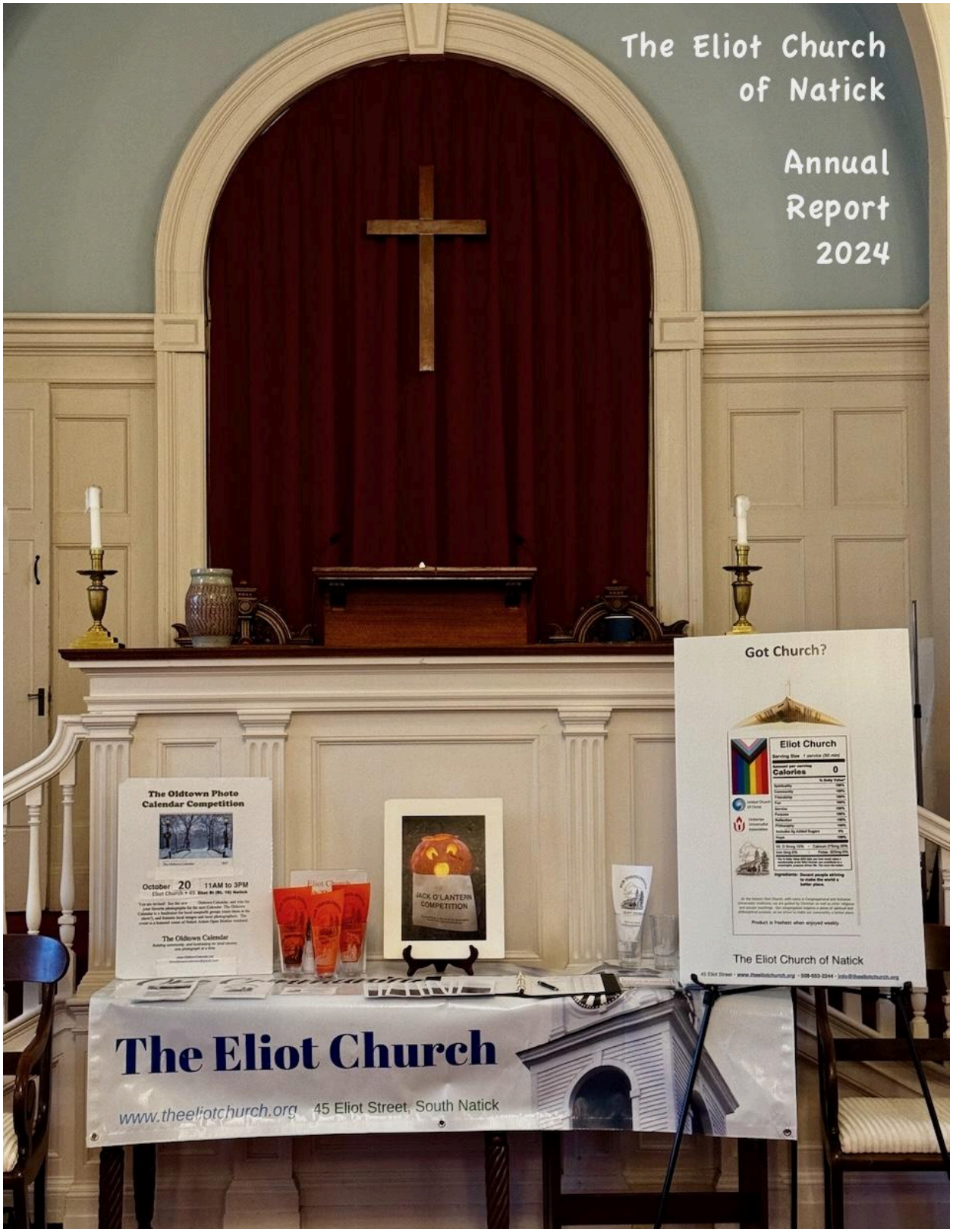
The Eliot Church
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Annual
Report
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October 20 11AM to 3PM
The Oldtowns Calendar
JACK O'LANTERN
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The Eliot Church of Natick
The Eliot Church
www.theeliotchurch.org 45 Eliot Street, South Natick

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The Eliot Church of South Natick
45 Eliot Street
Natick, Mass. 01760

January 12, 2024

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

OF

THE ELIOT CHURCH OF SOUTH NATICK, INC.

Pursuant to the bylaws of The Eliot Church, this is notice that the Annual Meeting of the Eliot Church of South Natick, Inc. will be held immediately following the morning worship service on Sunday, February 2, 2025.

The purpose of this meeting is to receive and vote upon the reports of the minister and several standing committees.

At this meeting we will also:

1. Receive and vote on the Treasurer's Report
2. Vote on the proposed budget for fiscal year 2025.

Your attendance is earnestly requested.

Carol Hildebrand, Clerk of the Church

The Eliot Church of South Natick
Annual Meeting Minutes
February 4, 2024

The Annual Meeting of the Eliot Church of South Natick, Inc. was held immediately following worship service on Sunday, February 4, 2024.

The meeting was called to order at 11:10 am.

by Rosemary Driscoll, Moderator.

Quorum was established with 31 members present.

Adam opened the meeting with a prayer.

Rosemary called for a vote to approve the minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting.
On a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously
VOTED:

To accept the minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting held on February 5, 2023

Rosemary asked if there were questions for any committees other than the Finance Committee based on the annual report and led a review of the committee reports. There were no questions.

- Rosemary noted the support the congregation has given to Family Promise Metrowest over 2023.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED:

To accept all committee reports (excluding Finance Committee).

Finance: Chris Lindquist led a discussion of church finances and the proposed budget for FY2024.

- Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of the parish, we met our budget. However, there remains a question of being able to do so going forward long term.

Chris expressed cautious optimism that 2024 income would be sufficient based on the likelihood that the Verizon lease will commence and that St. Benedict Academy is interested in extending its lease.

- There was a question regarding the length of the Verizon lease. It is 5 years with an option to renew at the end of the lease.
- There was a question about where to find the balance of the Capital Account. Chris explained where to find that number and shared the current balance.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED:

To accept the 2024 budget as presented.

There was a brief discussion of pledging for 2024, with a canvass goal of $55,000. There is a physical pledge form as well as a pledge form online and members are encouraged to pledge by whatever means they prefer. Pledging via the Vanco account is also convenient and the assistant treasurer (Jackie McBride) will help parishioners set that up as needed.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED:

To accept the proposed slate of officers and committee members submitted by the Nominating Committee.

Rosemary recruited volunteers for coffee hour and flowers and collected a suitable roster of volunteers.

Rosemary asked if there were any other questions and comments.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED:

To adjourn the 2024 Annual Meeting of the Eliot Church at 11:48 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Hildebrand
Clerk of the Church

Minister
Annual Report for 2024
Rev. Dr. Adam Tierney-Eliot

This is my 22nd report of this kind to the Eliot Church. What a year we have had! 2024 was a time of self-study and growth. We have been working on a new direction for the congregation and there are many fresh new faces in the pews. Many of the experimental worship formats, like our new "Second Sunday" worship series, are regular occurrences now. So, too, are interesting lay-led services based on the same model. We have revived initiatives from the past like Pub Theology. We have tried new things like the adult gaming group and the "Sabbath Walks".

Have all these things been successful? Well, not right out the gate Some, in fact, have faltered a bit. However, we are learning and growing as we figure out our place in this new and constantly changing world. We will keep on learning, won't we?

First, I want to thank our leaders. Rosemary, our esteemed Moderator, Bill our Treasurer, Chris our Finance Chair, and the rest of the Parish Committee have maintained a calm and steady grasp on the tiller and the till. Thanks go to the Deacons and the Worship Committee for their hard work maintaining a steady but flexible worship presence in a constantly changing landscape. There are so many people who deserve to be named and I don't have the space to do so. Thank you so much! We would not have weathered this time as well as we have without you.

Also I want to thank the staff. Carolyn DiSciullo for stepping in at the beginning of 2024 and helping us to re-organize ourselves after Felicia's death followed by a period of administrative instability. Thanks go also to Stephen who has always proven to be a good natured and flexible colleague.

Thanks go, too, to a number of "honorary" staff members who stepped up to get the many tasks and jobs done. We really came together. As I said last year–and the year before–working in a house of worship is an ancient profession. Our job descriptions are centuries--even millennia--old. It is a challenge to adapt such a system but we have. I am grateful for the willingness to change and move forward in the face of what comes our way.

Finally, thanks to all the people who have attended worship and our many events! As is always the case in a small church, there have been no "back benchers" this year.

We get quite a bit of work done and "punch over our weight" in the community. Thanks go to everyone who volunteered in one of our ministries or for one of our committees. Also, just showing up to church while maintaining good cheer about our present and future has been a source of strength for all of us. I feel blessed to have spent this year with you. What could have been a draining slog has been energizing. Thank you!

I know that I have left off so many names that could have been included. Thanks to everyone who has worked tirelessly to keep us up and running. I do, in fact, see your efforts and am very grateful for them! I urge everyone to take a look at the other reports in this collection to see the names and work of the great people who make up the leadership of this congregation.

In Memoriam:

This year we have lost Anne Powers and Roseda Warren, two great pillars of the church and dear friends to all of us. We hosted Ros' service in December, where we remembered her fondly for all she has done in our congregation and the community at large. Plans for Anne's memorial are still in development.

What Will We See in The Future?

2025 looks like another year of discernment and growth. As you know, the congregation will be going to a part-time ministry model. This will be an interesting and exciting development. Stay tuned for news early this year and we plan for our next steps!

Moderator Report
Annual Report 2024

2024, like many years, was filled with happy and sad times. We welcomed new members and many visitors; shared many holidays and Eliot traditions; worked alongside one another to keep The Eliot Church up and running. Our stalwart staff (Adam, Stephen, and Carolyn) continued to share their gifts and time with us. Unfortunately, we said goodbye to two valuable members and old friends: Anne Powers and Ros Warren.

2025 will bring a lot of new challenges to our congregation. We made the decision to move to a part-time ministry beginning in September 2025. This decision was not made quickly or rashly. With the loss of long-term tenants of Memorial Hall (first Riverbend School and more recently St. Benedict Academy), our revenues will drop significantly as of February 2025. Income from that rental represented over one-third of our operating budget. After several months unsuccessfully looking for another tenant, we opted to sell Memorial Hall. At this point, we are negotiating an offer. In addition to financial drivers, our need for a full-time minister has changed over the past years. With no ministerial intern, little demand for a Religious Education program, and reduced programming in general, it is hard to justify a full-time minister. Adam has worked with Church leaders over the past year as we have navigated this decision, for which I am very grateful.

Thanks to all of you who help in many big and small ways throughout the year. We will be facing many new challenges in the coming year—may we handle them with grace and civility.

Buildings and Grounds
Annual Report for 2024

The Church Building

The Church Building was spared any unexpected damage or deterioration in 2024. Maintenance activity was minimal. The previously deferred painting and repointing of the basement windows is included as part of the budgeted 2025 painting of the North side of the church.

An energy audit resulted in the installation of entrance door weatherstripping and a suggestion for the replacement of the basement lights with LED's.

The new Verizon installation was completed and operational in December. In conjunction with that project Verizon installed LED lights for the steeple which is, after many years of darkness, illuminated each evening. Verizon also installed a privacy screen at the exterior north (rear) side of the church to shield an HVAC unit integral to their project.

Plans to restore the function of the steeple clock were delayed by the timeline of the Verizon project. We look forward to the completion of the work during the first part of 2025.

Memorial Hall

St. Benedict Academy continued to be a very non-needy tenant with no complaints and rent paid in a timely manner. They have now moved most of their belongings out. Brad Peterson, Jose Montemayor and Bill Seymour are taking turns checking on the empty building. There is still some decision making required as to the remaining contents of the building: what do we keep and what do we leave/dispose of? This is complicated as there is uncertainty of the ownership of some items: are they ours or did Riverbend leave them with the understanding that St. Benedict could have them?

In anticipation of the sale of the building Scott Septic is in the process of connecting the building to town sewer. Also, the ejector pump in the lower level failed and has been replaced.

We are sad to see the building go as it has not only provided us with a significant revenue stream for many years, but we also have many fond memories of events that were held there: Spaghetti Suppers, Church auctions, Chili Fest, Fall Fair and White Elephant Sales (NOT!).

The Parsonage

Things were fairly quiet at the Parsonage in 2024. Stumpy's did some tree work and stump grinding early in the year due to damage from a late December storm. Jeff Meisner replaced the gas water heater, addressed some venting issues, and rerouted a few things to bring it up to code.

2024 Worship Committee Annual Report

The Worship Committee consists of the ministers and chairs or representatives of committees directly involved with worship service. Our function is to assist in planning and implementation of the worship service, including scheduling preaching dates. The committee also oversees adult education programs.

Services

Worship services were held every week, with the exception of a few holiday weeks and most summer weeks. All services in the spring were livestreamed on our YouTube channel but due to low audience levels we suspended streaming in the fall. We continued our experiments with second Sundays, which featured a service that is purposefully accessible to many ages and interest levels. Second Sunday services are made up of many short, related readings and a brief reflection. These services include many lay readers.

Adam preached in January and February on the topic of nature and living things, along with the traditional state of the church sermon on annual meeting Sunday. We had two out-of-pulpit ministers, Hank Peirce and Ciarán Osborn. On February 10 and 11 many members of the Eliot community participated in our Annual Winter Get-Away at Dexter's Inn in Sunapee, New Hampshire.

In the spring, themes included Lent and art and creativity. The Maundy Thursday Communion Service, Easter Sunrise service and Easter Sunday itself were highlights. The Worship band played for Maundy Thursday. In March, April and May we had three out-of-pulpit ministers: Matt Carriker, Julie-Ann Silberman-Bunn, and Devin Schmueli. In June we experimented with a lay-lead service on the topic of Juneteenth.

Summer is a quiet time in life at Eliot; however, we had three great lay preachers share their messages with our community during July: music director Stephen James, Bill Seymour, and Herb Crehan. Herb spearheaded our traditional Baseball Sunday on August 4, followed by a great outing to Polar Park in Worcester to watch a WooSox game.

On September 8, the church kicked off the new year of worship with Adam. We had Ingathering in mid-September, and the customary water ritual. We welcomed three out-of-pulpit ministers in October and November: Tara Humphries, Matt Carriker, and Julie-Ann Silberman-Bunn.

December was filled with the many traditions of Advent—sanctuary lighting, seasonal decorations, Advent candle lightings, the annual Christmas Pageant, Solstice Sing at Pegan Hill, and the now traditional single Christmas Eve service at 5PM. On January 5, Epiphany Sunday, we celebrated the end of the Christmas season by participating in a joint service at the First

Congregational Church in Natick, along with the Edwards Church and Plymouth Church from Framingham.

Adult Education

Three rounds of Pub Theology sessions happened this year, in March, July, and November – one more than the previous year! One was a joint event with the First Congregational Church in Natick and we're planning to connect with them again in 2025. We hope you will join us for at least one upcoming session in 2025!

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Lindquist

Music and Arts Committee
Annual Report 2024

The Eliot Church enjoys an outstanding ministry of music in our worship and outreach program. The Music and Arts committee, working with the music director and other committees, is responsible for the planning and support of these programs, both as an integral part of our worship and in outreach to the broader community.

The committee includes: Music Director Stephen James, Annie Hunsicker, Lee Manuel and Bill Seymour.

Stephen James continues to play preludes, postludes, musical interludes and hymns. These pieces were carefully planned in consultation with Rev. Adam Tierney-Eliot, or guests, in parallel with the worship theme. In addition, we enjoyed the performances from guest soloists throughout the year.

While we did not offer any community performances during 2024, we were able to host a benefit concert in March for PATH/Camp Arrowhead.

A highlight of 2024 was our choir coming back together, singing together in the Spring and the Fall.

Deacons
2024

The deacons lost a huge support this year with the passing of Roseda Warren. A deacon when I joined the church, Ros stepped away from regular deacon duties but was always available to help with memorial services, in appreciation, she told us, for the support she received when her son passed. We will miss her very much.

This year's group of deacons was a reliable, seasoned group of congregation members who represent the church with humor and grace. In addition to regular Sunday coverage, they also generously give of their time when they're needed for memorial services and wedding gatherings. We started the year off with Rosemary Driscoll, Jennifer Birch-Israeloff, Jackie McBride, Bob McBride, Lee Manuel, and Margaret Lindquist. We ended the year with the following deacons

Ellen Banthin
Jennifer Birch-Israeloff
Rosemary Driscoll
Lee Manuel
Bob McBride
Jackie McBride
Margaret Lindquist

The checklist outlining deacon duties is distributed to all the deacons periodically, or whenever a new deacon joins the group. The checklist includes but is not limited to the items below.

- Open the church doors and light the sanctuary
- Post the hymns and responsive readings on the board
- Place glasses of water on pulpit and lectern
- Set out the collection plates
- Put new candles into the candle holders if they're short and light the candles
- Greet members of the congregation and visitors and distribute orders of service
- Count and record the number of attendees
- Collect the offering

- After service, put collection plates on office desk, extinguish candles, collect orders of service, recycle dated inserts, and place the offering into an envelope in the weekly collection folder, if Jackie McBride isn't at church that day
- Straighten pews and hymnals, stock any inserts and pencils on the pew cards
- Turn out the lights
- Lock the church

The deacons also prepare and serve communion, bringing bread from home and using the gluten-free options in the church, stocking and pouring wine and juice, and washing and returning the glasses to the cabinet. The head deacon is responsible for reviewing inventory of candles and communion supplies and requesting purchase or purchasing any needed items. This has been done with our church administrator Carolyn DiSciullo, who has provided invaluable support to the deacons.

Respectfully submitted, Margaret Lindquist

Membership Committee Report 2024

- We welcomed Elizabeth Montemayor and Jose Montemayor to Eliot Church membership in January.
- Eliot folks and others gathered for Vote Forward letter writing sessions throughout the year. We wrote hundreds of letters to increase voter participation.
- The "Eliot Trifold" flyer with upcoming events was updated and printed every few months throughout the year.
- The Eliot Church Chili competition took place on April 28th. The winning contestants (Aileen Zogby, Carol Hildebrand, & Margaret Lindquist) won mediocre prizes that they no doubt display with pride.
- ECXC (Eliot Church Cross Country) fielded a team on May 11th at the New Life Furniture Bank 5k and Soles of Medfield 10k. The event raised over $20,000 for the Furniture Bank's mission to furnish the new homes of families emerging from homelessness.
- We staffed a table at Natick Days on September 8th. We had good conversations with passers-by, and passed out Eliot flyers.
- In October we sent Eliot postcards to the approximately 700 Natick households geographically close to the church. The postcard invited folks to visit and included dates for upcoming events.
- The 19th Oldtown Photo Calendar Competition took place on October 20th. 40 photographers entered over almost 100 images, and at the show 176 people cast ballots, and others came through to enjoy the show so we got close to the magic 200.
- The Eliot Jack O'Lantern Contest on October 30th was the biggest yet. Over 25 pieces of pumpkin art were entered, and we saw a lot of attendees and a lot of energy. Thanks to Bill Seymour for adding ideas and enthusiasm which resulted in new participants, and Denise Girardin who recruited local artists to also add their creativity to the mix. Emily Mannion and Blaire Peterson took home prizes in the youth category, and adult winners were Kimberly Gunner, Carol Hildebrand, Steph Smith, and Elizabeth Carol. I am sure they also have their ribbons on display.

Respectfully submitted,

Tod Dimmick, Chair

The Oldtown Calendar 2024 Report

The Eliot Church started the Oldtown Calendar Project almost twenty years ago with the objective to build community, an objective that many Eliot activities share. The project celebrates the beauty and history around us, and shines a spotlight on the creativity of our photographers, many of whom have been with us from the beginning. Others join for the first time every year.

The 19th Oldtown Photo Calendar Competition took place on October 20th. 40 photographers entered over almost 100 images, and at the show 176 people cast ballots, and others came through to enjoy the show so we got close to 200 people visiting our show. These numbers are all better than past years. We had a noticeable number of first time attendees.

The event was once again part of Natick Artists' Open Studios weekend, and we're proud to be part of this annual celebration of the arts.

The Oldtown Calendar project unites photographers, nonprofit groups, businesses, and neighbors around the common theme of "Oldtown," the name Harriet Beecher Stowe gave to South Natick in her book *Oldtown Folks*.

Every year, a common sentiment expressed by voters as they look at these gorgeous images is *"wow."* And then, as they realize that they must choose their favorites; *"This is hard."*

Calendars are sold directly by the church, by our partner nonprofit groups (Natick Service Council, Morse Institute Library, Natick Historical Society, Bacon Free Library), and by local businesses on our behalf, including supporters Charles River Coffee House and Tilly & Salvi's Bacon Street Market. Other copies are given to advertisers and winning photographers, and used for promotion.

We believe all parts of the Oldtown Calendar project support its mission to build community.

Thanks for your support of the project, and for buying your copy of the Oldtown Calendar. There are still a few copies left!

Respectfully submitted,
Tod Dimmick
Chair, Oldtown Calendar Project

Financial Summary:	
2023 Year End Balance	$10,658
2024 Year End Balance	$11,391
Gross Income	$733

Religious Education Committee
Annual Report 2024

Our Religious Education program reflects the number of families with children currently active in the church. However, we did try some new things and experienced some growth and success!

- The traditional Easter Egg hunt was held on Easter Sunday.
- In October, a number of children (church members and visitors) participated in the Jack O'Lantern contest.
- In November we ran a three-week pilot for a flexible model of Children's Religious Education. The program focused on nature and spirituality and involved a field trip each week.
- In December, we held the Annual Christmas Pageant—a great multi-generational event.
- Immediately following the Pageant, the children participated in an ornament craft project. The ornaments were given away during the Christmas Eve Service.

We thank the families and other volunteers for their efforts. In particular we thank our stalwart members; Carol Hildebrand, Anne Hunsicker, Ben Otte, and Peter Zogby. Thanks everyone for building a small but stable foundation to build on!

Eliot Service Committee Report
For 2025 Annual Report

Programming: During the previous calendar year Service Committee members coordinated numerous outreach and service programs that benefited local organizations as well as our own congregation. The 2024 Committee members were Katie Scott and Aileen Zogby, Co-Chairs, Carole Lodding and Jennifer Birch-Israloff.

- We completed our 14th year as a Support Congregation for **Family Promise Metrowest**, partnering with St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Natick to offer one week (at a time) of support for meals, groceries and fellowship to area families facing homelessness. There were 3 host weeks: March, August and October.
- Two occasions of hosting **The Open Door** community meal (March and June).
- Diaper drive for **A Place to Turn** (summer).
- Fresh produce from The Eliot Church vegetable & herb garden was delivered to **A Place to Turn** or **The Natick Service Council** food pantry by "garden ministry" volunteers (summer and fall).
- Food/supply drive for **Natick Service Council** (October) netted 131.5 lbs of goods headed to their food pantry.
- Holiday Meal/Gift giving programs of **The Natick Service Council** at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Support was given in the form of gift cards and financial donations from our congregation, and then separately we collected specific gifts (20 in total) for 2 NSC children.

Financial Support from our budget was given to:
- The Natick Service Council (local)
- A Place to Turn (regional)
- Family Promise Metrowest (regional)
- Natick Community Organic Farm's camp scholarship program (regional)
- Dignity Matters (regional)

Inreach to our own members was provided as needed for pastoral care and bereavement/funeral support. InReach is available to all, for any reason, and the congregation is encouraged to share news of members and friends they know who may benefit from a friendly call or visit, and more coordinated support such as rides to appointments or a meal-train.

Respectfully submitted, January 6, 2025
Aileen Zogby, Co-Chair

TREASURER'S REPORT

Fiscal Year 2024
(January 1 – December 31)

Account	December 31, 2023	December 31, 2024
Operating Account	$81,262	$118,640
Capital Account	$145,816	$138,319
CD – 12 month	$62,020	$64,748
Brokerage	$2,818	$2,604
Old Town Calendar	$10,658	$11,391
Total	**$302,574**	**$335,702**
Endowment Total	$724.048	$775,587
(Hunnewell Component)	$119,693	$127,386

Real Estate Assets

	Assessed Value
45 Eliot St. (Church)	$1,128,600
40 Eliot St. (Memorial Hall)	$ 996,800
14/16 Pleasant St. (Parsonage)	$ 830,600

RECONCILIATION
(Includes All Accounts)

Opening Balance **$302,574**

Plus…

Oldtown Calendar Change	$733
Revenue	$251,159
	$251,892

Less…

Operating Expenses	$202,985
Capital Expenses	$13,279
Prepaid 2024 Pledges	$2,500
	$218,764

Closing Balance **$335,702**

Since our revenues exceeded our operating expenses a total of $35,000 will be transferred from the Operating Account to the Capital Account. This is an acceptable amount of "saving" against future capital needs and reflects the continued generosity of our members during a difficult period.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Seymour
Treasurer

ASSISTANT TREASURER'S REPORT

(Excludes Old Town Calendar)

Fiscal Year 2024

January 1 – December 31, 2024

Pledge	$56,787	
Gift (non-pledge or gifts over pledged amount)	$24,858	
Subtotal (Goal was $55,000)		$81,646
Plate (Cash and Check)	$ 3,866	
Received from Endowment General	$18,750	
Hunnewell Endowment Component	$ 2,750	
Verizon	$15,000	
Memorial Hall Rental	$74,822	
Value of parsonage housing	$42,000	
Praying Indians Contribution	$ 600	
Concerts	$ 0	
Miscellaneous	$ 624	
Church Rental	$ 2,550	
Interest income	$ 8,412	
Investment change	$ 239	
Total Revenues	**$251,159**	

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie McBride
Assistant Treasurer

Stewardship (aka Canvass) Committee

Annual Report 2024

The Canvas Committee encourages financial stewardship of the Eliot Church. While pledges are not required of church members or friends, they are an important part of budget planning and the maintenance of church operations.

For 2024 we maintained the pledge goal to $55,000 and received pledges of $57,843 from 27 households. Total giving by members was $81,646 (some members give but do not pledge, some pledgers gave more than their pledge). Additionally, there was "plate" giving of $3,866.

Taking an historical look, the dollar amount of member donations had been remarkably consistent for over 12 years, declining slightly from a peak of $85,000 in both 2011 and 2012 to 2022's "normal giving" of $70,000. The giving in 2023 showed a significant drop but in 2024 there was a huge bounce upwards. While there were some "unlikely to be repeated" gifts in 2024, the lift is encouraging. There were also more households donating and more donating at a high level – additional good news.

For 2025 the Canvass campaign will begin, as it did in 2024, at Annual Meeting and will continue with a mailing and follow up phone calls following. Once again we encourage everyone to pledge, no matter the amount, as it demonstrates a commitment to the church and helps us budget. And, as always, it is a pledge that can be revisited if your financial circumstances change.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Driscoll

Bill Seymour

Endowment Annual Report
12/31/24

Brief History: The Endowment was formed in 1989 through an initiative of several church members concerned about contributing in a manner that would help ensure the long-term financial stability of Eliot Church. Since inception and through December 2024, the Fund has received a total of $349,692 in individual gifts, with $10,000 in one gift received in 2024 from a generous member. In April 2018, assets in the Louisa Hunnewell Trust were transferred from private trustees to the Church Endowment where it is being held as a separate component to honor the donor. Prior to 2009 all returns and dividends were reinvested in the growth of the Fund. In 2009, however, a distribution policy was approved and a total of $170,000 has now been distributed to the Church including $21,500 transferred to the operating fund in August 2024.

Purpose: In describing the Endowment Fund, the Eliot church Bylaws state: "It is the desire and intention of the congregation to establish a Fund to receive, manage and disburse gifts, grants and bequests to provide for future needs of the Church. Since it is the intent of the congregation of the Eliot Church in creating the Fund to set aside assets and use only the income from such assets, any amendment to this policy which involved the invasion of principal must be approved by a nine-tenths (9/1 O} vote of the members of the Eliot Church ... "

Guidelines for Use: The Endowment Committee established guidelines that, once the balance of the Fund for the three previous years exceeded an average of $225,000 the Endowment Fund would consider making distributions of up to 3.5% of the three-year moving principal average, to the Church Operating Budget on an annual basis. In 2018 the Endowment Committee approved moving to a five-year moving average to smooth out growing market volatility while still providing a stable and growing distribution to the operating fund. The five- year moving average (2020-2024) is now $687,633. The Endowment Committee intends to grow the Fund through income earned plus market appreciation, gifts, and bequests. Simultaneously, the Committee believes the Endowment Fund, a perpetual vehicle, should contribute to the current financial needs of the Church in a fiscally responsible manner while balancing the needs of current and future generations.

Current and Historical Data: The chart below depicts the five-year moving average calculated since year end 2012. The 2024 calendar year end total of $775,587 ($127,386 or 16.4% attributable to Louisa Hunnewell component) was 7.1% higher than the 2023 year-end total, providing a real return after last year's 3.35% ($21,500) distribution to operations of the five-year moving average.

Year End	Balance	5 Year Average	Annual Distribution	Cumulative
12/31/12	$223,448			
12/31/13	$298,566		$16,500 All Prior Years	
12/31/14	$321.852		$8,500	$25,000
12/31/15	$322,427		$10,000	$35,000
12/31/16	$351,571	$303,523	$10,000	$45,000
12/31/17	$400,522	$338,988	$11,000	$56,000
12/31/18	$465,572	$372,274	$12,000	$68,000
12/31/19	$540,842	$416,186	$13,000	$81,000
12/31/20	$600,661	$471,834	$14,000	$95,000
12/31/21	$700,177	$531,554	$16,000	$111,000
12/31/22	$637,683	$588,987	$18,000	$129,000
12/31/23	$724,048	$640,355	$19,500	$148,500
12/31/24	$775,587	$687,631	$21,500	$170,000

The endowment committee is proposing a distribution of $23,500 from endowment this year (pro-rata between the two components) which amounts to 3.42% of the five-year moving average or a slightly higher percentage distribution than last year. This represents a 9.3% increase over last year's dollar distribution and is above this year's anticipated inflation rate.

The Endowment assets are custodied at Vanguard and invested in low cost, no-load mutual funds in a balanced manner with a long-term preference for equities (common stocks) given their superior long-term returns to bonds and cash. There are no custodial or investment management fees, the absence of which adds to the Endowment's long-term return. There is a strong liquidity position given Eliot's transition to a part-time ministry and ongoing strategic planning.

Initiatives: The Endowment Committee has adopted the following initiatives. First the Committee has formally recommended, and the Parish Committee has approved, that communication to the members about, and solicitation of donations for the Endowment Fund, should be a responsibility of the Parish Committee and the Canvas Committee. Second, the Committee has endorsed a policy of active and transparent communication to Church members about the existence, purpose, policies of the Endowment. Third, the Committee has endorsed making available to donors' multiple avenues of donation, including pledges, gifts, and bequests, both restricted and unrestricted, subject to the limitations set forth in the Bylaws.

The Endowment Committee would also like to recognize the following members and families as:

FOUNDATION AND SUSTAINING DONORS:

Hunnewell Family
Robert and Joan Brack
H. Burton and Anne L. Powers
Augie and William L. Chase

Respectfully Submitted
John Wilkins, Chairman
William Seymour, Treasurer

Finance Committee
Proposed Budget Fiscal Year 2025

Below is the summarized fiscal year 2024 budget, alongside the fiscal year 2025 budget and fiscal year 2024 actuals.

Non-rental Income	**2024 Budget**	**2024 Actual**	**2025 Budget**
Pledge, Capital, and Gift Income	$55,000	$81,646	$60,000
Plate	$3,000	$3,766	$3,000
Endowment Distribution	$17,931	$18,750	$23,500
Hunnewell Endowment	$3,569	$2,750	
Functions/Events	$0	$0	$0
Concerts	$750	$0	$750
Praying Indians Contribution	$400	$600	$400
Interest	$5,000	$8,412	$4,000
Investment Change		$239	
Misc.	$0	$624	$0
Income Subtotal	**$85,650**	**$116,787**	**$91,650**
Rental Income	**$115,000**	**$134,372**	**$54,000**
Memorial Hall Rental	$73,000	$74,822	$12,000
Cell Tower	$15,000	$15,000	$30,000
Parsonage Allowance	$42,000	$42,000	$42,000
Event Church/Hall Rental	$0	2550	$0
Rental Subtotal	**$130,000**	**$134,372**	**$84,000**
Total Income	**$215,650**	**$251,159**	**$175,650**
Expenses			
General and Administrative	$10,000	$3,807	$4,000
Institutional	$12,300	$12,834	$14,000

Staff	$168,000	$157,406	$158,217
Non-recurring Unusual	$0	$0	$6,000
Building and Grounds Operating	$24,000	$24,624	$21,700
Religious Education	$4,213	$159	$1,350
Music	$3,100	$1,050	$3,090
Service	$2,000	$2,000	$2,000
Membership	$1,100	$1,103	$800
Operating Expense	**$224,713**	**$202,984**	**$211,157**
Operating Income Less Operating Expense	**-$9,063**	**$48,175**	**-$35,507**
Contribution to Capital Account	**$20,000**	**$35,000**	**$20,000**
Net Difference	**-$29,063**	**$13,175**	**-$55,507**
Capital Expenses	**2024 Budget**	**2024 Actual**	**2025 Budget**
Capital Account Balance	**$145,816**	**$145,816**	**$173,899**
Clock controller installation	$1,800		$2,200
Replace Church Basement Doors and Frame			
Window repair/re-pointing			
parsonage water heater		$2,529.00	
Parsonage Painting	$10,000	$10,750.00	
Church Painting (North Side)			$14,500
Connect 40 Eliot to sewer			$15,000
Memorial Hall Ejector Pump			$3,200
Total Capital Expenses	**$11,800**	**$13,279**	**$34,900**

Finance 2024 Summary

Commentary:
In 2024, thanks to the ongoing generosity of our members, The Eliot Church achieved a net positive balance for the year. It was, however, the last year of our historically normal rental income for the church.

In the coming year, we anticipate rental income reductions as a result of the potential sale of Memorial Hall, the proceeds from which will provide additional investment income in perpetuity, but which will fall significantly short of the income previously achieved through rent. We also will begin to see a small reduction in annual costs as the result of a move to part-time ministry at the end of 2025.

Income:

Our income exceeded expenses by $48,875 in 2024. This outcome was due both to better-than-anticipated income and somewhat lower-than-expected costs. We exceeded our pledge goal of $55,000 by $2,843. We also received nearly $25,000 in non-pledge gifts or gifts above pledged amounts.

Verizon honored its contract and began paying rent on the steeple tower in July, yielding $15,000 in income. St. Benedict Classical Academy completed the last full year of its lease on Memorial Hall and will pay for two more months through February in 2025 before their agreement with us concludes.

As a result of this year's positive balance, the budget proposal recommends that we contribute $35,000 to our capital budget against future capital expenses, including upcoming costs related to making Memorial Hall suitable for sale (including connecting to town septic), while retaining the remainder for use in 2025 to help close any gap in income.

Expense:

Overall operating expenses were lower than expected due to somewhat reduced staff time and unused committee operations budgets.

Looking Forward:

For 2025, our endowment will contribute an increased amount of $23,500, with 16.4% of that coming from the Louisa Hunnewell portion. We are once again grateful to the Endowment Committee for their excellent stewardship of this fund. Noting that our pledge-plus-gift totals have exceeded our budgeted amounts for each of the past five years, we have increased that line item by $5,000 to $60,000 for the coming year. The Finance Committee still feels that we cannot count on extraordinary gifts each year, but we want the budgeted amount to better reflect recent reality.

The loss of a tenant for Memorial Hall creates approximately a $70,000 decrease in annual income.

To help close this gap, the church will be moving to a part-time minister as of September 2025. This change will not have a dramatic impact on expenses in 2025 but will help the church remain sustainable in the following years.

We are also in negotiations to sell Memorial Hall. Should that purchase go through at the current offer of $725,000, the church will net approximately $680,000. These proceeds would be added to the church endowment, with a percentage of the investment income (the percentage varies each year depending on a rolling average of investment results) being used to offset the operating expenses of the church. Clearly this investment income will not replicate past rental income, though it will help provide some long-term stability.

Should the current purchase offer fall through, we will pursue additional offers as well as potential tenants. During the course of that search process, buildings and grounds expenses will likely increase beyond budgeted amounts, as the church would be responsible for utility and regular maintenance costs related to Memorial Hall that in the past have been paid by our tenants.

The finance committee deeply appreciates the assistance and thoughtfulness of the staff, other committee members, and membership over the past year of dramatic change for the Eliot Church, and we look forward to their continued collaboration as we navigate 2025 and beyond.

Respectfully submitted,
The Eliot Church Finance Committee
Chris Lindquist (Chair), Jennifer Dimmick, Nora Field, and John Wilkins

THE ELIOT CHURCH OF NATICK

Nominations for Officers and Committee Members, and Committee List

Elected members' names are followed by a term - such as "(2026)". Terms are 2 years unless otherwise noted, and finish at the end of the year specified. Appointed members' names are not followed by a term.

Moderator, Rosemary Driscoll (2026)
Treasurer, Bill Seymour (2025)
Clerk, Carol Hildebrand (2025)
Assistant Treasurer, Jackie McBride (2026)

Parish Committee
B & G Chair, Rotating
Finance Chair, Chris Lindquist (2026)
Membership Chair, Tod Dimmick (2025)
RE Chair, Rotating
Service Chair, Rotating
Worship, Margaret Lindquist (2026)
Member at Large, Jose Montemayor (2026)
Member at Large, Regina Wolf Fritz (2026)

Buildings and Grounds
Brad Peterson (2025)
Lee Manuel, Parsonage (2026)
Sam Wolman, Church Building (2025)
Landscaping Sub-Committee
Carol Hildebrand
Carole Lodding
Aileen Zogby

Deacons
Ellen Banthin (2027)
Rosemary Driscoll (2026)
Lee Manuel (2026)
Margaret Lindquist (2026)
Bob McBride (2026)
Jackie McBride (2026)
Jen Israeloff (2025)

Endowment (Term of 4 years)
Ben Otte, (2026)
Jennifer Dimmick (2028)
David Lodding (2025)
John Wilkins, Chair (2027)

Finance
John Wilkins (2025)
Jennifer Dimmick (2026)
Chris Lindquist, Chair (2026)
Nora Field (2025)

Membership
Tod Dimmick, Chair (2025)
Bob McBride (2025)
Open

Music Committee
Lee Manuel
Annie Otte, Chair (2026)
Bill Seymour
Stephen James, Music Director (ex-officio)

Oldtown Calendar
Tod Dimmick

Nominating
Rosemary Driscoll
Lee Manuel
Tod Dimmick

Religious Education
Carol Hildebrand (2026)
Annie Otte, (2025)
Open

Service
Carole Lodding, (2025)
Elizabeth Montemayor (2026)
Aileen Zogby (2026)
Katie Scott (2025)

Worship
Music & Arts, Annie Otte (co-chair)
Deacons, Margaret Lindquist (co-chair)