



ST. LUKE IN THE FIELDS  
487 HUDSON STREET NYC 10014

# Candidate Statements for Warden & Vestry Elections 2024

MINISTRY  
HOSPITALITY  
STEWARDSHIP



WELCOME TO  
ST. LUKE  
IN THE FIELDS

## About Warden & Vestry Elections

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For the warden elections for 2024, parishioners will be asked to elect one candidate for a 2 year term.

For the vestry elections, parishioners will be asked to elect 4 candidates total: 3 to fulfill 3 year terms, and 1 to fill a vacant seat.

Candidates' statements and videos will also be posted on St. Luke's website.

There will be a special opportunity to meet and greet candidates at coffee hours on Sundays January 7 and 14, 2024. The Annual Parish Meeting and announcement of election results will be on Sunday, February 4, 2024.

Elections this year will once again be held online. Election packets will be sent to parishioners in good standing via email and snail mail. Please look for your ballot on or around January 9. If you have any questions about the elections, please contact the Parish Office ([asyedullah@stlukeinthefields.org](mailto:asyedullah@stlukeinthefields.org) | 212.924.0562).



## Michael Cudney (*current incumbent*)

Hello, I'm Michael Cudney, and I'm currently finishing up my first term as a warden here at St Luke in the Fields. It has been a privilege to serve this wonderful faith community for the last two years. I am very grateful for all of you who have put your faith in me to help lead our congregation.

We've all heard of stewardship as giving of time, talent and treasure. For myself, I've been able to give my time having been retired for six years now, from working in the classical music business. It gives me flexibility and the opportunity to be of service at St Luke's in a number of ways. It has been only about 12 years since I first came to call this parish my spiritual home. Previously, I'd been a part of a small Episcopal church in Upper Manhattan, where I live with my husband Keith, and where we raised our now 30 year old son, Artemis.

You probably know the type of person who was first to raise their hand when there's a call for volunteers or for some special cause. I'm pretty much that person, although I must sometimes tell myself that doing too much is not always a good thing. I believe I found the right balance that allows me to serve St Luke's in ways that are balanced and fruitful. Some of the things for which I've raised my hand over the years at St Luke's include serving on the altar in several roles. I am very thankful for the opportunities to be a part of St Luke's rich Anglo Catholic liturgical tradition.

Additionally, for a number of years I've served as assistant at our weekday mass. I love its intimacy and immediacy. Over the years, I've served on committees here at St Luke's, including the nominating committee, Stewardship and the Strategic Planning Committee. I regularly attend the monthly Finance Committee meeting to gain a deeper understanding of our budget and resources. Additionally, I have regularly helped organize St Luke's presence at the annual Pride March. Currently, I also serve as one of the three appointed members to the Board of St Luke's School. I look forward to finding new ways to expand our partnership with the school community.

The wardens, along with our Treasurer, serve as the Rector's Advisory Council. We meet once a month or more often as needed to discuss the state of the parish, our resources and the aspirations to which we hope to channel those resources. It has been my pleasure to work with my fellow warden, Theresa Goldsborough, with our Treasurer David Moody, and with Mother Stacey as often as I do. The parish of Saint Luke in the Fields is blessed to have all these wonderful people as our leaders, along with all of those I serve with on the vestry.

As warden, I will also try to be available to all those of you who have questions, who want to know where we are and what we are looking forward to do. I am always open to hear what you have to say.

An important part of any leadership role is looking ahead. As warden, I hope to be able to see us fulfill our many aspirations. A secure financial footing to hand down to those who will follow us. An expansion of our outreach work, and especially in our hope of creating new space to serve even more those in our parish community, in our neighborhood, and to all those in need.

Again, I am very grateful for the opportunity to be of service for to our beloved community of St Luke's as a warden. Thank you for putting your trust in God's peace to you all.



## Bruce Goerlich (*vestry incumbent*)

*Occupation:* Retired advertising research executive

*Years at St. Luke's:* 2007 to 2019, 2022-2023

*Activities at St. Luke's:* Acolyte, Stewardship

Committee, Anti-Racism Committee and Vestry

I have a deep affection for the worship services and the community of Saint Luke's. I have had experience in many aspects of the Church over the past years and I can bring that historic knowledge to the aid of the

present. My career in advertising has given me special insight into communicating key messages that can help us reach out to the broader community.

I live with my husband, Ryan Binongo, in Kew Gardens, Queens. Ryan is a special education teacher for the culinary arts in the NYC public schools. We had our marriage blessed at Saint Luke's in 2017. I am retired from a 36-year career in advertising research. I became certified as an English as a Second Language teacher and now teach part-time in the Queens Public Library system. I am also a docent at the King Manor Museum in Jamaica. I try to play as much Mahjong as I can.



## Celina Khury-Morejan

I've been calling St. Luke's home for over 12 years, and have served as an acolyte and usher. In that time my wife and I married, started a family and we are blessed to have two wonderful children Eva, 10, and Mateo, 7. My transformation here continues as I was confirmed just last year and am watching my two children learn and grow within a supportive and welcoming community. I've felt the support of St Luke's clergy and lay membership throughout my

spiritual journey here and have always wanted to find different ways I can help.

I've held various leadership positions in the banking tech industry for nearly 25 years. In those roles I've had to make tough decisions, manage large scale investments, and lead people of diverse backgrounds and talent. If elected, I would bring my professional experience and perspective as a long time parishioner to support the church to continue serving our community for many years to come.

I love spending time with my family in and around Manhattan, rediscovering its rich history and architecture, be it finding hidden caves within Central Park or retracing where our founding fathers gathered around Wall St.



## Abby McConnell

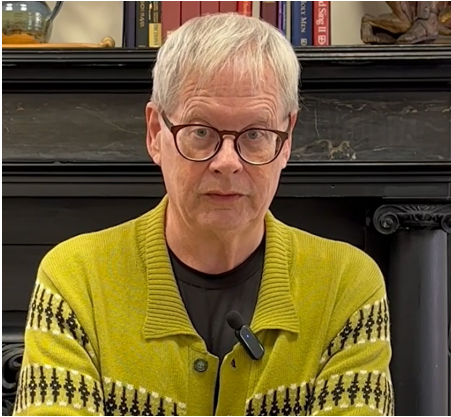
Hi, my name is Abby, and I am running for the vestry. I'm really excited at the opportunity to bring my community building skills and just my general love for St Luke's to the vestry.

Through my participation on the altar guild, the 20s30s group, and the Parish Life Committee, I've really grown my volunteer recruitment skills and my understanding of what it takes to build programs that

meet people where they're at and really meet the needs of the community. I'm really looking forward to bringing these skills to not just programming at St Luke's, but also to the outreach programs. I'm also looking forward to serving as a bridge between the parish and leadership and really making sure that parish voices are heard in decisions and people understand how decisions that are made are really going to affect them and affect their life at St Luke's and affect their spiritual life within this parish.

St Luke's has been a spiritual home to me for a little over two years now. And while two years doesn't sound like very long, the impact that this community has had on my life has been immeasurable. It has really served as a spiritual home and a place of refuge for me. I am drawn to lay leadership because I want to make sure that St Luke's can continue to be a spiritual home and a place of refuge for people for many years to come and continue to have the impact on people's lives as it had on mine. I've already found so much joy serving this community through various different roles, and I really come to see the beauty and the necessity of doing the work behind the scenes to make sure that this church and this parish runs smoothly and continue to meet the needs of the people that it serves.

I'm an avid reader and I don't care if it's an e-book, a paperback or an audio book. I come from a social work background and I do bring this lens to all of the work that I do. I like to understand how decisions are going to affect our larger structures, our community, and then of course, the individual experiences that people have within our community.

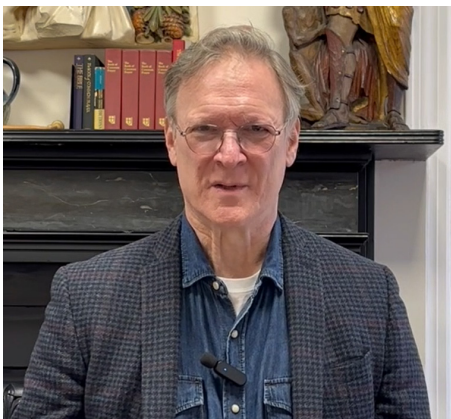


## Robert McVey

I see the role of vestry member as taking on the work of a team effort. Mutual respect in reaching decisions for the common good is the goal, and not just the common good for the parishioners of today but for those who come after. This is a ministry for the future, stewardship for the continuance of the church we love. I love it when clergy reminds us to contribute time talent and treasure to St. Luke's if we find that it is our spiritual home. It is my spiritual

home, and I want to give it good care and upkeep. To be on the vestry feels for me like a development of the joy I've felt in serving on the discernment committees I've been on for candidates for the priesthood; that of leading the prayers of the people; the meditation over the ironing in the sacristy - years of small linens; welcoming worshipers as an usher. So many tasks go into the running of a home! It's a great home, and I'm happy to be part of it.





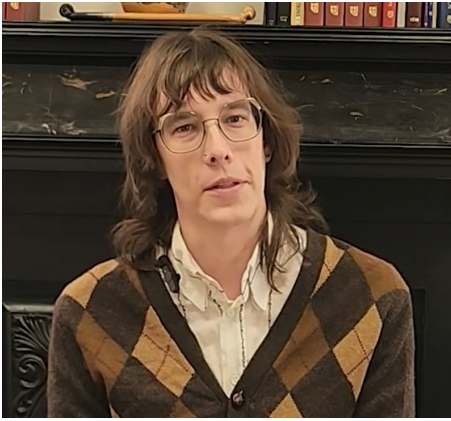
## Jack Spencer

My professional life as a mental health practitioner requires many skills, one of which, if not the most important, is *listening*. When God calls me to lay leadership in the Church, God calls the entire me. Bringing this gift to St. Luke's, I'm drawn to the first words of the *Rule of St Benedict*: 'Listen carefully ... and incline the ear of your heart.' These ancient words are a call to listen and watch for openings of the Holy Spirit in loving collegiality, coming

together in consensus, unity of purpose, creativity and even struggle. In the ongoing journey toward spiritual maturity, I hope I have grown into greater wisdom, learned to keep my views flexible, been willing to occasionally get it wrong, and remain open to simultaneously holding conflicting ideas in my mind. One of my favorite Biblical personalities ~ and with whose temperament I can identify ~ is Paul's companion, Timothy. Though he has an unfair reputation for timidity, instead, I see someone who is grounded, phlegmatic and led with empathy, supportiveness, encouragement, humility, and patience.

As to why I feel called to lay ministry at St Luke's, I turn to the words of our Baptismal Covenant, where we reaffirm our belief in the deposit of faith handed down by our forebears, "to continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in the prayers," To which we affirm, "I will, **with God's help** (emphasis mine).

I enjoy donning an apron, getting messy in the kitchen, and baking bread and cakes. I like to work but do not consider myself a workaholic. That being said, if I stay still too long, I can be quite lazy binging on Netflix and on the aforementioned cake I baked. I'm partial to ecclesiastically themed novels (Catherine Fox, Joanna Trollope, Susan Howatch) where the protagonists are not behaving as they ought. I'm a DIY-er, and if there is something around the house I can do myself, I will (I stay away from the electricals and the plumbing – that, I leave to the pros).



## Ramona Sybrant

I'm an analytical thinker who likes to think through problems by asking questions. For the past five years, I've worked in fundraising at a large hospital. As a result, I intimately understand the needs of non-profits in a complex legal and fiscal landscape, especially New York City. My skill set from my work as a prospect researcher has honed my detail-oriented thinking process. I will be a thoughtful member of the vestry who thinks through questions with deliberate

and careful attention.

Beyond my professional experience I also have experience in being on a church vestry. As a teenager, I served as a youth member on my church's vestry. Our small parish was my spiritual home as I became an adult. The experience of witnessing my fellow parishioners guided our church through a time of intense difficulty gave me an understanding of how churches keep going on a day-to-day basis and must be carefully stewarded. My childhood church eventually closed when I was a senior in high school, and seeing how my fellow council-members' faith aided them during that time left a powerful mark. As a vestry member at Saint Luke's, I hope to use my faith as a lantern along the decision-making path.

I hope that by being an earnest listener and eager question-asker I can help guide the future of our parish, especially in this time of inflation and change as we hope to plan for the coming years. I hope to emphasize thoughtful listening and a collaborative mindset in my approach to the vestry's work. I believe that my unique talents and my own perspective will be a boon to the vestry and St. Luke's as a whole.

I first came to St. Luke's on All Saints Day in November 2021. My grandparents are interred in St. Luke's, despite never stepping foot in our church. The generosity and warmth I've experienced in the past two years from both the clergy and my fellow parishioners has meant a lot to me. In fact it's difficult to put into words. I believe that part of being a faithful Christian is giving back to people or organizations who have

themselves been generous to you. Serving on the vestry is a good way for me to give back to the St. Luke's community.

Giving back with service is not the only reason I'm drawn to serving on the vestry at St. Luke's. I find a lot of value in the mundane organizational stuff that keeps a parish running. It's those smaller items that might get missed, but are actually so important because someone needs to be thinking of them and make sure those things get done. Scheduling, budgeting, making decisions about resource allocation: these are all invaluable parts of keeping an organization running smoothly. I'm drawn to the vestry because I value that kind of work.

I'm really interested in trees - as in, identifying them (NYC has lots of ginkgos and honey locusts, both quite hardy) and learning about them. In fact, ginkgos have been around since the time of the dinosaurs! (I'll leave it to you to draw any conclusions between NYC's pollution and the post-meteor ash that blanketed the earth). I have a tattoo on my shoulder of my pet rabbit from when I was a child, Pepper. Pepper was an all black dwarf rabbit who terrorized everyone she knew. She used to be a free roaming rabbit, until one day my father noticed some white stuff on the floor near some shelves in our living room. After moving the shelves, we found a rabbit-sized hole in the wall all the way to the brick exterior of the apartment! Pepper had been planning her escape, and after that she lived in a hutch on our porch.

I grew up Lutheran and attended a Catholic school growing up. When I was about eight years old, I was very upset that I couldn't be both Lutheran and Catholic. I didn't know that there was a denomination waiting for me that could accommodate my Catholic liturgical preferences with a more Protestant theological focus. Over twenty years later, here we are!

# The Church of St. Luke in the Fields

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Pastoral Emergencies: *Please email any clergy member in the event of an emergency.*

Website: [www.stlukeinthefields.org](http://www.stlukeinthefields.org)

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Like our Facebook Page:

The Church of St. Luke in the Fields

Join our Facebook Group: "St. Luke in the Fields"

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Theresa Goldsborough & Michael Cudney,  
Wardens

Donald Conrad

Amanda Durant

Bruce Goerlich

Michael Hudson

Samuel Jordan

Valerie Komor

Jack Spencer

Grady Tarplee

Naveen Thacker, Clerk

Non Voting

David Moody, Treasurer

Doug Houston, Recording Secretary

Email Contact: [Vestry@stlukeinthefields.org](mailto:Vestry@stlukeinthefields.org)

December Vestry on Call:

Donald Conrad (646-884-3145)

Samuel Jordan (240-652-3234).