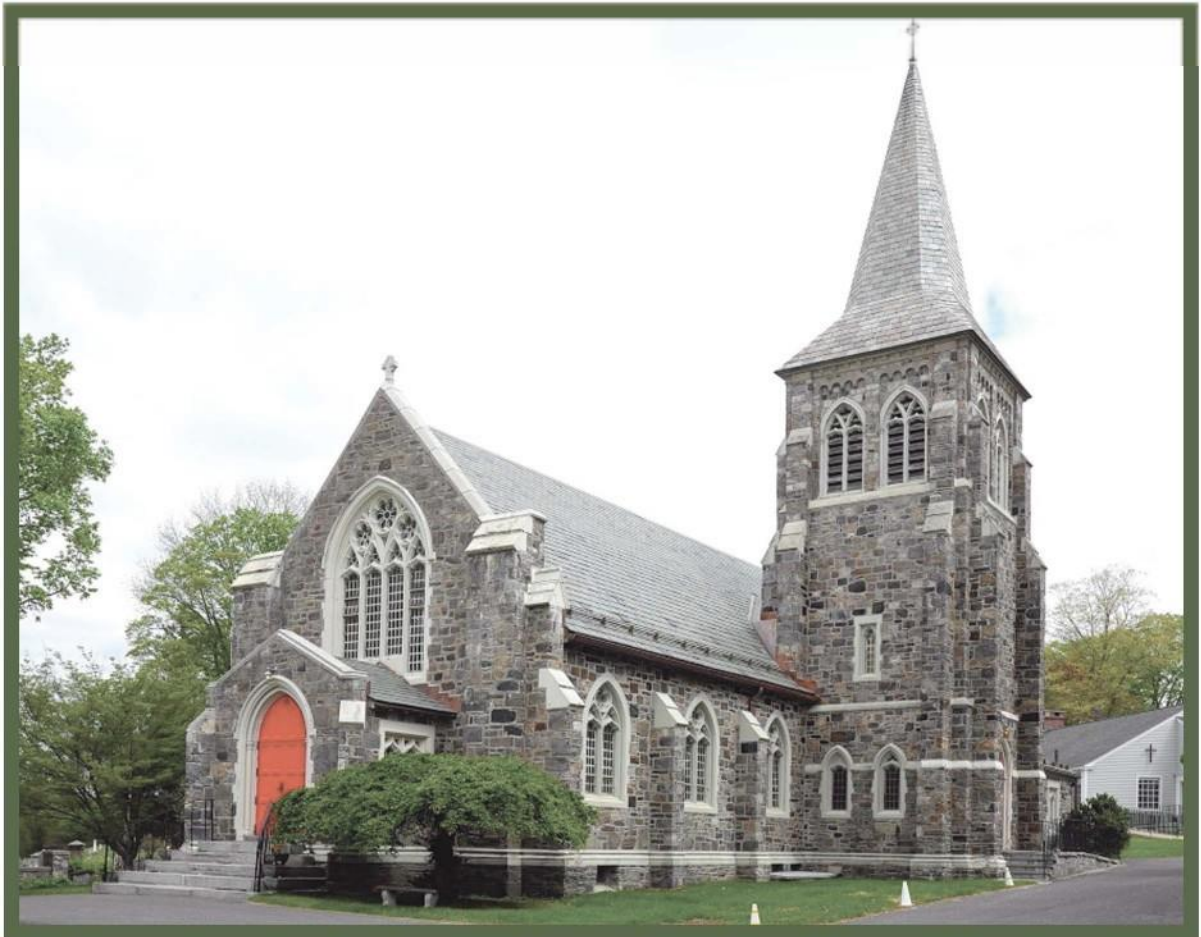


St. John's Episcopal Church



Annual Reports 2024
February 2nd, 2025

78 Green Hill Rd, Washington, CT 06793

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 a community of faith, specifically

- its instinct for 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

Guidelines for Dialogue

(developed by VISIONS, Inc)

“Try on”

Just like shopping for clothes, try on new ideas. You don't have to buy them, and you might just learn something.

It's okay to disagree

We can love each other as Christians and not hold the same opinion on everything. *We disagree with ideas, not people.*

It is not okay to blame, shame, or attack, self or others

Disagree with ideas, not people. Don't say “This is a stupid idea, *but* . . .”

Practice “self-focus”

Pay attention to what is going on with you. *Speak in “I” statements.*

100% responsibility for own learning

What you get out of this experience is up to you.

Practice “both/and” thinking

Try holding seemingly contradictory ideas simultaneously. *See if you can use “and” in place of “but.”*

Notice both process and content

Be attentive to how things are said as well as what is said. Also notice what may be missing.

Be aware of intent and impact

Well intended comments are not always received as such. We need to be mindful of the impact we can have on others. *Say “ouch” when someone says something that hurts, or “wow” when someone says something that surprises you.*

Maintain confidentiality

What is said here stays here. *It is not appropriate to tell someone else's story.*

**ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
WASHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

**ANNUAL MEETING
February 2, 2025**

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING PRAYER

REVIEW OF THE ST. JOHN'S MISSION STATEMENT

REVIEW OF THE GUIDELINES FOR MUTUALITY

APPROVAL OF THE VOTING ROLL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE 2024 ANNUAL MEETING

PRESENTATION OF THE SLATE FOR ELECTION

ELECTION OF VESTRY MEMBERS AND DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVES

WARDENS' REPORT

PRESENTATION OF THE 2025 BUDGET AND OTHER FINANCIAL REPORTS

QUESTIONS ABOUT REPORTS PRESENTED

STATE OF THE PARISH ADDRESS BY THE RECTOR

ADJOURNMENT

CLOSING PRAYER

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2025

Voting Members

If your name should be on this list, but is missing, please call the Parish Office.

Mr. Bill Bardel	Dr. Larry Di Fabrizio	Mr. John Magee
Ms. Penny Bardel	Ms. Jill DiLosa	Ms. Susie Magee
Dr. James Bauer	Mr. Jeffrey Drubner	Capt. Rudy Mangels
Joanne Bauer	Ms. Sophia Sutton Drubner	Ms. Marcela Manubens
Ms. Diana Beattie	Mr. Charles Dubow	Mr. Philip Markert
Mr. Dick Beattie	Ms. Melinda Dubow	Ms. Susie Markert
Ms. Joan Beattie	Mr. Tom Dulack	Ms. Sarah Lee Martin
Nick Benson	Ms. Veronique Dulack	Ms. Karen Martinelli-Saxe
Mr. Edward Bent	Ms. Lili Dyer	Ms. Susan McFeely
Ms. Rebecca Bent	Ms. Natalie Dyer	Ms. Katherine Michie
Ms. Joanne Berger-Sweeney	Ms. Ashleigh Fernandez	Mr. Arthur Miller
Mr. Urs Berger	Ms. Emily Fitzhugh	Ms. Nancy A. Miller
Mr. John Treacy Beyer	Ms. Holly Flor	Mr. Justin Ormand
Mr. Worth Bracken	Ms. Ruth Forge	Ms. Kirsten Peckerman
Mr. Hunter Brown	Mr. Robert H. Futh	Mr. Rod Pleasants
Dr Ann M. Burton	Ms. Sally Futh	Mr. Alec Purves
Chris Campbell	Ms. Camille Gillespie	Ms. Lee Reese
Darcy Campbell	Mr. David Gillespie	Mr. Richard Reese
Mr. Joseph Claro	Mr. Edmond Gum	Mr. Robert Reynolds
Mr. Kevin Clemente	Ms. Emily Gum	Ms. Virginia Reynolds
Ms. Kathleen Clynes	Fr. Geoffrey Hahneman	Ms. Lisa Rossi
Mr. Bob Coles	Ms. Anne Hayes	Ms. Jill Sauser
Ms. Sara Coles	Mr. Nikko Hayes	Mr. Marty Sauser
Mr. Jay Collins	Ms. Audrey Hecken	Ms. Susanna Salk
Ms. Roberta Connolly	Ms. Ann Hodgman	Ms. Susan Schulman Schultz
Mr. William Cox	Mr. Tom Hollinger t	Ms. Kelly Anne Sidely
Ms. Laura Daly	Mr. Douglas Holtquis	Mr. Richard C. Snider
Mr. Tim Daly	Ms. Corinne Johnson	Mr. Jon W. Somes
Ms. Betty Daniels	Mr. Andris Kalnins	Mr. Jerry Strawbridge
Mr. Thomas Daniels	Dr. Bert Keating	Ms. Suzi Strawbridge
Ms. Joan Davidson	Ms. Mary Jo Keating	Dr. Ann Belford Ulanov
Mr. William Davidson	Mrs. Kirsten B. Knutson	Mr. Carter Walker, III
Ms. Mary G. Davis	Mr. Sean Krebs	Ms. MB Witt
Mr. Michael Del Nin	Ms. Regine Laverge-Schade	Ms. Darby Wright
Ms. Sarah DePolo	Ms. Carolyn Bransford	Mr. Harry Wright
Ms. Claudia Di Fabrizio	MacDonald	Mr. Chris Zaima

St. John's Episcopal Church
Budget vs. Actuals YTD 2024
 January - December 2024

	Dec 2024		Total	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Income				
A. Weekly Collections			0.00	0.00
Loose Plate	2,182.25	1,250.00	9,674.25	15,000.00
Non-Pledge Offerings	3,143.65	416.67	8,768.65	5,000.00
Pledge Income	26,065.00	12,500.00	145,370.47	150,000.00
Pledge Prior Year Income		0.00	3,250.00	5,000.00
		\$		\$
Total A. Weekly Collections	\$31,390.90	14,166.67	\$167,063.37	175,000.00
Endowment Fund transfers	-20,000.00	0.00	67,476.56	67,500.00
Fundraiser Income	47,208.07	2,500.00	64,718.82	30,000.00
Prior Year FR			15,792.00	0.00
		\$		\$
Total Fundraiser Income	\$47,208.07	2,500.00	\$ 80,510.82	30,000.00
Grants			28,000.00	0.00
Interest Received	2.37		17.49	0.00
Liturgical Income			0.00	0.00
Flowers	150.00		2,310.00	0.00
Music Income			264.00	0.00
		\$		\$
Total Liturgical Income	\$ 150.00	0.00	\$ 2,574.00	0.00
Outreach Income	10,201.91		11,441.91	0.00
Rental use of Property	5,200.00	4,116.67	50,350.00	49,400.00
		\$		\$
Total Income	\$73,553.25	20,783.34	\$407,434.15	321,900.00
		\$		\$
Gross Profit	\$73,553.25	20,783.34	\$407,434.15	321,900.00
Expenses				
Clergy			0.00	0.00
Salary	3,056.26	3,056.26	39,731.38	39,731.38
SS allowance	343.74	343.74	4,468.62	4,468.62
		\$		\$
Total Clergy Salary	\$ 3,400.00	3,400.00	\$ 44,200.00	44,200.00
Medical Insurance	161.26	170.30	2,096.40	2,213.90
Prof. Expense & Continuing Ed		279.17	761.05	3,350.00
Supply Priests		500.00	456.68	3,000.00
		\$		\$
Total Clergy	\$ 3,561.26	4,349.47	\$ 47,514.13	52,763.90
Episcopal Church			0.00	0.00
Diocesan Pledge	1,405.42	1,405.42	16,865.04	16,865.00
Pension from 2013			8,024.54	0.00
		\$		\$
Total Episcopal Church	\$ 1,405.42	1,405.42	\$ 24,889.58	16,865.00
Fundraiser Exp Prior Year			1,236.34	0.00

Fundraiser Expenses	16,319.40		30,880.72	0.00
Total Music	\$11,885.48	\$ 4,912.46	\$ 52,497.93	\$ 53,452.00
Office & administrative			0.00	0.00
Audit			1,750.00	0.00
Bank Fees			80.00	0.00
Communications			0.00	0.00
Donor Database	37.00		444.00	0.00
Internet			3,451.08	0.00
IT Tech Support	570.00		1,441.40	0.00
Total Communications	\$ 607.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 5,336.48	\$ 0.00
Computer & Copier Expenses	1,420.00		8,484.58	0.00
Office Supplies	154.00	2,083.33	1,579.31	25,000.00
Office wages	5,420.00	4,166.67	52,760.00	50,000.00
Online Processing Fees	181.31		839.43	0.00
Payroll Expenses	243.55		2,810.23	0.00
Worker's Comp Insurance			319.00	0.00
Total Payroll Expenses	\$ 243.55	\$ 0.00	\$ 3,129.23	\$ 0.00
Payroll taxes	620.16		4,254.83	0.00
Total Office & administrative	\$ 8,646.02	\$ 6,250.00	\$ 78,213.86	\$ 75,000.00
Program Expenses			0.00	0.00
Outreach	11,000.00	10,000.00	11,441.91	10,000.00
Parish Life	117.62	416.67	1,811.47	5,000.00
Picnic			156.57	0.00
Web Page			155.88	0.00
Total Program Expenses	\$11,117.62	\$ 10,416.67	\$ 13,565.83	\$ 15,000.00
Property			0.00	0.00
Alarm Fee	258.49		2,150.07	0.00
Bldgs. & Grounds	1,111.81	5,458.33	38,014.39	65,500.00
Building Rental Use Expense	7,948.87		54,707.72	0.00
Total Bldgs. & Grounds	\$ 9,060.68	\$ 5,458.33	\$ 92,722.11	\$ 65,500.00
Church Supplies	96.21		2,983.91	0.00
Property & Liab. Ins (Q)	2,854.96	0.00	13,143.57	27,000.00
Utilities	5,450.19	3,333.33	29,477.34	40,000.00
Total Property	\$17,720.53	\$ 8,791.66	\$140,477.00	\$ 132,500.00
Worship			0.00	0.00
Altar Supplies	322.82	250.00	900.30	3,000.00
Flowers	214.80	83.33	996.68	1,000.00
Total Worship	\$ 537.62	\$ 333.33	\$ 1,896.98	\$ 4,000.00
Total Expenses	\$71,193.35	\$ 36,459.01	\$391,172.37	\$ 349,580.90
Net Operating Income	\$ 2,359.90	-\$ 15,675.67	\$ 16,261.78	-\$ 27,680.90
Net Income	\$ 2,359.90	-\$ 15,675.67	\$ 16,261.78	-\$ 27,680.90

St. John's Episcopal Church Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2024

	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Church Operations	
Church Checking #6401	48,293.40
PayPal	0.00
Petty Cash	262.80
	\$
Total Church Operations	48,556.20
Church Savings (Funds)	48,789.65
Designated Funds	
Investments-USBWM Hull	87,608.47
	\$
Total Designated Funds	87,608.47
	\$
Total Bank Accounts	184,954.32
Other Current Assets	
Investments - D&B Endowment	1,537,641.34
USBWM Custodian Acct -7690	716,729.60
Temporary Foundation Funds	50,000.00
	\$
Total USBWM Custodian Acct -7690	766,729.60
	\$
Total Other Current Assets	2,304,370.94
	\$
Total Current Assets	2,489,325.26
	\$
TOTAL ASSETS	2,489,325.26
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Credit Cards	
Mitchell Oil Line of Credit	3,813.00
USB Visa CC	0.00
	\$
Total Credit Cards	3,813.00
Other Current Liabilities	
Eversource Energy Effic Loan	1,088.79
Investments	
D&B Endowment Fund	1,537,641.34
	\$
Total D&B Endowment Fund	1,537,641.34
USBWMA Endowment	797,729.60

	\$
Total Investments	2,335,370.94
Prepaid Pledge Income	20,600.00
Restricted Investment Funds	
Hull Scholarship Fund	87,608.47
Total Restricted Investment Funds	87,608.47
	\$
Temporarily Restricted Funds	
Emergency Center Fund	7,600.00
Music Fund	3,313.44
Parish Discretionary Fund	1,676.21
Rectory Capital Reserve	0.00
Security Deposit Fund	5,200.00
Total Temporarily Restricted Funds	17,789.65
	\$
Total Other Current Liabilities	2,462,457.85
	\$
Total Current Liabilities	2,466,270.85
	\$
Total Liabilities	2,466,270.85
Equity	
	\$
Total Equity	23,054.41
	\$
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	2,489,325.26

2025 BUDGET

Income

A. Weekly Collections

Loose Plate	\$	8,000.00
Non-Pledge Offerings	\$	6,000.00
Pledge Income	\$	150,000.00
Pledge Prior Year Income	\$	4,000.00

Total A. Weekly Collections \$ 168,000.00

B. Endowment Transfers

Endowment Fund Transfer @ 5% *	\$	80,000.00
Excess Endowment Fund Transfer**	\$	54,603.00

Total B. Endowment Transfers \$ 134,603.00

C. Fundraiser Income

2025 Fundraiser Income	\$	40,000.00
2024 Fundraiser Income received 2025	\$	15,000.00

Total C: Fundraiser Income \$ 55,000.00

D. Grants \$ 18,000.00

E. Rental Income (rectory and parish hall) \$ 69,600.00

Total Income-All Sources (A-E) \$ 445,203.00

EXPENSES

A. Clergy

Salary	\$	40,900.00
SS allowance	\$	4,600.00
Medical Insurance	\$	2,200.00
Prof. Expense & Continuing Ed	\$	3,500.00
Supply Priests	\$	3,000.00

Total A. Clergy \$ 54,200.00

B. Music \$ 58,452.00

C. ECCT Diocesan Pledge \$ 27,061.00

D. Office and Administrative

Auditor	\$	1,750.00
Communications (internet and technical support)	\$	4,500.00
Copier	\$	8,340.00
Office Supplies	\$	3,000.00
Office Personnel Wages	\$	55,000.00
Online Processing Fees	\$	1,000.00
Payroll Service Expenses	\$	3,000.00
Worker's Comp Insurance	\$	400.00
Payroll taxes	\$	4,000.00

Total D. Office & administrative	—	\$ 80,990.00
E. Program Expenses		
Outreach	\$	10,000.00
Parish Life	\$	5,000.00
Total E. Program Expenses	—	\$ 15,000.00
F. Fundraiser Expenses		
2024 Expenses Paid I 2025	\$	1,500.00
2025 Expenses	\$	20,000.00
Total F. Findraising Expenses	\$	21,500.00
G. Property Expenses		
Alarm Fee	\$	2,000.00
Buildings & Grounds	\$	40,000.00
Building Rental Use Expense	\$	10,000.00
Loan to Foundation for Restoration Project	\$	50,000.00
Reserve for Rectory Cpaital Expenditures	\$	25,000.00
Property & Liability Insurance	\$	27,000.00
Utilities	\$	30,000.00
Total G. Property Expenses	—	\$ 184,000.00
H. Worship		
Altar Supplies	\$	3,000.00
Flowers	\$	1,000.00
Total H. Worship	—	\$ 4,000.00
Total Expenses-All Uses (A-H)	—	\$ 445,203.00
Net Operating Income	—	\$ -

Notes:

* This represents an endowment draw rate of approximately 5% of the 3-year quarterly trailing average

**This is the amount of an additional endowment draw (or additional income from other sources) required to bring the budget into balance

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
Washington, Connecticut
January 28, 2024**

The meeting marks the 228th year of St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington, Connecticut, and was held in the Parish Hall after the 10:00 a.m. Mass, and called to order at 12:02 p.m. Substantially more than a quorum of parishioners was present, including Fr. Hahneman, Tom Brand, Michael Del Nin, Rebecca Bent, David & Camille Gillespie, Karen & Evan Saxe, Richard Snider & Jon Somes, Ine Laverge, Emily Fitzhugh, Bob & Sally Futh, Bob & Sara Coles, Rod Pleasants, Richard & Leslie Weigel, Justin Ormand & Joseph Claro, Natalie Dyer, Corinne Johnson, Edmond Wheeler Gum, Penny Bardel, Sarah Lee Martin & Andris Kalnins, Susan McFeely, MB Witt, Veronique Dulack, Susie & John Magee, Susan Markert, and Worth Bracken.

Fr. Hahneman opened the meeting with prayer and reviewed the Guidelines of Mutuality provided by the Episcopal Church in Connecticut. Ms. Davis then delivered remarks, thanking Fr. Hahneman, Tom Brand, and the Vestry members for their service and dedication during 2023.

Fr. Hahneman then presented the voting roll, as approved by the Vestry and as amended to include MB Witt and Chris Zaima.

The minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting were accepted and approved.

Fr. Hahneman presented the slate of officers and Vestry members presented by the Nominating Committee, and it was approved by a vote of those in attendance. The elected slate was as follows:

For Warden for two years: *Mary Davis* (reelected)

For Warden for one year: *Worth Bracken* (to complete Jay Bauer's term following his resignation)

For Treasurer for one year: *David Gillespie*

For Assistant Treasurer for one year: *Andris Kalnins*

For Clerk for one year: *Justin Ormand*

For the Vestry Class of 2026 for three years: *Laura Daly* (second term), *Veronique Dulack* (second term), and *Justin Ormand*

For the Delegates to the Diocesan Convention for one year: *Sara Coles and MB Witt*

For Alternate Delegate to the Diocesan Convention for one year: *Laura Daly*

Continuing in their current roles are Vestry members Rebecca Bent, Michael Del Nin and Susan McFeely (Vestry Class of 2024), and Vestry members MB Witt, Sara Coles and Andris Kalnins (Vestry Class of 2025).

Mr. Gillespie delivered the Treasurer's Report and presented the proposed budget for 2023 as approved by the Vestry. The proposed budget was received without comment or question.

Mr. Brand commented on the Music Program for the prior year, noting the many special programs and events that were held, and presenting his vision for initiatives in 2024.

The floor was opened for questions and discussion, including discussion of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut's new bishop, the Right Reverend Jeffrey W. Mello. Appreciation was expressed by all for the generous bequest left to the Church by Hedda van Goeben upon her passing.

Fr. Hahneman addressed the state of the Parish, as more fully set forth in his written report. He thanked everyone in the Parish for their contributions over the past year. He confirmed that he will remain Priest-in-Charge through the end of 2024, and urged the Parish to focus on transitional concerns, in particular the need for the Parish to become a Parish led by parishioners. Fr. Hahneman also noted the need for more Lay Preachers and Lay Worship Leaders, Readers, and Veejays. He further reported that pledges were up, as was attendance at Christmas Mass and Evensong services.

Fr. Hahneman closed the meeting with prayer. Following the dismissal by Fr. Hahneman at 1:11p.m., the meeting was adjourned.

Reports were submitted by the Priest-in-Charge, the Organist-Choir Master, the Wardens, the Treasurer, the Stewardship Committee, the Building and Grounds Committee, the Readers and Eucharistic Ministers, the Diocesan Delegates, the Northwest Region Leadership Team, the Outreach Committee, the Holiday Fete Committee, the Altar Guild, the Floral Guild, the Lay Worship Leaders & Preachers, and the Hospitality Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,
Justin Ormand
Clerk

NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICERS, DIOCESAN DELEGATES, AND MEMBERS OF THE VESTRY FOR 2025

The Committee nominates one Warden in 2025: ***Worth Bracken***, currently a Warden, to a new term. The current term of Warden Mary Davis continues through 2025.

The Committee also nominates three Vestry members, to serve in the Class of 2027: ***Rebecca Bent***, ***Michael Del Nin***; and ***Susan McFeely***.

The Committee also nominates the following Officers: ***David Gillespie*** as Treasurer, ***Andris Kalnins*** as Assistant Treasurer, and ***Justin Ormand*** as Clerk.

Biographical paragraphs for all nominees have been included in prior years and are on file in the Parish Office.

Individuals nominated to be elected at this year's Annual Meeting on February 2, 2025, are listed below in bold italics:

OFFICERS:

Warden: ***Worth Bracken***, for a two-year term

Treasurer: ***David Gillespie***, for a one-year term

Assistant Treasurer: ***Andris Kalnins***, for a one-year term

Clerk: ***Justin Ormand***, for a one-year term

Members of the Vestry Classes of 2025 and 2026 remain unchanged:

Class of 2025: ***Sara Coles, Andris Kalnins, MB Witt***

Class of 2026: ***Laura Daly, Véronique Dulack, Justin Ormand***

VESTRY CLASS OF 2027, for a three-year term each:

Rebecca Bent

Michael Del Nin

Susan McFeely

DIOCESAN DELEGATES AND ALTERNATE, for a one-year term each:

Delegates: ***Sara Coles*** and ***M.B. Witt***

Alternate: ***Laura Daly***

Respectfully Submitted by the Nominating Committee

Camille Gillespie

Susan Markert

Virginia Reynolds

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2024

A balance sheet and income and expense report for 2024 is included within this Annual Report.

The backbone of the parish's annual budget is pledge income. Last year we budgeted \$150,000, and although the pledges made exceeded that amount, as of the writing of this report, we still have approximately \$15,000 in outstanding 2024 pledges. ***If any of your 2024 pledge remains outstanding, please remember to satisfy your pledge, as these funds directly support the current operations of the parish.***

We have been endeavoring to limit endowment withdrawals to five percent of a three-year trailing average of the balance in the Endowment (5% of the average balance of the previous 12 quarters). Budgeted withdrawals from the endowment for 2024 were \$67,500, and although at one point during the year the withdrawals exceeded \$87,000,

but thanks to income generated by the extremely successful 2024 Parish Christmas Fete and rental income from the Rectory, the excess withdrawals have been restored to the Endowment, so that the net 2024 withdrawals remained within budget. We managed to achieve this result even in the face of additional, exceptional, non-budgeted expenses in 2024, which included replacement of the Rectory windows, replacement of the Rectory's basement stairway (both projects totaling approximately \$40,000), and a \$50,000 loan to the St. John's Foundation to assist in the funding of the first phase of the new and much-needed restoration project for the masonry of the church building. Note that the Vestry authorized a loan to the Foundation of up to \$100,000 to fund the restoration project (the balance of which may be drawn in 2025).

We should offer especial thanks for extremely generous contributions made to the Endowment for the long-term support of the parish from the estates of former parishioners Hedda von Goeben (\$1,527,157) and Russ Elgin (\$121,000). These contributions will continue to support the parish for years to come. Testamentary bequests such as these are critical to the future of the parish, and we all should bear in mind the leadership of Hedda and Russ when doing our own estate and financial planning.

Also of note is the three-year lease agreement for the Rectory that was entered into with the Gunn School, for use as faculty and administrative housing. This will generate \$48,000 a year in steady rental income. In addition, the school will assume responsibility for utilities and much of the maintenance, while the Vestry may still at any time give nine months' notice to end the rental, if needs for a future Rector arose.

Respectfully submitted,
David Gillespie
Treasurer

STEWARDSHIP REPORT FOR 2025

To date, St. John's has received 41 Pledges, currently the same as last year's Report! The financial result is comparable to 2024, although growth is the goal. The Stewardship Committee would like to thank the members of the Vestry and all those who pledged their financial contribution to achieving this result, *and we encourage anyone who has not pledged for 2025 to do so*. Pledges express commitment to St. John's; the Vestry, and the Finance Committee who use these pledges to calculate how much money St. John's will have in its budget over the next year, so that they can plan accordingly for the next year of bills, worship services, salaries, outreach, and education.

Thank you to all who have pledged financial support to St. John's Church for 2025

<i>William and Penny Bardel</i> <i>James and Joanne Bauer</i> <i>Dick and Diane Beattie</i> <i>Ted and Rebecca Bent</i> <i>Urs and Joanne Berger</i> <i>Worth Bracken</i> <i>Sara and Robert Coles</i> <i>Laura and Tim Daly</i> <i>Tom and Betty Daniels</i> <i>Mary Davis</i> <i>Michael Del Nin</i> <i>Claudia and Larry Di Fabrizio</i> <i>Tom and Veronique Dulack</i> <i>Natalie H. Dyer</i> <i>Natalie S. Dyer</i> <i>Emily Fitzhugh</i> <i>Holly and Rudy Flor/Mangels</i> <i>David and Camille Gillespie</i> <i>The Reverend Dr. Geoffrey Hahneman</i> <i>Tom Hollinger</i>	<i>Kirsten Knutson</i> <i>Corinne Johnson</i> <i>Andris Kalnins and Sarah Lee Martin</i> <i>Herbert and Mary Jo Keating</i> <i>Susan McFeely</i> <i>Carolynne Bransford MacDonald</i> <i>Marcela Manubens</i> <i>John and Susie Magee</i> <i>Philip and Susan Markert</i> <i>Katharine Michie</i> <i>Nancy Miller</i> <i>Rodney Pleasants</i> <i>Alex Purves</i> <i>Robert and Virginia Reynolds</i> <i>Susanna Salk & Jay Collins</i> <i>Karen Saxe</i> <i>Richard Snider and Jon Somes</i> <i>John and Suzi Strawbridge</i> <i>Dr. Ann Ulanov</i> <i>MB Witt</i> <i>Harry and Darby Wright</i>
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Respectfully submitted,
Joan Burgess
Foundation Administrator

THE WARDENS' REPORT FOR 2024

The year 2024 was a period of continued rejuvenation, with foci on fortifying parish leadership and facilities, strengthening church activities, and fostering bonds of community.

An important and very positive leadership development was the decision to invite Father Geoff to assume the position of rector of St. John's, after serving as priest-in-charge. This change was made possible by a revision of Connecticut diocesan rules governing the appointment of rectors. Immediately upon learning of the change, the wardens made relevant inquiries with Father Geoff, the vestry and members of the congregation to ascertain support. These inquiries were met with unanimous approval – and, indeed, with joy and celebration! The vestry voted in approval in November, and a service of installation was held on Sunday, January 5, 2025, with Bishop Laura Ahrens as celebrant.

The wardens and vestry also took positive steps to ensure continued good stewardship of St. John's facilities. These included signing a lease on the rectory with the Frederick Gunn School, which will be using the building for faculty and administration housing. The initial lease will last two to three years, with options for renewal. The lease accomplishes two positive financial goals and at least one significant community-building objective: it creates an income stream; it relieves the parish of several maintenance obligations; and it fosters ties of goodwill and trust with an important educational neighbor.

Another important development was the planning and execution of a trial-phase renovation project on the church building itself. (For more information, please see "Renovations Report" in this Annual Report.) In addition, initial inquiries were made about painting the cottage. The Parish House remains in good condition and was used for office administration, parish gatherings, and as a location for yoga classes, as well as for the annual Fête.

Regarding church activities apart from Sunday services, Father Geoff continued to lead Bible study classes on Friday mornings in the Parish House. He also organized blood drives for the Red Cross, Zoom meetings of the St. John's Book Club, outreach to food banks and animal shelters, and the screening of a film, *The Philadelphia Eleven*, about the drive to ordain women in the Episcopal Church.

St. John's repeated its fall picnic at Waldingfield Farm – now an annual event – which was deemed a great success despite another rainy Sunday. The picnic was also an opportunity for Rumsey Hall students to gain some community-service credits, as they volunteered for transporting and setting it up, under the guidance of Karen Saxe and Robert Brenner of Rumsey Hall. A pot-luck luncheon was also held following a special pre-Hallowe'en service at the end of October, which included a Hallowe'en trivia game for students of Rumsey Hall (and everyone else), organized by Karen Saxe. Additional activities included an Easter egg hunt, Evensong services, and the Christmastime Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. The St. John's Fête was again a great success, leading to a substantial contribution by St. John's to the Washington Scholarship Fund (for more information, please see "The Holiday Fete" in this Annual Report).

Thus, the wardens believe that 2024 further strengthened church fundamentals, contributing to a firm foundation on which to continue advancing spiritual and communal goals. We understand that there is still work to do, and we are heartened to report on our optimism for the coming year. We and the vestry as a whole invite anyone with ideas or thoughts – or worries or complaints – to contact us and discuss them – we are eager to serve and meet the needs of parishioners and all those in our broader community!

Respectfully yours,

Mary Davis

Worth Bracken

Wardens

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS REPORT FOR 2024

Buildings:

- (1) *The Rectory* . . . has been officially rented to the Gunn School effective July 1, 2024 for a term of three years, with the option to renew for another two years at \$4,000 per month plus all utilities;
- (2) *The Cottage* . . . remains used by Tom Brand and his family as part of the Music Program for St. John's;
- (3) *The Parish Hall* . . . continues to rent to Ah Yoga on an annual basis, plus several others from time to time, like the Washington Garden Club. We also let the American Red Cross utilize the space for their Blood Drives several times during the year.

Grounds and Property Maintenance:

General maintenance of the Church properties continued throughout 2024 thanks to Dawn and Dave, however, with the rental of the Rectory to the Gunn School property concerns have slowed down considerably. The new windows and storms were installed in the Rectory and provisions were made to have the steps leading down to the basement in the Rectory replaced. The Cottage needed a new refrigerator which, thanks to Rod Pleasants, there was an extra one in his garage which he donated to St. John's! Outdoor maintenance, including Spring and Fall cleanup of the property grounds continued with BAS; Bartlett Tree maintenance continued with the two large trees on the front grounds of the Rectory and Church; and Elsa's Cleaning Service continued their weekly cleaning of the Parish Hall and Church and monthly cleaning of the Cottage.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McFeely

Property Chair of Buildings and Grounds

RENOVATIONS REPORT FOR 2024

The St. John's Foundation undertook a trial-phase renovation of select portions of the exterior masonry of St. John's Church in 2024. Planning and contract negotiations took place in the spring and summer; the active portion of the project took approximately two months to complete in the fall. The project was necessary because extensive deterioration of mortar is clearly evident upon even the most superficial visual inspection; the building remains structurally sound, but large cracks, loose stones and crumbling cast stone appear in many places.

Two of the most-damaged sections of the building were addressed: a section of wall to the left of the front entrance, and the north side of the chancel wall and two of those buttresses. The project had two primary goals: 1) To investigate the nature and extent of damage, thereby providing a reservoir of accurate and current knowledge that could be used for planning the renovation of the church as a whole (hence being

described as a “trial-phase” project); 2) Repairing the sections that were included in the project.

In order to facilitate planning and management, a building committee was formed that comprised Worth Bracken, Ph.D. and Alec Purves, Emeritus Professor of Architecture at Yale, both of the St. John’s Foundation, and Peter Talbot, AIA, a highly respected local architect and native of Washington. For project management and technical specifications, the Foundation engaged the engineering firm of Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. (WJE). WJE has extensive experience working with older stone buildings, including structures at Yale, and the firm has detailed knowledge of St. John’s Church through their production of a thorough review of the structure in 2011. Josh Jaskowiak was the main point of contact with WJE. The Foundation also secured the services of Ben Pear, of Benjamin Pear Masonry, who advised on mortar composition and stone, and who undertook the highly skilled work involving cleaning and resetting stones and repointing joints. The building committee found the work of both contractors to be exemplary.

At an early stage of planning, the committee, with the support of the Foundation’s board, determined that it would be most expeditious and budget-conscious to limit the scope of the project to a design-build procedure, a highly collaborative process in which WJE provided both design and technical specifications as well as oversight of construction. As hoped and expected, collaboration between the various parties was smooth and highly productive.

The project was funded through private donations, including an indispensable and very generous jump-start gift from Audrey Hecken and family, with the late Ken Hecken’s great love of and service to St. John’s in mind. Additional funding was generously provided by other parishioners, including Natalie Dyer and Robert and Virginia Reynolds, and by existing funds of the Foundation.

The main construction phase of the project came in under budget and well within the timeframe originally envisioned. Two final non-construction steps remain (as of this writing). First, Ben Pear has secured a crane lift to hoist himself, engineers from WJE, and a member of the committee for a close visual inspection of the exterior of the tower (the interior was inspected twice during the project’s construction phase; the tower was not included in the 2015 work involving the installation of the new slate roof). One minor construction addition is planned for the spring of 2025: repairs to the cast stone of the chancel window in the north wall.

Following the tower inspection, the engineers will present a final report, including an in-person meeting to discuss possible next steps for repairing the rest of the church. Two preliminary findings may be received with a sigh of relief and gratitude: the church building is structurally sound; and it does not appear to need complete repointing. The point must be emphasized, however, that this trial-phase project reinforced the

impression gained upon visual inspection that the damage evident throughout the masonry is in imminent need of repair.

Respectfully yours,
Worth Bracken
President, St. John's Foundation

MUSIC PROGRAM REPORT FOR 2024

Music once again played a vital role in the worship life of our parish during 2024. The following are some highlights:

CHOIRS:

Our Chancel Choir and Schola Cantorum performed a diverse array of repertoire in styles ranging from Medieval plainsong to Renaissance and Baroque polyphony to Anglican cathedral anthems by Romantic, 20th Century, and contemporary composers, as well as spirituals, gospel hymns, and folk song arrangements. *We are always eager to welcome new choir members*, so if you or someone you know may be interested in joining, please contact Organist & Choirmaster, Tom Brand.

SPECIAL MUSICAL PROGRAMS & EVENTS:

Throughout 2024, St. John's hosted a number of special musical programs, many of which were well attended by parishioners and community members alike. These programs included the following:

- *February 11*: Choral Evensong featuring the St. John's Choirs, Saecula Schola Cantorum, and the Vocal Ensemble of the Frederick Gunn School
- *April 28*: Chamber Concert featuring musicians and ensembles of the Frederick Gunn School
- *June 18-20*: Saecula Choral Academy Summer Retreat
- *June 18*: Evensong featuring Saecula Vocal Ensemble
- *June 19*: Juneteenth Gospel Songfest featuring Saecula Vocal Ensemble, United Girls' Choir, and Michael Brown
- *September 22*: Elm City Girls' Choir performed as guest ensemble in the 10:00 a.m. service
- *November 3*: Choral Evensong featuring the St. John's Choirs
- *December 15*: A Traditional Service of Nine Lessons & Carols in candlelight, featuring the St. John's Choirs
- *December 24*: Christmas Eve Family Service & Midnight Mass featuring the St. John's Choirs

EQUIPMENT & RESOURCES:

Our pipe organ has been experiencing chronic electrical issues, which have resulted in occasional interruptions in its operation. Thanks to the generous assistance and specialized skill set of Wheeler Gum, we have managed to keep the organ functioning despite the fact that it is in need of some significant electrical work. Wheeler recommends that the organ's electrical system undergo a full professional evaluation in the near future in order to determine what will be needed to restore it to a reliable state.

Our choirs have continued to enjoy the many benefits of reading digital sheet music on tablets. In December 2024, we acquired five additional Samsung Galaxy tablets, ten new Wenger music stands, some replacement chargers and styli, and an additional charging station for tablets. These items will support the continued use of this powerful technology.

VISION, STRATEGIC PLANNING, AND NEW INITIATIVES:

The future holds many exciting possibilities for our music ministry. Considerable interest has been expressed in establishing additional choral opportunities and training programs for children and youth. Our vision is to establish St. John's as a beacon of musical excellence and world-class choral education, and a venue which hosts frequent performances by outstanding guest artists and visiting ensembles. We are pleased by the recent progress we have made in building relationships with neighboring institutions, such as Frederick Gunn School, Rumsey Hall School, and Saecula Choir Foundation*, and we look forward to continuing to develop those relationships in the coming years.

**Saecula Choir Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization whose goal is to establish North America's first pre-college conservatory for choral conducting. Saecula and St. John's have forged a strong relationship, and there is potential for establishing a formal partnership in the future that could support both institutions in achieving their respective goals. Anyone who may be interested in playing a role in fundraising and/or strategic planning for such an endeavor is encouraged to contact Tom Brand or Father Geoff Hahneman.*

Our existing Choral Scholar program is exceptional, and it is clear that expanding our music program to include additional opportunities for children and youth can continue to attract new families to the parish, have a significant positive impact on the community, and establish the reputation of St. John's as a hub of professional-caliber musical training for young choristers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

Special thanks go out to Emily D'Souza, who once again served capably as our summer organist throughout July and August. Emily is a Choral Scholar at St. John's and a member of the Elm City Girls' Choir and Saecula Singers who often serves as apprentice conductor of our Schola and Chancel Choir on Sunday mornings. She has

received musicianship training and introductory organ instruction from the Saecula Choral Institute and Organ Exploration Program.

Shout-outs also go to *Spencer Yang* and *Esther Lin*, two gifted young pianists who shared their talents with our congregation by playing postludes on Sunday mornings.

I extend heartfelt gratitude to Father Geoff, the Wardens, Vestry, staff, parishioners, and of course all of our dedicated choir members and their families for their support of our Music Program throughout the year. It is an honor to serve as Organist & Choirmaster of St. John's, and I look forward to our continuing collaboration as we strive to strengthen and expand the parish's beloved music program.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Brand, Organist & Choirmaster

READERS & EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS REPORT FOR 2024

Readers and Chalicers continued their faithful duties of service to St. John's. *We welcomed several new participants and always welcome more!* Readers' duties include reading the Lessons on Sundays and Major Feasts, and occasionally the Prayers of the People, at both the 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. Sunday services.

Chalicers assist Father Geoff in administering the sacrament during communion by offering the cup of wine, the symbol of Christ's sacrificial blood. Chalicers must be licensed, which the office will facilitate. Sometimes, the Readers at the 8:00 a.m. service are also the Chalicers, if needed. Anyone may serve in both capacities. The duties are separate, and anyone is welcome to be only a Reader, or only a Chalicer, or both. *If you are interested in either of these parish services, please contact Father Geoff or me.*

Respectfully submitted,
Holly Flor
Schedule Coordinator

DIOCESAN DELEGATES' REPORT FOR 2024

The 240th Annual Diocesan Convention was held on Friday, October 26th and Saturday, October 27th at the newly completed Bristol Event Center. St John's was represented by Fr. Geoffrey Hahneman and diocesan representative, MB Witt. Neither Sara Coles nor the Alternate Laura Daly were able to attend. The convention began Friday afternoon with a business meeting and concluded the day with dinner and a jazz band that played throughout the event. And the music was great!

A Eucharist led off Saturday morning with Bishop Melo, Bishop Suffragan Laura Ahrens as celebrants. In Bishop Melo's sermon he said, "We are growing together with Jesus as our vine, our branches are stretching and reaching new places, the very places God wants us to be." He talked about The Restructuring of the Diocesan Staff, Created a Property Advisory Group, Continued work in Anti- racism work and Title IV & Safe Church Practices, Working with churches with no priest, New Director of Lay Ministries & Vocations & Lay Leaders. He said "We are must do as much as we can, whenever we can, wherever we can."

There was a concluding business session Saturday afternoon after which the convention was declared over.

Resolutions were adopted which included:

Convention budget

Clergy compensation

Repudiation of discrimination against LGBTQ+ persons

Acknowledgement of the 175th anniversary of the abolition of slavery in Connecticut

Creation of a reparations fund

Merger of two more parishes.

Respectfully submitted by,

MB Witt

Diocesan delegate

NORTHWEST REGION LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORT FOR 2024

The mission of The Northwest Region Leadership Team of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut is to join God's redemptive work of restoration and reconciliation and acts as a catalyst to new ways of being the body of Christ in the Northwest Region. We do this by: Regularly communicating with our Region's worshipping communities and Ministry Networks to support their efforts to connect, coordinate, and collaborate with each other and their local communities. Convening an annual gathering for sharing our wisdom, experience, and resources.

Nurturing God's Mission in new and meaningful ways with financial support granted annually to new and existing initiatives in the Region. Responding to new initiatives and events with discernment and supporting them when they align with our mission. A major part of our effort in 2024 was the promotion of the Elmore Terrell Trust Grant to foster collaborative ministries. This includes ministries with other faith-based communities or with the community at large. This grant can help fund an existing or new project. The NWRLT reviews the applications and votes on which missions receive

funding. For 2024, recipients of the Elmore Terrell Trust Grants include support for food pantries, clothing, the homeless, community outreach.

Each leadership team is now responsible for its own regional newsletter as the program to have missionaries supporting the teams was discontinued in 2024. The NWRLT's newsletter began in June of 2024 and features news of the region and parish profiles. *Anyone at St. John's wishing to subscribe to the NWRLT newsletter can contact Laura Daly (msdalynac@gmail.com).*

The NWRLT held a gathering on September 28 at Camp Washington, "Room to Breathe: A Time to Draw Near During Times of Division". It was a time of prayer, contemplation, a shared meal, and fun activities as we bonded with each other in Christ's love, respecting our differences and finding joy in each other.

Respectfully submitted by:

Laura Daly

Northwest Region Leadership Co-Convenor and Scribe

THE HOLIDAY FETE REPORT FOR 2024

Co-Chairs: *Susan McFeely & MB Witt*

Steering Committee: Joan Burgess, Veronique Dulack, Ashleigh Fernandez, Ann Hodgman, Regine Laverge, Ron Leal, Sarah Lee Martin, Rod Pleasants, Chris Zaima

Goals:

- (1) Contribute \$10,000 to a designated community Charity
- (2) Continue to raise awareness of St. John's in the Washington and surrounding communities
- (3) Reach new attendees and supporters by expanding our email and online capabilities
- (4) Continue the tradition of St. John's Holiday event by involving as many Parishioners and Friends of St. John's through ticket sales, donations and volunteer hours, all the while having fun doing it!

The 2024 St. John's Holiday Fete was once again a huge success and remains the official start to the holiday season in Washington. This year our event began on Friday, December 6th with a Champagne Reception and Preview Party and then remained open on Saturday and Sunday, December 7th and 8th, for additional shopping. Gross revenues surpassed our expectations to over \$80,000, thanks in part to record ticket sales, a very successful Silent Auction, Hays Worthington's beautiful Jewelry & European Crystal Tree Collection, yummy homemade foods in the Larder, general sales of all furniture items from the Rectory, designer finds in the Couture Closet, which always remains a big draw, expanded amaryllis and paperwhite blooms from Van Engelen, decorative wreaths,

and more great buys in the St. John's Boutique. Another major contributing factor to our success this year was a generous donation of over 200 specialty items and puzzles from the Stephen Sondheim Estate, which added significant revenue to the Fete's bottom line. As a result of our good fortune, St. John's will once again donate \$10,000 to the Washington Scholarship Fund as our designated charity.

To the Steering Committee's tireless efforts and commitment and to all who supported St. John's, we extend our warmest thanks for enabling us to continue the tradition of our Holiday Fete!

Respectfully submitted,

Co-Chairs: Susan McFeely, MB Witt

ALTAR GUILD REPORT FOR 2024

Tradition is one of the hallmarks of St John's and in setting the table for Eucharist each week, we follow in the footsteps of those who came before us and loved St John's as we do. They polished the same silver chalices and brass crosses. There is a holiness and peacefulness in what we do.

Altar Guild Members

Sara Coles, Camille Gillespie, Corinne Johnson, Susie Magee, Virginia Reynolds.

These ladies are so faithful, thank you, each one, and to Geoff and Laura who make our jobs easier. Please consider joining us. ***The Altar Guild is looking for four to five men or women to join the guild.*** No experience is necessary and on-the-job, training is provided. Service is one service per month for teams of two. We especially need people who attend the ten o'clock service. Talk to any of our members and they will tell you that they serve one service a month, the set up and clean up times are flexible, training is provided, and we cover for one another when needed.

This year we are replacing our set of purple Lenten hangings as the old ones were too fragile to continue to use. We will be offering the following items as memorials with designated donor's names embroidered on the items: Pulpit Fall, Bible Markers, Burse and Veil that cover the Chalice, a Priest's Stole and matching Priest's Chasuble (robe). And the exciting news is that we will be recreating the old and quite beautiful designs on new fabric. Stay tuned for more details. Many thanks to Virginia Reynolds, who has spearheaded this project.

St John's is a beautiful place to worship and to be an Altar Guild member is both an honor and a privilege. We serve God and our fellow parishioners.

Respectfully submitted,

MB Witt & Corinne Johnson

Altar Guild Coordinators

OUTREACH REPORT FOR 2024

We are happy to report that, thanks to everyone's generosity and participation, our various *Outreach Calendar* activities have been very successful.

1. Washington/Warren Foodbank

Weekly gathering of food for the Warren Washington food bank continues. The congregation was particularly generous in our special collections during the summer, when the need is particularly higher because so many children are not receiving meals at school!

2. Blood Drives

With the support of WCOOC volunteers, the St. John's hosted quarterly Red Cross Blood Drives in the Parish Hall: on January 19th, July 12th, September 6th, and October 21st in 2024. According to the Red Cross, there is an alarming blood shortage. St John's is committed to continuing its participation in blood drives in the coming year.

3. A Little Help from My Friends

St John contributed to this community-based effort that provided donations to the needy in Litchfield County. The appeals are based on specific needs -- such as winter coats during the winter — and backpacks for the return to school -- or theme, such as gifts meant for Mother's Day. The volunteers behind this effort ceased collection efforts mid-year with much appreciation of our support!

4. Backpacks, School Supplies and Christmas Angel Tree

In what has become an annual collaboration with the Hartford based *Covenant to Care for Children*, St John's Outreach committee contributed to the "Back to School" backpacks drive and school supplies, and to the Christmas Angel tree.

The recipients of these gifts are chosen by the Social Services in Torrington.

- It seems that the need for backpacks was particularly acute this year. Thanks to the generous contribution of the parishioners, St John delivered 30 backpacks as well as school supplies!
- The Angel Tree, set up during the "Fete", raised \$500 dollars, which were matched by St. John's dollar for dollar, giving each recipient a \$50 dollars Amazon gift card. This year, the recipients identified by the social workers were teenagers and young adults in foster care. In her thank you note, Leah Chapin, supervisor of Connecticut Children & Families in Torrington stressed that "*Older children and young adults in foster care are a vulnerable population who are often overlooked. The generosity of St. John's and supporters is fulfilling a need that would likely have gone unmet*".

5. Homecoming Picnic

What has also become a tradition, The Home Coming picnic at Waldingfield Farm, initiated by Worth Bracken, attracted over 50 guests, happy to play games (especially English croquet with Geoff), and eat at their hearts content.

6. The Washington Scholarship Fund

A cash gift of \$10,000 dollars, drawn from the funds raised by *The Fete*, was donated to the Washington Scholarship Fund. This fund awards scholarships annually to seniors and graduates from Shepaug Valley High School and other secondary schools who have been residents of Washington, Marbledale, and New Preston for a minimum of two years for their college educations.

Respectfully submitted,
Veronique Dulack
Outreach Chair

FLORAL GUILD REPORT FOR 2024

The Floral Guild faithfully adorns the beauty that is resplendent in St John's Church. As the number of our regular members is small (*Veronique Dulack, Alec Purves, MB Witt and Suisan Markert*) and our budget is equally limited, we have to be creative! We cut flowers from our own or parishioners' gardens and often use potted plants which can bloom for many weeks. We do purchase flowers and have a small budget for this.

Huge thanks to *Veronique Dulack, Alec Purves, MB Witt* for their dedication and creativity. Special thanks to Alec Purves who, this year, created stunning altar arrangements for both Easter and Christmas! On these special occasions other parishioners have offered assistance and we want to thank *Natalie Dyer, Emily Fitzhugh, Susie Magee and Barbara Blake* for always being willing to help. We happily welcome anyone else who might be interested in helping out and learning a bit more about flower arranging.

The Flower Guild has a small budget, and we greatly appreciate contributions to St. John's Floral Guild from congregants who wish to make a donation 'in celebration of' or 'in memory of' a loved one or friend. We do need a few weeks notice to make sure we can create an appropriate memorial creation. Please inform me (*Susan Markert*) or St. John's with enough notice.

It is a pleasure being able to add to the spiritual ambience and sense of community that exists at St. John's. Again, sincerest thanks to *Veronique Dulack, Alex Purves, MB Witt, Natalie Dyer, Emily Fitzhugh, Susie Magee and Barbara Blake* for their continued participation.

Respectfully submitted,
Susie Markert
Flower Guild Chair

LAY WORSHIP LEADERS & PREACHERS' REPORT FOR 2024

During 2024, Lay Worship Leaders and Lay Preachers officiated at Morning Prayer on 11 Sundays, an increase from eight Sundays in 2023.

We also increased the number of Lay Worship Leaders from 5 to 7. The number of Lay Preachers remains at 3.

We are hopeful that additional parishioners will seek training to become Lay Worship Leaders and Lay Preachers. Anyone interested should talk to Father Geoff.

2024 Lay Worship Leaders:

Rebecca Bent
Worth Bracken
Sara Coles
Laura Daly
Mary Davis
Ann Hodgman
Tom Hollinger
Justin Ormand

2024 Lay Preachers:

Sara Coles
Laura Daly
Ann Hodgman

Respectfully Submitted,
Sara Coles, Laura Daly
Licensed Lay Worship Leaders
Licensed Lay Preachers

HOSPITALITY REPORT FOR 2024

Coffee Hour

We continue to provide coffee hour and time for fellowship after the 10 a.m. service. I want to thank the following parishioners for their dedication to this ministry:

Penny Bardel
Rebecca Bent
Worth Bracken
Tom Brand/St. John's Choir
Joseph Claro
Laura Daly

Mary Davis
Veronique Dulack
David Gillespie
Camille Gillespie
Wheeler Gum
Corinne Johnson

*Susie Markert
Susan McFeely
Justin Ormand
Alec Purves*

*Rumsey Hall Students
Karen Saxe
MB Witt*

I will be turning Hospitality over to Corinne Johnson as of January 2025. I know coffee hour will be in good hands as Corinne is one of our most dedicated volunteers. As many hands make light work, ***we still need more volunteers for coffee hour.*** Please contact Corinne Johnson (stargazer4492@charter.net) if you are interested in being added to the list. Coffee and some cookies would be all that is required as the most important element of coffee hour is to catch up with friends and make new friends.

In the coming year we will be planning potlucks and other events to continue to build our ties to one another. The more we can function as a community, the more we can do for the community at large.

2024 Easter Egg Hunt/Coffee Hour

Thanks to MB Witt for the highly successful and delightful Easter egg hunt, as well as coordinating the wonderful coffee hour.

September 29 Parish Wide Family Picnic

For the second year in a row, we held a welcome back from summer church picnic on Sunday, September 29th at Waldingfield Farm. There was great food, games, face painting and ice cream. This event was a great deal of fun and will become a St. John's tradition. Thanks go to Worth Bracken for being the person who took care of all the logistics to make it happen. Thanks also go to Veronique Dulak and Mary Davis, the rest of the Vestry, and Bob Coles who was the grill master.

Respectfully Submitted,
*Laura Daly
Hospitality Chair*

THE RECTOR'S REPORT FOR 2024

***St. John's is a church in transition, from
a congregation led by a priest and supported by the lay leaders,
to a congregation led by the lay leaders and supported by a priest!***

As the congregation at St. John's moves into 2025, I am honored now to be your Rector! Although really, nothing has changed but my title. I have the same responsibilities as before, the same hours, and the same pay. Still the Vestry welcomed the title change as a sign of stability in the parish, and perhaps some recovery from past troubles. And there are lots of new signs of stability at St. John's! The weekly attendance continues to grow from post-covid lows, and several former parishioners are active again!

In addition to old members returning, some new families are appearing in our pews each week, especially refreshing are the small children wondering about and the youth presence from Rumsey School! There were 3 new pledgers again this year so far, helping to solidify our financial stability! ***This is a good reminder to those of you who haven't turned in your pledge cards for this year, to do so.*** Blank pledge cards are available in the church, the Parish Office, and at the Annual Meeting! The parish is more stable financially as well because of the long-term rental of the Rectory to the Gunn School. In addition, there has been a significant increase in the Parish Endowment as a result of recent gifts from several estates of deceased former parishioners, like Russ Elgin and Hedda van Goeben. ***This is a good reminder to all of us to remember St. John's in our wills*** to secure its ongoing presence in our community! All these developments are good signs of stability and growth, especially after the ravishes of the pandemic! Still there is much work to be done! And the bulk of that work rests upon the shoulders of the parishioners, not the Rector!

Church is not meant to be a 'spectator' sport, but one which invites and encourages its members to use their God-given gifts and talents for the benefit of the larger community. For example, most of you can read, I presume, so why do we struggle to find enough Readers for our Sunday Services! The Lectern has a great microphone, so it isn't a question of the strength of the voice, but the willingness of the congregation to participate! ***I would love to see the day when each of the Readings at our Services is read by a different voice, and the Prayers are led by a group dedicated to remembering and praying for those on our Prayer list!*** In January, we had a Sunday when I was away and out of the country, with one Lay Worship Leader in the hospital, another in Florida, another traveling with work, and another committed in Greenwich! Canon Rebecca Hatch will offer an Introduction to Lay Worship Leaders on Sunday, January 26th, at 9:15 a.m. in the church proper, but how many of you will go, and will agree to serve? ***St. John's needs more Lay Worship Leaders if it wants to have worship services every Sunday and Major Feast! Likewise, St. John's needs more Lay Preachers!*** The Diocese provides ongoing instructions and support, and those who have participated will tell you that serving in this ministry has been a powerful force of personal spiritual growth as Christians! Is not that what we all want? ***Besides, these more public-facing ministries is the very important and everyday support of the everyday work of the church, by serving on parish committees, and volunteering for parish events!*** We want to encourage fellowship and getting to know one another, for example, so the after-church Coffee Hour is crucial to the growth of the congregation, yet we struggle to find volunteers to assist! Corinne Johnson has agreed to take over organizing this ministry this year and still ***we need more participants to help with Sunday Coffee Hour!***

Finally, I hope that some of you read the "Concerning the Service" piece in the bulletin at the time of Bishop Ahren's Episcopal Visitation. In the 'old days' that service was often called "*The Installation of the Rector,*" from monastic times when literally a

new priest was authorized to sit in the ‘stall’ or seat of the Rector! I am not sure we at St. John’s have a designated seat for the Rector, as we do for the Bishop, and if we do, I think I may have been sitting in the Rector’s seat all along! Still the nature of that service is changing, and that change is worth noting. In the 1928 Prayerbook, it was called “*An Office of Institution of Ministers into Parishes or Churches,*” where the reading and signing of the Bishop’s Letter of Institution was the principal focus of the Service, with the so-called ‘Institutor’ also presenting the new Minister with a Bible, a Book of Common Prayer, and the Church Canon Laws, all specified to be done so ‘*within the rails of the altar.*’ This appeared to many to be too clerically oriented! In the new 1979 Book of Common Prayer, that focus was broadened further and it was called “*Celebration of a New Ministry,*” and representatives of the congregation were clearly to be the Presenters, and the presentations changing to a Bible, water for baptism, a stole, a book of prayers or other symbol, oil for healing, the church keys, the Church Canons, and bread & wine for the Eucharist, all things which the new Rector would need for ministry in the parish. Thus, the focus in the new Prayerbook was still on the role of the priest exclusively and was still much criticized. So, in the new Enriching Our Worship authorized liturgy, which we used, the service is called “*The Renewal of Ministry with the Welcoming of a New Rector,*” emphasizing the ‘shared ministry’ of the gathered community together. This emphasis is more closely aligned with my continued efforts for the congregation to be prepared for the days ahead, when a priest may not always be regularly available. This stresses the needs of St. John’s for more Lay Preachers, Lay Worship Leaders, Eucharistic visitors, Readers, Prayer Leaders, and such to be able to carry on in the absence of clergy. This is why I purposely take off one Sunday a month and to see how well the congregation does in my absence, and allow the parish a sense of self-sustainability. Thus, as I get inevitably older and older, I may be traveling more and more in the days ahead and working closer to the ‘less than half time’ that my Letter of Agreement proclaims, both for your benefit as well as mine.

So, we remain still very much where I said we were at my first Annual Meeting at St. John’s in January 2020, five years ago now: *St. John’s is a church in transition, from a congregation led by a priest and supported by the lay leaders, to a congregation led by the lay leaders and supported by a priest!*

Faithfully Submitted,
The Reverend Dr. Geoffrey Hahneman
Rector

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Vestry

Mary Davis, Worth Bracken: *Wardens*

David Gillespie: *Treasurer*

Andris Kalnins: *Assistant Treasurer*

Justin Ormand: *Clerk*

Class of 2024

Rebecca Bent, Michael Del Nin, Susan McFeely

Class of 2025

MB Witt, Sara Coles, Andris Kalnins

Class of 2026

Laura Daly, Veronique Dulack, Justin Ormand

Diocesan Delegates: Sara Coles, MB Witt

Laura Daly: **Alternate**