



# *Old North Foundation*

2020 & 2021  
ANNUAL REPORT



# Dear History Lovers,

Reflecting back on the last two years, one thing is certain: we are living in historic times. As we navigate the challenges of a pandemic, systemic racial inequity, and growing division in our communities, places that speak to our nation's complex origins and founding ideals have special significance. Old North's 300-year history helps us contextualize the present and gives us the inspiration needed to move forward with hope, tenacity, and compassion.

2020 and 2021 have been years of recovery, reinvention, and rebuilding for the Old North Foundation. During our 13-month closure, our team developed curricular and enrichment materials that combine history, civics, social emotional learning, English language arts, and more — work that led to a transformative strategic plan that defines our goals as we prepare for the 250th anniversary of the signal lanterns in 2025:

- Make the past relevant and use it to inspire compassionate, courageous choices and active citizenship for both on-site visitors and classrooms across the country.
- Un-sugarcoat history by being honest, inclusive, and unafraid of complexity.
- Create engaging visitor experiences that showcase an iconic piece of history and provide insight into its importance.
- Be an anti-racist organization, committed to the ongoing pursuit of liberty and justice for all.

The Foundation celebrated Patriots' Day Weekend 2021 with a return to in-person tours and programming. Throughout the year, friends and families traveled joyously, relishing the opportunity to reconnect and make memories together. Reopening after a long hiatus allowed us to develop experiences that helped visitors see the church in new ways, including a family scavenger hunt and a gallery tour that focuses on Old North's early Black congregants and the church's ties to enslavement.

In a world that can feel increasingly virtual, being able to sit in our 300-year-old pews or see the steeple where the famous signal lanterns hung is to make a powerful connection to the past. Hundreds of thousands of visitors seek out Old North Church annually as a tangible symbol of freedom and liberty. We believe that by presenting, questioning, and learning from the full and complicated span of Old North's history, we can engage audiences in contemporary questions of equity and representation, courage for the common good, and what it means to be an active citizen.

Looking ahead, the Old North Foundation envisions a future in which everyone will see their stories, struggles, and hopes reflected in places of prominence and our shared American history. We invite you to join us in pursuit of this vision as partners, supporters, and advocates. Together, we can build a bright future.

In partnership,



NIKKI STEWART  
*Executive Director, Old North Foundation*



MADELEINE RODRIGUEZ  
*Board Chair, Old North Foundation*



Visitors to Old North enjoying an Independence Day concert from Dr. Libor Dudas, Music Director and organist for the congregation.



# A New Direction

The Old North Foundation was established in 1991 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit secular organization independent of the Old North Church congregation. The Foundation manages all historic site operations and interpretative, educational, and preservation programs. In 2021, the Foundation launched a comprehensive five-year strategic plan that pairs a sustainable business model with educational goals that leverage Old North's 300-year history to inspire visitors and students to build inclusive and equitable communities that deliver on the promise of a more perfect union.

Our **vision** describes the world in which we want to live.

*The Old North Foundation envisions a future in which everyone will see their stories, struggles, and hopes reflected in places of prominence and our shared American history.*

Our **mission statement** describes how the Old North Foundation is going to contribute to creating the world in which our vision is realized.

*The Old North Foundation inspires active citizenship and courageous, compassionate leadership by interpreting and preserving the Old North Church & Historic Site.*

Our **core beliefs** articulate the guiding principles on which our programmatic work, operations, and partnerships are based and carried out.

*The Old North Foundation believes that:*

- *Bravery, patriotism, and active citizenship come in many forms. These acts can inspire both large-scale and local change.*
- *Education and respectful dialogue are key to building a more perfect union that reflects the promise of liberty and justice for all.*
- *Becoming an anti-racist organization will require active engagement with the legacy of slavery at Old North Church and the ongoing burdens of slavery and racism in our country.*
- *By preserving and sharing history, space, and stories, we shape our future.*



# Timeline

## December 31, 2019

The Rev. Stephen T. Ayres, Old North Foundation Executive Director and Vicar of the Old North Church, retires after 22 years of service. We are thankful for his leadership, dedication, and stewardship of Old North Church.

## March 2020

Old North Church & Historic Site closes to visitors at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## June 2020

Nikki Stewart joins the Old North Foundation as Executive Director.

## November 2020

The Foundation begins an intensive strategic planning process with funding from the National Park Foundation.

## December 2020

Bloomberg Philanthropies commits a transformative five-year grant to support the Foundation's programs and operations.

## April 2021

Old North Church & Historic Site reopens after a 13-month closure.

## June 2021

The Board of Directors finalizes a five-year strategic plan to build towards the 250th anniversary of the lantern signals in 2025 and announces a new mission: to inspire active citizenship and courageous, compassionate leadership by interpreting and preserving the Old North Church & Historic Site.

## August 2021

The Foundation received a highly competitive National Endowment for the Humanities Historic Places Planning Grant to fund an interpretive plan and new exhibit that engages visitors in honest dialogue about how our founding ideals and ongoing struggles for equity shape active citizenship in 2021 and beyond.

## December 2021

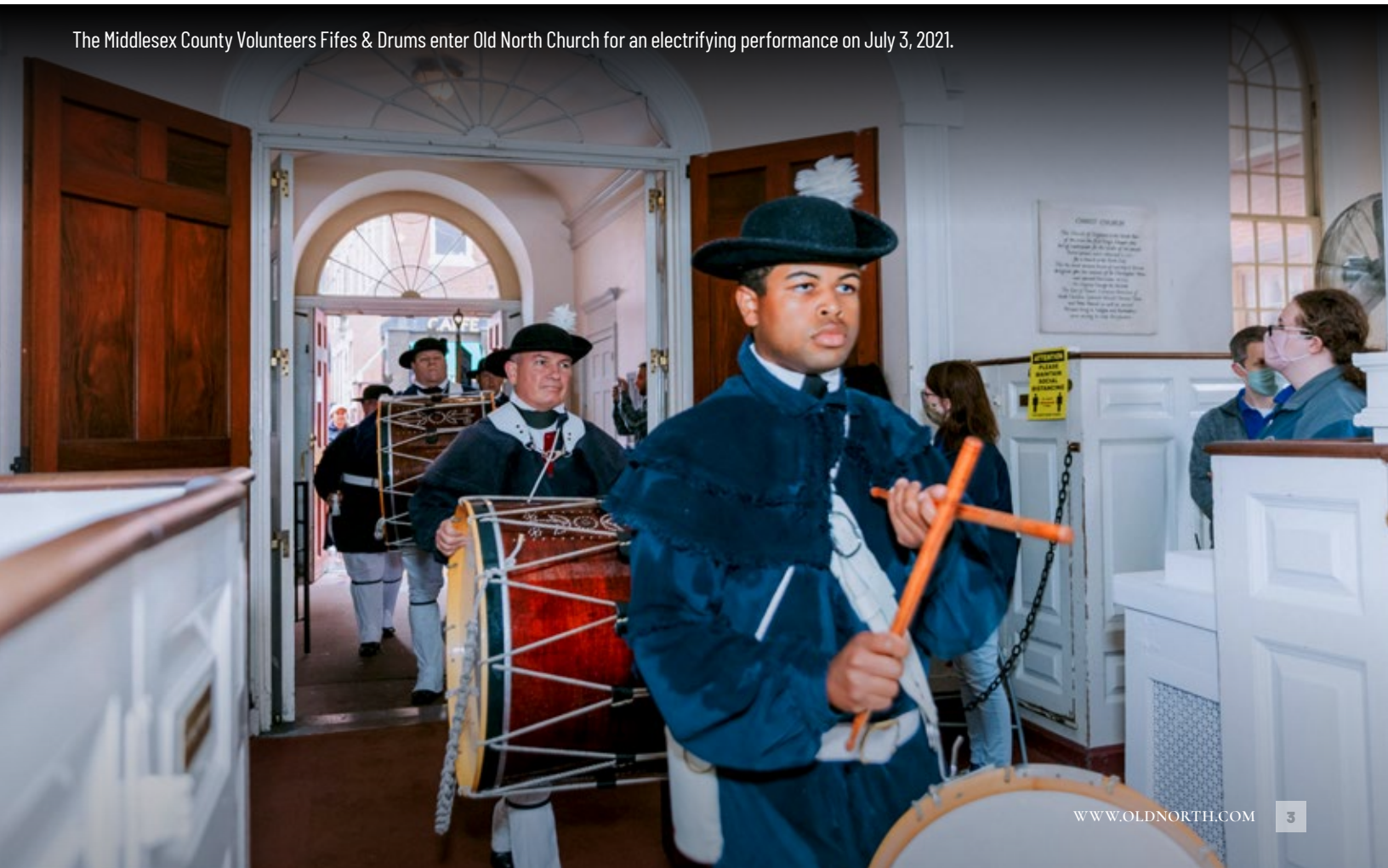
A second National Endowment for the Humanities grant is secured to expand our interpretation of the experiences of Old North's free and enslaved 18th century Black congregants, as well as Old North Church's complex entanglement with those engaged in the trade of enslaved Africans.

# What's next in 2022?

- Research Fellow Jaimie Crumley, PhD will spend a year researching Old North Church's connections to Black congregants and communities in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- We will introduce a new plan for interpreting the church and campus that weaves together the theme of active citizenship with an exploration of Old North's complicated connections to slavery.
- Audio tours will be developed to allow visitors to learn at their own pace, learn about hard to reach places and artifacts in the church, and access content in multiple languages.
- Old North's historic crypt will undergo a major restoration with the partnership and philanthropic support of the National Parks of Boston.
- A team from UMass Boston is developing a virtual reality tour of the steeple, which will allow everyone to climb in the footposts of the lantern bearers.

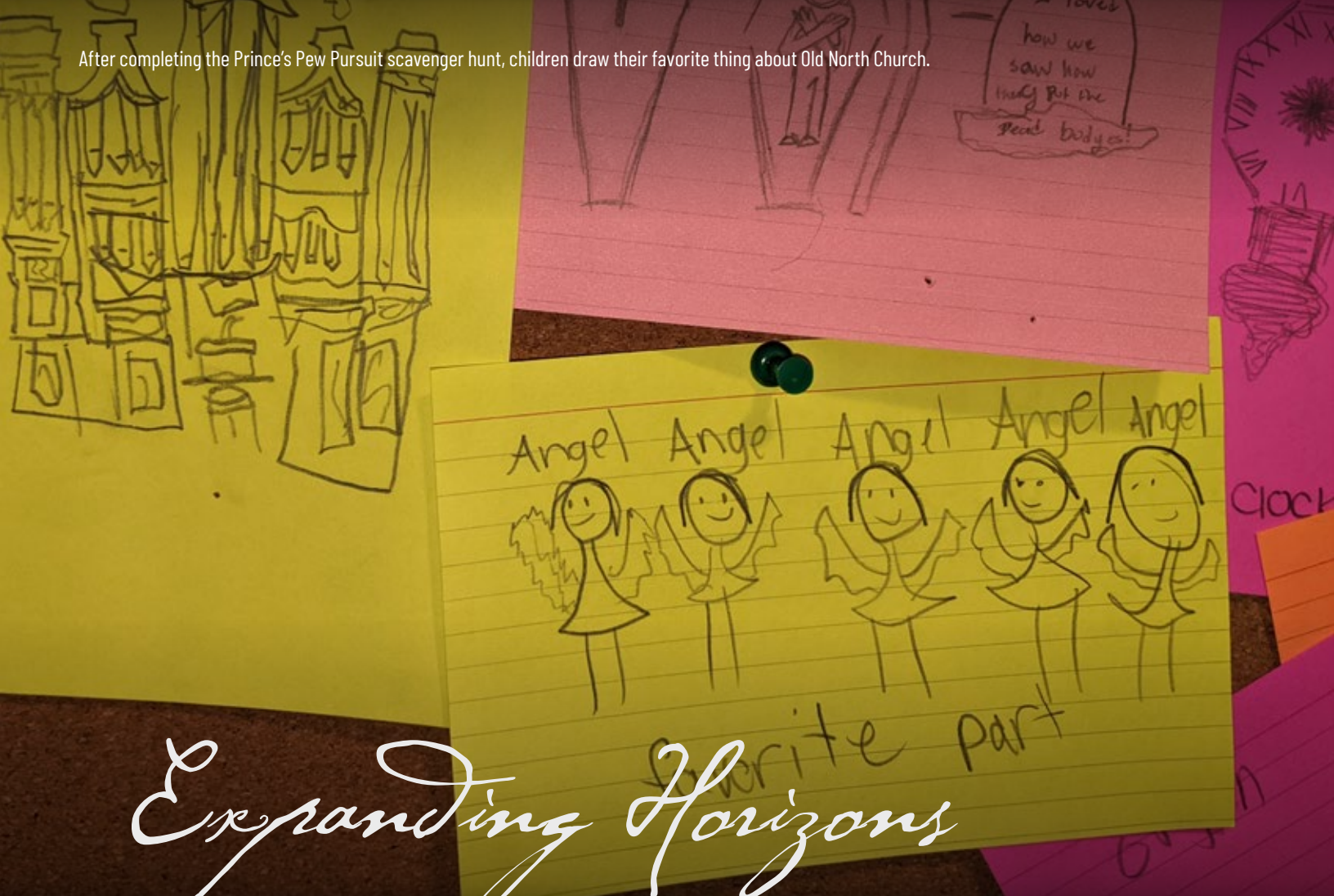


The Middlesex County Volunteers Fifes & Drums enter Old North Church for an electrifying performance on July 3, 2021.





After completing the Prince's Pew Pursuit scavenger hunt, children draw their favorite thing about Old North Church.



# Expanding Horizons



Digital Speaker Series events engaged national audiences and forged connections in a time of distance. (Fall/Winter 2021 Speaker Series sponsored by Citizens Bank.)

## Digital Learning for All Ages

Throughout the pandemic, the Foundation developed new programming to connect with history lovers across the country, including a digital speaker series, *99% Sure* web series exploring visitors' most frequently asked questions, and *Cacao and Colonial Chocolate*, an online exhibit for all ages.

To support classroom teachers during a time of great disruption, staff developed four digital curriculum units that leverage Old North Church's history to engage students and inspire them to consider big questions.

*Educators can request these materials, which are offered at no cost to the school, by emailing Emily Spence at [espence@oldnorth.com](mailto:espence@oldnorth.com).*

# HISTORY MYSTERY

Grades 4-8

This three-part 60-minute video series explores the events leading up to Paul Revere's ride and helps students use sources to solve the mystery of who hung the signal lanterns in Old North Church's steeple. Through videos and activity packets, students learn how to consider multiple perspectives, analyze sources and evaluate for bias, and use evidence to construct an argument.



## CACAO AND COLONIAL CHOCOLATE

Grades 8-12

This five-lesson unit traces the history of chocolate from the Maya through colonial Boston and the slave trade to the present day industry and its connection to child labor. Through video lessons, along with source analysis and research activities, students learn about the connection between chocolate production and enslaved labor, and create their own plan to eliminate child labor from today's chocolate industry.

## CHOCOLATE AS A LENS TO THE PAST

Grade 5

This unit challenges students to look at the history of chocolate in Boston from both a historical and scientific perspective. In the four social studies lessons, students use primary sources including maps, advertisements, land deeds, and probate records to learn about 18th century Boston, its chocolate industry, and its reliance on enslaved labor. In the two science lessons related to chocolate's history, students design investigations to answer questions about the impact of climate on crops and how matter changes states.

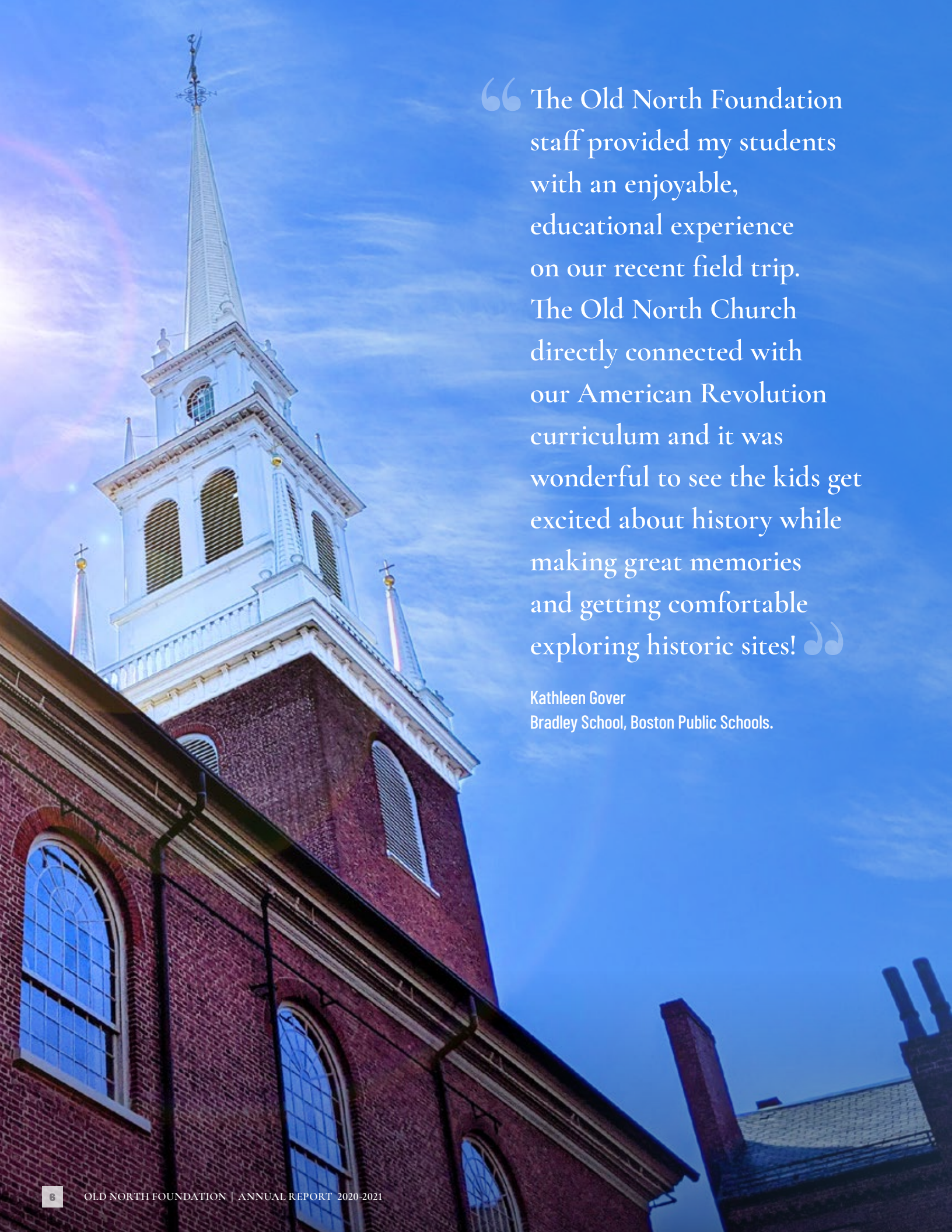


## BEHIND THE SCENES VIDEO TOUR

Grades 5-12

A half-hour video takes students inside some of Old North Church's most compelling spaces and tells the stories of various people whose labor over the centuries helped to build the church and its community. The video addresses the paradox of Old North — that is, Old North Church's connection to enslaved labor while also being considered a symbol of freedom.





“ The Old North Foundation staff provided my students with an enjoyable, educational experience on our recent field trip. The Old North Church directly connected with our American Revolution curriculum and it was wonderful to see the kids get excited about history while making great memories and getting comfortable exploring historic sites! ”

Kathleen Gover  
Bradley School, Boston Public Schools.



# Preservation at Old North Church

- A major restoration of the **windows in the church and St. Francis Chapel** was completed with funding from the National Park Service and the George B. Henderson Foundation. Additionally, the renovation of our **public restrooms** was funded by the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism. This is welcome news to all who will walk the Freedom Trail in the years to come!
- Phase one of the **Washington Garden** redesign kicked off with the repointing of the garden walls.
- **Accessibility** planning and design is underway, preparing for site-wide improvements in 2023 that will provide Freedom Trail walkers with a ramp to bypass the stairs on our campus and accessible entrances to the church and crypt.



Old North's windows were restored with the partnership and philanthropic support of the National Parks of Boston.





# The year in numbers

## Old North Foundation Statement of Financial Position for December 31, 2021 and 2020

The Old North Foundation was fortunate to receive two Payroll Protection Plan loans, which have been forgiven, as well as substantial support through the Shuttered Venues Operating Grant program administered by the Small Business Administration. These awards gave us the capital needed to rebuild our staff in 2021 and reopen the site to visitors. A strong tourism season in 2021 allowed us to establish a board-restricted cash reserve fund of \$500,000. This fund will serve as an internal line of credit should we experience a facilities crisis or substantial business disruption.

Assets	2021	2020
<strong>Current Assets:</strong>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$2,606,808	\$1,013,852
Current portion of grants and contributions receivable	345,468	213,700
Inventory	68,885	120,212
Prepaid expenses and other current assets	19,654	5,415
<strong>Total current assets</strong>	<strong>3,040,815</strong>	<strong>1,353,179</strong>
<strong>Other Assets:</strong>		
Investments	1,137,158	1,132,626
Grants and Contributions Receivable, net	150,000	200,000
Cash Surrender Value of Life Insurance	67,061	63,599
Property and Equipment, net	1,342,854	1,293,461
<strong>Total assets</strong>	<strong>\$5,737,888</strong>	<strong>\$4,042,865</strong>
<strong>Liabilities and Net Assets</strong>		
<strong>Current Liabilities:</strong>		
Current portion of long-term debt	\$46,989	\$46,989
Accounts payable	32,610	22,032
Accrued expenses	17,147	15,261
<strong>Total current liabilities</strong>	<strong>\$96,746</strong>	<strong>\$84,282</strong>
<strong>Other Liabilities:</strong>		
Conditional Grant Advance	338,741	-
Long-term Debt, net	199,387	391,025
<strong>Total liabilities</strong>	<strong>\$634,874</strong>	<strong>\$475,307</strong>
<strong>Net Assets:</strong>		
Without donor restrictions:		
Operating	419,682	(124,969)
Board designated	500,092	-
Property and equipment	1,245,096	1,172,847
<strong>Total without donor restrictions</strong>	<strong>2,164,870</strong>	<strong>1,047,878</strong>
With donor restrictions	2,938,144	2,519,680
<strong>Total net assets</strong>	<strong>5,103,014</strong>	<strong>3,567,558</strong>
<strong>Total liabilities and net assets</strong>	<strong>\$5,737,888</strong>	<strong>\$4,042,865</strong>



2020-2021

## OLD NORTH FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS

The following families, individuals, and institutions generously supported the Old North Foundation in 2020 and/or 2021. We make every effort to maintain accurate records. Should you notice an error, please contact [development@oldnorth.com](mailto:development@oldnorth.com).

### \$25,000+

Anonymous  
Bloomberg Philanthropies  
Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts\*  
George B. Henderson Fund for the City of Boston  
Mass Cultural Council\*  
Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism  
National Endowment for the Humanities  
National Park Foundation  
National Parks Service\*  
Small Business Association  
The Bigelow Family\*

### \$10,000-\$24,999

Anne Bailey Berman and Roger Berman\*  
Susan and Charles Eddy\*  
Ed and Kater Pendergast\*  
Allen Snyder\*  
The Freedom Trail Foundation

### \$1,000-\$9,999

Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company  
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Carol Ball and Jim Re\*  
Bernstein Private Wealth Management  
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Citizens Bank\*  
City of Boston Resiliency Fund  
City of Boston, Mayor's Office of Arts,  
Tourism & Special Events  
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Brian Strachan  
The Hamilton Company Charitable Foundation  
The John H. Brown, Jr. Revocable Trust\*  
Doreen and Peter Vigue\*

### \$250-\$999

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Samuel Bigelow  
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John Sutton  
Daniel Taylor  
Teak Media + Communication  
Eleanor Terry  
Deborah Terry  
Thomas H. and Mary F. Townsend\*

\*Indicates gifts made in both 2020 and 2021





## STAFF LIST\*

Pam Bennett, *Director of Retail and Operations*  
Kyra DeStefano, *Retail Operations Manager*  
Jason Fishman, *Marketing Coordinator*  
Julius Hobert, *Visitor Experience Manager*  
Catherine Matthews, *Director of Education*  
Billy Raye, *Facilities Assistant*  
Emily Spence, *Digital Resource  
& Curriculum Manager*  
Nikki Stewart, *Executive Director*  
T.J. Todd, *Researcher*  
Tim Wenrich, *Sexton*

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Allen Snyder  
Nikki Stewart

*\*Lists reflect December 2021 Staffing and Leadership*

*Old North Foundation*

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## SPECIAL THANKS TO



NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE  
HUMANITIES

