

St. John's Episcopal Church, Henrico Parish

Annual Report 2021

Annual Congregational Meeting

February 27, 2022, 1:00 p.m.

via Zoom

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
The Venerable J. David Curtis, Deacon, *who blessed us by serving without compensation*

The Vestry

Paul Broughton, *Senior Warden* Mike Broda, *Junior Warden*
Laura Streat, *Treasurer* Barbara Olwig, *Register*

Class of 2021
Paul Broughton, *Sr. Warden*
Rita Driscoll
Marshall Schutt

Class of 2022
Mike Broda, *Jr. Warden*
Maureen Matsen
Lora Toothman

Class of 2023
Brendan Cleary-Wildt
Stewart Gamage
Victoria Hauser

St. John's Church Endowment Fund, Inc.

Barbara Bayler
Richard Bowden
Mike Broda

Victoria Hauser, *Secretary*
Diana Nunnally
Marshall Schutt

Patty Soileau
Pattie Tobler, *President*
Lisa Wood, *Vice President*

2021 Diocesan Annual Convention Lay Delegates

Paul Broughton, *Delegate*
Lora Toothman, *Alternate*

St. John's Church Foundation

Jeff Gill, *President*
Sam Baronian, *Vice President*
Pam Seay, *Secretary*
James Driscoll, *Treasurer*
The Rev. Amelie Wilmer, *Rector*

Paul Broughton, *Senior Warden*
Wymond Cabell
David E. Cottrell
F. Willson Craigie
Frances Fitzgerald

Caroline Marvel
Ashley McCune
Dr. Dan Roberts
Dr. Ryan Smith
Dr. Sandra Gioia Treadway

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 coun-sel 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)	285
Members in Good Standing	156
Active Non-Members (see below*)	96
Inactive Members (see below**)	129
<i>Increases in Membership</i>	22
By Baptism and Confirmation	14
By Reception and Reaffirmation	5
By Transfer in	3
Reactivation	0
<i>Decreases in Membership</i>	3
By Death	2
By Transfer out	1
<i>Net Increase in Membership</i>	21
Marriages	3
Burials	6
2019 Average Sunday Attendance	106
2020 Average Sunday attendance	109 (as of March 1, 2020)
2021 Average Sunday attendance	54 (beginning with in-person services May 9, 2021)
2021 Average Online Attendance	82 (<i>via YouTube; not recorded in Parish Register</i>)

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, February 27, 2022, 1:00 p.m.**

Opening Prayer Determination of a Quorum

Approval of 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes Old Business

New Business

Election of New Vestry Members

Finance Ministry Report and Presentation of the 2022 Budget

Senior Warden's Report

Rector's Report

Ministry Team Reports

Closing Prayer, Benediction, and Dismissal

Adjournment

2021 Annual Meeting Minutes

St. John's Episcopal Church January 24, 2021

Dr. August Butler, Senior Warden, called the meeting to order at 11:15. The Rev. Amelie Wilmer opened the meeting with prayer. Dr. Butler declared that a quorum was present, as more than 50 members were present via zoom, and we have a current active membership of 198.

The 2020 Annual Meeting minutes were presented. Susan White moved the acceptance with Paul Broughton seconding. Motion passed unanimously.

There was no old business to discuss.

The first order of new business was the election of new vestry members. Prior to election, Rev. Wilmer recognized and thanked the outgoing members: Dr. Butler, Mr. Marc Dixon, and Ms. Susan White. Rev. Wilmer also thanked Ms. Mary Garner Devoe, who resigned from the vestry. The Vestry Class of 2023 slate was presented. The nominees are Mr. Brendan Cleary-Wildt, Ms. Stewart Gamage, and Ms. Victoria Hauser. Ms. Maureen Matsen was nominated to complete a 2-year term created by resignation. There were no nominations from the floor. Jane Hunnicutt moved the slate of nominees, with Bill Thornton seconding. The nominees were elected unanimously.

Dr. Butler offered the Senior Warden's report. They began by thanking the vestry, staff, and numerous parishioners who stepped up to lead and to participate during this time of pandemic. Dr. Butler takes courage from knowing that the right people will be at the right place at the right time as we continue this path. They reminded us to stay flexible and creative.

Rev. Wilmer presented the Rector's report. She began by thanking Dr. Butler, Senior Warden, and Paul Broughton, Junior Warden, for their leadership. She also thanked all who attended the annual meeting. Rev. Wilmer started by stating that St. John's entered 2020 in a place of strength. This allowed us to weather the pandemic and the necessary changes. She reminded us of the lessons we have learned about adaptability, resourcefulness, and creativity since we were forced to move online when our parishes were closed on March 11, 2020, initially for two weeks. She thanked Andy Russell for being our videographer, which allowed us to create an authentic online worship experience for our community.

Rev. Wilmer also thanked Mr. Jim Bennett, Minister of Music, and the choir for the hard work with creating music on a weekly basis. Rev. Wilmer explained that the music we hear requires hours of work, and this music continues to enhance our worship. She thanked our bishops for guidance and support during 2020 and also thanked the Ven. David Curtis, Ms. Patty Duffy, the Rev. Dr. Dorothy White, and the Rev. Anne Lane Witt for their work and ministries.

Mr. Marshall Schutt, Stewardship chair, discussed the 2020 financial situation. He explained that St. John's receives funding from the following sources (approximately): 45% from pledges and plate; 33% from grants and endowment; 12% from St. John's Church Foundation; and 10% from other sources. This year, members gave generously, and we collected almost the amount pledged. While income from St. John's Church Foundation fell, a Paycheck Protection Program loan of \$40,000 helped us meet the gap. Mr. Schutt also discussed expenses, which can be broken down as follows: 50% for staff, 30% for buildings and grounds, and 20% for outreach, worship, etc. He also recognized the Property Committee and staff for realizing savings.

For the 2021 budget, Mr. Schutt said that St. John's budget is balanced and includes a 2% increase in staff salary. Additionally, we included a line item for a videographer. Dr. Butler reminded all that the budget was passed by vestry and does not need to be passed at the annual meeting. Dr. Butler clarified that the staff has not received a salary increase for several years.

Rev. Wilmer announced Mr. Broughton will serve as Senior Warden and Mr. Michael Broda will serve as Junior Warden.

Members offered reports covering the various ministry areas of St. John's. Highlights include:

- 6,507 pounds of food collected for the First Fruits Food Pantry Ministry.
- New Justice Ministry formed to support our work with RISC (Richmonders Involved to Strengthen Communities).
- New website launched thanks to Ms. Bonnie Sampson and vestry liaison, Ms. Devoe.
- Spiritual Formation (Adult Forum, Children's Chapel, EfM, Wednesday Night, Book groups, and Transformation and Recovery Group) all shifted to virtual meetings with good attendance.
- Pastoral Care team continued to support members in need of additional care.
- Hospitality offered through online Coffee hours; new tablecloths were donated by Mary Garner DeVoe.
- Young Adults met for their Annual Superbowl party in February 2020; since then, they have connected through online game nights, outdoor picnics and an online Christmas Gift exchange.
- Workdays held to care for grounds and building.
- Staff supported as they moved to remote work settings and became familiar with online worship.
- National and diocesan worship resources used to give staff and members rest from weekly recording.

The meeting ended at 12:30pm with prayer, a blessing, and dismissal.

Respectfully submitted,

The Ven. David Curtis

Deacon, St. John's Church

Vestry Nominees

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

Daryl Joslin has been attending St. John's Church since 2018. Her husband, Doug Quackenbush, brought her to the St. Johns Foundation's "Give Me Liberty, or Give Me Death" reenactment the year before they made their move to Richmond permanent. Both she and Doug were interested in the history, not the religion. But the rector who welcomed them to the church prior to the reenactment, Amelie Wilmer, was not at all what they expected. She caught their attention as she said the church was inclusive and that everyone was welcome at the Lord's Table. Attending her first service, Daryl was captivated by Dorothy White's sermon, as Dorothy's style was that of a storyteller who connected deeply. After searching for a church for 20 years, Daryl knew this was a place where she could express her sometimes unique views on faith. She and Doug felt a church community was important as they moved to a new city and found the honest approach of the members of their Inquirers Class refreshing. After a long wait complicated by COVID protocols and travel, Daryl and Doug will be received into the church in early 2022. Daryl has volunteered her time to St. John's Church's RISC initiative and is involved in their Affordable Housing and Gun Violence efforts. She and Doug have also been involved in the church's social justice education and outreach.

Daryl is a Virginia native and graduated from the College of William and Mary. She has returned to her roots after 35 years in Florida, Washington, California, Wisconsin, and Arizona. Daryl and Doug settled in Rocketts Landing but have recently contracted to build a home in Goochland. With the current housing market, she feels they will be lucky to move by the end of 2022. Daryl is looking forward to spending Sundays with the St. John's Church community. With a 6-year-old granddaughter who stays with her two nights a week and who loves Children's Chapel with Anne Lane, she does not see this as a challenge, but a joy. With retirement from her Market Insight firm on the horizon, Daryl hopes to divert her energy to helping the St. John's community grow even stronger with its focus on the inclusivity and meaningful outreach that attracted her to St. John's.

Ann Hardy is a Richmond native. She and her husband, Chip Atkins, live just east of St. John's Church in Varina. A registered nurse for over 20 years in the acute care, hospice and regulatory settings, she currently works as a Senior Investigator with the Virginia Department of Health Professions.

Born a Presbyterian, Ann attended Third Presbyterian Church, where she sang in the choir, recited her catechism, and believed that Jesus loved her. Meanwhile, throughout her elementary and high school education, she attended St. Catherine's School where her faith was further imprinted through religious education and the ongoing presence of the Episcopal liturgy.

In 2018, parishioner and neighbor, Jane Koontz invited her to a jazz vespers at St. John's. This transformational and restorative event inspired her to return Sunday after Sunday, and she felt as though she had "found [her] favorite pair of lost slippers." She kept waiting for the interaction or experience that would sow doubt, and it never came. Sermon after sermon respectfully addressed issues deeply important to her, and with each coffee hour, she found more and more joy in the fellowship of this diverse faith community.

Being a member of St. John's Church has reconnected her spiritual wires and deepened her faith. She feels ready and eager to serve the vestry and this church. She hopes and prays that, with God's help, she can faithfully serve the needs of our church and lean further into a vision and commitment to creating a beloved community.

Douglas Payne grew up in Roanoke and was baptized at St. Andrew's Catholic Church. He joined the Episcopal Church during college because he found the faith to be welcoming and inclusive. It also provided the opportunity to rediscover his family's Episcopal roots, which included Cumberland Parish in nearby Lunenburg County, Virginia.

Soon after moving to Richmond in the mid-1990s, Doug joined St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Goochland where his oldest son, Turner, was baptized and attended pre-school. After moving to Church Hill in 2011, he began attending services at St. John's. He also became active in St. John's 400th anniversary celebration, designing the anniversary logo, and helping with a variety of marketing and public relations efforts.

In 2012, Doug convinced Lynn Kirstein to accompany him to St. John's for services. Lynn also grew up in the

Catholic faith and had been looking for a spiritual home more closely aligned with her beliefs, especially regarding giving back to the local community. Soon afterward, they started a family of their own. Their twins, Charlie and Kate, were baptized at St. John's in 2013 and are now enthusiastic participants in St. John's Children's Chapel. In 2015 the family moved to Westham near the University of Richmond.

Doug graduated from Fishburne Military School in Waynesboro and currently serves on the school's Board of Trustees. He earned a B.A. in Government and Foreign Relations from Hampden-Sydney College in 1994. His career in advertising and marketing began in Richmond with Arnold Worldwide, and later, Riddick Advertising. He also served for 15 years as Communications Director for SOAR365, a nonprofit serving people with disabilities and their families. He currently works as a consultant in marketing and public relations.

Lora Toothman was appointed by the vestry during 2021 to fill the seat vacated by parishioner Joni McKeen. In accordance with Canon 11 of the Constitutions and Canons of the Diocese of Virginia, the congregation will vote on this appointment at the Annual Meeting in addition to the other vestry nominations.

Lora has attended St. John's Church since 2019, when Ann Hardy invited her to join her at a service. The warm and open welcome St. John's gave her helped Lora realize she'd found her church home. Lora quickly joined the next Inquirer's Class and became a member of the Episcopal Church and St. John's that same year.

The daughter of a U.S. Army officer and a school teacher, Lora was born in Virginia but spent her childhood all over the United States and (at the time) West Germany. Lora and her husband, Joshua Cooley, have lived in Union Hill for 18 years.

An avid gardener by avocation, and a construction project manager by profession, Lora hopes to use her experience and skills to help preserve and maintain our beautiful buildings and grounds for the future. She also seeks to help St. John's build our blessed community and share God's love with those around us.

St. John's Church Endowment Fund

In 1885, a gift of \$200 was presented to St. John's Church in memory of Mary E. Godwin. By 1918, this fund had grown to \$1,000, and it was at this time that the St. John's Church Endowment, Inc. was chartered. Acknowledging that gifts to the church should be managed by a board of church members in a grateful, consistent, appropriate manner, the Endowment is controlled by a Board of Trustees who ensure that the income is used for purposes that fall within the charter's guidelines.

Current Endowment Trustees are Barbara Bayler, Richard Bowden, Mike Broda, Victoria Hauser (Secretary), Diana Nunnally, Marshall Schutt, Patty Soileau, Pattie Tobler (President), and Lisa Wood (Vice President). Three of the trustees must be members of the Vestry. Trustees serve a three year term. Those ending their term in 2021 are Barbara Bayler, Marshall Schutt, and Pattie Tobler. Nominees for new Trustees are presented by the Vestry.

The Endowment Funds are managed by Davenport & Company. Hardy, Harris, & Johnstone is the CPA firm that serves as the accountants and auditors.

The one directed gift to the Endowment this year was received from the estate of Penny Cannon Hodge. The gift of \$5,400. brings the total amount of Penny Hodge's gift to \$105,400. The very generous bequest from Penny is a reminder of the importance of including St. John's in our estate planning.

In 2020, the Endowment Fund set aside \$10,000 for repairs to the Parish House property and \$15,000 for renovation of the Parish House Garden. The Parish House Garden has been completely renovated to provide a lovely, serene environment for meetings, activities, or prayer and contemplation. The members of the Board of Trustees are deeply grateful to landscape designer Wendell Welder, who both designed the space and saw each step of the project through to completion. Her work was a gift to St. John's. The Endowment Board of Trustees hosted a special Coffee Hour in the garden on Sunday, October 24, at which time parishioners had the pleasure of viewing the new space and participating in a special blessing of the garden.

Members of the Endowment Board have met regularly with our managers and directors from Davenport & Co. to review the status of the Endowment Funds. The amount the Endowment Fund may spend annually is limited to 4.5% of the average of the last 12 quarters. A summary of Endowment funds is listed below.

Market Value as of December 31, 2021

General Endowment \$2,571,043.14

Endowment Funds \$568,138.84

Vestry Funds \$1,669,557.91

Total: **\$4,808,739.89**

Value, Parish House \$739,000.00

Total: **\$5,547,739.89**

Respectfully submitted,

Pattie J. Tobler (President)

Rector's Report

As the year 2021 came to an end, I began reading a collection of previously unpublished essays and lectures on “community” written by the great theologian and spiritual guide, Henri Nouwen. I was so touched by his candid, unfiltered insights on the nature of communal life that the book became the focus of our Wednesday evening Epiphany series for 2022. There is one quote from an article he wrote in 1978 that resonates deeply with our shared experience at St. John’s this past year:

“Many people whose love for one another has been tested more than once know that the decisive experience in their life was not that they were able to ‘hold’ together, but that they were ‘held’ together.”

Before I had read these words, I had been pondering how it was that we have been able to “hold it together” at St. John’s over nearly two years of life in pandemic, and now it occurred to me: we have also been held. Held by the loving hands of a God who works through our hearts, our minds, our spirits, our helping hands, and our busy feet. Held by one another, as a beloved community of individuals who are each made in the image and likeness of God. We have held on because we ourselves have been held.

We have held on to our shared worship by using technology to connect when conditions prevented us from gathering in person, and yet we were “held” as the Spirit breathed life into computer screens and iPads. We have held on to each other through loss, illness, joy, and life transitions as parishioners delivered meals, wrote notes, and made phone calls, but we were “held” by the sacred love that feels compassion and inspires action. Personally, I was held during 10 weeks of surgery leave as you sent notes and cards, delivered meals, prayed for me, and encouraged me to rest and truly recover. All the while, you were held by the loving and skillful leadership of the Rev. Jenny Montgomery as your interim supply priest.

We have held on to our beloved church property, wielding paint brushes, rakes, and hammers, but were held by the light that shines uniquely on our Beacon on the Hill, reminding us we are standing on holy ground. We have held on to our financial condition through wise decisions and creative uses of resources, but we were held by the overwhelming generosity of our members and friends of St. John’s. We have held on to our fellowship, learning, and the work of our ministry teams, adapting to the rise and fall of COVID numbers by meeting indoors with masks, outdoors when the weather permitted, on zoom screens when it was time to retreat. But despite the exhaustion of all this “pivoting,” we did not lose heart. And that is because we were “held.” Held by the sustaining love of God from which we draw our strength, our hope, and the joy we experience through our life together.

So, here are a few highlights that I would like to celebrate with you during this period of “holding” and “being held.” Many of these observations about our strengths are drawn from our vestry’s year end Mutual Ministry review, and it occurred to me that the entire congregation would benefit from them:

- Our ability to offer vibrant and meaningful worship that engages parishioners and visitors in ways that both celebrate and shape the gifts of our community – whether in person or online. We accomplished much this year: including the successful orchestration of the protocols necessary to safely transition back to in-person worship after a year of worshiping online. This was followed by a busy stretch of special services, including: an ordination, a joint Juneteenth Celebration with St. Peter’s, several weddings and multiple funerals, a baptism, a vibrant homecoming celebration, and a Spirit-filled visit from our bishop that welcomed three baptismal candidates and 15 candidates for Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation. There is no doubt that the authenticity, joy, and welcome we express through our worship is the primary reason newcomers are drawn to St. John’s.
- The teamwork and dedication of our vestry, which adapted with resilience and creativity to change and challenge. It takes a spirit of community and collaboration to be able to lead a congregation during a rector’s absence, and our vestry managed to do this during the 10 weeks of my surgery leave with grace and skill. I believe that it was the health and authenticity of our congregational leadership that drew such a fine interim priest to us; our vestry did a commendable job working with Jenny Montgomery to keep our church thriving during a transitional period in the life of our parish.

- The ongoing resourcefulness and teamwork of our pastoral care, young adults, outreach, property, worship, fellowship, and newcomer welcoming ministries. These ministry teams have held fast to their mission throughout the pandemic, remaining connected to one another and to the congregation.
- Our online Faith Formation programming. This is one of the “silver linings” of our year in lockdown mode and has borne fruit with compelling and more broadly attended book discussion, bible studies, and spiritual formation on Wednesday evenings. Our EfM group, Inquirer’s class, and Transformation Group have also been able adapt and even thrive through the online format.
- Our commitment to *Richmonders Involved to Strengthen Communities (RISC)*, which has allowed us to engage virtually via zoom in the hard work of social justice advocacy through initiatives addressing affordable housing, gun violence, and the effects of climate change on the most vulnerable in Richmond.
- The leadership of the St. John’s Church Foundation, who created innovative ways to share the rich story of our historic church with the surrounding community and the hundreds of visitors who traditionally are welcomed through our gates during times when physical access is not possible. We now shift nimbly back and forth from in-person to online formats for reenactments, tours, and lectures, and have not skipped a beat in our educational programming for elementary schools across the city and country, offering virtual interactive presentations live streamed directly into classrooms.

These are but a few of the ways we were able to hold our community together while being held, despite the continued uncertainty of pandemic, despite the tensions that divide our nation, despite how many times we have had to shift gears as COVID numbers rose and fell and rose again. In the pages that follow you will learn even more about all we were able to accomplish.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude for our Senior Warden, Paul Broughton, and our Junior Warden, Mike Broda, whose complementary skills offered encouragement, direction, perspective, and the gift of laughter to the work of our fabulous vestry. For Lynn Anderson, our Finance Team Leader, and Marshall Schutt, Chair of Stewardship, whose dedication and ingenuity have strengthened our financial position. For our interim supply priest Rev. Jenny Montgomery; to our Associate Priest, Rev. Dr. Dorothy White, and our deacon, Ven. David Curtis, whose preaching, teaching, and support of our ministries offered new blessings each week; to the Rev. Anne Lane Witt, who lovingly ministered to our children every Sunday, transitioning back and forth between online and in-person Children’s Chapel. To our Minister of Music, Jim Bennett, who creatively transitioned our choir back to in-person worship and did not lose heart as they donned masks and kept their distance. To our video technicians, Andy Russell and Mac Wooley, and to vestry member Brendan Cleary-Wildt, who adapted our online worship to a livestream format and laid the groundwork for a fabulous new camera system in the church. And to our Parish Administrator, Patty Duffy, who has devoted herself to St. John’s with flexibility, love, and care for over a decade.

Thank you, dear people of St. John’s, for the honor of serving as your Rector. I continue to be in awe of the ways we hold it together and are being held in the loving, life giving arms of God.

Faithfully submitted,

The Rev. Amelie Wilmer, Rector

Senior Warden's Report

At St. John's, 2021 was quite a year. It was the second year of the COVID Pandemic which dictated many of our activities and how we carried them out. It was a year when our beloved Amelie had to withdraw for approximately two and a half months to take care of her own physical needs and when we had to pick up and carry-on. We had the extreme good fortune to have Jenny Montgomery join us as our interim supply priest during this period and provide us with direction and nourishment.

We migrated from prerecorded services to an outdoor service, to live and online services, then back to taped and then live services again in early 2022. All the while Amelie, Dorothy, David and Jenny provided the messages and leadership that kept us going. And I must mention Jim Bennett's piano playing music that kept us tapping our toes, bobbing our heads, and engaged in worship whether we were there in-person or watching online.

Not to be outdone by the clergy, the parishioners and vestry of St. John's did their parts to continue to make St. John's the welcoming and beloved community it has become to be. Staying connected, offering fellowship and hospitality, both inside and out, looking after one another in the parish, and offering our gifts to others were regular occurrences throughout the year.

Each of our ministries has its own report as part of this annual meeting, so I will let each of them speak to the specifics. They were all successful thanks to the work of so many of our parishioners who are involved. But we cannot rest on the laurels of the past year. There is much to be done, and many more of us need to step forward and become more involved.

I would be remiss if I did not mention our continued and growing partnership with St. Peter's Episcopal Church. Our first combined "Juneteenth Celebration" was amazing, and we look forward to continuing that event annually and finding other ways to connect our parishioners and ministries.

I have been struck by how the words in the "Prayers of the People" conclude during this Epiphany Season, "Having prayed for these needs, and the secret needs of our hearts, *empower us to change this world and to help usher in the Reign of God* (emphasis added)." This, to me, is the call to St. John's as we look both internally and externally at the work we are called to do.

Thank you for allowing me to be your senior warden this year; it was busy and it was an honor and a privilege.

I want to end this report by borrowing a blessing that Amelie has shared with us and which I think speaks to our responsibility for God's creation and each other.

The Blessing

*The world now is too dangerous and too beautiful
for anything but love.*

May your eyes be so blessed, that you see God in everyone

Your ears, so you hear the cry of the poor

Your mouth, so you speak the truth in love,

*Your hands, so that everything you give
and everything you receive, is a sacrament*

And your feet, so you run to those who need you.

*May your heart be so opened,
so set on fire, that your love,
YOUR love, changes everything*

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Broughton, Senior Warden

Deacon's Report

Grace and peace be with you this day and for all of 2022! I am grateful that 2021 is behind us, and that hope seems more plentiful than ever.

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 Kathy Dixon for her leadership of our Outreach ministry this year. The Outreach team continues to look for and to find ways to serve our community in the midst of pandemic. Our Laundry Love ministry has been on hold since March 2020; it is our hope to begin that ministry again as pandemic moves to endemic.

In 2021, we collected over 4,700 pounds of food for the Christ Ascension Food Pantry. Outreach team ministers were present on the first and third Saturday of each month from January to May. Beginning in June, as we returned to in-person worship, we still gathered on the first Saturday of each month for First Fruits drop off.

I am deeply grateful that this community has increasingly become a community that engages with the neighborhood and with the city of Richmond. St. John’s has a deep history of community ministry and engagement, and this ministry, as with all ministries, ebbs and flows, and it seems that ministry is flowing these days. Some who come to St. John’s are drawn to this ministry of engagement and of action, of love and compassion, of grace and of relationship.

In addition to my ministry at St. John’s, I continue to serve as one of the two archdeacons of the Diocese of Virginia. As archdeacon, I assisted with the placement of newly ordained deacons in their placements while welcoming them into the Community of Deacons. With others in the diocese, we held the first Diocesan Deacon Day, an event that invited people to learn more about what the diaconate is and how to become one. I also organized and planned an in-person retreat for our deacons at Shrine Mont in October 2021.

Lastly, in November 2021, I was appointed to the Transition Committee for the Diocese of Virginia. In June 2022, members of the clergy and laity will meet to elect our next Diocesan Bishop. The Transition Committee’s work is underway and will become increasingly focused when the slate of candidates is announced in March 2022. The next bishop will be ordained and consecrated on December 3, 2022.

Words cannot express the gratitude I have to God for allowing me to serve in this community. This community is engaged. When we disagree, we do so lovingly and with respect. There is room for many different views and understandings of the Divine, of justice, of love at St. John’s, and yet we remain together because at the center of what we do is Jesus.

Justice, then peace,

The Ven. David Curtis

Deacon, St. John’s Church
Archdeacon, Diocese of Virginia

Ministry Reports

Worship Ministries

As we say 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, and when the Pandemic continued into 2021, we offered that gift to members and friends through video technology, COVID-cautious indoor worship, and outdoor services. One of the great learnings of this time has been the recognition of the importance of our growing online community, which is an expansion of our worship ministry that we could not have dreamed of before the pandemic. In addition to our regular Sunday services, special highlights for 2021 included:

Online:

- ❖ Ash Wednesday service with ashes provided for at home use
- ❖ Palm Sunday, Blessing of the Palms, and Passion Narrative
- ❖ Maundy Thursday Holy Eucharist with Spiritual Communion
- ❖ Good Friday Evening liturgy
- ❖ Easter Day Service
- ❖ Service of Commissioning our Vestry Members
- ❖ Wednesday evening Compline services and Advent Vespers Services

In-Person (with Livestream video option during indoor services)

- ❖ Outdoor Saturday evening Eucharist in Eastertide.
- ❖ Pentecost Festival Eucharist
- ❖ Ordination of Rachel Eskite to the Transitional Diaconate
- ❖ Juneteenth Worship and Celebration with St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, Richmond
- ❖ Homecoming Sunday Eucharist with procession of Ministry Team Leaders
- ❖ Blessing of the Animals in the Churchyard with over 80 in attendance
- ❖ Blessing of the Parish House Garden
- ❖ All Saints Day Bishop’s Visitation with Holy Baptism, Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows (a total of 18 candidates).
- ❖ Thanksgiving Day Eucharist
- ❖ Christmas Eve Family Service and Late Evening Festival Eucharist
- ❖ Four baptisms, three weddings, and five funerals.

St. John’s entered the year 2021 in its 10th month of worshiping online only, with pre-recorded video services that included scenes filmed from the church along with contributions from a wide variety of parishioners from their home environment. These videos premiered on YouTube at 10:00 a.m. each Sunday morning with a chat feature, which enabled members of the congregation to greet one another and share responses to the service. While not the same as worshiping together side by side, these online services connected us with one another with a level of intimacy and creativity that opened new doors for relationship, both within and beyond our existing community. Over this past year, we have welcomed dozens of online worshipers who are new to us, both locally and in other regions of the country.

This form of online worship continued through Epiphany, Lent, and Eastertide, followed by a gradual transition to in-person worship as we ushered in the season of Pentecost. Once back inside the church for worship, we shifted to a live-stream system for our video recordings, continuing our commitment to making our worship services available on YouTube for our online community. We have truly embraced the unexpected blessings of our online experience during the pandemic: “Hybrid” worship is here to stay!

With the return to in-person worship, we were able to open the church to a number of parishioners and friends of St. John’s who had postponed weddings, baptisms, and funerals due to the pandemic. This opportunity to provide a sacred place of sanctuary, welcome, and hospitality is a gift that lies at the heart of our identity as the beloved community of St. John’s. Thanks go to the dedicated team of readers, acolytes, musicians, ushers, greeters, and givers of hospitality who made this welcome possible.

Among our most Spirit-filled services of the year were our joint Juneteenth Celebration with St. Peter’s, our Annual Blessing of the Animals, the Blessing of our Parish House Garden, and our Bishop’s visitation with Bishop Goff. Attendance at these services exceeded our expectations and offered us the opportunity to joyfully welcome many newcomers to St. John’s.

In addition to our corporate worship, several pastoral liturgies offered by the Rector have included home communion during pastoral visits and the blessing of two babies born this year to parents in the congregation. Each were performed with physical distancing necessary to ensure the safety of the families involved. In addition, prayers for surgery, reconciliation, and other pastoral prayer were conducted either in-person or online, depending on parishioner comfort levels and COVID levels.

Participation in one or more of our worship ministries is a life-giving way to serve our community and nurture your relationship with God. Even during this time of pandemic, opportunities to serve by supporting our worship, whether online or in-person, are plentiful. The Worship Team, consisting of the Rector, Deacon, 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, Interim Ministry Team Leader)

The 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.

Some examples of work done by Altar Guild are: setting the altar for all services and returning altar vessels to the sacristy 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.

This was a year of adaptability and transition for our Altar Guild. The team began the year under the leadership of Catherine Brown for the Altar ministry and Reeves McCune for our Flower ministry, providing liturgical hangings and flowers appropriate to the season for our online services. Understandably, the altar guild team was reduced to a very small number of participants during this time for COVID safety. This group responded with grace and creativity to address special liturgical needs, such as distributing ashes to members of the congregation for at home use during our online Ash Wednesday service and Palms for Palm Sunday.

When the congregation made the gradual transition to in-person services with Holy Eucharist in May 2021, the time came to rebuild our former team to prepare the table for the Eucharistic feast with appropriate COVID safety measures in place. By mid-summer, a shared leadership model was established, allowing Catherine to transition from her role as Team Leader. Altar Guild team member Sarah File Lineberger agreed to manage scheduling, and by the end of 2021, former Altar Guild Team leader Lisa Wood agreed to step back into her

previous role on an interim basis. Please offer these dedicated St. John's parishioners your thanks for supporting this important ministry during a time of constant change!

The Altar guild has met several times since last summer to review procedures, divide responsibilities, and ensure that the sacristy supplies are in order. On Saturday, November 7, members of the team gathered for a "Polishing Party" to prepare the church furnishings for our bishop's visitation. The church was glowing as brightly as the hearts of those who gathered for this joyous occasion.

As we enter into the year 2022, the Altar Guild's primary goal is to rebuild team membership from 7 parishioners to its previous level of at least 12. Please consider participating in this sacred and essential ministry of the church; training and orientation sessions will be offered throughout the year. Attention will also be paid to our Sacristy area, which has long needed reconfiguration and renovation.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Rev. Amelie Wilmer, Rector

Choir and Music

(Jim Bennett, Minister of Music)

God's Promise*

*I didn't promise you skies painted blue
Not all colored flowers all your days through
I didn't promise you sun with no rain
Joys without sorrows, peace without pain.*

Refrain:

*All that I promise is strength for this day,
Rest for my worker, and light on your way.
I give you truth when you need it, my help from above,
Undying friendship, my unfailing love.*

Woody Guthrie, the iconic American folk singer, wrote many lyrics for songs that he never had the chance to set to music. Since his death in 1967 from complications of Huntington's disease, his estate invited other writers to peruse the archives and set some to music. I first heard the song "God's Promise" performed by singer/songwriter Ellis Paul. The song came to mind when I looked back over the past year and reread the report I submitted for our last annual meeting. I wrote then about the challenge of doing ministry with pandemic restrictions, the frustration of not being able to do what we usually do. Woody Guthrie's words remind us that life is not always easy. There are times of sorrow and pain as well as times of joy and gladness. God promises to be with us, to light our way, to accompany us through it all.

*I never did promise you crowns without trials,
Food with no hard sweat, your tears without smiles,
Hot sunny days without cold wintry snows,
No vict'ry without fightin', no laughs without woes.*

*All that I promise is strength for this day,
Rest for my worker, and light on your way.
I give you truth when you need it, my help from above,
Undying friendship, my unfailing love.*

The people who are the Music Ministry at St. John's have had their sorrows and woes, their trials and pain. We've felt the weight of the pandemic and we've had friends, coworkers, and family affected by it. We have struggled to be community while sitting in front of a computer screen or smart phone, singing in a mask while

standing too far apart to hear each other well. We have also felt God's friendship and unfailing love. We have lifted each other up, prayed together, and learned that singing in a mask is better than not singing at all.

*I sure didn't say I'd give you heaven on earth,
A life with no labor no struggles no deaths,
No earthquakes no dry spells, no fire flames no droughts,
No slaving no hungers, no blizzards no blights.*

*All that I promise is strength for this day,
Rest for my worker, and light on your way.
I give you truth when you need it, my help from above,
Undying friendship, my unfailing love.*

The people who are the Music Ministry at St. John's have lifted their voices in praise for many times of worship over the past year. Prerecording our services has given way to gathering in-person again. Though we briefly needed to revert to prerecording, we are again back together. We have added new choristers—sopranos Victoria Rennie and Jennifer Grundy. Raymond Elmore has returned to sing bass.

*I promise you power, this minute this hour,
The power you need when you fall down to bleed,
I give you my peace, and my strength to pull home
My love for all races all creeds and all kinds.*

The people who are the Music Ministry at St. John's joined our voices with St. Peter's to celebrate Juneteenth this past summer. The work we are doing with our sisters and brothers is sacred work, needed work, and difficult work. God's promise is to be with us through it. We were reminded again how powerful the work is when we gathered again recently with St. Peter's to receive the diocesan Meet Me in Galilee award.

May God's light continue to guide us as we walk the journey of becoming beloved community.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Bennett, Minister of Music

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Servers

Lay Readers – Our Lay Readers read the lessons and lead prayers at each service, with assignments scheduled in advance and communicated through the coordinated efforts of Victoria Hauser and our Parish Administrator, Patty Duffy. When we were worshiping online during the first half of the year, our readers adapted by recording their assigned lections from home and submitting them to our video editor. A surprising benefit was the addition of several new readers and broader inclusion of our readers in the prayers and responses during the service. With the resumption of in-person worship, this expanded group of Lay Readers have once again adapted, offering their readings in church with COVID Safety measures in place.

Lay Eucharistic Ministers/Visitors - 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 to receive it in their homes, bringing the St. John's community to those who cannot attend church on Sunday morning. Both LEMs and the LEVs are licensed by the Diocese of Virginia. The work of Eucharistic Ministers has resumed with COVID safety procedures in place, and we encourage parishioners who are unable to attend worship to consider receiving this outreach of our eucharistic feast.

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. With the return to in-person worship, our acolyte ministry has resumed, and we encourage any person over the age of nine (9) to participate.

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.

With the return to in-person COVID-Safe worship in May, our ushers have risen to the occasion. This has included ensuring masks are on hand for those who need them, assisting worshipers with distanced seating, and guiding congregants during communion.

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, and we were grateful to resume it with our return to in-person worship.

Prayer Ministry – Prior to the pandemic, members of our prayer ministry offer personal prayers during communion at the Colonial Altar. This ministry was placed on hold during COVID, with prayers for the congregation being offered from our ministers’ homes. We hope to resume this ministry in Spring of 2022.

Weddings

(Lynn Anderson and Patty Duffy, Wedding Coordinators)

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. As COVID restrictions eased in the Spring of 2021, weddings inside the church became possible once again. Three couples were married at St. John’s during the year, filling our beloved sanctuary with joy and hope, while adapting, as needed, masking and distancing requirements. Amelie is currently in the process of preparing four couples for weddings in 2022, with additional weddings being placed on the calendar as the year progresses. After serving as our Wedding Coordinator for nearly two decades, Lynn Anderson began training Patty Duffy, our Parish Administrator, to assist her and eventually step into the role in the coming year while we seek to cultivate a new lay leader. Lynn has done an excellent job in this role, which includes coordinating with our Rector, Minister of Music, Altar Guild, and the couple to manage the logistical planning for the wedding party and assist with the rehearsal and ceremony.

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!

Faithfully submitted,

The Reverend Amelie Wilmer, Rector

Faith Formation

“Faith formation,” of course, includes a whole host of practices and opportunities that feed the lifelong process of growing in our relationship with God and all of God’s creation. Study, contemplation, prayer, worship, service—and the experience of our lives—all provide pathways to deepen and expand our faith. Thus, St. John’s support of the congregation’s faith journeys is imbedded in each and all of our ministries. Specific programming aimed at purposefully supporting and encouraging deeper understanding of our faith and its implications for our lives fall generally within our Faith Formation ministry.

Formal activities that fall within this ministry include our weekly Sunday Forum, Children’s Chapel, weekday evening programming (including Bible and book studies, special presentations and workshops, Lenten series),

an annual retreat, Inquirer's (Confirmation) class, Education for Ministry, and our Transformation group. During 2021, over 60 St. John's parishioners participated in at least one of these programs.

Sunday Forum

This year's Sunday Forum met via Zoom from January through May following online worship, and in person before the 10:00 a.m. service from September until the end of Advent. Forum themes were anchored in Biblical study, modern spiritual questions, and the liturgical seasons. Discussions stimulate thoughtful reflection to feed attendees' spiritual growth.

The year began with what has become 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 Encountering God in Prayer (David Curtis), Inclusive Language (August Butler and David Curtis), the Wisdom of Children's Literature (Amelie), Engaging Virginia's Native Tribes (Dr. Ellen Chapman, Archaeologist), and A "trip" to Palestine in Art and Pictures (Martha Broughton).

The season of Lent continued online with presentations grounded in the Lenten Lectionary led by the day's preacher. Gospel themes appropriate to Lent such as "The Wilderness," "Losing Life to Find it," "Turning Tables and Cleaning House," and "How God So Loved the World" were explored in informal, engaging conversation.

After Easter, the Forum resumed with the theme "Practicing Resurrection" with online presentations from visiting speakers, including Professor Frances Taylor-Gench, Prof. Sam Adams, Prof. John Carroll, Dr. Roger Gench, and the Rev. Dr. Jenny Montgomery. As always, Sunday Forum took a break for the summer.

Upon our return in the fall, we were able to meet in person and the planning team designed a program that was easily adapted to an earlier, 9:00 a.m. start time and an anticipated smaller number of participants. The program focused on the Sunday lectionary readings from the Old Testament, Psalms, Epistles and Gospels, and offered participants interpretive resources and tools to engage with and understand them in new ways. Clergy and lay leaders led the discussions. A small group of 4-8 attended throughout the fall.

The final program for the year was a series for Advent based on the Music, Art, Literature, and liturgical expressions of the Canticles in Luke's Gospel.

Programming and scheduling for all of this was overseen by a new Faith Formation Ministry Team, which met throughout the year.

Children's Chapel

As we end the second month of 2022, I have been reflecting on our Children's Chapel ministries, and I am so thankful. When we returned to in-person Children's Chapel last summer, I feared that our momentum would be lost, but it has continued, with our students still eager to be together. The ten children who have participated this year genuinely enjoy each other's company, which makes my work easier and even more meaningful. Many, many thanks to all who have been a part of our ministries!

We are still using the Lesson Plans That Work curriculum, following the Old Testament track for now. Our students definitely have inquiring and discerning hearts and active minds, and it is always interesting to hear their take on our sacred stories. If your family has not yet gotten a children's Bible, I recommend doing so; I have seen such growth in their curiosity as they grow in Biblical literacy, and it can be great fun to share it with them. Please let me know if you need help choosing one.

Thank you so much for your support of Children's Chapel. As I am reminded every time we reaffirm our Baptismal Covenant, I will, with God's help, and most often, God's help comes through the people around us. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

The Rev. Anne Lane Witt

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 a core group of faithful participants and have led us all into deeper relationships with one another and with God. Each week, we gathered for study/ discussion at 7:00 p.m. online via Zoom. Programs were generally facilitated by Amelie, with assistance from the Rev. Dorothy White; our deacon, David Curtis; and members of the congregation.

On Wednesday evenings during the season of Epiphany and in the early fall, participants discussed selected books relating to our Justice ministry, including *Evicted* and *The Church Cracked Open*. At other times in the program year, scripture guided our conversations, with a study of the Book of Acts led by the Rev. Joe Glaze during Eastertide and an exploration of healing stories led by Amelie in the late fall.

The year concluded with a four-week series based on Jan Richardson's "Illuminated Advent" exploring the season through creative writing, art, music, and community. Participants engaged in thoughtful, vulnerable conversations sparked by Richardson's questions.

Lenten Series

During the season of Lent, our programming continued online at 7:00 p.m. with a five-week series on "Spirituality for Your Personality" based on the book, *Prayer and Temperament* by Chester Michael and Marie Norrisey. Program participants utilized the results of their Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) to explore the spiritual practices that best suit their personality styles and temperaments.

Inquirers/Confirmation Class

Our yearly Inquirers classes are for those interested in learning more about membership in the Episcopal Church or who might be considering Confirmation, Reception, or the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows.

This year's 6 participants of various ages and religious backgrounds enjoyed a mix of virtual and in-person meetings from August through October. In November, they were joined by the 9 members of the 2020 class for the bishop's visit to baptize and confirm individuals, resulting in a joyful in-person service for the entire congregation.

Education for Ministry

This was the third year of our Education for Ministry (EfM) group at St. John's. This four-year program in theological education is based upon small-group study and practice and is designed to help lay people discover and nurture their calls to Christian service. The group is mentored by deacon David Curtis and, remaining virtual, began meeting in September, with 2 second-year members and 6 third year members. 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.

Transformation Group

Formed in 2018, this small group ministry remains committed to its mission of providing a monthly meeting of female-identifying individuals whose experience of violence, abuse, trauma, or unexpected life-altering circumstances informs their ongoing spiritual growth and transformation. Members offer each other support, understanding and grace, using their shared history as a unique lens through which peace can be achieved. During 2021, the group met both in person and online as circumstances permitted. Scripture-based resources from The Center for Contemplation and Action, Jan Richardson, and Henri Nouwen guided their

discussions. The group will continue meeting regularly during 2022 and is exploring ways to share their existence and purpose more broadly so that they might serve as a resource to others who might benefit.

Fall Retreat

In October, the annual parish retreat took place, not at Shrine Mont as usual, but locally on October 29 and 30. Led by our rector and our deacon, it included both virtual and in-person elements. Participants joined together virtually on Friday and Saturday evenings, and in person at Three Lakes Park on Saturday morning for a final session and lunch. Time was spent reflecting on the healing stories of John 5:1-15, John 11:38-42, and Mark 1:29-3. Everyone is looking forward to planning next year's retreat at Shrine Mont.

Faithfully submitted,

Maureen Matsen, Faith Formation Vestry Liaison
The Rev. Amelie Wilmer, Rector
The Rev. Anne Lane Witt, Children's Chaplain

Newcomer/Visitor Ministry

(Rita Driscoll, Vestry Liaison)

Even though 2021 was a year of challenge and opportunity for our church as we made the gradual transition from worshiping and gathering online to gathering in-person, with adjustments along the way as COVID rates rose and fell, newcomers continued to visit St. John's, both in person and online. When a newcomer visits for the first time, they are welcomed with an email or call from Amelie. Quarterly emails are sent to these newcomers with updates and invitations to upcoming events. Despite ongoing pandemic conditions, we welcomed 31 newcomers during 2021, which is something to celebrate! On November 7, during the Bishop's visit, three baptismal candidates and 15 participants from our 2020 and 2021 Inquirer's classes were welcomed into formal membership at St. John's.

Fellowship/Hospitality

(Rita Driscoll, Vestry Liaison)

Because the year began with COVID restrictions in place and no in-person church-related events. Virtual coffee hours were our means for getting together after online services. By Mother's Day, we were able to gather after services for coffee hours, pivoting from meeting indoors to outdoors, depending on COVID case levels, and those gatherings were a welcome treat for everyone. In October, an enthusiastic crowd of animals and their owners gathered for the Blessing of the Animals and enjoyed snacks in the churchyard. On November 7, we provided an outdoor brunch with food from the 25th Street Market for the Bishop's visit. We welcomed 18 new members and three families with Baptisms under tents in the churchyard on this beautiful, sunny morning. It was a lovely, unforgettable event.

After three years of devoted leadership, our Fellowship leader, Susan White, resigned in November to recover from surgery, and a committee was formed to coordinate the responsibilities of this ministry. Because the kitchen and Parish Hall were closed for so many months, members of the property committee and several volunteers dedicated a work day in November to cleaning and reorganizing the kitchen. Rita Driscoll ordered new supplies to re-stock the kitchen. As COVID numbers rose to all-time highs with the omicron variant in late December, we again cancelled in-person coffee hours and returned to online coffee hours for the remainder of 2021.

Young Adults Ministry

The Young Adults continued to show flexibility and resilience in 2021, while still sharing in community with one another. We began the year with a Super Bowl "party" on Zoom, laughing at commercials and sharing our

predictions for the game.

In March, we joined other St. John's members for a Parish Work Day and for the annual RISC Nehemiah Action virtual event, and in April, we enjoyed an outdoor gathering in David Curtis' backyard. In June, the Brodas hosted an outdoor farewell celebration for Andy Russell before his move to Tennessee, which was an event full of love, laughter, and sun/sweat.

Many Young Adults also took part in the Juneteenth celebration, including Michael Nesossis and Bonnie Sampson joyously carrying the banner at the front of the march. In July, we were excited to return to hosting second-Sunday Coffee Hour, getting back in the habit of making a fine spread. We also served as the set-up, clean-up, and entertainment crew for the Homecoming Celebration in September.

In December, the Brodas hosted the annual Christmas Party with everyone's favorite White Elephant gift exchange, and a great time was had by all! The Young Adults group was happy to welcome some new faces last year and look forward to more time together and more new faces in 2022.

Submitted with love,

Liz Broda, Young Adults Ministry Team Leader

Outreach Ministries

Our outreach team's mission is to strive to walk the way of Jesus in love and justice, connecting St. John's members with the broader Church Hill community. We are grateful to the parishioners who give their time and talents to enrich our efforts to serve our neighbors.

This past year included many accomplishments despite ongoing pandemic barriers.

First Fruits: Thanks to our congregation's faithful donations of food, we exceeded our goal of 4,000 pounds and provided 4,207 pounds of food for Christ Ascension's food pantry. Our participation has been vital to the existence of their program. Since 2015, we have collected 18,157 pounds.

First Fruits collections had been held on the first and third Saturdays of the month, but once we began in-person worship in June 2021, we switched to collecting food on the first Saturday and first Sunday of each month. Parishioners have enjoyed the personal connection they get when dropping off food on Saturdays. We continue to mask up and keep some social distance, but are able to share conversation and laughter with our fellow St. John's parishioners. We are grateful for those who have faithfully assisted with collections and those who faithfully contribute each month.

We also created St. John's t-shirts that feature our church logo and the message: "Everyone is welcome. No exceptions!" Having sold 25 of them, some of the proceeds will be donated to Christ Ascension's food pantry.

In addition to these regular collections, the Outreach Team was able to purchase non-perishable Thanksgiving foods for Chimborazo Elementary School's community Thanksgiving dinner. Members of the Outreach Team and other volunteers assembled 25 complete meal boxes (stuffing, gravy, vegetables, sweet potatoes, macaroni and cheese, cornbread, cranberry sauce, dessert, coffee/tea/hot chocolate) and delivered them to the school for distribution in place of their annual dinner.

Laundry Love: We have been unable to return to the laundromat due to COVID restrictions. We periodically check in with the manager to see if he feels comfortable hosting again.

Bellevue Elementary School: Our neighborhood elementary school is dear to the hearts of St. John's members, and we continue to support their teachers and staff. We assembled and delivered goody bags for all teachers and support staff in May; we delivered a back-to-school breakfast in August, when they returned for in-person

learning; and we are providing snacks for the teachers' break room throughout the year.

ReWork Richmond: This organization housed at St. Peter's assists East End families who seek to improve their lives by enhancing their skills and education, and by obtaining stable employment. In addition to the church's financial support of the organization, a number of our parishioners are involved in volunteer activities such as resume writing and interview preparation. Amelie serves on the ReWork board. Several ReWork program participants have started their own small businesses, and our parishioners have also been able to help with marketing and graphic design support.

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

Many thanks to all who support these important ministries!

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Dixon, Outreach Ministry Chair

St. John's Justice Ministry

*(The Rev. Dr. Dorothy White and Rev. Amelie Wilmer, Clergy Leaders;
Jane Hunnicutt and Katherine Schutt, Network Team Leaders)*

*What does the Lord require of you?
To do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God (Micah 6:8)*

St. John's formed a Justice ministry in the Fall of 2020 in response to the systemic inequities that were laid bare by the pandemic and our biblical call to promote justice in our local community. After researching and learning about efforts already underway, we joined RISC —*Richmonders Involved to Strengthen our Communities*—a grassroots, direct-action organization made up of 22 congregations throughout the Richmond Metro Area. Though our involvement in social justice efforts will expand in the future, RISC allowed for our immediate collaboration. Several online “house meetings” led by the Rev. Dr. Dorothy White provided opportunities for St. John's Parishioners to deeply research two areas of concern being addressed by RISC – Affordable Housing and Gun violence – in order to understand the problem and to offer meaningful, proven solutions. These meetings led to the participation of over 38 members and friends of St. John's in the Annual RISC Nehemiah Action on March 23 in which over 2000 RISC supporters met with City Council members to affirm their commitment to a \$10 million Affordable Housing Trust fund and their ongoing consideration of policies affecting Gun Violence.

As our Justice Ministry entered the 2021 Fall Season, participation by St. John's parishioners as RISC network members grew to 27. Parishioners Jane Hunnicutt and Katherine Schutt assumed team leadership, and four house meetings were held from September through December. In addition, several team members became involved in the research and advocacy process for the three issues being pursued by RISC during the 2021/22 calendar year: Affordable Housing, Gun Violence and the newly adopted “Healthy Homes” initiative, which addresses the impact of climate change on the most vulnerable in our city. In support of RISC's organizational efforts, our clergy regularly attended clergy Caucus and RISC board meetings. St John's network members are now preparing for the 2022 “Nehemiah Action” scheduled for April 5, in which thousands of RISC representatives will gather to publicly ask the mayor and the city council to implement their proposed solutions. Please consider joining us for this important meeting. There is strength in numbers, and your presence matters. You can learn more by contacting our clergy leaders, Dorothy White and Amelie, or team leader Jane Hunnicutt.

Faithfully submitted,
Rev. Amelie Wilmer, Rector

Pastoral Care Ministry

The Pastoral Care Committee, a vital part of the St. John's community, has continued the ministry of caring for members in need over the past year. Committee members provided a variety of services, including sending notes, cards and flowers; running errands; and preparing meals for those experiencing illness, bereavement, or the birth of a child. Committee members rotate monthly to serve as point person for pastoral concerns. In addition, an appointed member sends weekly bulletins and news to parishioners who cannot attend services or access them online 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 administrator, we kept abreast of those at St. John's needing care.

Last summer we held met for dinner and to review our monthly assignments, team guidelines, and challenges during this time of social distancing. 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 or Rita Driscoll for further information.

Faithfully submitted,
Rita Driscoll, Vestry Liaison for Pastoral Care

Reconnecting Ministry

The Reconnecting Committee is new to St. John's, a product of the pandemic and the vestry's desire for the community to stay connected. The committee's mission is to reach out, particularly to members of St. John's whom we have not seen recently, either in person or online; however, the committee is also interested in connecting with everyone at St. John's.

During COVID, we were confined to sending cards and emails and touching base with phone calls. We are looking forward to being able to host welcome back events once COVID rates are down again and once more of our members feel safe gathering with each other again.

If you'd like to help renew ties with St. John's members you haven't seen recently, please join us! Contact Lora Toothman for more information.

Respectfully submitted,
Lora Toothman, Vestry Liaison

Care for Parish Administration Ministry

Care for Parish Administration is one of the vestry's strategic goals. It is based on our recognized need to support and assist the rector and all other staff in their work and in their lives. A secondary area of focus is helping identify areas where processes or procedures can be improved and/or documented.

A major focus this year was to support and assist Amelie during her surgery and recovery. We thank Barbara Bayler for leading that effort.

Looking forward, a working committee has been identified to support this effort in 2022 with monthly meetings and a charter to guide the committee's activities.

We all owe Amelie, Dorothy, David, Anne Lane, Jim, and Patty a huge expression of gratitude for a job well done in very, very difficult circumstances. If you have the opportunity, please tell them how much they are appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Broughton, Senior Warden

Communications Ministry

(Brendan Cleary-Wildt, Vestry Liaison)

It takes many words to describe the path that our Communications/Community Presence Ministry took this year – transitional, flexibility, cooperation, group effort, and challenging are just a few of them.

The major focus was the broadcast of our Sunday Services to those who would be viewing online. The year started with all of us watching prerecorded pieces of a service that were “pasted” together and uploaded to YouTube to provide a complete service at 10:00 a.m. each Sunday morning. This process was the solution that we had originally adopted in 2020 when COVID prevented us from in-person worship.

Then on Mother’s Day, May 9, 2021, we returned to in-person services that were live-streamed. With the help and cooperation of the St. John’s Foundation, specifically Amy Swartz, we were able to live stream these services using a laptop and shoulder rig that Amy had devised so the Foundation could broadcast programs to elementary schools under their Title I program during the week.

Instrumental to our prerecorded services and the new live-streamed services was parishioner Andy Russell, who shared his knowledge and skills to help make it all happen before leaving for graduate school in Tennessee at the end of June. We are indebted to him. Fortunately, he had given us notice, and we began immediately searching for videographers to help us.

After several fits and starts, we finally found a video tech assistant who has helped us for the long term—Mac Woolley. During the interim period and later, when Mac was unavailable, several parishioners filled in, using the laptop rig and, on occasion, using an iPhone.

Beginning in June, the vestry and Amelie realized that online services were here to stay, even after we were back to in-person worship, and that St. John’s needed a professional camera system to make that work. Brendan Cleary-Wildt solicited bids and Collaborative AV was awarded a contract in August.

After some delays due to supply chain issues, the camera system was installed in January 2022. We are currently enjoying the improved picture and sound quality that our new system provides.

We want to acknowledge the bequest of Christine Smith to St. John’s. Her gift has made possible the purchase of this equipment, as well as other improvements in St. John’s, possible.

We also thank Brendan Cleary-Wildt for all his work in coordinating the purchase of the equipment and heading up this ministry this year.

In the summer, we hung new, eye-catching banners designed by our own Barbara Olwig (thanks to Barbara), which provide information about our in-person and online services to motorists and pedestrians.

Another important area of our communications ministry is the production of weekly updates for our electronic newsletter and Sunday bulletin inserts, and the management of our website. This process is handled by our Parish Administrator, Patty Duffy, in collaboration with our rector, who encourages ministry team leaders and members of the congregation to submit announcements as they occur during the year. We have continued to refine our steps to ensure accuracy of information, frequency, and visibility.

Finally, in order to improve communications to the congregation about the priorities and ongoing work of our vestry, our church leadership established a new practice of sending a monthly “Vestry Note” that summarizes the highlights of each meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
The Communications Ministry Team

Property Ministry

The Property Committee's work began this year with a "walk-through" of the buildings and grounds by Joni McKeen, Jim Carpenter, and Ashley and Reeves McCune after our being shut down for almost a year because of COVID. They found a number of issues that served as the beginning of our work plan for the remainder of the year. And, of course, as the year progressed, we had some additional needs and surprises that were added to the list.

Additionally, we had two very successful "parish work days" in the fall, with many new folks chipping-in to make the work go faster. Perhaps the best thing about those 2 work days was reconnecting with old friends and making new friends as we worked side by side.

Below is a list of the projects that have been completed this year:

1. Parish House (note all work was paid for by the Endowment which owns the Parish House)
 - a. Gutters cleaned
 - b. New downspouts installed
 - c. East side porch scraped and painted
 - d. West side door and window trim, scraped, and painted, basement door scraped and painted
 - e. Gate installed on interior; interior fence painted
 - f. Garden refurbished to include patio and new plantings
 - g. Porch light fixture replaced (2/2022)
2. Church
 - a. Several shutters replaced/restored
 - b. West porch railings and steps repaired and painted
 - c. Spot light bulbs replaced with LEDs on the lights that illuminate the altar windows (2/2022)
 - d. Boiler pumps replaced
 - f. Bathroom drain unclogged
 - g. air conditioner repaired/replaced part of one air conditioner (the Foundation paid for this work)
 - h. Marguerite Stokes stained glass window is presently begun (to be completed in approximately 3 months)
3. Parish Hall
 - a. Boiler replaced
 - b. Vent fans replaced in the Women's and Men's Bathrooms (2/2022)
 - c. Downspouts tied together on southside of parish hall to drain onto sidewalk (1/2022)
 - d. East Porch and North Porch and door repaired and painted
 - e. Air Conditioners replaced
 - f. Oven hood cleaned and inspected
 - g. Breaker replaced to restore power to the nursery air conditioner. (2/2022)
4. Miscellaneous
 - a. Leak in front of churchyard repaired (2/2022)
 - b. Gutters cleaned where needed
 - c. Fence repaired and painted around church air conditioners
 - d. Sidewalk repaired

With old buildings and grounds, there will always be something that needs to be repaired or replaced. At present we have the following projects on our radar:

- Repair water pipe to Parish Hall
- Repair or replace steps going down to the boiler room under the Parish Hall.
- Repair and maintain shutters on the church – (Foundation Project)
- Paint floor and steps on West porch of church

- Paint Keeper's Cottage Roof
- Scrape and spot paint of the church, parish hall, and keeper's cottage
- Unclog blocked downspouts and drains and map drain pipes from church

This year we also began the initial steps of developing a long-term property management plan which will be completed in conjunction with the St. John's Foundation. With six different buildings on our campus, it is necessary to catalog all of the various systems in each building, establish life expectancy and replacement plans, and to track repairs, improvements and capital investments. Thanks to Stewart Gamage, Anna Martin, who performed this type of work in her career, toured our buildings. Afterwards she met with the property committee, members of the vestry, and members of the Foundation's staff to discuss the components of a plan and the advantages of having one.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to all who have helped with the property team this year, especially to Ashley McCune who shares his knowledge and expertise as well as time to tackle the property challenges. Additionally, many thanks to Rita Driscoll and her son Michael, who repaired and painted fences, doors, and porches. They spent many hours doing this volunteer work and saved the church a lot of money. We are also grateful for the ongoing work of the **Archives Committee** and the **Cemetery Committee**.

If you are interested in becoming involved in the property team, please contact Marc Dixon or Lora Toothman, who will be the chair of the committee and vestry liaison for property this year, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Broughton

Stewardship

The Stewardship Committee includes Marshall Schutt, Jay Rosenstock, Brendan Cleary-Wildt, and Sue Schutt and was also greatly helped by periodic assistance from Jane Hunnicutt and Ed Schutt this year. Our Rector, Amelie Wilmer, and Parish Administrator, Patty Duffy, offered helpful guidance and critical support, too.

The 2022 Stewardship Campaign, with the theme "Broken Open," centered on the words Jesus spoke to his disciples at the First Eucharist: "While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said, 'Take, eat. This is my body.'" It also reflects the many ways that St. John's has remained open as a community and to one another, and has found ways to spread God's love with open hearts during the past year.

The campaign kicked off on Sunday, October 17, and concluded on November 7, 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 an ambitious goal of \$205,000 for 2021. As of this writing, St. John's has received a strong response, with pledges for 2022 totaling \$212,165 from 73 households. This result, well in excess of our goal, is a great indicator of the strength and health of our spiritual community.

Several factors contributed to the success of the stewardship campaign this year. First, many loyal and longtime parishioners pledged once again. This core group comprises the majority of our donors, and St. John's is so grateful for each household's continuing and steadfast support.

Second, we had thirteen new donors respond with cumulative commitments totaling \$22,900. This is a wonderful expression of the positive growth that St. John's is enjoying. I believe these strong financial accomplishments are a testament to the important role St. John's plays in the lives of all of us, perhaps even more so during these unusual times.

This strong support will enable us to continue to fulfill our growing ministries at St. John's and in our community, and to support our leadership and operations. Your gifts are especially welcomed this year, enabling us to grow and prosper even as we continue to navigate uncertainties with COVID.

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, Stewardship Chair

Finance

St. John's annual revenue budget for 2022 is \$513,023.98. 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; and payments from the St. John's Church Foundation.

Both the church and St. John's Church Foundation are slowly recovering from the backlash of COVID. The Foundation's contribution of \$33,000 in 2021 will be increased to \$48,000 in 2022. Additionally, towards the end of 2021, the Foundation provided an additional \$7,000 for maintenance and preservation; most of this has already been spent.

In 2021, we received pledges from 70 families totaling \$206,409. Going into 2022 we have 73 pledges totaling \$212,165 so far. We hope to see additional pledges to further expand our ministries.

Historically, 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, whose funds are invested with the Endowment, but are available to the Vestry. The largest and most important fund 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, although this year we did take an extra amount to replace the air conditioners in the Parish Hall.

As in-person services resumed in May 2021, some of our expenses such as utilities, landscaping, and janitorial services returned to their pre-COVID levels. We are continuing to provide streamed services for those who prefer to worship online. Thus, our videography budget has required additional funding.

2021 ST. JOHN'S REVENUE

ITEM:	AMOUNT:	% of REVENUE:
Pledges	\$206,409.20	40.65%
Plate Offering	\$17,406.65	3.42%
Carry Over	\$63,989.36	12.60%
Flower/Bldg & Maintenance Gifts	\$1,011.00	0.19%
Dorothy White Compensation Gifts	\$180.00	0.03%
Endowment	\$101,061.67	19.90%
Foundation Payment	\$33,000.00	6.50%
Vestry Funds	\$55,584.00	10.94%
Other (Weddings, etc.)	\$29,020.73	5.77%
TOTAL	\$507,662.61	100.00%

In addition to increases in our pledge and plate income, our future depends on continued funding of the endowment, funded largely by parishioners who include St. John's in their wills, and by the performance of our investments.

We pray for the growth of our church family. Growth is essential 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

It was another quiet year for the St. John's Church Foundation due to COVID.

Site operations, including tours and reenactments, resumed on a limited basis in the spring. We held our Summer Reenactment Series with an amended program and smaller cast due to COVID protocols. In October, we also held our annual Fancy Me Mad event in person.

Despite COVID, the Foundation was able to complete some restoration projects.

- Foundation volunteer Lee Ball continued to work on the Graveyard Identification project with Church archives volunteers.
- Project Red Coat has been completed. The project entailed the following:
 - Removed the red paint from the brick foundation.
 - Repaired and repointed church foundation.
 - Repaired one rotating brick pier undermining the brick foundation.
 - Repaired rotten wooden sill under the original 1741 section of the church.
 - Repaired brick retaining walls in basement.
 - Covered brick foundation with permeable coating.
 - Will repaint west wooden threshold when the weather warms up.

Preservation Virginia completed a shutter assessment for the church and immediately repaired 2 shutters. We hope to obtain grant funding to complete repair and restoration on the remaining shutters.

The Foundation obtained estimates for repairs on the church's west, north, and east porches and on the east door of the Parish Hall at the request of the vestry. The work was completed in the fall and funded by the church.

Through our Adopt-a-Grave program, we have 4 gravestones ready for restoration. The conservator will be on site in Spring 2022 to complete the restoration. All have been approved by Amelie and the vestry.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Swartz, Preservation and Programs Director,

St. John's Church Foundation

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.***

Sending song

Dismissal

Deacon Go in Peace to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God.

Response ***Thanks be to God!***