

St. John's Episcopal Church, Henrico Parish

Annual Report 2019

**Annual Congregational Meeting
January 26, 2020, 11:30 a.m.**

Our Mission Statement

We are a caring, spiritual community,
joyfully embracing and nurturing all,
serving God, each other
and the community.



Our Welcome

Whoever you are,
and wherever you are
in your spiritual journey,
you are welcome here.

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The Parish Staff

The Rev. Amelie Wilmer, Rector
The Rev. Dr. Dorothy A. White, Associate Priest
Patty Duffy, Parish Administrator
Jim Bennett, Minister of Music
The Rev. Anne Lane Witt, Children's Chaplain
Bella Smith, Chaplain's Assistant
Qiyamah Stephens & Hillary Lebedun, Nursery Attendant
The Venerable J. David Curtis, Deacon, *who blesses us by serving without compensation*

The Vestry

Class of 2019
Horace Dowdy, *Sr. Warden*
Jamie Isaacs
Jane Hunnicutt

Class of 2020
August Butler, Jr. Warden
Marc Dixon
Susan White

Class of 2021
Paul Broughton
Marshall Schutt
Rita Driscoll

St. John's Church Endowment Fund, Inc.

Barbara Bayler
Jane Hunnicutt, *Secretary*
Pattie Tobler

Paul Broughton, *President*
P. Maxwell
Susan White, *Vice-President*

Neill Goff
Marshall Schutt
Lisa Wood

2019 Diocesan Annual Convention Lay Delegates

Jane Hunnicutt, Delegate
August Butler, Alternate

Jeffrey Gill, *President*
Samuel Baronian, *Vice President*
Sarah Whiting, *Executive Director*
The Rev. Amelie Wilmer
W. Wymond Cabell
Ashley McCune

St. John's Church Foundation

Douglas D. Monroe, III, *Immediate Past President*
James Driscoll, *Treasurer*
John B. Werner, *Trustee Emeritus*
Lynn Anderson
Frances Craigie Fitzgerald
Ned Moore



Prayers

A Prayer for the Parish

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the indifferent, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

A Prayer for a Meeting

Almighty and everliving God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with those who take counsel in our Annual Congregational Meeting that it may be for the renewal and mission of your Church. Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory. Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

—*from the Book of Common Prayer*



From the Parish Register

Since last Annual Meeting

Members (includes inactive)	422
Members in Good Standing	187
Active Non-Members (see below*)	90
Inactive Members (see below**)	235
<i>Increases in Membership</i>	19
By Baptism and Confirmation	4
By Reception and Reaffirmation	7
By Transfer in	8
<i>Decreases in Membership</i>	8
By Death	4
By Transfer out	4
<i>Net Increase in Membership</i>	11
Marriages	5
2017 Average Sunday Attendance	90***
2018 Average Sunday Attendance	93
2019 Average Sunday Attendance	106

***Includes Christmas Eve and Christmas Day attendance numbers

Updating the Membership Database

Members in Good Standing are people who:

- (1) have become formal members by transfer, baptism, or confirmation, or are deemed members by the rector (usually former Roman Catholics)
- (2) receive communion at least three times a year, and
- (3) provide financial support to the church.

*If you are part of our community and have not formally joined St. John's Church, please call the Parish Office—it is easy to join and become a formal member.

**To meet our Bishop's request, we "deactivate" the memberships of those who have not been in contact with the church for over a year.

We continue to add past members to our database from the parish registers, with the goal that all who joined throughout the ages will appear in our database. Most of these individuals became members long ago but have lost touch with the church. Since they have not transferred out and notice of their death hasn't reached us, we keep them on the "books" as inactive members.

Finally, and happily, when members with whom we have lost touch return to reconnect with us, their memberships are "reactivated."



Agenda

St. John's Episcopal Church, Henrico Parish
Annual Congregational Meeting
Sunday, January 26, 2020, 11:30 a.m.

Opening Prayer

Opening Hymn, "Let it shine"

Determination of a Quorum

Approval of 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes

Old Business

New Business

Election of New Vestry Members

Finance Ministry Report and Proposed 2020 Budget

Senior Warden's Report

Rector's Report

Ministry Team Reports on Strategic Plan

Closing Prayer and Benediction

Adjournment



2019 Annual Meeting Minutes

St. John's Episcopal Church

January 20, 2019

The meeting began at 11:30 a.m. directly after the Worship hour. There was a show of hands of all of the members of St. John's Episcopal Church to confirm that there was a quorum. An introduction was made by the Senior Warden, Jane Hunnicutt, who announced that Amelie Wilmer had been called to be the Rector of St. John's Episcopal Church. The members gave their applause, and Amelie was introduced as the new Rector.

Amelie introduced the current vestry and announced the members who would be rotating off the vestry, thanking them for their service. The new slate of vestry members was introduced: Paul Broughton, Rita Driscoll and Marshall Schutt. There was a motion for an up-and-down vote on the full slate, which was seconded and passed with no objections. The vote proceeded with a show of hands and the slate was accepted unanimously.

Amelie thanked Jane Hunnicutt for her service as Senior Warden, the new Senior and Junior warden were announced to the congregation. The new senior warden is Horace Dowdy; the new junior warden is August Butler.

Lynn Anderson presented the budget showing how money had been spent in 2018, the current status of the pledges, and incoming revenues for 2019, and the expected expenses for 2019. Lynn stressed that the money that would be withdrawn from Woodson in 2019 is not sustainable, but that the finance committee believes that we are on the right track for the long-term financial health of the church. This year, we did not receive the income from a large commitment that ended in 2019, and it will take some time to make up for that. The congregation is growing, with more than 10 new pledging units this past year, and we are looking toward creative fundraising opportunities to support our existing sources of revenues.

After Lynn's report, Amelie noted that our budget planning only takes into account pledge revenues that have actually been pledged, which is a conservative approach. Several members give to the church regularly without signing a pledge card, and this extra income would offset the amount budgeted to be drawn from Woodson. Amelie encouraged those who give regularly to consider pledging to assist the vestry in making an accurate estimate of our revenues.

The Senior Warden, Jane Hunnicutt, made a presentation telling of the warmth she feels in the community of the church and of the many people who help man the committees.

Amelie gave the Rector's ministry report, noting the highlights of the year, including the growth in weekday programming, new forms of worship, and integration of new members into our ministries. She looks forward to working with the vestry to develop a strategic plan to support the congregation's continued growth and to develop creative ways to build resources for our existing and new ministries.

Amelie introduced the presentation of the Ministry Team reports. Each Ministry Team presentation was supplemented by PowerPoint slides and a written report in the Annual Report handed to all in attendance.

Amelie initiated the presentation with a description of the worship ministry that lies at the heart of all we do. This year, three training sessions were conducted, and new manuals written for acolytes, ushers, Lay Eucharistic Ministers and the Altar Guild. The Altar Guild Ministry presentation was made by Lisa Wood and concluded with a presentation of two new torches for the church.

Jim Bennett, Minister of Music, presented the accomplishments for the music ministry in 2018, including a Hymn Sing of hymns from around the world, two concerts, special music for Holy Week, Church Hill Advent Vespers, and working with the Bellevue Elementary School Chorus.

Susan White made a presentation about the Fellowship Ministry, giving a special shout out for Sue Schutt and the work she has done through the years as team leader. The fellowship committee will be working on a schedule to help ease the workload and to transition the leadership as Sue steps down from her existing role.

as team leader. Sue also reported on the Newcomers Ministry, noting that 65 newcomers have worshipped with us this year, and over 30 have become active in one or more of our ministries.

A report was given on behalf of the Young Adults, referring to their regularly scheduled monthly get togethers and outings, including social, outreach, and spiritual formation events.

August Butler gave a report on our Outreach ministry to the Richmond community, highlighting the many different opportunities for congregational participation. There was a special mention of the amount of food that had been collected for Christ Ascension Food Pantry during 2018. The goal was 1,500 pounds but the collection actually added up to 2,119 pounds. Patricia McNaught and Victoria Hauser will be leading this group in 2019.

Patty Soileau presented information on the Pastoral Care Ministry and reminded the congregation of the food, notes, visits, and cards that are being sent to those in need. New members are always welcome.

An extensive list of the accomplishments from the property committee were given and thanks was given to all those who have helped in the workdays and to those who have helped in other times. Appreciation was offered to Ryan Smith for his dedicated leadership of the Parish House renovation.

Susan White presented the Endowment Report. The Endowment Fund provided \$186, 427 for the Parish House renovation completed in 2018. The 4th quarter fund balance was \$3,461,555.35. Endowment also owns the Parish House, which is valued at approximately \$578,000.

The last ministry to give a report was the stewardship committee. The 2019 stewardship theme was “Now into the World.” An update on the pledge was reported. To date, 71 households had contributed \$156,675 which is 84% of the goal of \$186, 325. We look forward to continuing to reach 100%.

After the conclusion of the Ministry Team Reports, the meeting was adjourned. Amelie led the congregation in the closing Prayer for St. John’s and offered a benediction. The Rev. Deacon David Curtis offered a dismissal.



Vestry Nominees

The Vestry has nominated the following members to serve on the Vestry:

Mary Garner DeVoe is a cradle Episcopalian and grew up at All Saints in Richmond. After graduating from Collegiate she attended Rice University in Houston, Texas and began a forty-year journey along the Gulf Coast and mid-Atlantic. Her career in real estate fulfilled a calling to serve people as she cored and launched numerous franchises and “turn around” offices for the largest real estate company in the world. She has been active in parishes in Texas, Louisiana, and Washington, DC. Last year she moved back to Richmond. She and her husband, Bob Calongne, visited St John’s for Christmas Eve and knew they had found home. She is passionate about inviting friends to services and events at St. John’s, and can often be found in our kitchen.

Joni McKeen grew up in the eastern part of Henrico County attending a number of churches. As a young adult, she joined the Catholic faith and was a member of Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Benedict's and eventually found a home with Church of the Redeemer when her life as a parent began. She was very active in the church then finding comfort in the extended family. With a growing family and a demanding career, serving for many years at Bank of America as a Sr. Vice President in the Technology and Operations division, and currently managing the same area at Capitol One, she found herself drifting from church over time.

As life is winding down with her family having families of their own and the career not so demanding, Joni began again to reconnect with her faith. Her partner in crime, Jim Carpenter, and she both were seeking a church home. He was in Chesterfield and she was in Hanover...St. John's was in the middle. They knew from the first 8:15 service that they would be back. She and Jim have been attending for some time now both renewing their commitments and becoming members of St. John's and received into the Episcopal Church this past fall. They have been active in Parish Workdays, staffing our table at the Irish Festival, and most recently leading the Brunswick Stew Sale at Fancy Me Mad. Joni feels blessed to be a part of such a wonderful community and committing to do all they can to support the church. She and Jim reside in Hanover county enjoying their ever-growing family.

Mike Broda and his wife, Liz, have been active members of St. John’s since 2016. They were married by Amelie on July 21st, 2018, in a wonderful ceremony at the church. Mike is active with Young Adults group, the St. John’s A/V Club, and a number of outreach ministries, including Laundry Love. He was received into the Episcopal Church in November 2018.

Growing up in Ohio, Mike was raised in a small UCC church where his parents remain active. He and Liz moved to Richmond five years ago from Detroit when Mike was offered an Assistant Professor position in the School of Education at VCU. He is a social scientist who teaches courses in statistics and research design.

What Mike loves most about St. John’s is the welcoming spirit that inhabits the church and congregation. He loves the sense of community and commitment to service that defines what we do.



St. John's Church Endowment Fund

The Endowment Fund was established many years ago to manage gifts and bequests left to St. John's and to invest the money in a manner to best increase the principle and provide funds for church activities and requirements.

The current trustees of the fund are Barbara Bayler, Paul Broughton, Neill Goff, Jane Hunnicutt, Paul Maxwell, Marshall Schutt, Pattie Tobler, Susan White and Lisa Wood. At least three of the trustees must be members of the Vestry, and each trustee normally serves a three-year term. The terms expiring in 2019 are held by Neill Goff, Paul Maxwell, and Lisa Wood. We thank them for their contributions and service. The Endowment Fund will be requesting the new vestry to nominate candidates for the vacant trustee positions.

The Endowment funds are managed and invested by Davenport & Co., following general guidelines set by the Endowment Board. The funds are audited on a quarterly basis by Harris, Hardy and Johnstone.

Disbursement of the Endowment's funds are the responsibility of the Endowment trustees upon request by the vestry; other funds (known as the vestry's funds) are disbursed solely at the discretion of the vestry, but the investment of all the funds is the responsibility of the Endowment trustees. The Endowment limits the amount that can be disbursed annually from its "general" fund to 4 and ½ per cent of the average of the last 12 quarters.

In 2019 the Endowment approved to fund approximately \$16,000 to cover the cost of improvements for the Parish House including repointing the brick on the back and west side and adding additional outside security lighting. The Endowment is currently working with the Commission of Architectural Review on approval to replace the wooden fencing around the back portion of the property.

The total of all the funds at the beginning of 2019 was \$3,461,555.35, and at the end of the 2019, the total was \$4,044,431.44. The Endowment also owns the Parish House which has a value of approximately \$664,000.

Respectively submitted,

Paul Broughton, President



Rectors' Report

One of my favorite spiritual guides and writers, Wayne Muller, said something years ago about being in community that has resonated with my experience as your rector this past year. “We are called to be strong companions and clear mirrors to one another, to seek those who reflect with compassion and a keen eye how we are doing, whether we seem centered or off course … we need the nourishing company of others to create the circle needed for growth, freedom and healing.”

It has been a joy and an honor to be your companion in the ever-widening circle of compassion and growth that exists at St. John’s. Having served here now for nearly three years, I continue to be blessed by knowing, loving, and working with you…deepening relationships with those who have been here a while, and delighting in the new relationships which have developed as visitors become regular worshipers and then full participants in our ministries. This year has been a release of gifts – yours and mine.

Among the greatest of these is our capacity for welcome and hospitality, a blessing that changes lives. This happens, not only during our Sunday coffee hour, but any time we gather to support one another in gain and loss, in sorrow and in joy or celebration—whether it is a baptism, a funeral, or a wedding. This was particularly evident at the Celebration of our New Ministry in May and the profoundly meaningful Service of Lament, Reconciliation and Commitment we hosted for our region in August.

As our congregation grows and new members join us, we continue to explore creative ways to energize our existing ministries, create new opportunities, and engage our members in areas that use their gifts and meet their needs for spiritual growth. Nearly everyone who has come to us this year has become an active participant in one or more of our faith formation, outreach, fellowship, worship, music, or young adults’ ministries. In response to the interest expressed by a number of newcomers, we created an “off year” inquirer’s class with 11 participants, and with the support of the bishop, were able to hold a special service in the fall at the diocesan headquarters for the rite of Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation.

This year, the vestry embarked upon a strategic plan that was presented to the congregation in May and will be evaluated at our Annual Meeting. This collaborative work has resulted in continued variety and participation in all of our ministries—which I invite you to explore in the reports that follow. Highlights include the introduction of our first Education for Ministry (EfM) program, the formation of small groups such as the Survivor’s Transformation group, the growth and revisioning of our Laundry Love ministry, and our first try at creative fundraising efforts. Our Toffee sales at the Irish Festival and Advent, a Brunswick stew sale in the fall, and our application for a Diocesan Grant to fund repairs of our stained-glass windows were met with surprising success. The installation of our new sound system, made possible by the Christine Smith Fund, enabled our worship services to be accessible to people of all hearing abilities.

In our life of worship, we moved into our second year of new services such as the Epiphany Bonfire and Service of Light, fuller Holy Week liturgies, including the Great Vigil of Easter, and offering Vigils for social justice by hosting the service of Lament, Reconciliation and Commitment, all of which were enhanced by increased congregational involvement and broader community attendance. We also completed our first full year hosting a Contemplative Eucharist and Rite of Healing on the second Saturday of each month. I give thanks for our Minister of Music, Jim Bennett for the immense creativity and skill he offers us, along with our clergy, our parish administrator, Patty Duffy; and our servers in worship for all they contribute.

2019 has also been a year of transition in the leadership of our ministries, as we continue to spread responsibilities and allow for a smoother and more regular transition of team leaders. This year, Susan White followed Sue Schutt as leader of our Hospitality team, and in the transition, they created a new structure that divided the leadership of special events. Our outreach leadership transitioned into the capable hands of Victoria Hauser and Patricia McNaught, and our deacon David Curtis is currently developing lay leadership for our Laundry Love and Food Pantry ministries. Our Pastoral Care team leadership has transitioned from Reeves McCune and Patty Soileau to Barbara Bayler and Rita Driscoll, and last year, Liz Broda agreed to fill the vacant position of Young Adults Team Leader. After many years of dedicated service, Lisa Wood will be stepping down from her leadership of the Altar Guild, and in the coming months we will be working together to identify her successor. Increasingly, we are recognizing the need to provide members the tools to move

into new leadership roles by creating procedures manuals, processes for successorship, and manageable terms of service.

This summer, we were gifted with the addition of the Rev. Dr. Dorothy White to our clergy staff, made possible by your generous contribution of funds to support this new part time position. For the fall of 2019, Dorothy blessed us once per month with her preaching and served an additional 8-10 hours per month, assisting with Adult Forum, pastoral care, and leading worship. In 2020, her hours will expand to 8-10 hours per week, which will allow her to more fully contribute her awesome gifts of preaching, teaching, prayer, and pastoral care. Anyone who knows Dorothy knows just how richly we have been blessed.

In addition, the contributions of our deacon, the now Venerable David Curtis, are invaluable, from assisting with weekly worship and preaching, to orchestrating our outreach efforts, engaging in social justice activities, participating in our faith formation and fellowship activities, caring for our members, sending us out “With Joy and Wonder in all God’s Works,” and making us laugh. We are especially proud of his leadership in the diocese, and recent appointment as Archdeacon in the Diocese of Virginia.

We are also blessed by the ministry of the Rev. Anne Lane Witt to our children. Anne Lane has a remarkable capacity to welcome and engage youth of a broad variety of ages and stages, and if you watch her at work, you cannot help but be enchanted! This year, our Children’s Chapel has grown to include 23 participants, with as many as 11 in the Keeper’s Cottage on a Sunday morning. To support this growth, our Children’s Ministry team has equipped youth member Bella Smith and a group of adult members to assist Anne Lane.

An initiative I have been honored to support this year is the Re:Work Richmond program launched at St. Peter’s in February. I continue to represent St. John’s on their board and finance committee and celebrate the increasing opportunities for our congregation to offer our skills and resources to a growing number of program participants. This has also opened the door to increased fellowship between St. John’s and St. Peter’s. In addition to this outreach effort, I now serve on the Westminster-Canterbury Foundation Board and continue my role on the Editorial Review Board of the *Interpretation Journal of Bible and Theology*.

Our relationship with the St. John’s Church foundation and their capable staff remains positive and productive. I meet regularly with Sarah Whiting, Executive Director, to explore ways to build upon our shared mission and vision, including outreach efforts in the community, improvements to the church, and sharing of best practices for stewardship, communications, and community building. This year, we re-instated the Partnership Committee consisting of three members of the church and the foundation to meet quarterly to address areas of mutual concern and interest. I invite you to read the Property and Foundation reports for examples of the numerous ways we collaborate.

Above all, I give thanks for the opportunity to celebrate, laugh, shed tears, and walk alongside you through the most meaningful passages of our shared life. Together we laid to rest three beloved parishioners and welcomed four of our youngest into the household of God through the waters of baptism. Five couples were united in holy matrimony and four have become regular parishioners at St. John’s. We stood in celebration with Bishop Susan Goff at the diocesan headquarters as she welcomed 11 of our new members into the Episcopal Church. Our list of newcomers grows weekly, and our Sunday attendance has increased nearly 30% in less than three years. We enter 2020 full of new energy, imagination, and vision, enlivened by the Spirit to create the resources and leadership necessary for a growing congregation. This will be another exciting year for St. John’s. Thank you for this opportunity to be your rector, your pastor, and your friend.

Faithfully submitted,

The Rev. Amelie A. Wilmer, Rector



Senior Warden's Report

It has been another wonderful year at St. John's with many wonderful things that have been happening all through the year. Along with our amazing rector and wonderful sermons, we now have the addition of Dorothy in our Sunday rotation. Other events of note include a new sound system, new concerts that are being presented, a more active involvement in the Church Hill St. Patrick's celebration. As we watch our congregation continue to grow and new events happening, it is exciting to imagine what new directions we will be able to discover.

When I look back at my time with the vestry and in particular to this past year as Senior Warden, I am filled with amazement with all of the talents and abilities of the members of the vestry and the parishioners as a living and breathing body of Christ. I am reminded of one of the lines of our prayer: "let us be a beacon on the hill".

As you look through the annual report, I hope you will be excited to read all the different things that have been accomplished and to see examples of where we are just at the beginning of new journeys. As I slip back into my role as parishioner, I know that our new vestry will lead us forward into the future.

Respectfully Submitted

Horace Dowdy, Senior Warden



Deacon's Report

Grace and peace be with you this day and for all of 2020! In 2019, we continued to build on the firm foundations laid down by the generations before us. Our desire to live out our faith beyond the walls of St. John's is becoming, more and more, an evident and vibrant part of the DNA of this community. Thank you all for your witness to the Gospel and for the living out of your faith.

The vows of a deacon call him or her to "interpret the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world". These vows ground deacons in servant ministry and in leading the church beyond its walls to the world around us. And, the presence of a diaconal voice in our community, in our meetings, and from our pulpit adds additional dimensions to how we are able to engage this world.

I am grateful to Victoria Hauser and Patricia McNaught for their leadership of the outreach team in 2019. Lay leadership grows in our outreach ministries, and I am grateful to witness and support stronger lay leadership. This year, we held an outreach retreat at Richmond Hill, where we could pause to dream, to plan, and to consider our ministries in the world around us.

Laundry Love RVA remains a vital ministry here. In 2019, from January to October, we assisted 492 people, washing 1,155 laundry loads and drying 1,179 loads. At the October Laundry Love Event, it became evident that we needed to step back and redesign the program. Laundry Love ministers began to meet in November to think through, to dream, and to re-image the program. We believe that we have a workable plan so that we may return in February 2020.

Our First Fruits ministry is now part of who and what we are as a community. In 2019, you gave a staggering 3,585 pounds, surpassing our goal of 3,000 lbs. This is an increase of 1,466 pounds, or a 69% increase, over 2018. Our goal for 2020 is 4,000 pounds. The food we collect benefits the Christ Ascension Episcopal Church's Food pantry and allows it to continue its mission. If you have not yet done so, I encourage you to consider joining the \$5 Club. The \$5 Club is simple: pledge to yourself that you will spend \$5 every month to help feed those in need.

I am deeply grateful for this community and its willingness to be a beacon of reconciliation in our world. We gathered on August 17, 2019, for a Service of Lament, Reconciliation, and Commitment to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first enslaved Africans at Jamestown. Bishop Susan Goff celebrated, and the Rev. Dr. Dorothy White preached. Jim Bennett planned our music and worked with a diverse choir, and Susan White marshalled troops for an amazing reception. And many others assisted in making the service a success.

At its core, this service remembered our past, lamented sins done in our names, and called those in attendance to commit to the hard work of reconciliation in this world. The service was a natural extension of the work that St. John's has undertaken in the past 5 years. The Central Richmond Region of the Diocese of Virginia sponsored this service, and we had representatives from every church in the region participate. The Central Richmond Region is also discussing the creation of a program focusing on reconciliation, beginning in Fall 2020.

In the larger diocese, I worked with the Community of Deacons to build community and ministry. I organized meetings of the deacons for a place for us to support one another in our various calls and ministries. I assisted planning the Deacons' Retreat in October 2019 at Shrine Mont. I attended the Central Richmond Region meetings to support our regional community.

This past December, I was named one of the two new archdeacons for the Diocese. This role is still being formed, and I will work with Bishop Susan, The Venerable Holly Hanback (the other archdeacon), and diocesan leadership to flesh out this role and to create a living and sustainable ministry, not only for myself, but for the archdeacons who will follow.

I am also very grateful for Amelie's support of my ministry at St. John's. She continues to invite me to participate fully as the deacon of this community. I am especially thankful for the opportunity to create the prayers of the people on a routine basis. Thank you, Amelie, for your servant leadership and ministry at St. John's.

I look forward to working alongside you all as we find and provide hope, as we change the world in small ways and in large ways, and as we bring about the Reign of God.

God's peace,

The Ven. David Curtis
Deacon, St. John's Church
Archdeacon, Diocese of Virginia



Ministry Reports

Worship Ministries

Worship the LORD with gladness; come into his presence with singing (Psalm 100:2)

As you often hear in the Episcopal Church, “If you want to know what we believe, worship with us.” Our praying shapes our believing and lies at the heart of our shared life. At St. John’s we are dedicated to providing Spirit-filled worship services that welcome everyone. In addition to our regular Sunday services, special highlights for 2019 included:

- ❖ Second Annual Epiphany Bonfire and Service of Light with Procession of the Magi
- ❖ Two Ash Wednesday Services with Imposition of Ashes;
- ❖ “Ashes to Go” in the community.
- ❖ Palm Sunday, Blessing and Procession of the Palms, and Passion Narrative
- ❖ Maundy Thursday Holy Eucharist
- ❖ Good Friday Evening liturgy
- ❖ Our second Great Vigil of Easter at St. John’s
- ❖ Easter Day Eucharists with Holy Baptism
- ❖ Celebration of New Ministry and Institution of our Rector
- ❖ Pentecost Festival Eucharist
- ❖ Community Spring Sing with St. Peter’s Episcopal Church
- ❖ Regional Service of Lament, Reconciliation and Commitment
- ❖ Shrine Mont Parish Retreat Eucharist
- ❖ Blessing of the Animals for the community with song and fellowship
- ❖ Rite of Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation by Bishop Goff at Diocesan headquarters
- ❖ All Saints Day Eucharist with Welcoming of New Members and Prayers for the Departed
- ❖ Thanksgiving Day Eucharist
- ❖ Church Hill Advent Vespers Service with St. John’s Choir and Bellevue Elementary Chorus
- ❖ Advent 4 Eucharist and Thanksgiving for the Birth of Child
- ❖ Christmas Eve Family Service and Christmas Eve Festival Eucharist
- ❖ Monthly “Second Saturday” Evening Contemplative Eucharists with Rite of Healing
- ❖ Four baptisms, three funerals, and five weddings (one offsite)

In 2019, St. John’s introduced several new opportunities for worship. The “Second Saturday” evening contemplative eucharist with Rite of Healing became a regular part of our schedule and was offered every month. In addition, we hosted two special services that were broadly attended: The Celebration of New Ministry with Amelie as our new rector, and a regional Service of Lament, Reconciliation and Commitment marking the 400th Anniversary of the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in America. Members of our worship team worked together to enrich and enliven the Holy Week liturgies that were introduced to St. John’s in 2018, with fuller attendance and participation at this year’s Great Vigil of Easter. During the fall, we held five training sessions for our Ushers, Greeters, Acolytes, and Lay Eucharistic Ministers and welcomed approximately 15 participants into new server roles. This year, we will continue with periodic trainings for servers and lay readers, and an added training for Eucharistic Visitors.

Participation in one or more of our worship ministries is a life-giving way to serve our community and nurture your relationship with God. The Worship Team, consisting of the Rector, Deacon, Associate Priest, Minister of Music, and Ministry Team leaders, coordinates its efforts to enhance the worship experience for each liturgical season, utilizing the appointed lectionary readings and related liturgy, music, and special activities.



Altar Guild (*Lisa Wood, Ministry Team Leader*)

Altar Guild is responsible for maintaining all supplies necessary for the celebration of the Eucharist and other services conducted in the church. The Team Leader prepares the schedule for four teams, plans meetings, communicates with members and prepares orders for supplies as needed.

The 13 members of Altar Guild have regularly assigned weeks for their duties. Some examples of work done by Altar Guild are: setting the altar for all services and cleaning up afterwards; ordering and arranging flowers for Sunday services, weddings and funerals; preparing for baptisms, weddings and funerals; cleaning and ironing altar linens; maintaining liturgical hangings; decorating the church for Christmas and Easter; and polishing the silver and brass. This ministry brings order and beauty to all the services at St. John's.

Our manual is treated as a living document, and updates are made according to changes in procedures. In 2019 St. John's invested in liquid candles to light our worship experience. They don't drip, don't smoke, don't change size and, therefore, don't require replacing. Also, in 2019 the Altar Guild purchased a pair of new brass torches, which use liquid candles. This was a gift to St John's.

New in 2019 was the addition of a lock box for the sacristy door to enable Altar Guild members to access the sacristy to perform their various duties without interfering with the business of the Gift Shop operated by the St. John's Foundation.

This report would not be complete without mentioning our gratitude to those without whose help St. John's would not look so beautiful at the great celebrations of Christmas and Easter. Thank you to Horace Dowdy, John King and many other "elves" who helped decorate for Christmas and Easter. Altar Guild is especially grateful to David Curtis, who always shows up and fills in where needed, purchases our communion wine, and hauls it up to the sacristy.

We still pray for a sorely needed renovation of the sacristy.



Choir and Music (*Jim Bennett, Minister of Music; Horace Dowdy, Vestry Liaison*)

St. John's music ministry encompasses the choir and instrumentalists in our weekly worship, and various programs offered to our congregation and the Richmond community. The choir sings during weekly and special services, offering a variety of music styles. The choir practices on Thursday evenings and just before the Sunday morning service. Special musical ability is not required in order to participate; interested singers and instrumentalists are invited to contact Jim Bennett; jimbennett@juno.com.

In addition to singing and making music, we include time regularly for fellowship and prayer.

St. John's was approached by Three Notch'd Road, The Virginia Baroque Ensemble, about the possibility of St. John's as their Richmond venue for the 2019-2020 season. Now, halfway through the season, we are delighted to report this has been a successful endeavor. Three Notch'd Road is a group of world-class musicians, and they have drawn many people from the community and congregation to their concerts. The Music Ministry, Three Notch'd Road, and St. John's Historic Foundation collaborated to offer a pre-concert reception in December; this was a successful event with the musicians, board members and invited guests.

The people involved in the Music Ministry continue to present a variety of musical formats and styles in our worship, adding instrumentation when appropriate, and welcoming special guests from time to time. These included during Advent/Christmas the Reverend Ross Kane (alto sax), and a small instrumental ensemble (cello, clarinet, two flutes, recorders). The choir sang during Holy Week services, Church Hill Vespers, and for the 10:30 p.m. Christmas Eve service when they presented a Choral and Instrumental Prelude. This year, we were delighted to welcome The Songbirds, a group from Anna Julia Cooper Episcopal School, to present singing and step dancing during Church Hill Vespers. Other music offerings included "Spring Sing" in May (a community hymn sing which included some of St. Peter's choir), music for monthly Second Saturday Contemplative services, and a concert by The Richmond Choral Society in March. A musical component has

also been added to some of the Wednesday evening programming, including Lent Suppers and book studies. Song and guitar accompaniment have added a joyful dimension to our annual Blessing of the Animals. In August, St. John's hosted a diocesan Service of Lament, Reconciliation, and Commitment to mark the 400th anniversary of the arrival of enslaved Africans to this land. The Music Minister, as part of the planning team, helped choose and then led the music for this powerful worship service led by Bishop Susan Goff. We were joined by several singers from various area Episcopal churches.

We continue to believe that improving the quality of St. John's musical instruments is essential to our efforts to expand and grow the music ministry. The current digital piano needs to be replaced with a high-quality acoustic piano. The organ continues to deteriorate, with numerous problems that will only get worse over time. It is important to remember that this is a mechanical instrument with many wooden and leather parts that require periodic maintenance, replacement, and repair; this has not occurred and has led to further issues. In 2018, we engaged organ expert David Storey. He looked closely at our current organ and gave us a report with options for restoring the current organ, replacing it with an extant organ in much better shape, or building a new one. In addition, he considered the acoustics of our space and made recommendations to remove some of the carpet. His report is available; contact Music Minister Jim Bennett.

This year, a new sound system was installed and has greatly improved the ability for those in the congregation to hear what is being said and sung by our preachers, lectors, and cantors. The Music Minister has organized and trained several congregation members to run the sound system during our regular and additional services.



Servers

Lay Readers and Lay Eucharistic Ministers/Visitors – Our Lay Readers read the lessons and lead prayers at each service. Lay Eucharistic Ministers assist at communion by serving the wine. Lay Eucharist Visitors take communion directly from the worship service to those in who request it, bringing the St. John's community to those who cannot attend church on Sunday morning. Both the LEMs and the LEVs are licensed by the Diocese of Virginia. In 2019, three LEM trainings were held in the fall, and will continue throughout the year in response to interest. We encourage your participation!

Acolytes - Acolytes carry processional crosses, light altar candles, assist with the offertory, help prepare for communion, and assist with other duties as requested by clergy. They serve to make our liturgy ageless and beautiful and are essential to our worship. Any person over the age of nine (9) is encouraged to participate. Our annual group training was held in the fall, and individual trainings were also offered by appointment during the year.

Ushers - Ushers play an important part in the worship experience. They assist by making those present feel welcomed, helping with name tags, handing out bulletins, answering questions, and distributing publications concerning current church activities. They also guide congregants to communion at the altar rail in an organized fashion, help with receiving the offering, and make sure attendees have bulletins and prayer books. Usher training was held in October and December and continues throughout the year.

Greeters - Members of this team greet newcomers as they leave our worship services, inviting them to offer their contact information, answering questions, and ensuring that the information is recorded and delivered to the office for follow up. This ministry is essential in assisting our Rector and Newcomer Welcoming team in reaching out to our visitors. A greeter training was held in December.

Prayer Ministry – During worship each Sunday, members of our prayer ministry offer personal prayers during communion at the Colonial Altar. In addition, a prayer group is held every Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. in the Keeper's Cottage. If you are interested in participating or feel called to be a prayer leader, please contact Carolyn Dallas at ccDallas@yahoo.com.



Weddings (*Lynn Anderson, Wedding Coordinator*)

One of the great gifts of our Historic church is the sacred setting it provides for the Blessing of a Marriage. A number of our current members were married at St. John's, and it was through that experience that they chose our congregation as their church home. In 2019, four weddings were held at St. John's and one off-site, and all five couples now attend St. John's as parishioners. Amelie is currently in the process of preparing four new couples for weddings in 2020 and one for 2021 (we have already celebrated two weddings in January of 2020). Lynn Anderson continues to do an excellent job of working with our Rector, Minister of Music, and the wedding couple to coordinate our wedding services.



If you and/or your children are interested or feel called to help in any of our worship ministries, please do not hesitate to contact Amelie, Patty Duffy, or any member of our worship team - explore a new opportunity at St. John's!

Respectfully submitted,

The Reverend Amelie Wilmer, Rector



Faith Formation

The concept of “faith formation” offers a holistic view of spiritual growth. It includes practices and opportunities such as learning, contemplation, praying, worshiping, celebrating, and serving that are the lifelong process of growing in our relationship with God, self, others, and all of creation. Every experience in our lives can provide us with the opportunity to deepen and express our faith.

Formal activities that fall within this ministry include those related to Adult Forum, children’s ministries, weekday evening programming (including Bible and book studies, special presentations and workshops, Lenten series), the Shrine Mont annual retreat, the Inquirer’s (Confirmation) class, Education for Ministry, and recovery/ transformation groups. During 2019, over 75 St. John’s parishioners participated in at least one of these programs.



Adult Forum

This year’s Adult Forum, or Sunday Forum, met throughout the year for six different series anchored in Biblical study, modern spiritual questions, and the liturgical seasons. Meetings are intended to feature different speakers or leaders to stimulate thoughtful discussion for attendees’ spiritual growth. As usual, meetings took place in the Parish Hall on Sunday mornings between the 8:15 and 10:30 worship services. Attendance rose steadily over the year, ranging from 10 - 25 participants.

The year began with what is becoming a St. John’s tradition: a series through the Epiphany season on “Seeing God in a Different Light.” These weeks featured sessions facilitated by both members and friends of St. John’s, on the Quaker tradition (Rev. Janet Legro), Zen Buddhism (Prof. Cliff Edwards), science (Rev. Dr. Lindon Eaves, and Rev. Dr. John Kerr), Judaism (Cantor Dara Rosenblatt), art (Martha Broughton), and “the God of Our Understanding” (David).

The season of Lent drew upon associated clergy to offer a series of presentations based on the weekly lectionary readings, or “Parables and Prodigals: Luke’s Lenten Lectionary.” The program year concluded with a series led by St. John’s favorite New Testament scholar, Prof. John Carroll, on the Book of Revelation.

After the summer break, the Forum resumed in September with a series on “Words in the World: Prophets Then and Now.” Sessions included investigations of the prophetic tradition in Scripture, the Major Prophets, and contemporary prophets, facilitated by Dorothy White, Denise Bennett, and David Curtis, respectively. In October, Amelie led a session on the spiritual and pastoral elements of our relationship with animals in time for St. Francis Day. The rest of October had us looking at Outreach ministries at St. John’s and our partnership with Re:Work Richmond, with a presentation by our own outreach team and Re:Work Director of Employment Services Diana Vasquez.

November returned us to the prophets, when Amelie led us in a discussion of Phyllis Tickle, Dorothy taught us about Pauli Murray, and Rabbi Michael Knopf of Temple Beth-El led a discussion of the prophets in the Jewish tradition. The last was particularly exciting as we continue to look for ways to encourage partnership with Temple Beth-El.

The final session for the year was tied to Advent, with a series on “Waiting for God” and an examination of some remarkable women in our history. Throughout December, we heard from Ellen Stamps on Corrie ten Boom, Dorothy on Dorothy Day, Rev. Sue Eaves on Mary, and Annie Campbell on expectation.

Programming and scheduling for all of this was overseen by an Adult Forum committee, which met throughout the year. The committee transitioned leadership from Amelie to August Butler in October. Hospitality and setup is arranged by John Bushey, Paul Broughton, and Andy Pillsbury. We welcome additional members to either side of the endeavor!



Children’s Chapel

Our preschool and school-age children continued to be guided by the Rev. Anne Lane Witt each Sunday at the Children’s Chapel during the first half of worship. The gatherings were sometimes small but sometimes very large, with up to eleven children! Anne Lane took advantage of snacks and the outdoors to keep the energy flowing while she offered programming tied to the lectionary during Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Advent, and more. She has been able to adapt her programming to the variety of needs and ages of the children who attend. One highlight was the making of a gingerbread house during Advent for the theme of “preparation.”

Anne Lane also coordinated our annual Easter Egg hunt on Easter Day, which was a success, and she assisted with the children who participated in the Christmas Eve nativity story (a highlight of our Christmas services!).

Bella Smith began serving alongside Anne Lane for two Sundays each month and has been a great help. Other congregants are welcomed and desired to fill in as well, once they have completed the requisite background checks and online “Safe Church” training.

We are thankful for all the many ways the St. John’s community has supported the formation of our younger members—the donation of materials and snacks and bringing our members among them. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Anne Lane at annelanewitt@me.com or drop by to hang out one Sunday.

For our youngest children, Qiyamah Stephens continued serving faithfully as a loving nursery attendant. We also hired Hillary Lebedun this year in accordance with child safety policies to have at least two adults supervising our children at all times. Our nursery has also grown considerably this year, with up to six children in attendance each week!



Wednesday Evening Formation

Our weekly Wednesday evening Programming continues to offer opportunities for learning and spiritual formation. These evening programs have been a place of welcome and engagement for our newer comers and have led us all into deeper relationships with one another, and with God. Each week, we gathered for study/discussion at 7:00, and for the first 9 months of the year, Centering Prayer and supper were included in the Evening. Programs were generally facilitated by Amelie, with assistance from our deacon, David Curtis, and members of the congregation.

On Wednesday evenings during the seasons Epiphany and Eastertide, which included a six-week break for our Lent Programming, we discussed a collection of writings by Henri Nouwen entitled *The Only Necessary Thing: Living a Prayerful Life*. In this anthology, the editor compiled some of Nouwen's best reflections on topics such as: desire, solitude, prayer, listening, community, and forgiveness.

Our Summer formation programming included a six-week discussion of Barbara Brown Taylor's *Holy Envy: Finding God in the Face of Others*. A number of friends and visitors from other congregations joined in our discussions and offered us a variety of perspectives on the various faith traditions explored in Taylor's book.

Wednesday formation in the fall included a study of the Gospel of Luke that extended through the Advent season. This offered an opportunity for newly confirmed/received members of the congregation to engage in Bible study through the perspective of the Anglican Tradition.



Lenten Series

During our Wednesday Evening Lenten series, we gathered each week for a potluck meal at 6:00 p.m. followed by a discussion facilitated by our clergy, lay leaders, and talented friends of St. John's. Together, we explored what it means to be a Beloved Community, a body within which all people can grow to love God and love the image of God we find in our neighbors, in ourselves and in creation. Our program framed a path to address issues of social justice and grow as a community of reconcilers, justice-makers, and healers who share a passion for the dream of God. Facilitators included the Rev. David Curtis, the Rev. Amelie Wilmer, the Rev. Sarah Price, and Paul Broughton. Each session began with an opening hymn led by Jim Bennett and ended with Compline. One memorable session produced the heart-shaped "God is..." word cloud that now graces the Parish Hall!



Inquirers/Confirmation Class

Our yearly Inquirers classes are intended for those interested in learning more about membership in the Episcopal Church and might be considering Confirmation, Reception or the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows. This year's class included 11 participants from all ages, and religious backgrounds who met for six sessions through July and August, culminating with the Rite of Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation at a special service presided by Bishop Goff at Mayo House on October 15, 2019.



Education for Ministry

This year saw the formation of an Education for Ministry (EfM) group at St. John's. This four-year distance learning certificate program in theological education is based upon small-group study and practice and is designed for lay people to discover and nurture their call to Christian service. The group founded at St. John's this year began meeting in September and consists of eight members, in addition to Deacon David Curtis, who is preparing to mentor the group in future years. The group is currently being mentored by Paula Price, a longtime mentor for EfM in Virginia. EfM is designed to incorporate group members of all four years of study, so anyone interested in beginning their study next fall should contact David Curtis.



Survivors Recovery/Transformation Group

In response to a desire to form a community of support for those who have experienced abuse or trauma, a small group was established in 2018 to companion members through the process of transformation. The group continued meeting every 4-6 weeks in 2019 using the book *How Then Shall We Live?* by Wayne Muller to guide their discussions. The group will continue meeting regularly during 2020 with Amelie and the Rev. Deacon Peggy Newman as facilitators.



Shrine Mont

On October 18-20, the annual parish retreat took place at Shrine Mont. Amelie led the programs there. Twelve members and friends of St. John's were in attendance, and the weekend included icebreakers, devotionals, a program on "An Altar in the World: Spiritual Practice for Real People," hikes, a labyrinth walk, porch time, and worship on Sunday morning with Church of the Good Shepherd, Md. and the congregation of the National Cathedral. The group was small but vibrant, enjoying good fellowship and powerful conversation together.

Faithfully Submitted.

August Butler, Faith Formation Vestry Liaison

The Rev. Amelie Wilmer, Rector

The Rev. Anne Lane Witt, Children's Chaplain



Newcomer/Visitor Ministry

This ministry has worked closely with our Rector, Amelie Wilmer, to insure anyone new or visiting St. John's Church was welcomed to our community. After Sunday worship services, greeters stood at the door of the church to collect newcomer/visitor information, and submitted the names of visitors to Patty Duffy, our Parish Administrator.

Amelie personally wrote an email to each newcomer/visitor within the week, and I followed with a Newcomer Notes email inviting them to upcoming events. In 2019 we had 69 visitors to St. John's. Many expressed interest in learning more about St. John's, and over the year, over 40 newcomers have become actively engaged in parish life.

We are fortunate that our average Sunday attendance increased from 93 in 2018, to 107 in 2019, or a 15% increase. Since 2016, attendance has grown over 30%. We want to continue to present a welcoming environment with a committed parish membership that invites the seeker, welcomes the guest, and guides the newcomer into a friendly parish with opportunities to serve and share.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan White, Vestry Liaison



Fellowship Ministry

It has been my privilege to serve as Vestry Liaison this past year for our Fellowship Ministry. St. John's social events have increased in number and in attendance and have been a joyful part of our community. We used a new approach in 2019 to plan and carry out activities, with sign-up occurring early in the year for parishioners to take on a specific event, and group together to do so. Nineteen people comprised this core group, and it has worked well. St. John's Fellowship Ministry hosted 2 large one-time events during the spring and summer that were followed by a reception and having a core group to pull from made these events go smoothly. You only need to recall the lovely receptions we had for Amelie's Institution as our Rector and the Central Region Race and Reconciliation service to understand what a boon it was to have a hospitality team in place. We will use this approach again in 2020.

We have also used a team approach for the 52 coffee hours in the year. Our working ministry groups, Young Adults, 2 book clubs, and 2 new teams all signed up for coffee hours. I named these 2 newest groups Ad Hoc 1 and Ad Hoc 2 for lack of better names (they are more than able to give themselves a new name!) and am looking to put together an Ad Hoc 3 team for 2020. Forming these ad hoc groups gives at-large parishioners an opportunity to pull together several times a year to host a coffee hour.

Since the majority of our events take place in the Parish Hall, the kitchen, like your kitchen at home, is the heart of activities. It must stay safe, clean, neat, and well-stocked. Linens need to be washed and cared for. The kitchen is in frequent use in carrying out coffee hours (52), the Epiphany reception, the chili cook-off, the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, Lenten suppers (usually 5), Easter brunch or reception, the Stars and Stripes picnic, Homecoming Sunday (in connection with Stewardship), and other events. Parishioners used the kitchen to make Brunswick stew and toffee, which have been highly successful fund-raising events. The St. John's Foundation also hosted activities in the Parish Hall and used the kitchen. The many users have done a great job in keeping the kitchen in good order. I truly appreciate all your efforts.

Other opportunities for fellowship include our weekly Knitting Circle, which continues to meet every Tuesday in the Parish House from 10:00-12:00 a.m., and our St. John's Book Clubs, which meet in member's homes once per month. Since our two existing book clubs have reached capacity, a third book club is now being formed and publicized in our weekly communications.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan White, Ministry Team Leader and Vestry Liaison



Young Adults Ministry

The Young Adults group continued in the tradition of collaboration, fellowship, and community service throughout 2019. The team is now being led by Liz Broda, with individual members of the team taking the lead on particular projects. This year, the YA's hosted monthly Coffee Hours, including the Homecoming Sunday celebration in September, and met for a "Supper and Spirituality" potluck with Amelie in April. Sarah Lineberger hosted the annual Christmas Party with a lively White Elephant gift exchange (and delicious White Russians), Hannah Mawyer hosted a summer evening game night, and Liz & Mike Broda hosted a delicious Super Bowl party where the focus was much more on the food than on the football. The group supported efforts at the church through the National Night Out ice cream social in August, participation in parish workdays, and by staffing the Irish Festival in March and "Fancy Me Mad" event in October. We also began a new tradition—movie nights on the church grounds! Over the summer, we gathered to enjoy *Clue*, and in the fall, we watched *Monsters, Inc.* We are looking forward to planning more movie nights in the future and inviting the whole St. John's family in on the fun.

Respectfully Submitted,

Liz Broda, Young Adults Ministry Team Leader



Outreach

Our outreach ministries take the love and spirit of St. John's beyond our gates, with a special focus on deepening relationships in our East End neighborhood. Thank you to the many parishioners who give so much of their time and talents to enrich our efforts.

This last year included many accomplishments which addressed our strategic plan for 2019:

First Fruits: Thanks to your faithful donations of food, we were able to exceed our goal and provide about 3,500 pounds of food for Christ Ascension's food pantry. Our participation has been vital to the existence of this program which has seen a great increase in the numbers of people who depend upon it. We hope to reach 4,000 pounds in donations this year.

Laundry Love: This enormously successful program has allowed us to build relationships while providing laundry services to allow neighbors to repurpose their money for other vital needs. With the help of dozens of St. John's members, we have served an average of 55 people each month, funding hundreds of loads of laundry each month, and providing a warm, friendly presence with children's face painting and activities. In 2020 we plan to relaunch the program with greater attention to logistics and flow, and welcome new parishioners to help with this two-hour mission one Saturday morning each month.

Bellevue School: Our neighboring elementary school is dear to the hearts of St. John's members, and we continue to offer support in providing healthy snacks for teachers, and a clothes closet for students organized by Carolyn Dallas. When needed, St. John's is at the ready for special supply needs or projects.

RE:work Richmond: This relatively new organization housed at St. Peter's assists East End families who seek to improve their lives by increasing their skills and education, and by obtaining better employment. In addition to financial support, a number of our parishioners are involved in volunteer activities such as resume writing and interview preparation.

Financial Support: Along with our volunteerism, St. John's provides financial support for Peter Paul Development Center, ACTS, and RE:work. Through a special grant for youth outreach, we also provided funds to Anna Julia Cooper School and the Richmond Bobcats, a youth sports league located in Southside Richmond.

Many thanks to all who support these important ministries, and we are grateful for the leadership of Patricia McNaught and Victoria Hauser for chairing the faithful Outreach Committee.



Pastoral Care Ministry

The Pastoral Care Committee is a vital part of the St. John's community and we have continued the ministry of caring for members in need over the past year. The committee members provided a variety of services, including home visits; sending notes, cards and flowers; running errands; and preparing meals for those experiencing illness, bereavement, or the birth of a child. Team members rotate each month as point person for pastoral concerns. In addition, a member also sends weekly bulletins and news to parishioners who cannot attend services but wish to stay in touch. Meal calendars were also set up for those needing longer term meal support. Through regular communications with our Rector and the parish office we keep abreast of those at St. John's in need of care.

We held a meeting in December and welcomed three new members to the team. Monthly assignments were made, and team guidelines were established. Initial plans were made to re-establish the Lay Eucharistic Visitor Ministry, which provides home communion to those who are unable to attend church. Though small, this 10-member committee does a great deal for our parish. St. John's is very fortunate to have such a dedicated group. We encourage anyone interested in joining this ministry to contact Barbara Bayler for further information.

Faithfully Submitted,
The Pastoral Care Ministry Team



Care for Parish Administration

An administrative committee was created to identify objectives and tasks to support the goal of establishing sustainable and proactive administrative schedule and procedures, with a focus on providing support for the Parish staff in their ministries and work. The committee prioritized support of the Rector as its most immediate need. The committee met once with the Rector to identify areas where others could be responsible for tasks she was currently performing and other processes. Several parishioners have agreed help in specific areas. Two areas of ongoing concern are the inability for the Rector to regularly enjoy her Sabbath (Monday) without interruption and for her to take the full four weeks of vacation leave each year. (She has not been able to do this either of the last two years.) The committee has suggested strategies and will meet with the Rector in the near future to finalize them for 2020.

Other activities that have supported staff are increased volunteerism to assist with specific tasks by creating or update procedures.

The committee will continue to meet with the Rector and other staff to identify areas where support can be provided.



Communications

The Communications Committee shares the news of St. John's with our communicants, friends, and neighbors. We keep people informed about what is going on at the church and announce upcoming events and projects. Our primary instruments of communication are the weekly e-Newsletter and the bulletin insert, published by Patty Duffy, the Parish Administrator. In addition, we continue efforts to improve our communications with more frequent updates to our website, regular postings on Facebook, and by engaging more of the Church Hill community through event flyers in local stores, postings on Church Hill's "Next Door" news feed, and hanging banners for special events.

In 2019, we moved forward with a redesign of the church's website to better tell our story to potential new members and to continue to engage our existing congregation. In addition, we designed a new St John's brochure with plans to make it available on the church grounds for visitors. Work has also begun on a promotional video for St. John's.

Respectfully submitted,

Marc Dixon, Vestry Liaison for Communications.



Property

The properties and grounds of St. John's church were very busy in 2019. We saw great contributions from across the membership, several emergencies, many notable accomplishments, and some ongoing challenges. We are grateful for the tremendous amount of stewardship and participation the congregation has provided. We work closely with St John's Church Foundation and the St John's Endowment Fund on many projects. The Foundation is responsible for all the historic aspects of St John's and they operate the visitor center and reenactments. The Endowment's main focus is the Parish House.

Property Workdays

We had four Parish Workdays in 2019 in April, June, August, and September. We spent a lot of time on the Parish House grounds, cleaning up after the giant tree fell in the backyard last spring. There was also landscaping work done along Broad Street in front of the church, decluttering the Parish House basement and

Parish Hall closets, Parish Hall exterior cleaning and paint touch-up, window washing, unclogging the visitor center drainage pipes, and removing branches and wood from the fallen Maple tree in the church yard.

Maintenance Events in 2019

- The church added a new sound system at an approximate cost of \$40,000, funded through the Christine Smith Fund. The system includes speakers, permanent microphones, headsets, new recording equipment, and an improved amplification system.
- The church has undertaken a further commitment to the stained glass by repairing the ventilator on the second Stokes window. This work was completed this summer and was partially funded by a \$5,000 grant from the Peter James Lee Church revitalization fund at the Diocese of Virginia. Additional work will need to be made on the window to complete the restoration.
- The metal sign over the front church yard stairs became unstable. The Foundation and the Church split the cost of repair.
- The gutter to the Visitor Center was damaged by a tree limb that fell. The Foundation and the Church split the cost of repair.
- The brick stairs on the north side of the Parish Hall were repaired and re-pointed.
- The brick path leading up to the elevator on the church yard level was removed and replaced by concrete to keep the swelling and contraction of the brick from damaging the elevator.
- The Parish House exterior lighting was replaced by the Endowment.
- The brick on the back of the Parish House was re-pointed by the Endowment.
- The tree in the Parish House rear garden damaged by the wind was removed.
- The storm damaged maple tree in the church yard was removed.
- A few of the chandeliers in the church stopped working. We worked with an electrician to track down and repair the problem.
- One AC unit in the church quit working, and we limped through the end of summer on one unit. It is scheduled to be repaired this spring with the Church and The Foundation splitting the cost.
- One AC unit in the Parish Hall quit working in the fall. We do not have a timeframe for repair yet.
- A number of miscellaneous woodworking repairs have occurred, involving church pews, Prayer Book and Hymnal holders, the altar, antique chairs, handrails, tables, and door locks and latches.
- An electrical outlet was installed in the bell tower and an internet extender was installed.
- The Parish Hall exterior was power washed.
- Lights in bathrooms at the rear of the church were repaired.

Property Committee

We meet every month or two to identify and work on property projects. Church Members with an interest in working on property projects are welcome to be on the Committee. In addition to actual work projects, we spent a lot of time getting better organized for the future in 2019.

- We spent a lot of time working with the Finance Committee to improve our budgeting, adding and modifying line items to make it much easier for us to see where the money is going.
- We created a Google Document “To Do” List to keep track of property needs and projects.
- We created a Google Document with contact information for all church systems (lawn care, heating & AC, alarm, elevator, etc.).

Looking ahead to 2020

A number of major projects are on the schedule for this year.

- Project Red Coat - a major Foundation project to repair the church foundation at the rear of the church will begin soon. This also includes the removal of three old safes that we no longer use.
- Bell Repairs – Due to the deterioration in the functioning of the church bell, we were advised to stop using it last summer. The Foundation coordinated with the Virginia Chapter of the National Society of the Children of The American Revolution to raise funds for the repair, and the bell is expected to be back in service in late March.
- Some remodeling at the back of the church is on the horizon, involving improving the Sacristy and Robing room.

Our membership and staff have always stepped up when needed to make this one of the most inviting places in the city. It is a privilege to care for this rare heritage and a blessing to have so many hands, and we remain grateful for the ongoing work of the **Archives Committee** and the **Cemetery Committee**.

Faithfully Submitted,

Jamie Isaacs and Marc Dixon, Vestry Liaisons



Stewardship

The Stewardship Committee was led by Marshall Schutt and was greatly helped by assistance from Sue Schutt, Barbara Baylor, Jane Hunnicutt, and Amelie Wilmer, our Rector, along with helpful support from Patty Duffy, our Parish Administrator.

The 2020 Stewardship Campaign, with the theme “*Wonder In All*,” encouraged each of us to examine where we see signs of God’s wonder around us and to explore what small acts we can each make to contribute to support St. John’s vibrant community.

The campaign kicked off on Sunday, October 13, and concluded on November 3 with the St. John’s Celebration on All Saints Sunday. In the interim weeks, we heard personal testimonies from select parishioners about what makes St. John’s special and meaningful to their lives.

The Stewardship Committee established a goal of \$178,950 for 2020, representing a 10% increase over the \$162,675 in pledges St. John’s received during its 2019 Stewardship Campaign.

As of this writing, St. John’s has received a tremendous response, with pledges for 2020 totaling \$190,627 from 82 households. This result is 106% of our target and will enable St. John’s to continue to fulfill our growing ministries at St. John’s and in our community and to support our leadership and operations in a way that is much more financially sustainable than it has been in recent years.

Several factors contributed to the success of the stewardship campaign this year. First, a group of loyal and longtime parishioners agreed not only match their pledges from the year before, but also to offer increases to their previous pledge as a “matching challenge” to anyone pledging for the first time to St. John’s or to anyone increasing their pledge over what they contributed last year. This “matching pool” totaled \$9,150. I firmly believe that the leadership and generosity of this group inspired the rest of us.

Second, returning pledgers responded to the challenge with 37 households increasing their pledges by a cumulative \$18,115. Third, first time pledgers responded with 25 households making commitments totaling \$40,282. This is a wonderful expression of the positive growth that St. John’s is enjoying.

In summary, we have received \$26,952 more in pledges than we did last year – a 17% increase. This is simply a terrific outcome, and a reflection of the positive experience that our parishioners enjoy at St. John’s and of the fact that our church community is growing. The composition of this increase is expressed in the following table.

New Pledges	\$40,292
Increases from Previous Pledges	\$18,115
Decreases from Previous Pledges	(\$5,790)
Lost Pledges	(\$25,665)
Total Increase Over 2019	\$26,952

I sincerely thank each one of you that have made a commitment to St. John’s this year. Your commitment is dearly important to our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Marshall Schutt, Chair



Finance

St. Johns annual revenue budget for 2020 is \$482,735. The budget draws from a wide variety of sources: pledges and gifts in the plate; annual disbursements from the St. John's Church Endowment Fund; payments from funds controlled by the Vestry but temporarily invested with the Endowment; payments from the St John's Church Foundation, which runs historical operations; and several smaller sources. All of this is separate from the Foundation's capital campaigns, which has provided the church's buildings with general upkeep and major improvements such as painting and roofing. The St. John's Endowment also funded the remaining construction items at the Parish House to conclude the renovation begun in 2017.

In 2019 we received pledges from 74 families totaling \$171,724.35. Going into 2020 we are at 82 pledges totaling \$190,627 so far. We look forward to continuing growth.

Approximately one third of our budget goes toward building and grounds: maintenance, repairs, landscaping, utilities, property taxes, insurance, etc. for the Church and Parish House. Due to these expenses we continue to draw on funds held by the Vestry. Their funds are invested with the Endowment, but the Vestry has the ability to use them at any time. The largest and most important is the Woodson Fund, which came to the church several years ago in a truly amazing bequest. We have used money from this fund to balance the budget. The Finance Committee and Vestry have worked very hard to limit how much of the Woodson Fund we use. Due to the 2020 pledge response, the percentage withdrawal of Woodson Funds has been lowered to 4.5% of the value of the asset, which was our financial goal to ensure sustainability.

2019 ST. JOHN'S REVENUE:

ITEM:	AMOUNT:	% of REVENUE:
Pledges	\$ 171,724.35	37%
Plate Offering	\$ 32,705.06	7%
Carry Over	\$ 4,742.00	1%
Endowment	\$ 101,472.76	22%
Designated Income	\$ 4,820.60	1%
Foundation Payment	\$ 53,222.04	11%
Vestry Funds	\$ 74,169.00	16%
Other (Weddings, etc.)	\$ 22,765.80	5%
TOTAL	\$ 465,621.61	100%

The amount of pledges combined with plate offering, while growing, covers less than half of the annual operating cost. The Foundation's payments are critical for upkeep and financial health. In addition to increases in our pledge and plate income, our future depends on continued funding of the endowment, largely by including St. John's in wills; and on the performance of our investments.

The growth of our church family should contribute to our financial stability. We hope to continue welcoming new members and showing them the love of God that surrounds all of us in this church.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Streat, Treasurer



St. John's Church Foundation

Historic Preservation Work

The Foundation's current preservation project is called ***Project Red Coat*** and gets its name from the coat of red paint on the brick foundation located at the back of the Church. The red paint has trapped water inside the brick, causing it to deteriorate over time. It is critical to remove the paint to prevent further deterioration of the foundation. ***Project Red Coat*** is expected to cost \$185,000 to complete the following:

- Remove the red paint from the brick foundation,
- Repair and repoint the brick foundation,
- Repair one rotating brick pier which is undermining the brick foundation,
- Repair a rotten wooden sill under the original 1741 section of the church,
- Repair brick retaining walls in the basement, and
- Engage archaeologists to monitor for ground disturbances and potential graves.

The Foundation received a \$50,000 challenge grant from The Cabell Foundation, which requires a 1 to 1 match. Thanks to a \$25,000 grant from The Roller-Bottimore Foundation, we are half-way toward our matching goal. With gifts from individuals we have raised over \$41,000 toward the \$50,000 challenge with \$8,000 left to raise. We are actively seeking donations to help us complete the challenge grant match.

Through our ***Adopt-A-Grave*** program we have repaired and cleaned 14 stones to date. Four more grave markers have been adopted and are ready for repair this spring, when we have consistently warm temperatures.

Madeline Herring, President of the Virginia Chapter of the National Society of the Children of The American Revolution, has been spearheading the fundraising for the restoration of our ***Meneely Bell***. She has successfully raised the \$16,190 funding needed to repair the bell, and additional funds raised will go towards setting up an annual maintenance fund. A contractor from the Verdin Company worked in December to complete the necessary preparations for repair. The repair will be completed by March 23, 2020, in time for a bell ringing ceremony that the Foundation is planning.

The Foundation is continuing the ***Ground Penetrating Radar*** project in the graveyard. The first phase was completed in August of 2019, and Phase II will take place this summer.

Foundation volunteer Lee Ball continues to work on the ***Graveyard Identification Project*** with church archives volunteers.

The City of Richmond completed the sugar maple tree removal, and the Foundation is now working closely with the city arborist on future tree care.

Educational Programming

With an incredible \$625,000 gift from Carole M. Weinstein, the Foundation created the ***Carole M. Weinstein "Give Me History!" Endowment*** to support our "***Give Me History!***" educational program, a history-based, SOL-aligned program for Richmond-area elementary students in Title I-qualifying schools.

In order for students to participate their school must be a Title I-designated school. Title I is a federal designation given to schools that have a high concentration of under-resourced students who are at risk of failing academically, and over where 50% of the student population receive a free or reduced fee lunch.

"***Give Me History!***" is free for schools, students, teachers, and parents. The Foundation receives no city, state or federal support and relies on grant funding to make the program free to all who participate.

Through field trips to St. John's Church students get to explore the original location of Patrick Henry's "Liberty or Death" speech and to learn what sparked the American Revolution. The program provides the following:

- A "Liberty or Death" reenactment
- Educational materials and teacher lesson plans
- Bus transportation

Since 2009 over **47,000 students** and teachers have participated from over 40 elementary schools in public school districts including: Charles City County, Chesterfield County, Goochland County, Hanover County, Henrico County, Hopewell City, New Kent County, Prince William County and Richmond City

Each year, on average, “**Give Me History!**” serves over 500 students and their teachers in the East End of Richmond from the following schools: Franklin Military Academy, Chimborazo Elementary School, Martin Luther King Middle School, Fairfield Court Elementary, and Bellevue Elementary. It is very meaningful for the Foundation to serve under-resourced students in our East End community—the community that surrounds Historic St. John’s Church.

While the Foundation is not operating tours during January through February 7th, we are running our “**Give Me History!**” program and are on target to serve over 3,000 students in 2020. In the past, there was always a risk of not being able to provide this program each year due to the potential lack of funding. Now, because of Carole’s incredible generosity and the creation of the **Carole M. Weinstein “Give Me History!” Endowment**, we can continue to serve Richmond-area students for many future generations to come!

On January 5, 2020, the Foundation partnered with the **National Park Service, Richmond National Battlefield, Chimborazo**, on the 4th annual **Arnold’s Raid** event. The program features speakers on the history of Arnold’s raid and capture of Richmond in 1781, as well as, an appearance by General Arnold, himself. The event, as always, was free to the public and attracted an audience of 100 over the day. The program for the day included talks by the following:

- Karen Chase, Novelist and Virginia Humanities Fellow
- Bert Dunkerly, Park Ranger, Richmond National Battlefield Park
- Nathan Hall, Park Ranger, Richmond National Battlefield Park
- “Benedict Arnold,” by Foundation actor Marc Holma

Special Events

On April 30, 75 people from 33 countries became American citizens in a **Naturalization Ceremony** inside the Church. The Honorable Judge M. Hannah Lauck presided over the ceremony, while Huguenot High School’s JROTC presented the colors. Patrick Henry, portrayed by Foundation actor Charles Wissinger, delivered his famous speech to the capacity crowd. This was the third time the Foundation has partnered with Commonwealth Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution on this event.

“**Fancy Me Mad**,” our annual Poe Tales/ Graveyard Tour, was held on October 26, 2019. We had a sell-out crowd of nearly 300. Guests perused the tombstones and listened to residents of the graveyard tell stories from their lives. All our popular spirits were in attendance. This year the Foundation invited the church to participate in the event by selling Brunswick Stew, cornbread and cider to the crowd. The Foundation is very grateful for the help from the Young Adults group, who assisted with directing the crowds and clean up. The Foundation is looking forward to Fancy Me Mad 2020!

The **Walter W. Craigie Speaker Series** was endowed by the Craigie family. The speaker series was created in Walter’s memory with the goal of bringing 2 speakers to St. John’s each year to talk about a wide variety of subjects related to history. In 2019, the series delivered two lectures on the U.S. Constitution. In May, **A. E. Dick Howard**, Warner-Booker Distinguished Professor of International Law, University of Virginia, School of Law, gave a talk entitled *Liberty’s Quest: American Ideas Here and Abroad*. In September **Mr. Khizr Khan**, attorney and Constitutional Rights and National Unity Advocate gave a talk entitled *Our Constitution: A Legacy of Liberty for All*. Mr. and Mrs. Khan are Gold Star parents. Their son, US Army Captain, Humayun Khan, a University of Virginia graduate, was killed in 2004 as he stopped a suicide attack on his camp while serving in Iraq. Both talks can be seen on the Foundation’s YouTube Channel and were delivered to a capacity crowd.

For more details about other projects and programs the Foundation has undertaken this past year we encourage everyone to check out the two newsletters produced in 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Swartz and Sarah F. Whiting, St. John’s Church Foundation 1/25/20



Closing Prayer and Benediction

Prayer for St. John's Church

(Said in unison)

O God, creator of life and giver of gladness, let us be your Beacon on the Hill,
Shining your light so brightly that others may come to know you, to love, and to be loved.
Help us to reach out to those around us,
Bearing fruit through acts of kindness, welcome, and fellowship. ***Amen***

Blessing

As we come to the end of our time together,
may all that we discussed serve as a catalyst for growth in ministry in all areas of our lives.
As we go out, may we remember we do not go alone.

As we go out, may we remember we go with a mission given by God
As we go out, may we be filled with love, hope, and peace to share,
so that our lives and our ministries may be a light to the world.

+ And may the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. ***Amen.***

Dismissal Go in Peace to Love and Serve the Lord

Response Thanks be to God!