



# “Being Church” in the World Today

**2015 Annual Report**  
St. John's Episcopal Church





**Saint John's Episcopal Church  
Washington, Connecticut**



**ANNUAL MEETING**  
**January 24, 2016**



**AGENDA**

**CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING PRAYER**

**MINUTES OF THE 2015 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH**

**PRESENTATION OF THE SLATE FOR ELECTION TO THE VESTRY**

**ELECTION OF VESTRY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

**REVIEW OF THE TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2015**

**PRESENTATION OF THE 2016 BUDGET**

**2016 STEWARDSHIP REPORT**

**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REPORT FOR 2015**

**OTHER REPORTS**

Report of the Buildings and Grounds for 2015  
Liturgical Report for 2015  
Report of the Altar Guild for 2015  
Report of the Flower Committee for 2015  
Report of the Music Director for 2015  
Report of the Church School Director for 2015  
Report of the Hospitality Committee for 2015  
Report of the St. Elizabeth Guild for 2015  
Report on the 2015 Food Festival  
Report on the 2015 Bazaar

**STATE OF THE CHURCH**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**ADJOURNMENT AND CLOSING PRAYER**

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING JANUARY 26, 2015

The Reverend Susan McCone opened the meeting with a prayer. This Annual Meeting marks the 221<sup>st</sup> year of St. John's Church in Washington, Connecticut. The Meeting was well attended with 40 qualified voting members present. The Minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting were accepted.

The slate of officers and Vestry members was presented. With no nominations from the floor, the Clerk of the Vestry cast one vote for the slate as presented and the following persons were elected:

Hunter Brown for a new 2-year term as Warden;  
Joan M. Beattie to a one-year term as Clerk of the Vestry;  
Thomas Daniels to a one-year term as Treasurer;  
Pamela Moffet for a new 3-year term as Member;  
Rebecca Lambert Bent for a new 3-year term as Member;  
Susan McFeely for a new 3-year term as Member.

John Magee was thanked for his long and dedicated service as a member of the Vestry.

The Treasurer's Report for 2014 and the proposed budget for 2015 were presented as approved by the Vestry. These were available in printed form in the Annual Report along with charts showing the allocation of the projected income and expenses for 2015. Mr. Smith inquired about the amount of the Diocesan pledge and Mother Susan explained that the Diocese assesses the pledge as a percentage of the unrestricted operating budget. Mr. Hollinger addressed a question regarding unpaid pledges and how confidentiality is maintained in efforts to secure payment of these pledges. Mr. Smith moved that the budget be accepted. The motion was approved and carried unanimously.

Mother Susan called special attention to various aspects of Parish Life, and thanked all those who have worked so hard this year, especially Mrs. Witt, Ms. McFeely, Ms. Laird, Mr. Brown, Mr. Gray (who is retiring as Chair of the Flower Committee), Mrs. Futh, Mrs. Gray, Mr. Jenkins, Ms. Robinson, Ms. Gandt, and Mr. Artieda.

Mother Susan drew peoples' attention to the income and expense distribution charts in the Annual Report, commented on services and pastoral calls, and noted the importance to Parish life of diverse hospitality events like Mardi Gras, Burns Dinner, Food Fest, Bazaar appealing to different constituencies.

Mr. Futh observed that sometimes it seems as if there are two separate parishes at St. John's, the one that attends the 8 o'clock service and the one that attends the 10 o'clock service. He suggested that we consider having just one service in the summer. Mother Susan said that it is an idea worth considering. A motion was made to thank Mother Susan for all she does for St. John's Church. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved. Following a prayer, the meeting was adjourned at noon.

Respectfully submitted,

*Joan M. Beattie*

Joan M. Beattie, Clerk of the Vestry

## NOMINATIONS FOR THE VESTRY FOR 2016

The Vestry presents the following nominations for Officers and new members of the Vestry to begin serving in the coming year:

<b>Thomas Hollinger</b>	For a new 2-year term as Warden
<b>Peter Harrison</b>	For a 1-year term as Treasurer
<b>Andris Kalnins</b>	For a new 3-year term as Member
<b>Natalie Dyer</b>	For a new 3-year term as Member
<b>Darcy Campbell</b>	For a 2-year term to fill an unexpired term
<b>Wendy Parkin</b>	For a 1-year term as Clerk
<b>Joan Beattie</b>	For a 1-year term as Assisting Clerk

### ANDRIS KALNINS

Andris is a long time Connecticut resident having grown up in Windham County. He is a graduate of the University of Connecticut and the Harvard Graduate School of Business. Andris had a long-standing career as a Managing Director at The Chase Manhattan Bank in both the Aerospace and Domestic Institutional Banking groups and is currently a Senior Vice President at Moody's Investor Services. Andris is an avid reader of history and loves to garden and grow organic vegetables. He enjoys golf and tennis and playing fetch with his Scottish terrier, Nelligan. Andris and his wife, Sarah Lee Martin, became part-time residents of Washington, Ct in 1998, while maintaining a residence in Manhattan where Andris serves as President of their coop board. He and his wife were married at St. John's Episcopal Church.

### NATALIE DYER

Natalie grew up in Washington, graduated from Rumsey Hall School, Emma Willard School, Bradford Jr. College and New York University. She and her late husband, Elisha, were married at St. John's, and bought a weekend house soon after on Buffum Road. Buffum Road became their full time residence in the early 70's, and home to their three daughters, numerous sheep, donkeys, horses, cats and dogs. Natalie has been a member of St. John's for well over 50 years and during that time has been actively involved in many Church activities including having served previously on the Vestry. In town, she has through the years served on several boards and committees and is a long time trustee of the Steep Rock Association. Before retiring to enjoy time with her family, particularly her seven grandchildren, as well as gardening, hiking, x-country skiing and tennis, Natalie taught in the Language Skills Department at Rumsey Hall School for 17 years.

### DARCY CAMPBELL

Darcy Campbell was born and raised in Washington. She is also one of those increasingly rare "cradle Episcopalians" and a second generation member of St. John's. She was married at St. John's (as was her brother and were her parents, Harry and Darby Wright, who continue to be pledging members of St. John's), and her sons Quintin and Spencer -- the third generation of Wright-Campbell's at St. John's -- were baptized here and continue to be faithful pillars of the Church School. Darcy received a B.A. from Springfield College, a M. A. in Special Education from the American International College in Springfield, Massachusetts, and has completed a 6th year degree at Southern Connecticut State University in Educational Leadership. Darcy has been a special ed teacher at New Milford High School for over 15 years, and currently is the Chair of the Special Education Department at Schaghticoke Middle School in New Milford.

Respectfully submitted:

The Nominating Committee

## REPORT OF THE TREASURER FOR 2015

Operating income in 2015 totaled \$573,389 and expenses totaled \$556,914. The Vestry had budgeted a \$14,000 deficit for the year, but anticipated that income from plate contributions, legacies and memorial gifts, while difficult to determine in advance, would eliminate the deficit during the course of the year. In fact, the Bazaar produced record income for the third year in a row, and bequests and memorials exceeded estimates by a wide margin. Although plate contributions remained below prior year's levels, the other factors combined to produce a \$16,475 surplus.

The 2016 budget projects total income of \$541,500 with conservative estimates of Bazaar and other non-pledge income. The \$255,000 projected income from restricted and unrestricted pledges combined seems reasonable considering actual pledges received to date and additional pledges still being received. Expenses are estimated to be \$548,000 projecting an operating deficit of \$7,285.

With a bit more generosity, careful control of expenses and a little belt tightening, we hope to at least break even this year.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas T. Daniels". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "T" and "D".

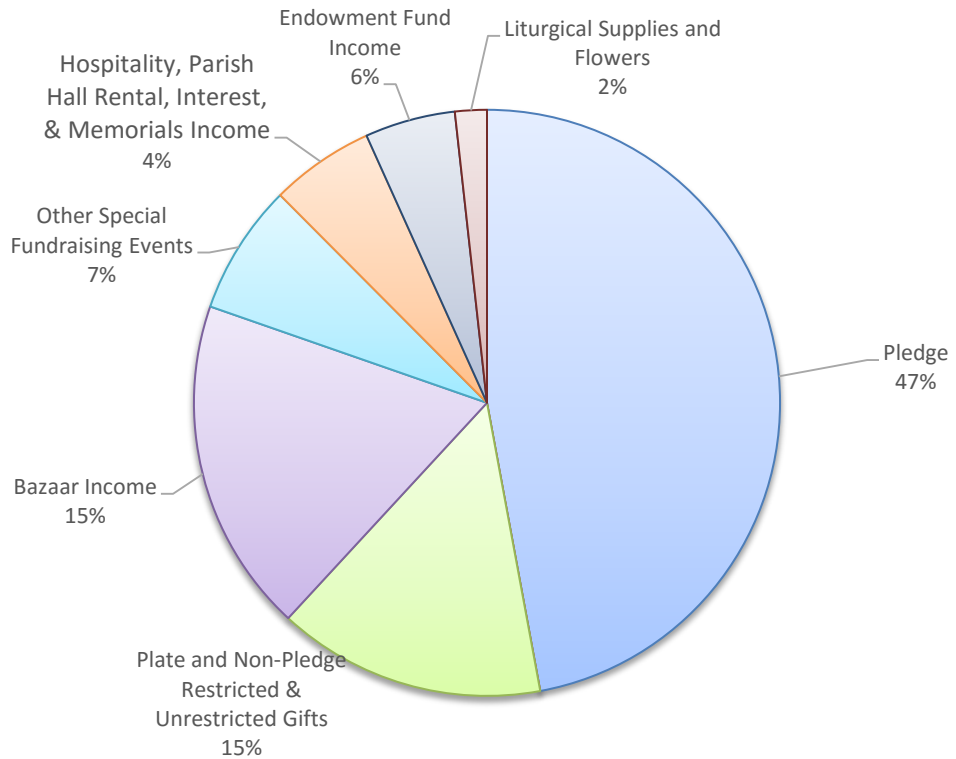
Thomas T. Daniels

Treasurer

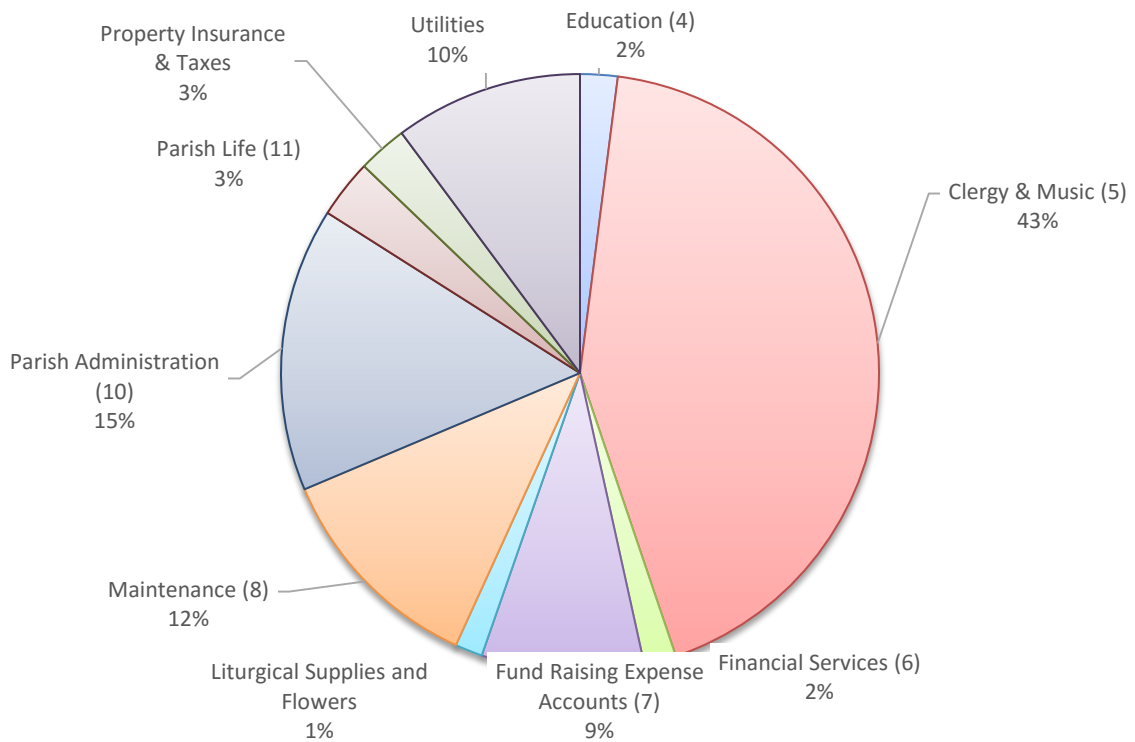
January 24, 2016

## 2016 PROJECTED INCOME AND EXPENSES

Income 2016



Expenses 2016



## 2016 APPROVED BUDGET

<u>Account Name</u>	<u>2016 Budget</u>	<u>2015 Actual</u>
Pledge	\$255,000.00	\$202,658.55
Payments of 2011-2014 Pledges in Arrears (1)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Plate and Non-Pledge Restricted & Unrestricted Gifts	\$80,000.00	\$80,627.44
Bazaar (2)	\$100,000.00	\$116,135.58
Other Special Fundraising Events	\$39,000.00	\$36,391.97
Other Miscellaneous Income (3)	\$31,000.00	\$93,794.78
Endowment Fund	\$27,000.00	\$36,150.97
Liturgical Supplies and Flowers	\$9,500.00	\$7,629.84
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$541,500.00</b>	<b>\$573,389.13</b>
Education (4)	\$10,250.00	\$6,449.12
Clergy & Music (5)	\$216,585.00	\$205,984.84
Financial Services (6)	\$8,800.00	\$8,395.34
Fund Raising Expense Accounts (7)	\$44,500.00	\$72,661.40
Liturgical Supplies and Flowers	\$7,500.00	\$10,750.72
Maintenance (8)	\$59,900.00	\$59,249.26
Outreach (9)	\$42,500.00	\$50,239.28
Parish Administration (10)	\$77,750.00	\$70,382.39
Parish Life (11)	\$16,000.00	\$19,453.12
Property Insurance & Taxes	\$13,500.00	\$10,116.21
Utilities	\$51,500.00	\$43,232.35
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$548,785.00</b>	<b>\$556,914.03</b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>-\$7,285.00</b>	<b>\$16,475.10</b>

(1) \$16,532 in 2011-2014 pledges remain unpaid from persons who have confirmed their intention to pay. An additional \$6100 in 2015 pledges are still outstanding and being carried forward.

(2) Includes \$6130 in 2014 Bazaar receipts received in January and February 2015.

(3) Includes Memorial Fees & Bequests, Church/Parish Hall rentals, Hospitality Income, & Hull Management Fee

(4) Includes Church School Director compensation; Child Care; Church School Supplies; Adult Forum; and Library.

(5) Includes Clergy and OCM compensation, pension, professional dues and continuing education; Sheet music; Paid musicians; Organ/Piano upkeep; and Supply Organist.

(6) Includes \$6134.46 in accrued 2014 Bazaar expenses paid in 1st Qtr 2015.

(7) Includes Accountant; Bank Fees; and Credit Card Merchant Fees

(8) Includes Alarm, Electrical, Grounds Maintenance, General Maintenance, Pest Control, HVAC, Davis Hollow Maintenance, and Sexton's compensation

(9) Includes Diocesan Pledge for Outreach, Contributions to St. John's Fund and other community organizations, and outreach supplies.

(10) Includes Parish Administrator and bookkeeper compensation; office supplies and equipment, postage; advertising and signage.

(11) Includes Hospitality; Stewardship; and Vestry.



## REPORT ON THE STEWARDSHIP APPEAL FOR 2016

2015 was a remarkable year in the life of St. John's Church: we kicked off our Capital Campaign with the announcement that we had already raised \$1 million toward our goal of \$3 million, we reported record-breaking income from the Holiday Bazaar, and carried on with all of the end-of-year's community activities. However, in the midst of a flurry of productive activity and unusually warm weather, our Stewardship Appeal got off to a very late start. We distributed pledge packets to 250 individuals and/or families who have demonstrated significant engagement with the Church. As of January, 69 people have responded and pledged approximately \$216,250, but we still have work to do to meet our goal of \$255,000 for 2016.

The good news is that those who have already submitted their pledges have generally increased or remained steady in the amount of their financial commitment to the Church. The shortfall for the Stewardship Appeal is predominately attributable to parishioners' delay in returning their pledge forms. Efforts continue to make it easier to pledge by offering the option of submitting a pledge online.

Similarly, with graphs, charts, E-blasts and periodic reports, we continue our efforts to educate parishioners on how pledge funds are spent to support the Church's operations and mission. Our hope is that with an increased knowledge about what it really costs to sustain the Church in today's world, as well as maintain our standard of worship and spiritual life, parishioners will continue to support our Church financially.

Each of the last three years, including this year, the Stewardship Appeal has increased its percentage contribution to the overall income of the Church, making day-to-day operations less financially dependent on the success of other fundraising events. We can close the gap in the projected goal for 2016 pledges, if the few who pledged last year but have not yet responded to this year's Appeal do so in the next few weeks. We have every expectation that they will. Once we know that we have sufficient projected income to fulfill our financial obligations to staff and vendors (for fuel, utilities, plowing etc.) for 2016, we all can focus on the real work of being church in today's world: enriching and deepening our spiritual life together and serving the wider community as we are called to do.



Peter Harrison

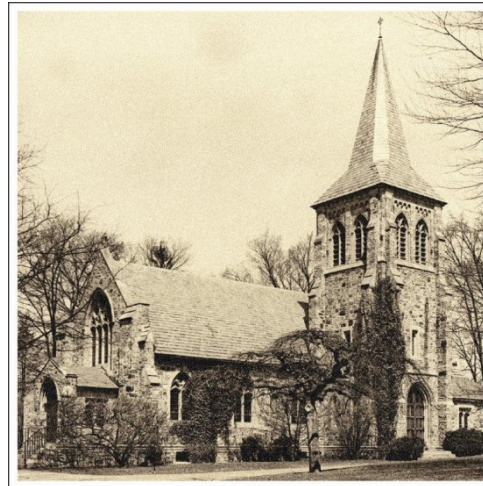
Stewardship Chair

## Thank you to all who have made pledges to support St. John's Church in 2015

Ms. Mary Elizabeth Adams  
Mr. Frank. Arcaro & Mr. James R. Booth  
Mr. & Mrs. William Bardel  
Dr. & Mrs. Jay Bauer  
Ms. Joan M. Beattie  
Mrs. Rosalind Benedict  
Mr. Nick Benson & Ms. Natalie Dyer  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward S. Bent  
Mr. & Mrs. John Treacy Beyer  
Mr. & Mrs. George M. Blake  
Mr. Hunter Brown & Miss Tillie Page Laird  
Mr. Paul Cappuccio & Mr. Matthew Shea  
Ms. Janet D. Chenery  
Ms. Kathleen A. Clynes  
Ms. Lisa M. Coleman  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert C. Coles, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Daly  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas T. Daniels  
Mr. & Mrs. William A. Davidson  
Mrs. Mary Graham Davis  
Mr. Michael Del Nin & Mr. Sean Krebs  
Ms. Sophie Sutton-Drubner  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Dulack  
Mrs. Natalie Dyer  
Ms. Emily Fitzhugh  
Ms. Holly Flor & Capt. Rudy Mangels  
Mr. William E. Fore  
Mrs. Anne Fuchs  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert H. Futh, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. David Gillespie  
Mr. & Mrs. Wallace H. Gray  
Ms. Diana Hardee  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Harrison  
Mr. & Mrs. Nikko Hayes  
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth A. Hecken  
Ms. Ann Hodgman  
Mr. Thomas H. Hollinger  
Mr. Derek Hughes  
Mr. Steven James & Mr. David Lewandowski  
Mr. Andris Kalnins & Ms. Sarah Lee Martin  
Dr. & Mrs. Herbert Keating  
Miss Louise W. King  
Ms. Kirsten Knutson  
Mr. & Mrs. John A. Magee  
Mr. & Mrs. Philip Markert  
Ms. Susan McFeely  
Ms. Katharine Michie  
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur F. Miller  
Mr. & Mrs. John Millington  
Mrs. Wendy Darling Parkin  
Mr. Thomas Pearsall  
Ms. Kirsten M. Peckerman  
Mrs. Marion Pennell  
Ms. Dagmar Pfanzelter  
Mr. Ronald Potter  
Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Purves  
Mr. Greg Anrig & Ms. Jeanne Reid  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Reynolds  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Rickart  
Mr. & Mrs. Christopher Smith  
Mr. & Mrs. Lee C. Stewart  
Mr. & Mrs. John Strawbridge  
Ms. Nancy Tafuri  
Ms. Caroline Reid Sorell-Thompson  
Dr. Ann Belford Ulanov  
Mr. Carter Walker  
Mr. Richard Wallgren & Mr. Martin K. Rook  
Ms. Carol M. Ward  
Ms. Bette Weed  
Mr. Robert P. Wessely & The Rev. Susan J. McCone  
Ms. Zemma Mastin White  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas R. Witt  
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Wright

As of January 21, 2016

## REPORT ON THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR 2015



For most of 2015 the Capital Campaign operated in the “quiet phase.” Beginning in 2012, potential donors of lead gifts were cultivated and ultimately successfully solicited, jump started by the initial, generous and inspirational challenge gift from Ken and Audrey Hecken.

From 2012 through 2015, as funds were raised, certain urgent, and no longer deferrable, projects were undertaken: the reinforcement of the Parish Hall roof trusses which architectural consultants determined had not been built to specification and were, therefore, deemed unsafe; the restoration of the Memorial stained glass window in the Lady Chapel which, again, was judged to be in peril and unlikely to survive another harsh winter; commencement of both foundational, structural and exterior work on the Rectory which had become an “eyesore,” an unacceptable blight on the architectural harmony of the Green; the replacement of the boiler and hot water tank in the Rectory and the boiler in the Church; restoration of the Church windows in the Chancel and Sacristy (which were in the worst condition); installation of new temporary covers for the window wells replacing the rotted and warped covers which were unsafe and ineffective. To date, the cost of these repairs and restoration work has been \$370,925.

All of the early projects were undertaken with Phil Market’s encouragement to begin the restoration work and his oversight of the initial work that was done as funds were available. In the spring of 2015, Jean Solomon, a professional and well-known manager of major international construction and restoration projects (eg. MOMA’s \$425 million expansion, Bloomberg’s 1 million sq. ft. London headquarters, 712 Fifth Avenue, and many others) offered to serve as project manager for the Church’s restoration on a *pro bono* basis...literally an angel without which the restoration project could not move forward. Based on her research and recommendation, the Vestry engaged the Architectural Preservation Studio -- specialists in the preservation and restoration of historically distinguished buildings -- to provide a detailed analysis of the nature and scope of the restoration work that needed to be done and to prepare the construction drawings necessary to secure bids for the work. The drawings are now complete and available for review in the Parish Hall.

By mid - 2015, it became clear that in order to be able to move forward with the actual work of restoration, we needed to move beyond the “quiet phase” and inform both the broader St. John’s community and the wider community of Washington of the Church’s restoration plans and the funds that would be needed to accomplish it. On August 29, the Campaign was publically launched at a Garden Party open to everyone of the Greater Washington area, an event that

coincided with a celebration of the Church's 200th Anniversary on the Green and the 100th Anniversary of the stone church building. It was an enormous success, earning the Church substantial goodwill among our neighbors and raising additional funds. To date, the Capital Campaign has secured contributions or pledges in the amount of \$1.062 million.

The next most important work to be addressed is the roof and the exteriors mortar, stone and cast stone repair, or replacement as needed, which is estimated to cost approximately \$1.2 million. To date, we have cash on hand of approximately \$120,000. Outstanding 2015 pledges which remain due are \$29,234. We anticipate receiving \$183,000 in pledges, which are due and payable in 2016. In order to solicit bids from contractors in good faith, we need, at least, an additional \$750,000 in funds must be readily available so work, once it is begun, can proceed on an uninterrupted basis. In the next few months we will actively cultivate additional gifts and would be grateful for any suggestions of potential sources for funding -- individual or institutional, large or small.

Our thanks to the members of the Restoration and Advisory Committees who have provided support in many ways, including generous financial contributions to the project:

### Restoration Committee

Anne. H. Van Ingen, Katherine Mowbray Michie, *Honorary Chairs*  
Edward S. Bent, Hunter Brown, Robert Futh, Thomas Hollinger,  
Susan & Philip Markert, Louise van Tartwijk  
Jean Solomon, Solomon & Sofford, LLC, *Project Manager*  
Daniel Rothbart, Architectural Preservation Studio, *Project Architects in formation*

### Advisory Committee

Mary Davis, David Gillespie, *Co-Chairs*. Thomas Hollinger, *Advisor*  
Julie & Robert Bailey, William Bardel, Jean Blanchard, Lisa Coleman, Michael Del Nin,  
Natalie Dyer, Victoria Elliot, Nancy Evans, Holly Flor & Rudy Mangels, Anne Sutherland Fuchs,  
Toni & James Goodale, Dagmar Grimm, Jane Whitney & Lindsey Gruson, Judy & Douglas Hamilton,  
Gael Hammer, Audrey & Kenneth Hecken, Kathy & John Kehoe, Carolyn Klemm, Barbara & Gene  
Kohn, Tillie Page Laird, Sarah Lee Martin, Adriana & Robert Mnuchin, Nancy & John Novogrod,  
Cynthia Oneglia & Dan Whalen, Kirsten Peckerman, Rodney Pleasants, Abbey Darer Rosenwald,  
Joanna Seitz, Marlene Smith, Sophie Sutton-Drubner, Richard Wallgren

## REPORT ON BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS FOR 2015

A number of routine building and grounds maintenance issues were addressed in 2015. Some capital improvements were begun in 2015, thanks to generous lead gifts to the Capital Campaign by parishioners and members of the greater Washington community. Major tasks such as roof repairs, repainting and recasting the stonework, windows, and drainage will require much larger commitments of funds. A public announcement of the Capital Campaign in late summer began to focus on these needs. It is appropriate to mention here that gifts for capital restoration work are separate from yearly pledges for operations.

### CHURCH:

#### Windows –

in the Sacristy and Chancel have been repaired and replaced, as necessary. The work on the windows in the Chapel and Nave will be undertaken as additional funds become available.

Temporary covers for the window wells have been installed.

#### Boiler -

The Church boiler was replaced, including installation of a dual fuel system which allows the use of either oil or propane depending on which fuel is the most economically advantageous at a given time.



*Old Boiler*



*New Boiler!*

**Roof** – A survey of the Church’s roof indicated that total replacement may not be necessary, but major work will be required. Work on the roof will commence as soon as funds are available.

#### Exterior walls -

Following the work on the roof, work will begin on repointing the exterior stone walls, which, ultimately, will help promote a more efficient use of fuel.

#### Reredos -

Repair was made to eliminate a leak in the wall behind the High Altar, after which the Mowbray mural, damaged by the leak on the two far left panels, was restored.



**RECTORY:**

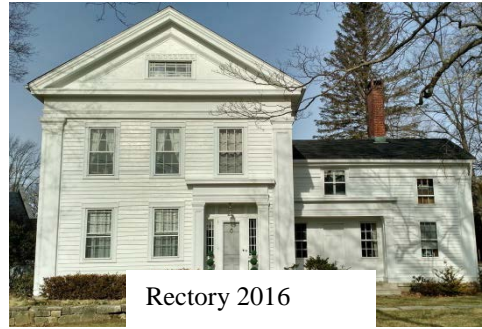
The heating and hot water systems were replaced and the exterior and foundation work has been completed. It now regains its place as a handsome part of the Green historic district.

**PARISH HOUSE and COTTAGE:**

While restoration work on both the Parish House and Cottage is necessary, that work will be addressed in Phase II of the restoration. There are rotten window sills and drainage issues which affect both properties, especially relating to the stone walks, patios and steps surrounding the Parish House.



Rectory 2014



Rectory 2016

**GROUNDS:**

Regular grounds maintenance expenses, (e.g. plowing, salting and mowing), were higher, and costs for Spring and Fall clean-ups were substantial. Drainage throughout the entire property is a major problem which requires regrading and repositioning drains in order to eliminate water pooling against the buildings. Repairs to the Parish House HVAC system, a new water heater and a freezer were necessary. and equipment, and replacement of some equipment such as refrigerators were also necessary.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Futh

*Bob Futh*

Buildings and Grounds Chair

## 2015 LITURGICAL REPORT

In 2015, according to the entries in the Register of Church Services the following services were held at St. John's Church:

Sunday Eucharists: 79

Weekday Eucharists: (including Ash Wednesday): 8

Private Eucharists: (at homes or in hospitals): 2

Daily Offices – Weekday: 21, Sunday 2

Service of Lessons and Carols for Advent: 1

Blessing of the Animals: 1

Burials: 5

Baptisms: 4

Marriages: 1

Attendance at all services: 4,142

The Clergy participating at these services during the course of the year included:

Iman Dr. Kareem Adeeb

The Rev. Cheryl Anderson

The Rev. Elaine Farmer

The Rev. John M. Gilpin

The Rev. Sherry Hardwick Thomas

The Rev. Carol Hoidra

The Rev. Mathew Kappalumakkel

The Rev. Susan J. McCone

The Rev. Max A. Myers

The Rev. Roger B. White

The lay person licensed to serve as a Lay Eucharistic Visitor in 2015 was Joan M. Beattie.

### The licensed Chalice Bearers and Lay Readers for 2015 were:

Frank Arcaro (Reader)

Joan M. Beattie (Chalice/Reader)

Rosalind Benedict (Reader)

Rebecca Bent (Chalice/Reader)

Jean R. Blanchard (Chalice/Reader)

James Booth (Reader)

Hunter Brown (Reader)

Sara Coles (Reader)

Thomas T. Daniels (Chalice/Reader)

Holly Flor (Reader)

Helen F. Gray (Chalice)

Gael Hammer (Reader)

Thomas H. Hollinger (Chalice/Reader)

Mary Jo Keating (Chalice/Reader)

Tillie Page Laird (Chalice)

John A. Magee (Chalice/Reader)

Marlene Smith (Chalice/Reader)

Caroline Reid Sorell-Thompson (Reader)

Robert P. Wessely (Chalice/Reader)

## REPORT OF THE ALTAR GUILD FOR 2015

The Altar Guild had a very good year. We welcomed Sarah Lee Martin as a new member. We completed a revision of the Manual, adding more photographs and simplifying instructions. We kept the silver and brass polished, the linens pristine, and the Altar set for all the services.

This, in a nut shell, is what the Altar Guild is all about, but it is much more than that. It is a ministry where we encounter the holy in many different ways. I asked our members to share with you WHY they serve and here are their answers.



“I love that the work we do is quiet and contemplative but very important to the life of the Church. I love the textiles and silver and the ceremony of the gentle and mindful care.”

“Caring for the vestments and preparing for services has strengthened my connection to the liturgy. Being in the Church when it is quiet provides me with peace and spirituality. I feel a responsibility to give as well as receive.”

“Working with other members of the Altar Guild gives me a chance to know fellow parishioners better and understand some pretty arcane but interesting facts about liturgical customs.”

”Serving on the Altar Guild brings me an inner sense of peace and serenity. I feel it is an honor to serve God and our Washington community by serving on the Altar Guild. I also enjoy learning more and understanding more about the Sacraments, “an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given to us.”

“Working on the Altar Guild is truly a rewarding experience. Our Church is such a treasure and its upkeep and preparation for the service is always a pleasure.”

“One of the most spiritual things I do is serving on the Altar Guild. There is such a unique history to everything we handle. For instance, the Paten we use is an unusual size and dates from 1879. I like to think of the saints who have gone before us and made St. John’s what it is today. I also like that on some Saturday mornings when I am setting up, I sometimes get a personal organ concert while Sumner is practicing.”



### Members of the Altar in 2016 Guild were:

Camille Gillespie  
Susie Magee  
Marty Rook

Kate Harrison  
Sarah Lee Martin  
MB Witt

Diana Hardee  
Ginny Reynolds

Respectfully submitted,

*MB Witt*

Director



## REPORT OF THE FLOWER COMMITTEE FOR 2015

With Wallace Gray's retirement at the end of 2014, the year 2015 was one of transition for the Flower Committee: Susie Markert stepped up to the plate and together with the group – Lee Reese, Veronique Dulack and Alec Purves – devised their own Rota. As a team, they never missed a beat. With occasional assistance from Loretta Stagen, who generously donates her time, the Church looked beautiful every Sunday, as well as at the special services throughout the year.

The Garden of Gethsemane once again was a bower of peace and beauty with masses of white hydrangeas and flowering branches. At Christmas, the Altar became a forest, with boxwood, and fir trees, and red roses adorning the branches.



## REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC FOR 2015

The 2015 year has been one of growth in spirit and commitment for the Music Program at St. John's. The St. John's Choir continues to bring new levels of revelation and spirituality to the music they offer each Sunday. I have often shared the thought that some hear the word through word only, some hear it through music only, and most hear it through a combination of word and music. I believe that the Choir has moved further into this understanding of their role within the liturgy, and by making this move has also brought the congregation and themselves deeper into the worship experience.

The Choir's other "brave" move has been to "mix it up" in the Chancel. You may notice that the sections no longer sit together. We have seen improvements on many levels by making this change. The Choir's blend and intonation have improved significantly. Several Choir members have also remarked that their confidence has grown because they now stand on their own rather than relying on their neighbor for pitch.



Our membership remains fairly stable, and is divided between a core of about 12 singers who rehearse weekly and several who, because of work, join on Sunday mornings. We are sad to have lost John LaPorta, tenor section leader, has because of travel and time considerations, but we are happy that Monte Stone, bass section leader, rejoined our ranks. We continue to look for a new tenor section leader, but no one can replace John's spirit, his voice, and his wine! We remain hopeful that he will rejoin us in the future.

We were able to assemble an ad hoc Junior Choir to sing for the early service on Christmas Eve. I believe that given the numerous extracurricular calls on the young people's time, the best answer for a Junior Choir at St. John's will be to bring children together for a specific service, i.e. Palm Sunday, Christmas Eve, and others. It would be ideal to have a Junior Choir that met weekly in order to learn to be choristers, acquire a little knowledge of music theory, and experience the liturgy of the Church from another perspective. It is this holistic approach to church music that develops the next generation of "church people" as well as singers.

St. John's hosted three successful concerts in 2015. A fourth had to be canceled due to the illness of one of the performers. The 2015 series opened with The Yale Whiffenpoofs, followed two weeks later by the St. Luke's Steel Band, a wonderful, upbeat and totally enjoyable outdoor concert. The series closed with The Asylum Quartet, a saxophone quartet based in Hartford. Each member of the Quartet is a graduate of the Hartt School of Music, and together they presented what one person described as the "most sophisticated concert" they have heard in years.

Arrangements for the 2016 series are still being finalized, but highlights will include several distinguished performances:

The Series will open on April 10<sup>th</sup> with a performance by the Yale Russian Chorus from Yale, a renowned choral ensemble now in its 63rd year. The group sings a variety of secular and sacred Slavic and regional choral pieces, including Russian and Eastern European folk songs, from the 12th century onward.

The YRC was the first American group to visit the Soviet Union as a private initiative, touring the country in 1958 following the signing of an agreement on cultural exchange. The YRC made 16 tours to the USSR before the Union dissolved in 1991. The ensemble tours domestically every spring and most notably has appeared at Carnegie Hall, The White House (for President Bill

Clinton), The Smithsonian Institution, The Russian Cultural Center in Washington, D.C., and The Winter Garden Theatre in Manhattan.

The Concert Series will close on October 23<sup>rd</sup> with a concert offered by The Escher String Quartet, resident artists of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. The Escher String Quartet is internationally acclaimed for its profound musical insight and rare tonal beauty. Within months of its formation in 2005, it was invited by both Pinchas Zukerman and Itzhak Perlman to be Quartet in Residence at each artist's summer festival. In 2013, the Quartet became one of the very few chamber ensembles to be awarded the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant. The Quartet takes its name from the Dutch graphic artist M.C. Escher, inspired by Escher's method of interplay between individual components working together to form a whole.



Two other concerts will complete the Series, including, by popular request, a return engagement of the Galvanized Jazz Band on June 6<sup>th</sup>.

It is my honor to continue to work with the dedicated souls who give of their time and energy to St. John's and its music program. These members come, as they are able, to rehearsal for 1½ hours each week, as well as each Sunday when Choir is "on;" as well as Holy Days, Evensongs, and other events as requested. Please thank each of these people as you see them: Hunter Brown, Kathie Clynes, Choir librarian, Sara Coles, Bob Coles, Laura Daly, Laura Evans, Jonathan Hall, Kate Harrison, Peter Harrison, Jordan Lee, Rudy Mangels, Anne Ranson, Monte Stone, Zemma White.

Respectfully Submitted:

*Sumner Jenkins*

Sumner Jenkins, Music Director

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL DIRECTOR FOR 2015

As our “regulars” near middle school age and have major commitments to athletics and busy social lives, attendance at Church School continues to be unpredictable. However, last year we welcomed a new and very faithful young parishioner, Simon, who is about to celebrate his first birthday! Simon is learning lessons about trust, music appreciation, movement and the importance of Communion which he receives eagerly (dare I say hungrily?) We are always happy when the Campbell boys and the Hayes and Klemm girls join us... and we love visits from Vivienne and Kiki and other little ones, age 5 and younger, who on occasion find their way to the Undercroft – and join in the art and craft projects which they LOVE.

Last winter, I prepared lessons which we sent via an E-blast to all our Church School families; there wasn't much feedback. So, now, I continue to prepare these lessons but reserve them for a Sunday when there is someone to hear and discuss them. In the spring, we planted a Spiritual Garden beside the porch entrance to the Church which we hoped the children would tend, and, at the same time, learn about spiritual growth from parallel Bible lessons about herbs and growing things. Although we didn't really have any “gardeners” during the summer, to ensure that this important idea take root, I have developed an ongoing art project creating a spiritual garden in the Undercroft which we tend briefly on any Sunday that children are present.

The Food Fest introduced St. John's to some new potential Church Schoolers whom, we hope, we will see again. The Boo Fest was fantastic and attracted both our own young parishioners and introduced us to others in the wider community. Making the Thanksgiving pie boxes was a fun and fabulous project thanks to the artistic talent of Alex and Annabelle Hayes, and Quintin and Spencer Campbell.



Britton and Charlotte Davis, Katharine and Hezzie Dyer-Benson, along with Quintin and Spencer Campbell participated in the early Christmas Eve “family” service, did an excellent job reading the lessons, and helped revive the Junior Choir which offered two carols during the service under Sumner Jenkins' encouraging direction.

I would be grateful for any computer savvy suggestions for communicating regularly with parents about the prospect of their family's attendance so that I could plan lessons and art projects more effectively and age appropriately (*e.g.* so far in 2016, I have had three classes consisting of five to seven children each whose ages have ranged from 11 months to 11 years, or 7 months to 11 years including Simon).



We are discussing reorganizing the Undercroft space so that it is more conducive to teaching/learning -- decorated with the children's art work which reflects their evolving understanding of lessons from the Gospels, stories about Jesus' life, meaning of miracles, the seasons of the Church, the importance of worship and what it means to be an Episcopalian -- and the many ways all of this can relate to their everyday growing lives.

Respectfully submitted:

*Jennifer Heath Robinson*

Christian Education Director

## REPORT OF THE HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE FOR 2015

Thanks to the members of the committee for contributions above and beyond their job furnishing delicious and delightful coffee hours on almost every Sunday of the year.

We would be happy to welcome new members to our committee – it is a once-a-quarter task, with the emphasis on providing easy finger food with the coffee and tea. Please be sure to invite visitors in Church to join us in the Parish House for Coffee Hour.

### Members of the Hospitality Committee for 2015 were:


Penny Bardel	Marlene and Chris Smith
Rebecca Bent	Audrey Hecken
Mary Davis	Kirsten Knutson
Veronique Dulack	Tillie Page Laird
Natalie Dyer	Susie Markert
Emily Fitzhugh	Val Materne
Sally and Bob Futh	Susan McFeely
Gael Hammer	MB Witt
Diana Hardee	Drika and Alec Purves

Respectfully submitted:

*Sally Futh*

Hospitality Committee Chair

Be not forgetful  
to entertain  
strangers:  
for thereby some  
have entertained  
angels unawares



St. John's  
Episcopal Church  
The Parish Hall  
9 Parsonage Lane  
Washington, CT  
860-868-2527

## The Parson's Table

open to anyone who wishes to come  
and break bread with their neighbors...  
no agenda, no program, no cost...  
an opportunity to enjoy home cooking,  
company and conversation

First Wednesday of each month

## REPORT OF THE ST. ELIZABETH GUILD FOR 2015

This year the St. Elizabeth Guild has focused its work on four specific programs which occur during the year.

Food donations from parishioners and delivery to food banks goes on constantly.

**In Lent**, the Guild works in cooperation with Family Services to create Easter Baskets for children in need. This year 42 Easter baskets were filled.

**In August**, the Guild spearheaded the Back-to-School Backpack effort. This year donations filled 30 backpacks with all the essentials.

**In November**, working with the Town of Washington, the Guild baked a dozen pies for the Town's Thanksgiving baskets. Despite Tulip's efforts, (an exceptionally hungry golden lab), everyone had a good time making the pies and putting them in the beautiful boxes decorated by the Church School under the creative eyes of JJ Robinson.



**In December**, the Guild organized the Angel Tree. Members of St. John's generously filled the wish lists of 38 children, who might otherwise have a very sparse Christmas.

St. John's once again had a presence at the Community Day **in June**, and the Guild is grateful for those who stepped in to take an hour or so at the table.

**August** is the month for our biggest project: the St. John's Food Festival, a portion of the proceeds from which go to the St. John's Emergency Fund which is administered by the Town. A great many members of St. John's are involved and the Guild takes this work very seriously.

We would be happy to have a larger committee. **Come and join us!** As you can see, there are things to do almost every single month of the year and we would love your help. At present we are small and only a very few members are able to be helpful consistently because of their other commitments.

Respectfully submitted:

*Helen Gray*

Helen F. Gray, Chair

Committee: Gael Hammer, Kate Harrison, Lili Dyer, Marlene Smith, Posy Benedict, Richard Wallgren, Sally Taylor, Susie Markert, Véronique Dulack

## REPORT ON THE 2015 FOOD FESTIVAL

Thanks to a hot, sunny day, lots of hard work and many volunteers, the Food Fest grossed a record amount - at least 65% over 2014's figures, and we were able to make a substantial contribution to the St. John's Emergency Fund.

We welcomed many new families with lots of children thanks to publicity on some family-oriented web sites. "Drive by" visitors from all over Connecticut, New York and Massachusetts, saw the pony rides, petting zoo, food court and vendors and drove in. The total amount collected from the children's activities alone was almost eight times 2014's figure!



The star of the food court was the "pulled pork" lunch which brought in over \$1,000. The pig was roasted on the spot, with the crew pulling the meat and making the sandwiches right in front of eager customers. In addition, the St. John's table had record sales of over \$1,200. With the addition of ice cream and pickles sold with the hot dogs, St. John's gross sales were up by 130%!

Unfortunately, because of scheduling conflicts, four of the prior year's vendors were not able to return, but two new vendors helped fill the food court with lots of good shopping opportunities. The core group of vendors who have been with us for three years or more did well and should return in 2016, and we are already working to include more vendors this year. Please be on the lookout for any new vendors and let me know right away.



The "Surf and Turf" dinner catered by Tilden's of Litchfield fed 70 diners in the Parish House (transformed by wall murals into a seaside beach). With the mystery wine in a bottle and the patron's cocktail reception, the evening festivities contributed over half of the Fest's gross income.

This was all possible because so many volunteers helped by putting in long hours, sometimes in 80-plus degree humid weather, especially on the Fest day itself. Thank you all. I look forward to working with you this year.

**Save the date - SATURDAY AUGUST 13TH - for the 2016 Food Fest and dinner with the Big Green Pizza Truck which was so popular two years ago.**

Tillie Page Laird

*Tillie Page Laird*

Chair

## REPORT ON THE 2015 HOLIDAY BAZAAR

2015 was another record year for the Holiday Bazaar, currently in its 26th year. Linda Allard, the Honorary Chair, welcomed everyone as they flocked in for the Gala Preview Party on Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to the creative genius of Honorary Chair Emeritus, Rod Pleasants, and designer Chris Zaima – guests found themselves immediately transported into a Highland palace festooned with billowing streams of tartan plaid intertwined with holiday wreaths. Definitely a sight to behold!



The mood was very merry, indeed, as guests strolled along the Street of Shops, previewed the Marketplace's many treasures, made a selection (or two!) from the Mystery Gift Tree, looked for Manolo's and Chanel's in the Couture Boutique, decided how many raffle tickets to buy for one of three Holiday Trees – Holiday Spirits, Holiday Entertaining, and Holiday Gourmet – and shopped the Larder for holiday goodies...all the while being entertained with seasonal melodies by David Grausman at the piano. The evening concluded with the Live Auction which generated record sales.

On Saturday, eager shoppers started lining up at the doors before 9:00 a.m. hoping for early bird bargains. An indomitable group of volunteers took up their stations and prepared for the mad rush while the Bistro crew put the finishing touches on the ever-popular lunch served from 12-2:00 p.m. The Marketplace closed at 4:00...allowing everyone a bit of time to rest and regroup before the holiday Jazz Cabaret featuring the famous Bahamian jazz singer, Naomi Tay, tropical tapas, and the announcement of the Holiday Tree raffle winners.



The Bazaar continued on Sunday with churchgoers and other last minute shoppers seeking that one additional bargain, and buyers arranging to pick up the treasures they had bought. The doors to the magical and mystical wonderland finally closed at 3:00 p.m., with sighs of relief from dedicated and weary workers, along with smiles of anticipated financial success.

When the pine needles had settled, the Bazaar was another huge success with income from vendors and sales of \$116,000. Preview Party, 'Angel' weekend, and Saturday Cabaret ticket sales grossed \$22,750, an increase of 63% from 2014. Total Bazaar sales were up over 9% from 2014 grossing \$42,499. Notable sales included the Couture Boutique exceeding its stunning 2014 results by 31% with over \$11,700 in sales; the Greenhouse sales increasing by 8% to \$2103; Larder sales growing by 3% to \$2600; and the Live Auction, combined with the dinners and raffles, grossing \$29,765, an increase of 6% from 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

*Susan H. McFeely*

Bazaar Chair



## RECTOR'S OBSERVATION ABOUT THE STATE OF THE CHURCH

### 2015 WAS A YEAR OF ADJUSTMENT...

Like every church in every denomination, St. John's is striving to adapt to the reality of a new religious landscape in the modern American culture. Sunday morning is no longer sacrosanct – no longer is it a time when the expectation is that a family would be together in the church of their choice, parents in the pews, children in Church School, the young adults in confirmation class. Church, even for many formerly “staunch” churchgoers, is no longer a priority in most people's lives -- spiritually, socially, financially and otherwise. Many things compete for every parishioner's time and attention...even on Sundays. This trend has a particularly difficult reality for the Church School program, as you can read in JJ Robinson's report.

In mid-May, The New York Times published a recently released report by the Pew Research Center on the state of religious life, practices and beliefs in America. Its conclusions and their implications have dominated conversations within the church, among religious leaders and churchgoers, outside the church among commentators on modern culture and even infiltrated political discourse for much of the year.

It noted that the Christian share of this nation's population has been declining for decades...The rate of decline exceeds any other demographic trend. It is not confined to the coasts, the cities, the young or the other liberal and more secular groups where one might expect it, either. The lead editor of the report, noted that “The decline is taking place in every region of the country, including the Bible Belt.”

The study suggests that the decline has been propelled in part by generational change, as relatively non-Christian millennials (generally those born from 1980-2000) reach adulthood and gradually replace the oldest and most Christian adults. But it is also because many former Christians, of all ages, have joined the rapidly growing ranks of the religiously unaffiliated...a broad category including atheists, agnostics and those who adhere to “nothing in particular.”

While the report does not offer any solid explanation for the decline of the Christian population, it notes that the young, well-educated and affluent are increasingly not self-identifying as Christians, and suggests that the trend is consistent with that group's distaste for the politicization of religion by American conservatives, a broader disengagement from all traditional institutions and labels, and the increase in inter-religious marriages -- all of which are recognized as the motivating factors by those who have moved away from an exclusive identification with the Christian faith.

Probably most unsettling to me was the report's finding that nearly a quarter of those who now say they are unaffiliated were raised as Christians, and among that group the largest number were those who had been raised as members of mainline Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. In other words, the brands of Christianity which hold most clearly to traditional and “orthodox” tenets of the Christian faith - most fundamentally the trinity, incarnation, resurrection and ascension - are the ones that are experiencing the greatest exodus of believers.

As any priest or minister, in any church of any denomination, will confirm, the effect of competing and conflicting priorities on peoples' time, the fact that the millennial generation has been raised with little to no religious component or experience in their lives, a direct

consequence of the lack of emphasis on religion education or experience by generation X, their parents' generation, the aversion to any kind of externally imposed discipline and the reluctance to make any binding commitment...all contribute to the loosening of religious bonds.

But, at least for those of us who have taken vows to teach, preach and uphold the faith, accepting that explanation and not probing further is a betrayal of our solemn obligation. Taking cover under these cultural reasons for this decline in the faith we cherish as justification for absolving ourselves of any responsibility doesn't work for me: "We can't change the past," the reasoning goes, "so there is nothing we can do except have faith that the trend will miraculously reverse itself ..." The other instinct is to hunker down and tend to our little patch of God's acre, regressing to that "quiet, little country church" of decades past, offering Sunday services and doing just enough else to keep the lights on, not striving to extend our embrace to a wider and more diverse community by offering a variety of opportunities for fellowship and engagement with the larger community.

Dwindling congregations and diminishing coffers which no longer support even part-time clergy in churches all around us sadly demonstrate that down either way lies not just further attrition but extinction. I am not -- and I believe the people of St. John's are not - willing to concede the inevitability of a continued decline of religion or the disappearance of churches, especially our Church -- important threads in the social fabric of our country and community -- without an effort.

We need to ask ourselves: "What are the millennials rejecting? Why are the agnostics growing in number? What about the Christian faith as it is being preached from the pulpits and presented in its messaging, apparently so uninspiring, unappealing, or off-putting?"

I believe that many who describe themselves as "non-aligned" with any religious tradition would, if pressed, go on to describe themselves as "spiritual but not religious." Many of them, I suspect, have a sense of the spiritual component of human life and some, no doubt, are committed to living out that commitment holistically in their lives -- in their relationships, in their commitment to conserving the physical environment, in their intellectual inquiries, in their alternative spiritual practices. We need to understand what it is about the explicitly Christian community that loosens their connections to the traditional church and impel them to seek spiritual fulfillment in other pastures?

I am confident that if you inquire more closely what someone means when they say they are "spiritual" but not "religious," you will hear them describe a deep commitment to a system of belief grounded in ethics and values, indeed the very commandments on which our faith is founded, the very core of Christ's teachings.

So, maybe we need to adapt our messaging to emphasize those foundational Christian commitments. Maybe we have to do a better job, individually and as St. John's Church, of living out our commitments in our participation in the life of our communities. Maybe we have to be more thoughtful in connecting what we believe as Christians with the similar beliefs of other members of the global religious community - Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims.

We need to be constantly alert to new ways of doing and being Church in today's world.... adjusting service times to accommodate people's life-styles; adapting how and when we educate

the next generation of Episcopalians to the realities of the younger generation’s time and multiple commitments; adopting new ways of accomplishing traditional church functions like the work of Altar Guild that mesh with people’s schedules for work and family.

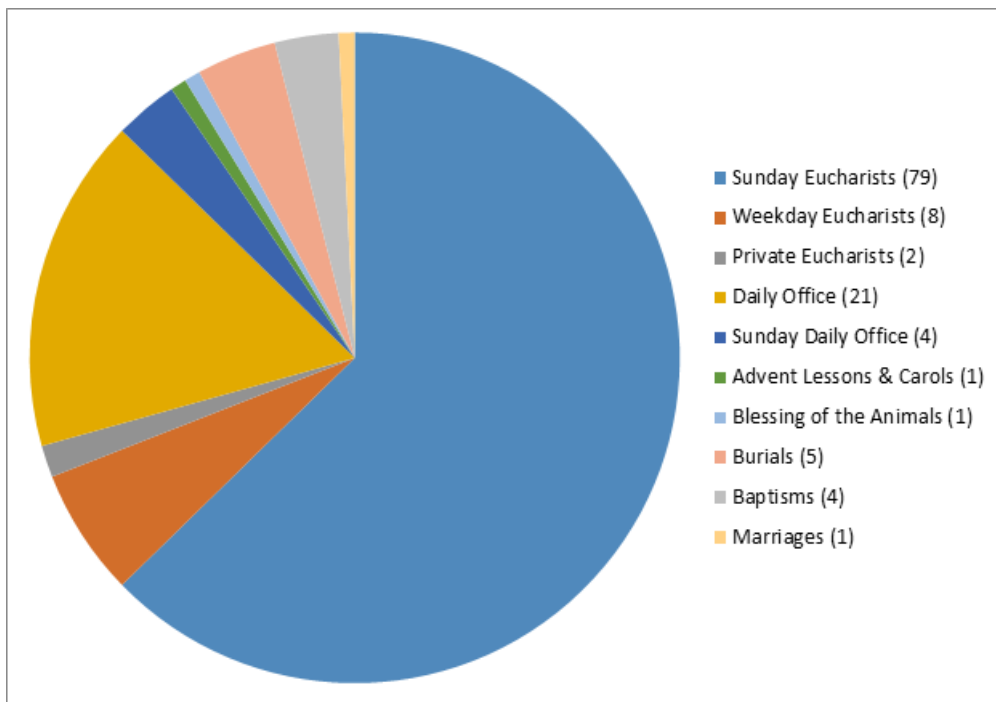
I would welcome your thoughts about how we might better adapt to the cultural changes affecting religious life and face the challenges they present in order to sustain and strengthen St. John’s for future generations.

It is not a time for pessimism or retreat...it is a time for reflection, and a receptive attitude toward all possibilities. Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury may offer the advice for this time of adjustment in the church: “God’s purposes for the world are likely to be mysterious to our small minds; and in order to go along with these purposes, we shall have to change in ways that can frighten and panic us.” It is important to stay the course, remain and trust in the synchronicity of God’s plans. “He manages to reveal them at just the right, however unexpected, moment. A door opens; a possibility never existing before suddenly is there in front of [us], just when a critical decision finally has to be made.”

## .....AND A YEAR OF ACTIVITY

### In Worship:

In 2015, we gathered as a congregation for a total of 122 services (24 fewer than in 2014 because of the “summer schedule,” see below) attended by 4,142 fellow worshippers. Our average weekly attendance (62) continued to exceed the national average (60). During the course of the year, we welcomed seven new adult members and five children into the St. John’s community.



This year, for the first time, we adopted a new summer worship schedule, gathering for only one service each Sunday at 9 o'clock from the first Sunday in June through Labor Day. Clearly, not all of our normally faithful parishioners (both 8 and 10 "o'clockers") made the adjustment easily, so we will need to weigh the benefits of the schedule (more of the day free for family and summer sports) vs. the downsides (fewer people in Church) before deciding to continue with a reduced "summer schedule" in 2016.

The Monday Morning Group, an informal gathering in the Rector's office, continued to be a source of inspiration and education for all of us who regularly participate. The discussions on a wide-range of topics take us wherever the spirit moves, often far afield from the starting point of the prior Sunday's readings...but always educational and deeply enriching.

Our 2015 Lenten program focused on the idea of pilgrimage as a sacred journey of faith drawing one ever closer to God. Both our worship and fellowship were enriched at our Friday evening Eucharists or Stations of the Cross followed by Soup Suppers in the Rector's Office. From Palm Sunday through Easter morning, we experienced the transformative power of the Holy Week liturgies, inspired by The Rev. Elaine Farmer's profound preaching at each service of the Triduum.

### **In Interfaith Engagement:**

On February 17 at Sunday Morning Prayer, Dr. Kareem Adeeb, Imam, President of the Interfaith Council of Southwestern Connecticut, and Founder and President of the American Institute for Islamic and Arabic Studies, delivered the homily. His ability to speak knowledgably about the Old Testament helped us appreciate the common roots of our faith which continue to inform Christian and Muslim beliefs today.

Following the Maundy Thursday services we once again joined with our Jewish friends at an interfaith Agape Seder weaving together the traditions and prayers of a Passover meal and the Last Supper of our Lord, strengthening and celebrating the common bonds of our faiths.

We once again hosted the Interfaith Community Thanksgiving service on the eve of Thanksgiving Day with clergy from the Congregational and Roman Catholic churches and lay members of the Washington Coalition for Jewish Life participating in the service.

### **In Service to the Community:**

The Report of the Elizabeth Guild's activities in 2015 demonstrates the genuine and generous commitment of the members of this parish to serve the broader community, filling Easter baskets, making pies at Thanksgiving, supplying Back-to-School Back Packs with every necessity and a few frivolities, and fulfilling children's Christmas wishes from the Angel Tree.

We sponsored a conversation on Music as a Healing Art led by classical guitarist, Andrew Schulman who experienced its power from his own near death experience, and Dr. Marvin MacMillan, the head of Emergency Medicine at Mt. Sinai Hospital, who oversaw Andrew's care.

For the third straight year we made record contributions to the SJ Emergency Fund of over \$5,000 from the proceeds of the Bridge Lunch, the Food Festival, and the Bazaar.

We continued to open our doors to neighbors, fellow parishioners, and friends from the Salem Covenant and Roman Catholic churches at Parson's Table lunches on the first Wednesday of every month, except July and August.

Once again, in August and in September, the Parish Hall served as the host site for Conversations on the Green, living out our mission purpose to advance education on a community-wide basis in a different way.

We co-sponsored the Cemetery Crawl on Halloween with the Gunn Museum, offering spooky refreshments at the Boo Fest after the crawl's last stop in the Church to hear the ghost of our founder, Edward van Ingen (Frank Arcaro), recount the Church's building.

We provided the forum for the Lake Waramaug Association's and Steep Rock's open conversation about responsible building in wetland areas.

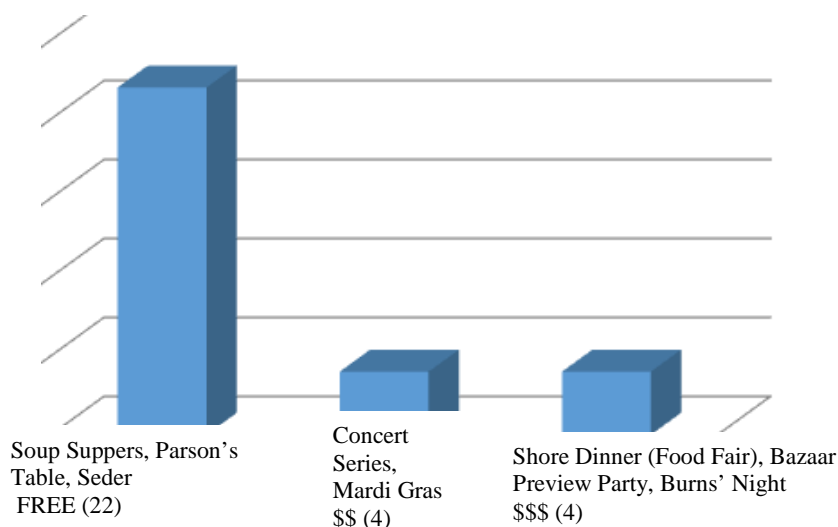
We continued to be the host site for meetings of the Washington Garden Club, Pilobolus rehearsals and week long summer camp program, the Women in White's summer sessions, Come to Believe gatherings and Pilates, Gentle Yoga, and Latin Dance classes.

The Concert Series fulfilled our mission of offering high-quality music to the broader community and enabled us to generate sufficient revenues to sustain the Series as well as support our music program generally.

### In Fellowship:

A community of faith is formed by breaking bread together – in worship with Communion at the Altar, as well as in fellowship with one another around other kinds of tables. In worship, one seeks a balance between Word and music, between liturgical form and theological substance. In fellowship one seeks a balance between events that reflect the diverse interests, style and means of the community as a whole, between events which are essentially free, some which are modestly priced, hopefully covering their costs, and a few which are more costly providing important cash flow at critical times in the year (especially January – February, mid-to-late summer and at the end of the year).

This year St. John's hosted 22 free dinners, 4 moderately priced events, and 4 somewhat more expensive dinners.



## .....AND A YEAR OF ACHIEVEMENT

### The Launching of the Capital Campaign to Restore St. John's Buildings:

This year we have been especially blessed by generous gifts from individuals, several not directly affiliated with St. John's, given in support of the effort to restore St. John's buildings, beginning with the "historic buildings" -- the Church and the Rectory. Because of some early lead and very generous gifts, work was able to be completed at the Rectory and commenced at the Church, as described in the Buildings and Grounds Report, which I encourage you to read.

Raising the significant amount of money needed to accomplish such a restoration would be an enormous undertaking for any parish. It is particularly challenging for a parish of St. John's size and experience. Being able to report that we had already raised over \$1million dollars at the Garden Party publically launching the campaign, at the same time as we celebrated the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. John's Church on the Green and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Church Building, was a monumental achievement, defying more than a few people's prediction that it would never happen. Since the Garden Party, without further solicitation, contributions from people who attended the event have continued to flow in.



### Reorganizing Staff Functions

In 2015, the increase in workload reached a crisis level as a direct result of the Capital Campaign's movement into a very active stage (both in terms of fundraising and in the commencement of actual restoration work) and the growing recognition that parishioner volunteers are no longer available as they once were (both in terms of bodies and time as a consequence of age, travel, seasonal absences and professional commitments).

All of the regular members of the staff (Director of Music, Parish Administrator, Bookkeeper, and Sexton) except for the Rector are part-time. By mid-year, it was clear that we simply could not keep up with the volume of work that needed to be done on a timely basis. As a result it was necessary to reorganize how some work was accomplished (in particular Altar Guild and the Flower Committee), to outsource some other work (notably, grounds maintenance, advertising/marketing and some graphics and printing work), as well as supplement the staff with additional people hired for specific purposes on an ad hoc basis (clerical work related to the Capital Campaign, "sexton" related work that required four hands or more muscle than could be done by one person), all of which incurred additional expenses.

The Director of Music and Rector worked regularly beyond their formal "job descriptions." The Director of Music applied his considerable technical skills to web site management, troubleshooting computer problems, and overseeing the installation and operation of HVAC, electrical, plumbing and other systems-related issues. The Rector typically and consistently worked seven days a week/70 hours a week (sometimes going as long as five weeks without a full day truly "off") overseeing the outsourced work, managing staff issues, picking up the slack from part-time workers who simply did not have the time to do the basic work on a timely basis and volunteers who simply did not exist to do the work and addressing the growing work associated with organizing and operating a capital campaign and the related restoration work itself. As a consequence, the Director of Music's attention was repeatedly deflected from what should be his sole focus: the Choir generally, as well as the Concert Series and other music-related events and program. The Rector increasingly had little energy left for what is her primary commitment to

teaching, preaching and writing. In both instances, simply not healthy or sustainable situations for either the individuals or the parish as a whole.

By late summer, total “meltdown” was almost achieved across the board...and then divine synchronicity occurred in the form of a professional business consultant/psychologist (a friend of the Rector who had come to St. John’s through the first Burn’s Night dinner in 2011 and stayed in touch). She has volunteered her time on a pro bono basis, met with each major staff member, made recommendation regarding work reallocation among existing staff and advised on the engagement of critically necessary additional staff.

As 2016 begins, the changes she has led us to see and begin to implement have resulted in a measurable improvement in the working environment. There remain some issues which need to, and will be addressed in the next month or so. The most significant changes have been the complete separation of the clerical and financial work of the Capital Campaign from the general business and financial operations of the Church with the addition of two part-time persons dedicated to the Campaign, increasing the Parish Administrative position to full-time status, and adding another part-time person to the Sexton staff .

### **An Increasingly Engaged and Involved Lay Leadership:**

None of these achievements would have been possible without a supportive and understanding Vestry and all pivotal Lay Leaders of this Church who increasingly have assumed real ownership of programs and projects in key areas, particularly: Mary Davis and David Gillespie, co-chairs, and members of the Advisory Committee for the Capital Campaign (see the Report of the Capital Campaign); Jean Solomon for her pro bono work as a the Project Manager for the Church Restoration; MB Witt, who re-imagined how a modern Altar Guild could do its traditional work; Tillie Page Laird and Susan McFeely for their respective roles in organizing and managing the Food Fest and Bazaar; and Wendy Parkin and Lisa Coleman who shouldered the nitty-gritty work of the Budget Committee participating in a top to bottom, microscopic analysis of 2015 expenses and income and the creation of the proposed budget for 2016; and Peter Harrison, who served as Stewardship Chair with dedication and great success, and as our resident attorney, established the St. John’s Foundation and secured its 501C(3) status from the IRS. Our appreciation to both Peter and his law firm, Cramer & Anderson, for performing this work on a *pro-bono* basis.

I hope you will take time to read the individual reports included in this report. What it takes to be “church” in today’s culture needs more than what one or two, or even a handful of people can make happen; it needs all of us working together and for those of you who contribute your time and talent and resources when called upon – again and again – I am profoundly grateful.

Finally, I remain grateful to all of you for allowing me the opportunity to serve you as your Rector... and always to God for his grace in sustaining me as I seek to live out my priestly vows in this place.

God willing, 2016 will be a time of deepening spirituality, continued growth, consolidation of our gains, and greater focus on how we can engage our friends in other faith communities in fellowship and worship.

In faith,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan J. McCone" followed by a small cross symbol.

The Rev. Susan J. McCone, Rector

## **DRAFT CALENDAR THROUGH JUNE 2016 (subject to change)**

### **JANUARY**

- January 24 Annual Parish Meeting and Meeting of St. John's Foundation Board  
January 30 "Chilly" Dinner and Talent Show

### **FEBRUARY**

- February 3 Parson's Table hosted by the Vestry  
February 7 Mardi Gras Brunch following the 10 o'clock Service  
February 10 Ash Wednesday: Imposition of Ashes during the day, Liturgy of Ash Wednesday  
February 14 First Sunday in Lent  
February 15 President's Day: Office Closed  
February 19 Holy Eucharist followed by Soup Supper  
February 21 Vestry Meeting  
Dick Reese's First Class on Flannery O'Connor: Faith and Spirituality in her writings  
February 26 Holy Eucharist followed by Soup Supper  
February 28 Third Sunday in Lent, "Laetare" Sunday, Sherry Hardwick Thomas, Guest Celebrant and Preacher  
February 28 Dick Reese's Second Class on Flannery O'Connor: Faith and Spirituality in her writings

### **MARCH**

- March 2 Parson's Table hosted by Monday Morning After Group  
March 4 Holy Eucharist followed by Soup Supper  
March 6 Fourth Sunday in Lent  
Choral Evensong at 5:00  
March 7 - 11 Iconography Class Workshop  
March 11 Holy Eucharist followed by Soup Supper  
March 18 Stations of the Cross followed by Soup Supper  
March 20 Palm Sunday  
The Rev. Canon Precentor Jeremy Davies, guest preacher  
Holy Week Begins  
March 21 Holy Monday – Evening Prayer at 5:30  
March 22 Holy Tuesday – Evening Prayer at 5:30



March 23 Tenebrae  
The Rev. Canon Precentor Jeremy Davies, guest homilist

March 24 Maundy Thursday Liturgy; Foot Washing; Stripping of the Altar  
followed by Interfaith Seder and The Watch Triduum  
The Rev. Canon Precentor Jeremy Davies, guest preacher

March 25 Good Friday Liturgy  
The Mass of the Pre-Sanctified  
The Rev. Canon Precentor Jeremy Davies, guest preacher

March 26 Holy Saturday – The Great Vigil  
The Rev. Canon Precentor Jeremy Davies, guest preacher  
Midnight Reception Champagne & Strawberries

March 27 Easter Day – the Mass of the Resurrection  
The Rev. Canon Precentor Jeremy Davies, guest preacher  
Easter Brunch, Egg Hunt

## APRIL

April 6 Parson’s Table hosted by Greeters

April 10 First Concert in Series: Yale Russian Chorus

April 17 Vestry Meeting

April 22 First Night of Passover

## MAY

May 1 Choral Evensong at 5:00

May 4 Parson’s Table hosted by Choir

May 15 Conversations on the Green with Charlie Cook. 3:00, Parish Hall

May 15 Organ Concert by Sumner Jenkins. 5:00 pm, Church

May 18 Bridge Luncheon to Benefit the St. John’s Emergency Fund

May 22 Vestry Meeting

## JUNE

June 1 Parson’s Table hosted by St. John’s Staff

June 5 Tentative date for Rossiter House Tour, a Capital Campaign Event

June 6 Second Concert in Series: Galvanized Jazz Band

June 26 Vestry Meeting

## ST. JOHN'S MISSION STATEMENT



*St. John's understands its Mission as an obligation to respond creatively and faithfully to the emerging and evolving needs of the parish, the wider Episcopal church, and the community of Washington.*

St. John's Mission is to fulfill its commitment in its word and actions by...

- responding to the needs of those around us with our hearts and hands and financial resources;
- striving for justice and peace among all people and respecting the dignity of every human being;
- providing a spiritual home for all who join us in worship in keeping with the Anglican tradition according to the Book of Common Prayer;
- serving Christ in all people, loving our neighbors as ourselves;

St. John's understands its Mission as an authentic expression of its unique gifts which together define its spirituality identity as community of faith, specifically

- its instinct for an open and inclusive hospitality, extending God's welcome in broad and diverse ways;
- its deep and long-standing commitment to music as an important and integral expression of worship;
- its diverse intellectual resources

## NOTES



WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S PARISH

CLERGY

The Rev. Susan McCone, *Rector*

STAFF

Sumner Jenkins, *Director of Music*

J.J. Robinson, *Church School Director*

Pia Gandt, *Parish Administrator*

Sarah Eyre, *Finance Director*

Michele Tetreault, *Capital Campaign Finance Director*

Joan Burgess, *Capital Campaign Administration*

OFFICE HOURS AND EMERGENCIES

The Parish Office is open Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Should you wish to make an appointment to see Mother Susan, please call the Parish Office, during normal office hours. If there is a pastoral emergency, please call either the Parish Office or the Rectory (860-868-9741).

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