



2025 VESTRY CIRCULAR

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

154 Somerset Street West, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K2P 0H8

Telephone (613) 232-4500 Fax (613) 232-4553

www.stjohnsottawa.com

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2025 ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING AGENDA

Sunday 23 February 2025

Anishinabe aking ate awaso kikinawadjichigan.

St John's Anglican Church is on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Nation.

Let us acknowledge the aboriginal land that has been inhabited and cared for by Indigenous peoples from the beginning, and in particular the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg people. We also recognize the contributions that Métis, Inuit, and other Indigenous peoples have made in shaping and strengthening our communities. May we walk together in Christ's grace and peace, seeking renewed relationship based on honour, respect, and peace.

1. Welcome & Opening Prayer
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Appointments & Housekeeping
4. 2024 Annual Vestry Minutes
5. Nomination Report & Thanks
6. Ministry Reports
7. 2024 Financial Statements & 2025 Budget
8. Signing Authority and Line of Credit
9. Review of Financial Statements
10. Other Business
11. Adjournment & The Grace

MINUTES OF THE 2024 ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING

See Appendix A for Attendees.

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer

The meeting was held in person. The Rector chaired the meeting, beginning by welcoming participants and offering an opening prayer.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion: That the agenda be adopted as circulated.

Moved by: Peggy Lister

Seconded by: Gloria Fox

Carried.

3. Appointments & Housekeeping

The following appointments were announced: Margot Cameron as Vestry Clerk, Barbara Dransch as Rector's Warden, Marianne Harkema as Deputy Rector's Warden, TJ Purves as Treasurer, and Peggy Lister as Envelope Secretary.

4. 2023 Annual Vestry Meeting Minutes

Motion: That the minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting held February 2023 be approved, with the following change: Vicki Robinson did not attend.

Moved by: Vicki Milnes

Seconded by: Barbara Dorrell

Carried.

5. Nomination Committee Report and Thanks

The Rector conveyed his thanks to outgoing Wardens, Deputy Wardens, Synod Delegates and Parish Council members.

Motion: That the presented slate of 2024-2025 nominees to Parish Council, Synod Delegates, the People's Warden and the Deputy People's Warden be elected. (See Appendix B.)

Moved by: Jane Maxwell

Seconded by: Barton Breen

Carried.

6. Ministry Reports

Motion: That the reports in the Vestry Circular be received as distributed.

Moved by: Bill Broughton

Seconded by: Erin Biggs

Carried.

7. Update on Redevelopment and Parking Lot Sales

Brian Cameron presented an update on these issues. Two major projects included in the 2022 Redevelopment Plan were the restoration of the Bell Tower and an upgrade of the electricals. These projects have now been completed, well under budget. The Diocese contributed half of the cost of these projects.

The Redevelopment Plan also included major upgrades to our public spaces to maximize their rental potential and put the parish on a sound financial footing. These are:

- In the Nave, replace the pews with chairs and install air conditioning
- Enclose the Chapel to create a boardroom-style meeting space.
- Renovate the Parish Hall to accommodate a long-term commercial tenant

Financing the plan depends on selling our 20 parking spaces at 138 Somerset. To date, two spots have been sold at asking price, and a neighbouring business has offered to buy all the remaining spots. However, the sale is dependent on 80% of the condo owners approving an amendment in the condo Declaration. Very few approvals have been received to date. In response, we are working with our real estate agent and our lawyer to find ways to expedite the condo approval process, and we will meet with the prospective buyer to discuss options.

8. 2023 Financial Overview

TJ Purves presented the following overview.

2023 Results – Income

Receipts	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual
Givings - General	325,903	328,500	323,370
Bequests	-	-	43,928
Givings - Music	6,899	4,500	8,752
Rentals	100,341	125,000	139,489
Community Shop	57,739	55,000	61,994
Parking Lot	53,002	55,000	42,739
Other	9,330	6,200	8,300
Events	8,416	6,000	23,240
Grants	16,528	-	79,733
Designated Income	-	-	-
Refugee Assistance Group	1,244	12,000	1,647
Sale of Parking Spaces	-	-	99,800
Open Doors	11,666	11,666	11,666
Total Receipts	591,068	603,866	844,658

2023 Results – Expenses

Expenses	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual
Priestly Services - ECOPS, Housing, Coverage	146,085	151,942	137,312
Diocesan Fair Share	132,036	108,345	105,316
Indigenous Relations	-	3,000	2,930
Christian Education	-	2,000	30
Music	21,728	18,200	22,383
Building and Maintenance	121,202	165,978	172,079
Staff Costs	99,243	138,024	122,316
Admin	11,103	22,300	12,059
Rental (custodian, parking management, condo fees)	64,941	81,500	43,175
Other (comms, liturgical, Rector's discretionary, The Shop)	9,710	15,900	14,337
Events	5,566	6,000	15,816
Community Support	4,508	6,500	4,399
Designated Expenses	-	-	-
Refugee Assistance Group	1,244	12,000	1,647
Open Doors - Interest Expense	5,092	5,000	5,092
Total Operating Expenses	622,457	736,689	658,893

2023 Results – Total

	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual
Total Receipts	591,068	603,866	844,658
Operating Expenses	622,457	736,689	685,983
Capital Expenditures	-	10,000	196,876
Surplus/(Deficit) - Total	(31,389)	(142,823)	(11,110)

2023 Fund Activity

Accounts	Opening Balance	Money In	Money Out	Net Change	Closing Balance
Affordable Housing	5	300	375	(75)	(70)
Loblaws Gift Card	13,923	44,655	43,890	765	14,688
Music Fund	16,701	200	4,000	(3,800)	12,901
Memorial Fund	15,790	44,599	43,928	671	16,461
RAG	78,112	13,048	10,151	2,897	81,009
RAG Sponsorship Accounts	114,269	72,735	116,666	(43,931)	70,337
Open Doors Fund	19,594	6,151	11,666	(5,515)	14,079
GIFT	22,041	-	-	-	22,041
Chapel Reno Fund	40,916	-	-	-	40,916
Youth Development Fund	1,344	-	-	-	1,344
West Window Fund	2,753	-	-	-	2,753

The following flow-through donations were made: \$5,600 to PWRDF, \$2,400 to Cornerstone, and \$1,200 to The Well

Motion: That the 2023 Financials be adopted as circulated and presented.

Moved by: Jeff Biggs

Seconded by: Mary Frances Marshall

Carried.

9. 2024 Budget

Barbara Dransch presented the 2024 Budget, as well as the financials for the redevelopment projects, as follows:

2024 Budget, with 2023 Actual and 2023 Budget

Operations

	2024 Budget	2023 Actual	2023 Budget
Income	646,200	653,459	592,200
Expenses	(677,219)	(653,801)	(731,689)
Operating Deficit	(31,018)	(342)	(139,489)

Income

	2024 Budget	2023 Actual	2023 Budget
Donations General	336,000	329,211	311,000
Bequests	20,000	43,928	20,000
Donations Designated	14,000	4,557	14,000
Rentals - The Well	112,500	71,248	61,700
Rentals - Other	77,500	68,241	63,300
Community Shop	60,000	61,994	55,000
Parking and Other	26,200	74,280	67,200
Total	646,200	653,459	592,200

Expenses

	2024 Budget	2023 Actual	2023 Budget
Priestly Services	157,557	137,312	151,942
Staff Salaries and Benefits	112,373	122,316	138,024
Program	99,900	73,603	85,900
Diocesan Support and Outreach	78,316	105,316	108,345
Repairs, Maintenance, Insurance	116,072	87,428	120,478
Utilities, Garbage and Snow	88,000	87,197	76,000
Parking Lot Costs	25,000	40,629	51,000
Total	677,218	653,801	731,689

Redevelopment Projects

	Tower and Electrical	Nave Floor and Chairs	Nave Air Conditioning	Chapel	Parish Hall	Contingency 25%
Sold 2 parking spots	99,800	-	-	-	-	-
Diocesan Partnership 50% of costs	79,733	-	-	-	-	-
Sell more Parking Spots (450,000 of 800,000)	-	90,000	140,000	103,000	117,000	-
Donation	-	-	-	41,000	-	-
Loan					23,000	131,000
Total Funding	179,533	90,000	140,000	144,000	140,000	131,000
Total Cost to Date	172,463	-	-	-	-	-
Cost to Complete	10,000	90,000	140,000	144,000	140,000	131,000
% Complete	95%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Barb described four ways to reduce or clear the operating budget deficit:

1. Borrow from our designated funds. There is a total of \$290,000 in the designated funds.
2. Sell our parking spots. The expected proceeds from the 18 spots is \$800,000. If we pay back the money from the designated funds (\$290,000), and leave a balance of 60,000 to assist with future deficits, this leaves a balance for redevelopment projects of \$450,000.
3. Decrease building maintenance.
4. Increase our income.

The objective will be to work towards balanced budgets, by continuing to work at increasing rentals, applying the maintenance budget to urgent items only, and growing givings.

She emphasized that there is definitely hope for the future, based on four foundations:

- **Growth:** A vibrant community and increased givings
- **Community engagement:** More neighbours coming in and more reaching out by St. John's
- **Building improvement:** Making our spaces safe, comfortable and rentable
- **Operational surpluses:** Giving us the opportunity to dream big in following God's call.

Motion: That the budget for 2024 be adopted as circulated and presented.

Moved by: Jim Cummings

Seconded By: Mary Frances Marshall

Carried.

10. Housekeeping

Motion: That Corporation, the Deputy Wardens, and the Treasurer be vested with signing authority, and be authorized to seek a line of credit of up to \$50,000.

Moved by: Pat Fisher

Seconded by: Sherrie Dagg

Carried.

Motion: That an accredited accounting firm be appointed to complete a review of the 2023 Financial Statements after year-end.

Moved by: Peggy Lister

Seconded by: Karen Marks

Carried.

Appendix A:

Attendees at the Vestry

Monica Patten	Gloria Fox
Barbara Dorrell	Sherrie Dagg
Kimberley Johnson-Breen	Barton Breen
Allen Box	Detlef Dransch
Gay Richardson	Mary Ann Varley
April Dickson	Margaret Kasurak
Jean Bosco Nkurunziza	Constance Snelgrove
Karen marks	Gordon Johnston
Jill Moll	Jill Courtemanche
Glen Robinson	Vicki Robinson
Jane Maxwell	Margot Cameron
Marianne Harkema	Ian Myles
Muriel Scott-Smith	Michelle Smulders
Jeff Biggs	Jamie Navarro
Roki Okoro	Lannie Mitchell
Emmy Verdun	J. David Miller
Gloria Jean Gifford	Jim Cummings
Mary Frances Marshall	TJ Purves
Vicki Milnes	Pat Fisher
Bill Broughton	Peggy Lister
Barbara Rottenberg	Jo Cassie
Elinor Clark	David Fisher
Marilyn Collins	Erin Biggs
Christine Unrau	Alex Passmore
Rebecca Gregg	Barbara Dransch
Brian Cameron	

Appendix B:

Parish Council 2024-2025

Rector's Warden	Barbara Dransch
Deputy Rector's Warden	Marianne Harkema
People's Warden	Monica Patten
Deputy People's Warden	Jeff Biggs
Treasurer	TJ Purves
Synod Delegates	Jill Moll and James Myles
Alternate Synod Delegate	Bill Broughton
Parish Council Members	Pat Fisher Mary Frances Marshall Deborah Nasasira Marilyn Box Luka Erikson
Rector	The Rev. Canon Gary van der Meer

RECTOR'S REPORT

The Reverend Canon Gary van der Meer

We reached the end of 2024 with a sense of arrival. We completed our major project and we turned our focus to living into the changes we have made. The whole year was very much about the journey. At times, it felt like we were squeezing ministry around the construction work. While we thought of ourselves as working to a plan, in reality there was a lot of improvising, both in the project and in our community life. That said, there were many highlights over the year.

Worship services continued Sunday by Sunday in our regular pattern of two service times (8:00 and 10:15), combining as one 9:30 service from June to Labour Day. Worship services were followed by time for conversation and refreshments. With our move to offering hospitality in the nave, we found that more people began to stay after the service. While some first-time visitors to a church might prefer to quietly check us out and leave immediately following the dismissal, our visiting time also included many conversations of welcome and introduction. The informality of walking around the nave, sitting, sharing food and drink, handing out newcomer contact information cards, and meeting friendly St John's people brought many return visits.

St John's offered a newcomer orientation event to introduce people to the various ministries of our church, ways to get involved, and how to support our church's ministry. Recognizing the wave of new people, especially coming from Africa, we called an after-church meeting to plan our first parish observance of Black History Month. We chose the last Sunday in February for a cultural experience of welcome, including singing, dancing, and food. Out of this experience has grown a Newcomer Choir which meets occasionally to prepare and present songs during Sunday worship. A further blessing has been the growing involvement of newcomers in Sunday worship roles.

Our newcomer welcome became the prompt to create a Lifelong Learning series, "Introduction to Christian Faith as Practiced at St John's." These sessions were attended by newcomers and long-time parishioners as an introduction to Christian faith, as a reworking of lifelong faith, and as preparation for the sacraments of baptism and confirmation. We celebrated a baptism and three confirmations, each including a parish presenter as sponsor and mentor. Over the course of the year, there were open house and open doors events inviting the neighbours to meet our community. We walked the neighbourhood to introduce St John's to local shops and businesses, and with my "Four Amigos" colleagues, we organized joint events and explored ways to collaborate with our three neighbouring churches - Knox Presbyterian, First Baptist and St. Theresa.

Children's Ministry continued to be offered at both Sunday services. At the 10:15 service, further leaders were added with new volunteers and participation by parents. At most services children conclude the liturgy by offering the dismissal. At the 8:00 service, the kids' play area was replaced by a children's focus table which was updated weekly with biblical figures illustrating Sunday's gospel reading. This year, we began a new initiative with a Sunday afternoon children's service offered occasionally (every 6-8 weeks) focused on a seasonal theme. The service includes a bible story, craft, informal eucharist, snack and free play. Children's ministry participants and teachers join the afternoon service instead of attending at 8:00 or 10:15. Structured children's programming is not offered at the morning services on these dates; instead, an activity is available on the children's table at the back of the church with parental supervision. This new service has approximately 20 participants including children, teachers, parents, and clergy.

St John's has long been known as a social justice church. This was expressed in our continued partnership with The Well – Belong Ottawa, and our own ministry of the Community Thrift Shop, both located in the lower level of our church building. In addition, St John's Refugee Assistance Group (RAG)

provided regular updates on the support provided to sponsored individuals and families. Parishioners championed and sponsored many community initiatives, including: Multi-Faith Housing, Coldest Night of the Year, Cornerstone Housing for Women, Primate's World Relief and Development Fund, Centretown Community Food Centre, and many more. Parishioners participated in Pride celebrations which included a Pride Service on Sunday morning.

St John's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation continued with Kimberly Johnson as Indigenous Engagement Coordinator. This ministry included weekly smudging offered before Sunday worship, regular announcements, encouragement to participate in significant days for Truth and Reconciliation: National Indigenous Day of Prayer, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, and Red Dress Day for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. Additional events included a Medicine Walk led by an Indigenous Elder, powwow participation, and a summer book study. In worship, we began regular use of the First Nations Translation of the New Testament for the reading of the gospel (approximately monthly) by an Indigenous member of our St John's community. Indigenous participation in our community has increased through these initiatives and the encouragement in supportive gatherings organized by Kimberly Johnson.

St John's has gradually increased participation in all aspects of Sunday worship, including new readers, intercessors, servers, Altar Guild members, and sidespersons. Thanks especially to those who continue in all these roles for providing training and guidance. The expanded participation also reduces the frequency of serving in roles; we are grateful to you for creating space in roles you also love to do. Expanded participation has stressed our older roster software and we began to explore newer scheduling programs.

At the conclusion of 2024, St John's Music Director search process reached a successful conclusion as we selected a very able candidate to begin this role in 2025. We are thankful for the St John's Choir, with leadership by choral scholars and by Interim Directors of Music, Barb Hallam-Price and Tom Annand. We look forward to welcoming Nick Busch in the week following our annual Vestry meeting.

So much is happening at St John's that we recognize the challenge of communicating the vibrancy of our shared community life. Our communications vehicles include the Sunday bulletin, announcements at the conclusion of the service, our church website, and the weekly email, "This Week at St John's" – this year augmented with pictures that celebrate our community. In addition, we created posters for church doors, bulletin boards, and at local businesses; and provided updates on Facebook and Instagram and in wider community events listings. We love how our glass doors communicate beauty, openness and welcome. We recognize that our most effective communication is word of mouth – and we thank you for all the conversations you share about our beloved church.

I would like to express special thanks for our churchwardens. Barb Dransch, Monica Patten, Marianne Harkema and Jeff Biggs have been faithful and committed leaders. Thanks to our assisting clergy, Allen Box, Christina Guest and Pat Johnston. We are grateful for our wonderful staff – our Administrator Kerry Bradley, Custodian Jesse Psaila, and to both Barb Hallam-Price and Tom Annand for their interim music leadership. Thanks especially to Barb for returning for a second stint as Interim Director of Music, and for her musical insight in the Music Director search process. I want to recognize Brian Cameron for leading the Music Director search process, for his communications support for our weekly newsletter, and his attention to pastoral and refugee support. Thanks to Detlef Dransch for giving the redevelopment process direction and momentum.

There have been so many ways to volunteer and support our community life in this year of transition. As always, we welcome your ideas, participation, and passion. Thank you for supporting our church.

In addition to my role as Rector of St John's, I serve the Diocese of Ottawa as a member of the Property and Finance Committee. This is a role that was most helpful in learning the financial aspects of our

redevelopment process. I also serve as the Interfaith Officer, a role of encouraging dialogue and friendship with other religions. I am delighted and grateful for St John's interest and enthusiasm for making new friends in other faith communities in Ottawa.

On a personal note, I want to thank you for your prayers and support over the past year. As many of you will know, I had a medical incident this fall. I passed out during a run with my running group and was taken to the hospital by ambulance. The fall months included various tests and a cardioversion to address atrial fibrillation. There will be further monitoring but I'm so thankful to be back to my regular level of energy and fitness.

In 2025, we are living into the significant changes we made. As we anticipate the many opportunities before us, words of Jesus which conclude the gospel reading on Vestry Sunday relate our efforts to the abundance of a grain harvest:

"A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be poured into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back." (Luke 6:38)

Our journey shows that as we give of ourselves in community, our whole community is blessed. May we join in God's many blessings of this coming year.

Gary+

WARDENS' REPORT

Barbara Dransch, Rector's Warden; Monica Patten, People's Warden; Marianne Harkema, Deputy Rector's Warden; Jeff Biggs, Deputy People's Warden

As we look back on the past year, we recall the great sense of anticipation and hope as we moved forward with renovations and the search for a new Music Director. We rejoiced to see new people joining for Sunday worship, and the steady influx of people participating in our many ministries and activities. We celebrated our growing partnership with The Well, as we learned more about our neighbourhood and how we serve everyone who comes through our doors, including through our Community Thrift Shop and at our annual Christmas Market.

The year began with the completion of the electrical upgrades and bell tower repairs projects. From there our focus shifted to the detailed planning of renovations to the Nave and Chapel. In May, we successfully sold the 18 parking spaces owned by the church at the adjacent condominium to a local business. This sale provided essential funding to advance our renovation plans.

From early July through early September, worship services took place in the Parish Hall, and we watched from the door to the Nave as the space was transformed. Several pews found new homes – some in private homes and others in a café in Wakefield. Additionally, some of the pew cushions were repurposed for use in another church.

A successful buy-a-chair fundraising campaign raised over \$20,000, enabling us to expand the renovation to include the Chancel seating. The move back to the Nave and Chancel was exciting as the space had been beautifully transformed into an air conditioned, comfortable and flexible area with modern seating. The new separation of the Chapel from the Nave and Chancel – achieved with a wall and majestic glass doors – has created opportunities for flexible programming and rental possibilities. We are grateful for the many people who devoted time and energy to keep things running before, during and after construction.

On December 8, we joyfully celebrated the renovated space at a rededication service, attended by Bishop Shane Parker and Member of Parliament Yasir Naqvi, and members of the McRobie Architects and Interior Design and MP Lundy Construction teams.

We were humbled this summer to receive a generous bequest from the estate of Henry Sawatzky, designated for building maintenance. At a special vestry meeting in September, the parish agreed to allocate funds from this bequest to replace the two flat roofs over the administration wing and choir room. This project efficiently overlapped with the finishing of the Nave and Chapel projects, allowing for continuity with the project management team from M.P. Lundy.

Looking ahead, St John's long-term financial plan includes an emphasis on increasing rental revenues. Corporation is currently reviewing our rental policies and rates, which will be updated for existing renters as contracts come up for renewal. Our website's rental pages will soon feature updated room descriptions, photos and rates.

After an 18-month search, we, are delighted to welcome Nick Busch as our new Director of Music. He will officially join us at the end of February. We extend our gratitude to Brian Cameron and the Music Director Hiring Committee; to Barb Hallam-Price for twice serving as Interim Music Director and for lending her expertise to the hiring process; and to Tom Annand for serving as the Interim Music Director from September to December.

This fall, during Kerry's extended absence, the office volunteers stepped up to carry additional responsibilities. Thank you to all of them, especially Mary Frances Marshall and Peggy Lister for their co-ordination work, Lannie Mitchell for taking extra administration duties and Margot Cameron for managing rentals. We are very happy to now have Kerry back at her desk.

Parish life at St John's is thriving, thanks to the tireless efforts of so many. We extend our deepest gratitude to Kerry Bradley, our Administrator; Jesse Psaila, our Custodian; Interim Music Directors Barb Hallam-Price and Tom Annand; TJ Purves, our Treasurer; and Peggy Lister, our Envelope Secretary. A heartfelt thank you goes out to the members of Parish Council, the Property and Maintenance Committee and the Stewardship Committee, all of whom have generously shared their time and expertise for the benefit of the parish.

We also thank the many volunteers who have contributed their time and skills and dedication to the life of this parish. St John's benefits from the compassion and grace each of them brings, helping to create a safe and welcoming space for all.

We have been honoured to serve as your wardens over the past year and we took seriously our role as stewards of our parish life on your behalf. In our regular weekly meetings with Gary, we discussed the many activities in our busy parish life, made plans, and tackled the issues and challenges that any community like ours sometimes faces. As we move into the new year, we carry forward the spirit of hope, gratitude, and determination that has guided us through this past year. Thank you all for being part of this journey.

NOMINATION REPORT

The Rev. Canon Gary van der Meer, Barb Dransch, Bill Broughton

We will see a change in the leadership team for 2025-26. Jeff Biggs and Marianne Harkema have decided to step down from their deputy warden roles and focus on other priorities. We thank them for their many contributions, commitment and leadership during the past year and look forward to seeing them in new ministry roles in the future.

We present the following nominations and appointments

Rector's Warden:	Barb Dransch (appointed)
Deputy Rector's Warden:	Vacant
People's Warden	Monica Patten
Deputy People's Warden:	Vacant

Treasurer:	TJ Purves (appointed)
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Synod Delegates:	Bill Broughton One Warden
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Alternate Synod Delegate:	Jim Cummings*
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Members:	Marilyn Box Chris Chiavati* Marilyn Collins* Barbara Dorell* Luka Eriksen Pat Fisher Kiegan Irish* James Myles Deborah Nasasira Wendy Robbins* Michelle Smulders
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Rector:	The Reverend Canon Gary van der Meer
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* New nominee

BIOGRAPHIES OF APPOINTMENTS/NOMINEES

Marilyn Box

Marilyn Box has served in a variety of ways in church life in various parishes over many years. Marilyn is happy to share her skills and experience in education programming, spiritual development, growing of community, organizing and volunteerism. As well, Marilyn has been a member of several charitable boards of directors both as staff and as a member.

Chris Chiavatti

Chris has been coming to St. John's since 2023, not long after moving to Ottawa from his hometown of Vancouver. Chris serves as Vice-Chair of the Building and Property Committee and helped organize the set-up and takedown of this year's Christmas Market. He also is a regular server on Sundays. In his daily life, Chris is an intellectual property lawyer specializing in biotechnology-related patents and an avid cyclist.

Marilyn Collins

After graduating from McMaster University in 1971, Marilyn moved to Ottawa to work in the federal public service. Finding an apartment on Somerset St. West, Marilyn joined St. John's and was a member of the choir from 1971 to 1980. During that period she married and had two children, both baptized at St. John's. In 1980, her family joined their parish church of St. Martin's in Carlingwood, where she was involved until it closed in 2023. Marilyn is pleased to return to St. John's, where she immediately joined the Altar Guild and offers to help in any way she can.

Jim Cummings

Jim first began attending St John's in 1987 after being posted to Ottawa by the military in 1985. After "Hanging Up His Uniform" in 1994 he started his own business providing support services to government departments in the areas of designing, prototyping, and material management of service clothing and personal equipment carriers. The business also provided management and consulting services for non-combat vehicles before transitioning to providing services to private industry internationally. He has provided consultant management services to a local law firm since 2004. Jim has been Rector's and Peoples Warden, Synod Delegate and Parish Council member. He chaired the Building Committee for 15 years and is presently a member of the Stewardship Committee.

Barbara Dorrell

I have been a member of St Johns since the late 1980s. An active member of the choir since that time, I have also been involved in various ministries over the years and a former member of Parish Council. Outside church I am a lover of the outdoors, an avid traveller, gardener, reader and a community volunteer in environmental issues.

Barbara Dransch

Barbara, together with her husband Detlef, has been a member of St. John's since 1987. She has enjoyed serving in several capacities over the years. Among them are Co-Chair of the Stewardship Committee, Chair of the Affordable Housing Committee, Co-Chair of the Altar Guild, Warden, Synod delegate and, member of the Choir. Recently retired from Cornerstone Housing for Women, where she worked for eight years as Director of Finance, Barbara continues her small bookkeeping practice specializing in not-for-profit organizations. In retirement she has enjoyed learning about the climate

crisis and continues her involvement with affordable housing. Barbara and Detlef have two adult children and one grandson.

Luka Eriksen

I'm from Airdrie, Alberta and moved here in 2016. I've been coming to St. John's since spring 2023. I sing in the Bass section of the choir and also play bassoon. I also do some occasional readings!

Pat Fisher

Pat Fisher is a retired parishioner and grandmother. She was a teacher and vice principal and subsequently had a career in the technology sector of the federal government. Pat is Past President and Director of the Board of The King's Daughters and Sons Apartments Inc. She is a trained facilitator, enjoys gardening and is an active member of the Sacred Dance Guild. Recently she danced in "Humankind" at St. Paul's Chapel in New York City.

Kiegan Irish

Kiegan has been a member of St John's for the past two years. He holds his Master's degree in philosophy from the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto, and it was during that time he first got to know Gary while attending St Anne's. Always seeking to link faith and action, Kiegan works now for Development and Peace, the Catholic international solidarity movement.

James Myles

James 'Jamie' Myles has attended St. John's since age 5, with a few notable gaps when he lived outside of Ottawa. James grew up in Aylmer (Gatineau), but recently moved into New Edinburgh, Ottawa, as a young professional working at Global Affairs Canada, focused on development in Sub-Saharan Africa. Once known as the child who always had an announcement to share, James went to Sunday School at St. John's before joining the Youth Group and going on pilgrimage to the Scottish Isle of Iona. St. John's has always been a safe place and warm hearth to James despite restless travels, and he is eager to contribute as a voice on the Parish Council. Please feel free to talk to him about the "4Cs."

Deborah Nasasira

Deborah Marie Nasasira has been at St John's for four months. She comes to us from Rwanda and has three children still living there. She is working hard to get settled in her new country, and she volunteers in the Community Thrift Shop.

Wendy Robbins

I started at St. John's about a year ago and as an office volunteer I am starting to understand just how many things go on in this church. My career was at the CBC; now retired, I help newcomers practice English, among other activities.

Monica Patten

A long-time active member of St John's, I retired a few years ago from a long career in community philanthropy and the not-for-profit sector. I remain an active community volunteer, and am involved in the Diocese as Chair of the Community Ministries Committee and as Resource Person to Diocesan Council.

TJ Purves

I have been coming to St John's since 2014 with my wife Alexandra and children Hailey and Tristan. I have lived in Ottawa for most of my life, and we currently live within walking distance to St John's. I enjoy spending time with my children and family activities, as well as playing board games and watching movies.

Michelle Smulders

St. John's has been Michelle's home parish since she and Ian moved to the area in 1991, aside from living overseas for several years in Nicaragua, Ghana and Tanzania. She has served on parish council before, as a duty warden, Sunday school teacher and deputy rector's warden. She has worked in immigrant services, community development and subsidized housing. Volunteering has been an important part of her life, whether related to her son's schools, her interest in urban planning or supporting a variety of projects abroad. Currently, she works for Connexions Resource Centre in Aylmer, Quebec, supporting seniors.

2024 PARISH REGISTER

Baptisms

Idris Bachene March 24

Confirmations

Abdi Abdullahi May 26

Chris Chiavatti May 26

Jean Bosco Nkurunziza May 26

Marriages

Robert Mason & Laura Lynch May 4

Funerals

Phyllis Beach Jan 7

Saskia Meuffels January 20

Robin Dorrell July 20

Katie Seymour September 21

Sarah Whitehead October 19

WORSHIP REPORTS

WORSHIP SERVICES

Gary van der Meer, Rector

As noted in the Rector's Report, St John's follows a pattern of worship services over the course of the year, offering regularly scheduled Sunday worship at 8:00 and 10:15 a.m. from September to the end of May, and a combined summer service at 9:30 a.m. from the beginning of June through to Labour Day. Roughly coinciding with the school year and travel plans, three quarters of the year includes choir and children's ministry. The summer quarter includes a cantor/soloist and an activity table for children supervised by members of their families.

In addition to these regularly scheduled services, the Christmas Season includes two services on Christmas Eve and one on Christmas Day. In Holy Week, St John's keeps the Triduum (the sacred *Three Days*), including Maundy Thursday (featuring a combined Pascal Meal and Eucharist and a liturgy of the agony in the garden), Good Friday liturgy, and the Easter Vigil (with a Resurrection Party).

It is a requirement of the Anglican Church of Canada to keep attendance statistics and to submit them to our Diocese. These figures factor into our financial support for the Diocese of Ottawa and they give us a way of being aware of demographic changes in our community life. This year's average Sunday attendance figures are as follows:

- Sunday 8:00 a.m. 7
- Sunday 10:15 a.m. 92
- Sunday 9:30 a.m. 58
- Afternoon Children Service 19
- Average Sunday Attendance 90 [73 in 2023]

Sunday-by-Sunday attendance is much more variable, as it is affected by people's travel plans, long weekends, and weather. This is also true of special services, with attendance varying greatly from year to year, as can be seen in statistics for the following special services (2023 attendance follows in brackets).

Palm Sunday (8:00 & 10:15)	7, 108	[8, 82]
Maundy Thursday (Dinner & Agony)	51, 56	[60, 50]
Good Friday	63	[30]
Easter Vigil	63	[40]
Easter Sunday (8:00 & 10:15)	11, 140	[12, 111]
Christmas Eve (Early, Carols, Late)	33, 70, 101	[60, 30, 134]
Christmas Day	33	[28]

While there was some discussion of the possibility of offering a midweek service, the timing was not right with the construction and abundance of other uses of the building.

ALTAR GUILD

Vicki Milnes, Barbara Dransch

Number of Members: 7

Brian and Margot Cameron, Vicki Milnes, Barb Dransch, Jill Courtemanche, Marilyn Collins, Wendy McCutcheon.

The Altar Guild prepares all things necessary for the celebration of the Eucharist at the two weekly Sunday services, funerals and special occasions throughout the year. Their work includes setting the altar before each service, cleaning the brass and silverware, hanging and washing and ironing the linens, filling the candles and changing the batteries in the tea lights.

Keeping a watch on the church calendar and verifying with Gary, the Altar Guild is responsible for changing the altar hangings to reflect the correct colour of the season. Together with Gary, prior year palms are collected and burned to prepare ashes for Ash Wednesday. Special decorations for Palm Sunday, Easter, Remembrance Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas are organized and laid out by the various team members.

In preparation for the Nave and Chapel renovations, the Altar Guild removed items from these spaces and stored them safely until renovations were complete. During this period, worship services were held in the Parish Hall requiring a bit more set-up and clean-up work. We were all happy to move back to the beautiful, updated Chancel, Nave and Chapel.

Flowers for the Sunday services are organized by Vicki Milnes. The flower arrangers are Vicki Milnes, Barb Dransch and Vicki Robinson.

CHOIR

Barb Hallam-Price

Number of Members: 24

Regular Meeting Time: Thursday evening and Sunday morning

St. John's Choir had a very busy 2024 providing wonderful anthems and solos to enhance worship as well as two concerts. The choir presented Fauré's Requiem on Sunday, March 24th as well as Good Friday, March 29th with the Strings of St. John's. Barb Hallam-Price was scheduled to conduct these two concerts but became ill and Gordon Johnston stepped out of retirement to conduct. We are most grateful to him for doing this. St. John's choir also presented "What Sweeter Music", A Festival of Carols by Mark Hayes, on December 8, 2024, which was conducted by Tom Annand.

There have been a lot of changes for St. John's choir this year as they had two interim Music Directors leading them. The choir should be applauded for how adaptable they have been; they have remained a cohesive group with a strong commitment to choral singing and worshiping at St. John's.

The choir meets every Thursday for rehearsal from 7:30-9:30 pm. They sing every Sunday, with rehearsals starting at 9:30 am. before the 10:15 am. service. The choral season runs from September to May of each year. If you are interested in joining the choir, please contact the Interim Music Director.

A new Music Director, **Nick Busch**, is starting at St. John's on February 25th!

Nick is a young, talented musician and we wish him a long and happy tenure at St. John's full of wonderful music making!

SERVERS GUILD

Wendy McCutcheon

Number of Members: 11

The role of Server is very specific and important to the services. The Crucifer leads the Servers, Priest(s) and choir into and out of the Nave, leads the Gospel and the Servers help the Priest in the preparation for the Eucharist.

This year we were very fortunate to have several new Servers join us, which enabled us to have three servers per Sunday at the 10:15am service, and two Servers during the summer services.

The Servers for this past year were: Idris Bachene, Anastasie Barabiraho, Chris Chiavatti, Sherrie Dagg, Rebecca Gregg, Wendy McCutcheon, Jill Moll, Nkundwe Scout Mwangomba, Allen Nakyejjwe, Jean Bosco Nkurunziza and Maxine Payne.

SUNDAY ROSTER

Monica Patten

Number of Participants: 75

The roster is the calendar of volunteers from the parish who help with worship on Sunday mornings and at other services. Members of St. John's assist with various aspects of the worship services at 8:00 and 10:15 a.m. The ministries include: Altar Guild, Servers, readers of the Scriptures, communion wine, sidespeople (greeters), Intercessors (prayers of the people), hospitality/refreshments, Sunday School (Godly Play), bell ringers, audio tech and lockup duties. And of course the music ministry, described elsewhere in this report.

During the past year around 75 volunteers were active.

Over the past year the management of the roster, which is an online program, was led by Sherrie Dagg, Jo Cassie and more recently, Monica Patten.

Being a Sunday volunteer is a great way to be involved in the life of our parish and to get to know others. Please speak to the Rector or any one of the Wardens if you'd like to get involved. In the meantime, thanks to Sherrie and Jo for many years of managing the roster, and especially to all of you who help make our worship services inclusive, inspiring and a reflection of our community life.

MINISTRY REPORTS

ART CREDO

Detlef Dransch

Number of Participants: ~20 parish volunteers, 48 artists, ~950 visitors

Time/Place: Exhibit open 20 April to 5 May 2024

Co-Leaders: Detlef Dransch and Mary Ann Varley



This spring, St. John's transformed the Nave, Chapel, and Narthex into an art gallery once again, hosting the 45th Art Credo Art Exhibition & Sale.

The exhibition featured 114 artworks from 48 local artists, including some parishioners, with 16 artists showcasing their work for the first time. The opening night, or Vernissage, provided attendees with an exclusive preview of the artworks, allowing them to find and purchase the perfect piece for their home, office, or as a gift. Guests enjoyed snacks, wine, door prizes, and live jazz music. For the next two weeks, a dedicated group of volunteer sitters, made up of artists and parishioners, kept the exhibit open every afternoon and four evenings.

In conjunction with Art Credo, we hosted a Paint-Along Night led by artist Josie DeMeo, which was attended by 24 parishioners and community members. Each participant went home with their own painting from the two-hour workshop, resulting in a fun experience for all.

Art Credo generates revenue through an entrance fee for each artwork displayed, as well as a commission on any sales. This year, 20 artworks were sold, slightly fewer than in previous years. After expenses, Art Credo and the Paint-Along Night raised approximately \$3,000 for St. John's.

Mary Ann and Detlef are already looking forward to planning Art Credo for 2025.

CHRISTMAS MARKET

Leaders: Jill Moll, Gloria Fox, Mary Ann Varley, Chris Chiavetti, Rebecca Gregg, Mary Frances Marshall, Vicki Milnes, Brian Cameron, Bea Robertson.

Number of volunteers: 70

The second annual Christmas Market continued to build on the success of last year's market. The removal of the pews, new flooring and air conditioning projects were completed just in time for the market to take place. The market proved to be a showcase for our new Nave, Chapel, Chancel and Parish Hall. The organizational chart was the same one used last year. There were five team leaders, each one responsible for getting volunteers. Members of the Parish Council and the congregation were instrumental in helping with every aspect of the market. They volunteered their time to publicize the event, to greet those coming in, to bake goods, to package, price, and to sell the goods, to make food for the Christmas Café and to serve customers. They helped to set up the rooms and replace the chairs for Sunday's service, to return the tables to their rightful places, and they came to the market to buy from the vendors. Three members of the parish participated in the market to great success. While vendors purchased their tables and were a source of revenue, the Bakery and the Christmas Café also contributed revenue to the church. Nevertheless, the Christmas Market is not about profit. Following

the 4C's model, the original goal was to build community within the church and to open the doors of St John to our immediate neighbours and to a community beyond our neighbourhood. Publicity of the artists' works on our Facebook page, advertising on various websites throughout the city, referrals from last year's market success and a visit of a reporter and a photographer from CBC Ottawa contributed to the market receiving over 800 visitors. The church has been booked for next year's market, November 22, 2025.

Thank you to the entire congregation for making this initiative such a success.

DANCE YOUR CARES, DANCE YOUR PRAYERS

Pat Fisher

This is a new offering for St. John's that is also open to the general public. Held on Tuesdays at 10:30 in the Parish Hall, the sessions last a worthwhile hour. Everyone is invited to freely explore movement with an eclectic mix of music and some art.

It has not been widely advertised but there is a core group of five and hopes of more people to join this unique joyful playtime. Here are some comments from participants:

- "It touches (me) on many levels."

- "Not only does it involve needed movement, but it helps me so much to maintain my inner peace in these times of great stress."

- "I look forward to Tuesday mornings at the Church. It's a time to reflect, move about freely and take a pause from the worries of the world."

- "Thank you to the Church for accommodating our group. "

Facilitated by Pat Fisher who has been leading groups for over 30 years.

ST JOHN'S BRIDGE CLUB

Bill Broughton

The St. John's Bridge Club normally runs from October to early June. It was good to restart our bridge after the three-years' interruption because of COVID. We followed the program as before. The games are for meeting socially, playing for fun. There is a variety of skill levels. Each pair plays each other pair once, or about one game a month. There were seven pairs for the 2023-24 season, so each pair played six games. The games were played in each other's homes, either afternoon or evening as mutually arranged. Sixteen hands were played, taking about three hours including a break for refreshments. The season concluded in June with a Saturday supper and pick-up game in the Parish Hall. A notice is placed in the weekly e-letter in September with contact information and an invitation to join. Questions? Contact Bill at billndora@rogers.com or phone 613-521-5088.

LIFELONG LEARNING STEERING COMMITTEE

Group Leader: Ian Myles since September 2024; Vicki Robinson for many years prior to that!

Number of Members: 9

Vicki Robinson, Sally Andrews, Margaret Kasurak, Rev. Gary van der Meer, Kimberly Johnson, Erin Biggs, Idris Bachene, Max Theriault, Ian Myles

Regular Meeting Time/Place: Mostly online; about once every month or two, with a break over summer.

The Committee warmly welcomed three new members: Erin Biggs, Max Theriault, and Idris Bachene, bringing new perspectives and energy to our efforts!

After many years of leadership, Vicki stepped down as the chair of the Lifelong Learning Steering Committee, passing the baton to Ian. Vicki has graciously agreed to continue on as a member of the committee. After over 15 years of diligent service, Sally Andrews "retired" from the committee. We have been very fortunate to have benefited from Vicki's leadership and Sally's insights for so many years!

The Committee has primarily played a planning and "enabling" role, inviting ideas from fellow parishioners and helping to make them happen. Some of the initiatives we supported in 2024 include:

- "Star Words", facilitated by Reverend Canon Pat Johnston
- "Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training" run by Belong Ottawa.
- A "Medicine Walk" led by Louella Tobias, a Cultural Grandmother and Keeper of the Delaware Nation
- A "Books and BBQ" event where we discussed "True Reconciliation: How to be a Force for Change" by Jody Wilson-Raybould

We have also been blessed with a very energetic and creative Rector, who has been tireless in leading a long list of learning events. These included:

- Preparation sessions for baptisms and confirmations
- Several learning sessions on "Healing our Relationship with God"
- Collective scripture read-throughs of the Gospels of Mark and Luke
- A children's service for All Saints Day

In addition to this, Gary continues to liaise informally with our 3 neighbouring churches (St Theresa Roman Catholic Church, Knox Presbyterian Church and First Baptist Church) with whom we hope to organize learning events in the year ahead.

CENTERING PRAYER

Group leader: Lyse Morin

Number of Participants: 16

Regular Meeting Time: Monday from 4.30 to 5.45 pm year-around

Centering Prayer is a contemporary form of what is known as the prayer of the heart. It is a method of silent prayer in which we respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit to consent to God's presence and action within us.

At the beginning of the session, the Group engages in Centering Prayer for 30 minutes, which starts and ends with a prayer selected by various members of the Group. At the end of the prayer period, we

view and discuss either a video or read a chapter of a book related to Spirituality. In 2024, we read: Christ Way Buddha Way by Tim Langdell. We are currently reading Ordinary Mysticism: Your Life as Sacred Ground by Mirabai Starr.

Members of the group include people from St John's and other denominations, as well as some who have no current religious affiliation. New members found the Group by word-of-mouth from existing members, through Contemplative Organization of Eastern Ontario/retreats at the Galilee Centre in Arnprior and through St John's website.

In addition to our weekly meetings, the Group held a Quiet Day Retreat in November 2024 at St Paul's in Shawville, QC with the theme of Autumn Prayer of Acceptance. The event was led by Lyse and co-created with Carol. We are grateful to St Paul's for allowing us the free use of their Parish Hall and we felt honoured to be the first group to use their indoor Labyrinth. The post-meeting survey indicated the participants were delighted with this Quiet Day Retreat and that they look forward to another such event.

Our members are grateful for the spiritual uplift from the Holy Spirit as we journey together through our prayers, readings and wonderful discussions.

We appreciate St John's continued support by hosting our Group on its website. We are grateful to Pat Fisher for providing the Zoom platform for our meetings. We are also grateful for the new friendships which have developed amongst the Group's participants.

INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

Kimberly Johnson

As we continued our journey together through the seasons of 2024, we welcomed more Indigenous parish members to participate in worship services by providing smudging, reading the First Nation Translation of the gospel, and providing prayers for the parish, especially during National Indigenous People's Day (June 21st), and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (September 30th).

We recognized Red Dress Day (May 5) with a beautiful red dress display in our narthex for all to see from Elgin St.

Our gardeners began the process of including native plants in our landscaping.

In the Summer we took a wonderful Medicine Walk with Grandmother Louella who shared her knowledge of the medicines on the land.

We attempted to attend the Summer Pow Wow at Madahoki Farm but rain impacted our plans.

We had several opportunities to read Indigenous authors at the All My Relations Journeying as Allies book club.

As we begin this Winter to anticipate the Eastern Direction (the Spring Equinox) we look forward on our journey to continue finding ways to honour and respect the Original Peoples of this land.

Our hope for this new cycle of the Four Directions is to have more community engagement outside our parish walls as we continue our ReconciliACTION together.

GODLY PLAY SUNDAY SCHOOL

Margaret Kasurak

Number of Participants: Five children; attendance varies from 0-5 each week

Teachers: There are four teachers and four helpers who rotate through the Sundays: April Dickson, Margot Cameron, Mary Ann Varley, Pat Turner, Rebecca Gregg, Elizabeth Punnett, Karen Marks and Margaret Kasurak.

Regular Meeting Time: Sunday 8 AM service with Children's Story; Chancel and Sunday 10:15 service; Godly Play Room, Classroom 1

At the 8 am service the children gather around two tables that were specially made by Ross Varley. The children sit on the floor while the Rector uses wooden figures to tell the Bible story that comes from the daily reading for that Sunday.

During the 10:15 service the children come to the Godly Play classroom. Happily, our attendance has increased this year as there are four children that attend on a regular basis as well as several visitors. Our Godly Play program uses small wooden figures and props to tell stories from the Old Testament in the fall and after Advent the stories focus on the life and work of Jesus. These materials make it easy for the children to retell the stories in their own words and actions. There are also materials for painting, drawing, playing with play dough or puzzles. Each session includes a reading from the Bible that corresponds to the story told with the figures. A light snack completes the morning so the children can return to their families for the Eucharist.

Nursery

The Nursery was thoroughly cleaned by the Godly Play team because it had become a storage area over the last decade. The toys were inspected for safety and for being appropriate for young children. Having this space reclaimed allows young children who are not quite ready to attend to the story to have a safe space to play quietly and then join the rest of the group for the shared snack. Additional volunteers this year has enabled this program to run more smoothly.

Sunday Afternoon Children's Service

A new initiative is a Sunday afternoon service several times a year where children from both the 8 am and 10:15 am service can join for a Bible story and a celebration of the Eucharist. There is time for an activity followed by a snack and a chance for the children to play together. This will be expanded this coming year so that we can get together every couple of months.

Nave Quiet Corner

There is a quiet corner located at the back of the Nave where the children can gather when they return to the service for the Eucharist. There are books and quiet activities for them to use. Having this area is very helpful for parents with young children.

OPEN DOORS

Monica Patten

For the past several years St. John's has welcomed visitors twice a week (in addition to Sundays) to see the church, chat with volunteers, spend a few minutes in quiet and peacefulness. Regretfully, Our Open Doors ministry was suspended during the past year. In the winter it was challenging to find volunteers and later on we were into renovations. Open Doors has not resumed. Hopefully we can return to this ministry in the future.

In the meantime, St. Johns happily participated in Doors Open Ottawa, held on June 1st. On that occasion volunteers welcomed over 200 guests to our church. Of special interest, as in past years, was

the architecture, organ, stained glass windows and the Nativity creche. Ringing the tower bell was popular, and many pictures were snapped by visitors. Volunteers who guided visitors around found the most enriching part of the day to be the stories people brought with them, while for many guests simply being in our space was awe-inspiring.

Thanks to Bea Robertson, Gay Richardson, Vicki and Glen Robinson, Jill Moll, Sherrie Dagg, Lannie Mitchell, Jo Cassie and David Fisher for helping make Doors Open Ottawa a success at St. John's.

PASTORAL CARE

Gary van der Meer

In 2024, pastoral visiting was led by the Rector with support from the honorary assistant clergy. In addition, significant pastoral assistance was provided by Brian Cameron and Marianne Harkema, especially for people with a long association with St John's and in need of support through life transitions.

PRAYER SUPPORT GROUP

Lannie Mitchell

Number of Members: 8

The St. John's Prayer Group is a small group of parishioners who volunteer to pray daily for those members of the congregation who submit prayer requests, either for themselves or for loved ones. People who would like this prayer support may call the group extension at the church office (613-232-4500 x21) or send an email to prayer-request@stjohnsottawa.ca. Requests are forwarded to all members of the group by email. Prayer requests are kept confidential and we uphold those in need for two weeks, or more, if needed. It is an honour and a privilege to pray for those in any kind of illness, distress or crisis and we hope that by surrounding them with prayer, they feel supported and uplifted. In these unsettling times, we hope that our prayers bring courage, comfort and healing. If anyone would like to join our group, we would more than welcome you to join us.

OFFICE SUPPORT STAFF

Mary Frances Marshall

Number of Members: 16

Office volunteers serve St. John's most weekdays between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm. They answer the phone and door, check and redirect emails, update the whiteboard calendar, remind folks of roster duty and do other chores to assist the administrator. When the administrator is away, volunteers are sometimes called upon to do things they are not familiar with, but it is always an opportunity for growth and to understand more about how St. John's operates. The work is not onerous, but it is an important component in keeping our church running smoothly. The arrival of a new and faster computer is keenly anticipated. The office volunteers are grateful for the guidance and help received from other staff and parishioners.

There are 16 volunteers. Each one is usually on duty every second week. However, the schedule varies to accommodate the busy lives of the volunteers. Mary Frances Marshall maintains the roster.

HOSPITALITY TEAM

Gay Richardson

Number of Members: 7

Jeff Biggs, Gloria Fox, Jane Maxwell, Christina Guest, Gay Richardson, Bea Robertson, Vicki and Glen Robinson

A member of the team is responsible for refreshments each Sunday after the 10:15 service or after the 9:30 service when there is a joint service in the summer months. Refreshments are served in the upper part of the Nave, where parishioners can easily gather. Refreshments are loaded on a trolley in the Parish Hall kitchen and delivered to the Nave after the service. Coffee, juice, hot water for tea, and water and a variety of treats are served. Donations to assist with the cost are gratefully received. New team members would be very welcome – and training will be provided!

STEWARDSHIP REPORTS

ENVELOPE SECRETARY

Peggy Lister

The role of the Envelope Secretary is to keep track of individual donations and issue charitable tax receipts each year. A database program specifically designed for church organizations makes this job much easier.

Each week the donations are entered; the program adds everything up and is formatted to print quarterly statements and tax receipts. The Envelope Secretary acts as a support to the Stewardship Committee by providing information on overall donations and analyzing giving trends.

Please contact me (peggylister@rogers.com) if you would like to receive weekly offering envelopes or to enroll in the monthly automated debit PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) Program to assist you in supporting St John's Church on a regular basis.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Co-Chairs: Barbara Dransch and Emmy Verdun

Number of Members: 6

Jeff Biggs, Jim Cummings, Peggy Lister, Gary van der Meer

The Stewardship Committee met regularly during 2024 to study stewardship practices, provide ongoing information to the parish, and to plan and execute the 2025 stewardship campaign.

Early in the year, the Committee solicited feedback from Parish Council on the 2024 campaign; the response was generally positive, with support for personal testimonials and a stronger "ask". The Committee revised the information on planned giving on the St John's website, with Peggy Lister providing a personal note on why she has included a legacy gift to St John's in her will. Information on the various ways to donate was also provided in This Week at St John's.

The Committee helped to organize the Newcomer's Lunch and spoke at this event to provide information on how to contribute to St John's with time, talent and financial gifts.

In 2024, the sale of the parking lot and the subsequent launch of renovations to the church were major events that led to two new parish projects. The first was the successful campaign to raise funds for new chairs which now replace the pews, raising over \$20,000. In addition, a generous bequest to St John's by the late Henry Sawatsky was enough to cover the cost to replace the flat roof - a just-in-time gift as the roof was in dire need of replacement.

In preparing for the 2025 campaign, the Committee again decided to use the material available through TENS - The Episcopal Network for Stewardship, an association of church leaders based in the US. The theme for the year, Walk in Love, was well-suited to St John's. The Committee used several of the TENS bulletin inserts, with Committee members speaking to a specific insert and how it resonated with them, personally.

The 2025 campaign was officially launched on Sunday, October 27 and concluded on Sunday, November 24. The campaign was initiated by a letter from Gary, followed by a letter from the Wardens, both sent electronically. The Stewardship package included a commitment card and a brochure, which featured a letter from the co-chairs asking for a 5% increase in givings, and which also highlighted St John's work with newcomers and the capital project to renovate our space. The renovations made the space more beautiful and flexible for all users and will contribute to the financial sustainability of St

John's. Financial information provided in the brochure covered "where does the money go?" and "where does the money come from?"

The results of the campaign were positive, with 56 parishioners returning commitment cards and another 34 parishioners continuing their support through PAR and Canada Helps. The overall increase was 5.2%, compared to the "ask" of 5%. This will result in an estimate \$12,000 increase in givings. The Committee sent hand-written thank-you notes to those who sent in commitment cards; a simple act that is much appreciated.

The Committee thanks all those who continue to support the important work of St John's at the corner of Elgin and Somerset Streets.

If you are interested in becoming more involved with the Financial Stewardship Committee, please contact:

Barb Dransch – Co-Chair	bdransch@sympatico.ca	613-220-1005
Emmy Verdun – Co-Chair	emmy.verdun@gmail.com	

GARDENING COMMITTEE

Edwin Stretch

Gardeners: Gay Richardson, Edwin Stretch and Garth Bulmer
Also Assisting: Max Gutsole, Angely Abreu, Andrea and David

The past season was marked by favorable climate with adequate rain and mild temperatures. We continue to focus primarily on maintaining perennials but have added in some annuals for additional colour.

One project undertaken this season was the refurbishment and expansion of the north garden following removal of the pergola and wood planter boxes. The city made some modifications to the water main valve and as part of that project they did a fine job of restoring the area disturbed, finishing off a brick walkway through the garden and adding new top soil where needed.

New this year is the addition of a healing herb garden composed of indigenous plants traditionally used by First Nations communities in healing rituals and as Medicinals. This garden is located just in front of our sign on the corner of Elgin and Somerset. Our initial planting consisted of Sage (*Salvia officinalis*), Canada Anemone, Common Yarrow, Sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*) and Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*). We intend to add to this garden in the coming season. Our thanks for the support and encouragement of Kimberly Johnson, Indigenous Engagement Coordinator.

We established a Saturday morning routine for our gardeners to work together. The assistance of Max, Angely, Andrea and David was subject to limited time and work commitments but was greatly appreciated. We will continue to seek volunteers that can commit time and energy throughout the coming gardening season.

Maintenance continues to be challenging, with sporadic mischief requiring repairs and replacement of plants throughout the season, but the garden continues to receive praise and encouragement from parishioners and neighbours who appreciate the addition of colour and natural beauty that the garden brings to our Centertown neighborhood.

PARISH COUNCIL

Number of Members: 15

Gary Van der Meer, Monica Patten, Barbara Dransch, Marianne Harkema, Jeff Biggs, TJ Purves, Jill Moll, James Myles, Bill Broughton, Mary Frances Marshall, Deborah Nasasira, Marilyn Box, Luka Eriksen, Kimberley Johnson, Pat Fisher (chair)

Regular Meeting Time: Third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm.

Parish Council met ten times over the course of the year, the January meeting being held via Zoom. We aimed for a mix of business and some social activities and we started and ended our meetings with prayer.

We were provided with space and time to reflect upon the work of the church by listening to reports and providing feedback. In addition, we championed improving our sound system by rehearsing and practising with the microphone, and testing a device to boost sound for people with hearing challenges. Parish Council supported and assisted with events at St. John's, notably Art Credo, the Christmas Market, St. John's Open House and many smaller events.

Thank you to all who served this year.

PROPERTY AND BUILDING COMMITTEE

Detlef Dransch

Participants: Ted Reeve, Chris Chiavatti, Denis Seguin, Jim Cummings, Kerry Bradley, Reverend Gary van der Meer, Jesse Psaila (our Custodian)

Leaders: Detlef Dransch and Chris Chiavatti

Time/Place: Monthly meetings on-line

In 2024, there were two significant activities related to Property and Building: (i) the second phase of the redevelopment projects (discussed in a separate report), and (ii) ongoing property and building maintenance, which is the focus of this report.

The most notable development this year was the reestablishment of the Property & Building Committee in May 2024. The committee meets monthly online, except during the summer. We keep a 'job jar' to track issues needing attention around the church. Some tasks are handled by committee members through do-it-yourself (DIY) efforts, while others are outsourced to service providers as necessary.

Our volunteer DIYers have tackled various routine tasks, including fixing toilets, replacing light bulbs and light fixtures, and repairing the gray chairs.

Other jobs we addressed throughout the year included repainting yellow lines in our two parking lots, installing new parking signs, assisting with a junk purge initiative, unloading and setting up the new red chairs in the Nave and Chancel, and repairing garbage enclosures.

The committee also oversees work performed by external service providers, primarily maintenance calls to our plumber, HVAC technicians, and locksmiths. We utilized the presence of workers involved in the redevelopment projects to address water drainage issues and install new light bulbs and dimmer switches in both the Nave and Chapel. The largest maintenance project this year was replacing the flat roof over the office wing and the flat roof over the second-floor choir area.

To keep costs down, we plan to prioritize high-priority and urgent maintenance projects and continue DIY tasks by volunteers in 2025.

BUILDING/INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Detlef Dransch

In 2023, St. John's initiated a two-year program featuring several redevelopment projects. Phase 1 was completed in 2023 and included repairs to the Bell Tower and rewiring the electrical system in our building's oldest sections. In 2024, we completed Phase 2, which initially included (i) redeveloping the Nave to attract new rental opportunities and (ii) redeveloping the Chapel to enhance flexibility for additional rentals. We also decided to add a project to renovate the Chancel in the redevelopment efforts.

Air conditioning was added to the Nave, although it was installed too late in the year for us to benefit from it in the summer. This improvement will allow us to hold services in the Nave during the warmer summer months, rather than relocating to the Parish Hall. The pews were removed, new flooring was installed, and moveable chairs replaced the pews. This change provides greater flexibility in arranging the space for services. Our Salsa Friday renter has expressed appreciation for the new layout, which allows for a larger dance floor.

The Chapel has been transformed into a separate room by adding a wall and two doors, including an eye-catching glass and brass double door. The floors have been refinished, and a new air conditioning system has been installed. This separation allows simultaneous events; for instance, our Salsa Friday renter has already offered Tango lessons in the Chapel while Salsa lessons are conducted in the Nave. We anticipate that these upgrades will help increase our rental income.

During the floor refinishing in the Chapel, it was suggested that we also refinish the Chancel's floor. This led to a third redevelopment project involving the removal of the choir pews and the platforms they were on. Once these risers were removed, we discovered that the 130-year-old subfloor needed significant repairs before installing a new oak floor. The final outcome of the Chancel renovation was impressive, with the new red chairs allowing for configurations that the previous choir pews did not accommodate, which has been well-received.

From an overall redevelopment cost perspective, although these Phase 2 projects exceeded their budget by about 16% this year, this overage is offset by the Phase 1 projects from the previous year, which were significantly under budget.

RENTALS

Kerry Bradley

What a fabulous year we had with our long-awaited renovations being completed. With our updates our longtime renter Rahim is over the moon, with the Nave flooring helping to create a smooth dance surface for his weekly Tango and Salsa dance evenings. Other dance groups have been attracted to the space as well. With the enclosure of our Chapel, we now have the capability to rent the Nave and Chapel spaces simultaneously, provided they are not music rehearsals. Our hope is to generate new revenue and continue to provide a welcoming space for our current renters.

We continue to host our many choirs for their rehearsals throughout the week. Our goal for 2025 is to solidify our rates and get the word out promoting our beautiful space for our downtown friends' rental needs.

I personally would like to thank Margot Carmeron for taking on the rentals in my absence this past fall. We also wish to thank all of our past 2024 Renters and look forward to hosting them again in 2025.

OUTREACH REPORTS

AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE

Barbara Dransch

Leaders: Barb Dransch, Chair; Peggy Lister, Coordinator, Loblaws Gift Cards

Members (8): Jo Cassie, Gloria Fox, Claudette Kohut, Mary Frances Marshall, Monica Patten, Gay Richardson.

While the Affordable Housing Committee didn't meet during 2024, its members were active in the pursuit of increasing the number of affordable homes in Ottawa.

Two affordable housing buildings in the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa opened their doors in 2024.

Hollyer House, a Diocesan affordable housing project on Christ Church Bells Corners' property, began accepting tenants in the summer. Hollyer House will provide housing for 55 to 75 people and serve hundreds of others through the community resource centre and food bank located in the building.

44 Eccles is a Cornerstone Housing for Women supportive housing community for women that opened in the spring. (Cornerstone is a Diocesan Community Ministry.) It consists of 46 units, 30% of which are dedicated to Indigenous People, with specific programs to support their unique needs delivered by community partners.

On May 26, several Committee members, as well as others from St. John's, supported the Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI) annual Tulipathon Walk, helping to raise fund to provide subsidies for tenants in need at MHI's affordable housing communities.

This year we especially thank Gay Richardson for her many years of service on the Membership and Outreach Committee of MHI. Gay retired in 2024 and has been replaced by St John's parishioner Marilyn Collins.

Funds raised through the sale of Loblaws Gift Cards (approximately \$2,000 per year) are disbursed by the Committee to support MHI and affordable housing projects within the Diocese.

Thanks to Committee members and to all who continue to support this important work.

If you are interested in becoming more involved with affordable housing, please contact:

Barb Dransch – St John's AH Committee bdransch@sympatico.ca 613-220-1005

Peggy Lister – Loblaws Gift Card coordinator peggylister@rogers.com 613-746-2633

THE COMMUNITY THRIFT SHOP

David Tappin and Peggy Lister

Number of Volunteers: 39

Hours of Operation: Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from noon to 4 pm

The Shop (which began in 1967) offers a huge selection of donated goods including clothing, household items, jewellery, books and more for sale at low prices. There is also a "voucher" system whereby several agencies in Ottawa may issue \$35 vouchers (quarterly) to those in need, to be exchanged for essential items.

The busy Shop was open from noon to 4:00 pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, except for holidays and the month of July due to renovations to the church.

Thrift Shop highlights for 2024:

- Cash sales: approximately \$60,000
- Vouchers: Number of vouchers - 2,458
Value of vouchers - \$73,000 (up 25% from 2023)
- Number of volunteers: 39
- Volunteer hours: 5,800
- Customers in the Shop: Between 70 and 150 daily
- Approximately 850 bags and boxes of excess clothing and other items delivered to the Salvation Army Stores.

The Shop continued to receive loads of donations which the dedicated volunteers sorted and displayed, often working on days when the Shop was closed.

Several of the volunteers were newcomers to Canada and their volunteering in the Shop gave them valuable work experience, resulting in references that helped them get employment.

The Shop will continue helping those in need by promoting recycling and re-purposing and encouraging "thrifting" as a wise and economical way to shop.

FOOT CARE CLINIC

Peggy Lister

Number of Participants: 25

Clinic Coordinators: Jo Cassie, Peggy Lister, Lannie Mitchell, Bea Robertson

Regular Meeting Time: Second Thursday of every month from 8 am to 12 pm at St John's from January to August.

For almost 40 years St John's has provided affordable foot care for St John's parishioners and the local community. Of the 25 clients attending the clinic at St Johns, about half were parishioners and half were from the community. Nurses for the clinic were provided originally by the Victorian Order of Nurses which later became Carefor. The organization of the clinic, including setting up the clinic each month, making appointments, keeping records, collecting clinic fees and paying bills, was done by volunteers from St John's. In the mid-1980s when the clinic was first organized, it offered foot care twice a month on the second and fourth Thursday of the month. In the early 2000s this was changed to once a month on the second Thursday of each month from 8 am to noon at St John's

Unfortunately, the clinic was informed in August 2024 that Carefor, the organization that provided the nurses for the clinic, would no longer be offering foot care and could therefore no longer provide nurses for the clinic at St John's. It was not possible to find another organization to provide the nurses and it was impractical to consider setting up a clinic on our own so the final clinic was held in August and clients were advised that they would have to find alternate arrangements for foot care.

REFUGEE ASSISTANCE GROUP

Chair: Jane Morisset

Number of Members: 9

Margot Cameron, Brian Cameron, John Campbell, Alex Lawrence, Jill Courtemanche, Hendrik Sire, Richard Parfett, Jane Morisset, Joelle Morisset, Eric Murray, and Meta Murphy.

Regular Meeting Time: Once a month, in person, at various members' homes.

The Refugee Assistance Group (RAG) sponsors refugees from overseas and helps them and their families adjust to their new lives in Canada. This support includes financial assistance as well as

settlement help, which ranges from finding and furnishing an apartment to learning how to use public transit, getting suitable winter clothing, enrolling children in school, finding doctors and dentists, securing employment, and providing guidance on all aspects of Canadian life that a new refugee might encounter.

In 2024, we welcomed a single man from Eritrea. Aot arrived in June, and we were fortunate to find him a reasonably priced bachelor apartment in the downtown area to call home. He is now attending English as a Second Language classes and is working on integrating into life in Ottawa. We have continued to assist the Afghan family of five, helping them find employment and navigate further education options.

Additionally, there has been a small baby boom among three of the Afghan families we welcomed over the past five years. Two of the families added baby boys to their households, while the third welcomed twins. We have helped all these families find the necessary baby equipment and navigate regulations related to raising children in Canada.

The family with the twins has required more intensive support due to the overwhelming responsibilities of raising twins. Several members of the committee have been involved in providing in-home support daily during the first few months, and now we continue to assist them on a weekly basis as they adjust to the new responsibilities of parenthood.

Currently, we have slowed our applications for new sponsorships due to difficulties in finding affordable housing, accessing medical services, securing second-language training, and obtaining employment. However, we have two applications currently submitted and are working on two more applications for three young, single individuals who we believe have the skills, education, and support to integrate relatively easily into Canada.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the many members of the parish who have supported us through both monetary donations and contributions of goods and services. We will continue to seek the support of the parish and deeply appreciate the willingness of individuals to help meet our needs. We also want to extend a special thank you to Barbara Dransch for ensuring that our financial and administrative needs were met while Kerry was on extended leave. Her efforts provided the necessary support for us to continue our work.

ANGLICAN PARTNER REPORTS

THE ANGLICAN FOUNDATION OF CANADA (AFC)

Brian Cameron

The Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC) is an arm of the Anglican Church of Canada whose mission is to foster Anglican presence across Canada by funding:

- innovative ministry initiatives;
- building grants for construction and renovation;
- theological formation and education programs;
- church music, worship initiatives, liturgical arts;
- education and support programs in Canada's North; and
- community outreach and social programs.

In 2021, AFC launched the "Say Yes to Kids" initiative, which has since raised over \$700,000 for youth-focused ministry and outreach across the Anglican Church of Canada. In addition to the local beneficiaries, these combined efforts by individuals, parishes and dioceses have also provided \$40,000 in funding for national Indigenous youth programs. In the Diocese of Ottawa this past year, Say Yes to Kids provided a grant to St. Alban's to provide campus meals for students facing food insecurity.

2024 also saw the launch of the Archbishop Linda Nicholls Education Fund devoted to financial assistance for women pursuing ministry.

St John's has benefitted from AFC grants and bursaries in the past, including the narthex renovation project in 2015 and bursaries for several ministry interns. In turn, we support the Foundation's important work with an annual contribution, which for 2024 was \$500.

THE PRIMATE'S WORLD RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT FUND/ALONGSIDE HOPE

Jane Maxwell

Members (2): Gay Richardson, Jane Maxwell

2024 marked the introduction of the new name for The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund - "Alongside Hope" was chosen after a long consultation process by the PWRDF Board of Directors. Alongside Hope is the Anglican Church of Canada's agency for sustainable development, relief, refugees, and global justice. With the support of Anglican parishes across Canada, Alongside Hope works to support partners' initiatives and to promote actions of solidarity at home and around the world.

St. John's primary activity related to PWRDF/Alongside Hope is the annual PWRDF Ash Wednesday Supper. Parishioners contribute soup and bread to share in a simple meal and are asked to make a financial contribution to PWRDF. This past year it took place on February 14, 2024.

After a meal of delicious home-made soups we welcomed guest speaker Chinelo Agom-Eze, Senior Policy Advisor for Canadian Food Grains Bank (CFGB). Parishioners responded generously to our request for donations with contributions totaling \$1,760. We thank parishioners for their continued loyal support to PWRDF.

Other PWRDF/Alongside Hope activities: Throughout the year the PWRDF Committee alerts parishioners to humanitarian appeals which PWRDF supports with its partners, ACT Alliance and Canadian Foodgrains Bank. A primary focus this year was the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza City which is run by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. The committee also sold 17 packets of PWRDF Christmas cards, this despite the postal strike! Once again parishioners responded generously to our Christmas

World of Gifts Appeal to “Buy the Whole Barn”, a project of 5 food security projects in Africa and Latin America. Well done St. John’s!

The Committee would like to thank parishioners for their generosity in supporting the life-giving work of PWRDF/Alongside Hope, both at the Ash Wednesday Poverty Supper and throughout the year. We also would like to extend a huge ‘thank you’ to Gay Richardson, who has played a vital role on the PWRDF St. John’s Committee for many years. Gay has operated the soup kitchen during our Ash Wednesday dinners and kept us all well fed. Thank you Gay! We would welcome new members to our committee.

BELONG OTTAWA: THE WELL SITE

Program Manager: Heather Wacyk

Report Written by: India Bedson

Belong Ottawa Overview, Mission, and Vision

Belong Ottawa is a Community Ministry of the Anglican Diocese, offering three drop-in day programs in the City of Ottawa. Our programs provide support and services to vulnerable individuals who may be experiencing homelessness, housing insecurity, substance use challenges, mental health barriers, and abject poverty. Belong Ottawa’s mission is to offer programs that address basic needs and foster dignity, wellness, and hope for all. We create inclusive communities where no one is marginalized, and everyone is valued and supported.

History

Belong Ottawa at The Well (also known simply as “The Well”) has been serving the community since 1984, originally as a volunteer-led initiative focused on supporting women by reducing isolation and fostering connections. Since 2005, the program has been based at St John the Evangelist Anglican Church, where it continues to offer essential services to vulnerable community members. Since 2024 The Well has extended services to all genders in response to evolving needs in the community.

Visitors and Hours

Each day, The Well welcomes around 150 visitors, referred to as “Participants”. In the mornings, the space is open to women and gender-diverse individuals, and in the afternoon and evening, it is open to everyone.

As of January 2025, the program is open for the following hours:

Monday – 8:00 am-8:00 pm

Tuesday – 8:00 am-8:00 pm

Wednesday – 8:00 am-8:00 pm

Thursday – 8:00 am-8:00 pm

Friday – 8:00 am-3:00 pm

Saturday & Sunday – 8:00 am-3:00 pm

Staff and Volunteers

There are 18 members of the team at The Well; eight staff members provide essential support to Participants with ten volunteers preparing and serving meals. Our volunteer team includes Participant volunteers who also access services through the program. Third party security personnel also work with the Belong Ottawa team to ensure our space is safe for everyone who visits and works at The Well.

2024 Success

To celebrate several milestones in service to the community, Belong Ottawa hosted the “We All Belong Anniversary Celebration” on November 21st, 2024, in the beautiful, newly renovated Nave of St John the Evangelist Anglican Church. The event was attended by local dignitaries, including Bishop Shane

Parker, Mayor Mark Sutcliffe, and Councillor Ariel Troster. During the celebration, Mayor Sutcliffe declared November 2024 "Belong Ottawa Month," a powerful recognition of the impact of Belong Ottawa's services in the community. This event also marked the first public gathering under Belong Ottawa's new identity, following the 2020 merger of three distinct drop-in day programs: St Luke's Table, Centre 454, and The Well.

2025 Hope

In 2025, The Well aims to increase advocacy and continue raising awareness within the broader community. With the escalating costs of living, housing shortages, and rising expenses, heightened awareness can generate greater public support to address affordable housing and economic inequality. We will also focus on social issues affecting our marginalized Participants, including expanding our involvement in Capital Pride 2025 to better support the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

COMMUNITY PARTNER REPORTS

CENTRETOWN CHURCHES SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE (CCSAC)

Emmy Verdun: Representative for St. John the Evangelist

St. John's is a founding member of the Centretown Churches Social Action Committee (CCSAC), a group of 22 churches that work together to improve the quality of life for the most vulnerable in our community. CCSAC is a registered charity whose directors are appointed by member churches.

CCSAC's principal program is the Centretown Community Food Centre (CCFC), the food bank serving people living in central Ottawa. The Food Centre is operating well in its new location at 370 Catherine Street, where it is co-located with a City Community Hub. With more space, CCFC is now able to provide clients a grocery store shopping model that allows clients to choose their items rather than receiving pre-packaged bags.

In 2024, the Food Centre experienced a significant growth in demand. In 2024, a total of 18,146 clients were served, an increase of nearly 50% over 2023. Of particular concern, the number of children served increased from 2,700 in 2023 to 4,500 in 2024.

The Food Centre expanded its operating hours from 3 days to 4 days per week to meet the higher demand and is now open on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays from noon to 3pm and Fridays from 9am to noon. Clients receive nutritious food once per month for up to five days, with the amount depending on family size.

The Food Centre's manager for the past 4 years, Diana Mahaffy, retired in late 2024. The new manager, Dennis Hansen, brings long experience in the food services sector.

The CCFC receives funding from CCSAC as well as donations from individuals, member churches, foundations and businesses. Transitional funding from the City of Ottawa ended in 2022, so finding new sources of funding remains a priority.

In 2024, member churches contributed a total of \$96,685 to CCSAC-related activities, comprised of \$20,156 donated to CCSAC and a further \$76,530 donated directly to the Food Centre. The annual Walkathon organized by CCSAC raised an additional \$53,511 for the Food Centre. CCSAC greatly appreciates the generosity of member churches and their parishioners, particularly when so many congregations are facing financial difficulties.

During 2024, CCSAC assisted the following local charities by providing requested goods such as clothing and toiletries as well as direct financial assistance: Bruce House, Centre 507, Haven Too, Knights of Columbus Coats for Kids, Odawa drop-in centre, and Ottawa Innercity Ministries outreach program. In addition, CCSAC used \$5,000 in funds received from a foundation to pay summer day camp fees for 11 children who could not otherwise afford to go to camp.

CCSAC is a member of Multi-Faith Housing Initiative, Citizens for Public Justice, the Alliance to End Homelessness and the Ottawa Community Land Trust. To learn more about issues related to poverty and social justice in central Ottawa, CCSAC invited the following guests speakers over the course of the year: Yasir Naqvi, Ottawa Centre MP; Peter Embleton, ED of the Youville Centre; Professor Steve Pomeroy, Carleton University and director of Ottawa Community Land Trust; and Elizabeth Beaven of Ottawa Innercity Ministries. At the AGM, Jennifer Brooks, a retired Nurse Practitioner and board member of the Council for Aging, spoke about NORCs (Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities)

For more information, check out the website at <http://www.centretownchurches.org>.

CIRCLES OF SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (CoSA OTTAWA)

Number of Participants: Approximately 60, comprised of 15 core members 5 more scheduled for 2025 in addition to 40-45 volunteers.

Program Director: Michaela De Curtis, replacing Kathleen Weedmark (Nov 2023-2024)

St. John's Representative: Reverend Gary van der Meer

Regular Meeting Time/Place: Approximately twenty circle meetings are held monthly – primarily during weekday evenings in classroom #2 at St John's; and, also by virtual means.

Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA) is a community-based program that assists people who have been incarcerated for committing sexual offences and voluntarily seek help in their effort to re-enter society. CoSA Ottawa, one of 15 CoSA sites in Canada, has been holding circle meetings at St. John's Church since 1998. This privilege is fundamental to ensure the safety and privacy that fosters CoSA Ottawa's success. Note: some sites have closed and reopened, such as in Hamilton, which is now sponsored by St Leonard's.

A circle consists of one "core member" and two or three trained (and screened) volunteers who meet regularly as a group and individually to help the core member develop a meaningful, crime-free life. The circle volunteers model healthy relationships, addressing reintegration obstacles, offering emotional support, and challenging risky or inappropriate attitudes and behaviors that could lead to relapse.

The volunteer training program is undergoing changes to increase access to pre-recorded modules and therefore increase the number of new volunteers. Our volunteers are recruited from a diverse group of individuals from the community.

Fundraising activities:

- Ottawa Race Weekend raised \$7,000
- Our 5th Gala took place in April 2024 and raised \$27,000
- End-of-year fundraising appeal raised \$11,800

Documentary "Facing Our Messy Lives"

Our thanks to Film Director Goeff Bowie for capturing the essences of CoSA's mission, and our gratitude for the participating core members and volunteers and Susan Love. It was launched in May 2024 at Carleton University with an in-person and telecasted event with a distinguished panel. CoSA subsequently showed it to both Carleton and Ottawa University students.

Program activities:

- Our annual BBQ was recast as a sports and fun day, which was well received by all participants.
- Our Christmas/Holiday Party was again held in St. John's Parish Hall with staff, core members and their guests, volunteers, board members in attendance. In addition, special Christmas meals were prepared for each core member.
- These are important pro-social events which help our core members to become more fully integrated into society. Many thanks to St John's for their continued support of CoSA activities and particularly to Rev. Gary for joining us for many of our gatherings.

Challenges:

Funding and recruiting enough volunteers continue to be a challenge. CoSA Ottawa continues to feel blessed as we received grants from Ottawa Community Foundation and Ontario Trillium Foundation. We deeply appreciate the numerous donations, many from St. John's parishioners, in addition to a

donation for the making of the documentary. We also appreciate the grant received from the Department of Justice to defray the costs of launching our documentary.

We continue to collaborate with CoSA Canada in the hopes of obtaining federal and provincial funding. We are recasting our Sustainability Working Group to extend our work in the area of volunteer recruitment, digital presence and reaching out to new Foundations and other groups.

Recruitment for a Treasurer is ongoing. Our sincere thanks to John Daley for his ongoing support during his tenure on the Board of Directors.

Successes:

A new Program Director, Michaela De Curtis, has stepped in to replace Kathleen Weedmark in November 2024. Micheala brings a host of skills based on her experience in the non-profit sector and 6 years as a CoSA volunteer. Nonetheless, to facilitate an effective transition, the Board of Directors agreed to push back the AGM to January 2025.

Currently we have 15 active circles with five new circles scheduled to begin in 2025 and continue to receive new referrals regularly. Last year, we had one individual charged with a new offence and no breaches of conditions. We continue to serve a wide range of core members, including one core member designated a dangerous offender, individuals in the community under a long-term supervision order, and those on probation and parole.

We have a new program called Maintenance Circles. This enables circles to meet less frequently but still offers participation in social events and discussions events.

Our deepest gratitude goes out to our exceptional volunteers who give our core members a sense of self-worth and hope for a new life, and who are our greatest champions. I am forever in awe of their maturity, selflessness, and commitment to our core members and to CoSA.

Thank you, St. John's staff and parishioners, for supporting CoSA Ottawa with your long-time volunteers, generous donations, priceless facilities, and warm hospitality. We are so very grateful to be part of the St. John's community.

We encourage you to read our Annual Report which has just been published, for more detail on operations and our direction in 2025. To view the 2023-2024 Annual Report please visit: [AGM & Annual Reports – Circles of Support and Accountability](#).

Lyse Morin, President, Board of Directors
Michaela De Curtis, CoSA Ottawa Program Director