

The Parish Church of St. John in the Wilderness



2022 Annual Report

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Award for Outstanding Service

St. John's 2022 Ministry Team

Vestry: John Allen, Liz Dobson, Melissa Sturges, Will McBride, Emily Brunner, Jim Petersen, Marschall Smith, Janet Waller

Clerk: Jeanie Thoemke

Treasurer: Andrew McLaren

Junior Warden: Barry Kostyk

Senior Warden: Harvey Caldwell

Nursery: Lorna Cessna, Magda Styczen

Sexton: Jake Malark

Financial Coordinator: Maureen Vruno

maureen@stjohnwilderness.org

Rising Generations Coordinator: Maggie DeSmet

maggie@stjohnwilderness.org

Parish Coordinator: Carrie Thomas

carrie@stjohnwilderness.org

Deacon: The Rev. Rick Todd

rick@stjohnwilderness.org

Deacon: The Rev. Margaret Thor

margaret@stjohnwilderness.org

Associate Priest: The Rev. Kate Maxwell, OSB

kate@stjohnwilderness.org

Rector: The Rev. Arthur Hancock

art@stjohnwilderness.org

Vestry Members

(terms expire at Annual Meeting on year indicated)

Harvey Caldwell, Senior Warden 2024

Barry Koystek, Junior Warden 2023

Andrew McLaren, Treasurer 2023

Jeanne Thoemke, Clerk of Vestry 2023

Jim Petersen 2023

John Allen 2023

Liz Dobson 2023

Will McBride 2024

Julie Jaeger 2024

Janet Waller 2024

Melissa Sturges 2025

Marschall Smith 2025

Emily Brunner 2025

Agenda

Annual Parish Meeting 2023

Prayer and Call to Order (Art Hancock)

Logistics/voter qualifications (Carrie Thomas, Art Hancock)

Election of Secretary for the Annual Meeting (Harvey Caldwell)

Review & acceptance of 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes (Harvey Caldwell)

Business (Harvey Caldwell)

- Treasurer's Report
 - Review of 2022 Financial Report (Andrew McLaren, Angie Gordon)
 - Acceptance of 2022 Finance Report
 - Presentation of 2023 Financial Plan (Angie Gordon, Tom Sturm)
 - Questions regarding Treasurer's Report
- Changes to Bylaws (Harvey Caldwell)
 - Vote to accept bylaw changes
- Elections (Harvey Caldwell, Art Hancock)
 - 2023 Elections
 - Warden (1 - 2 year term)
 - Vestry (3 - 3 year terms)
 - Vestry (1 - 1 year term)
 - ECMN Convention Delegates (5 - 3 year terms)
 - Explanation of Nomination and Voting Processes
 - Call for Nominations from the floor
 - Closing of Nominations
 - Appointment of Election Judges (if necessary)
 - Voting (in person & Google Meet Poll - if necessary)
 - Announcement of Elections

Rector's Presentation (Art Hancock)

- Rector's Report and Address
- Discussion

Presentation of the Outstanding Service Award (Art Hancock)

Presentation of Outgoing Leadership (Art Hancock)

Prayer and Adjournment (Art Hancock)

Minutes

Annual Meeting 2022

Annual Meeting Minutes: In-Person & Virtual via Google Meet February 6, 2022

I. Prayer and Call to Order

Father Art opened the meeting in prayer and called the Annual Meeting to order.

II. Logistics explained regarding the Annual Meeting: In-Person & Virtual (Google Meet)

III. Election of Secretary for the Annual Meeting

Art Hancock nominated Jeanne Thoemke to serve as Secretary for this Annual Meeting.

Motion Seconded by Dick Halbert

Discussion - None

Motion Carried (vote held)

Motion made by Jim Petersen to approve the January 17, 2021, Annual Meeting Minutes as written.

Motion Seconded by Carrie Thomas

Discussion – None

Motion Carried

IV. Rector's Presentation

a. Rector's Report and Address

Art Hancock presented the Rector's Report (included in Annual Report Booklet).

b. Questions

Art Hancock answered questions from parishioners in attendance.

V. Elections (Art Hancock)

a. Review of voter qualifications

Art H. reviewed voter qualifications

b. Explanation of Nomination Process

Art. H. explained the Nomination Process

c. Call for Nominations from the floor

No nominations from the floor

- d. Closing of Nominations
- e. Appointment of Election Judges
 - Not necessary
- f. Voting (in-person and by Google Meet Poll)

Art H asked for additional nominations for Vestry, there were none.

Art H. presented the slate of incoming vestry members: Harvey Caldwell, Warden (for a two-year term) and Melissa Sturges, Marschall Smith, and Emily Brunner (each for three-year terms on vestry).

Motion made by Pat Pickering to elect the slate presented of incoming vestry members.

Motion seconded by Jim DeMay

Discussion None

Motion Carried (vote held in-person and Google Meets Poll)

- g. Announcement of Elections

Incoming Vestry members: Melissa Sturges, Marschall Smith, and Emily Brunner (three-year terms).
Harvey Caldwell, Warden (two-year term).

VI. Treasurer's Report

- a. Treasurer's Report was presented by Angie Gordon.
 - i. Review of 2021 Financial Plan
 - ii. Presentation of 2022 Financial Plan
- b. Angie answered questions regarding Treasurer's Report

VII. Presentation of the Service Award

Art Hancock presented Helen Gehrenbeck with the annual Outstanding Service Award.

VIII. Prayer and Adjournment

Motion Made by Jim D to adjourn

Motion Seconded by Karen Herrera

Motion Passed

Discussion None

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeanne Thoemke
Secretary

Rector's Address

January 15, 2023

Grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ! As I compose this address to the parish of St. John in the Wilderness, we find ourselves in the depths of a true Minnesota winter. The snow is deep, the temperatures are seasonably cold, and many of us spend most of our days hunkered down inside our homes waiting for some semblance of spring. Winter is a perfect time to light a candle, to be still and consider the movement of God's spirit within us and within our faith community.

Traditionally, much of a Rector's Address is retrospective, that is, looking back at the past year to recall particularly poignant moments, to consider successes and failures, and to extend gratitude to those who have served faithfully and well. In addition, I wish to afford at least as much space in this address to a forward-looking endeavor, inviting us to contemplate where God may be leading us, extending some concrete steps that we may take to get there, and encouraging all of us to recommit ourselves to participate in God's dream for our faith community.

2022 saw us beginning to emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic as our worship and congregational life began to become regular and "ordinary." Throughout the entirety of 2022, we have been conducting all Sunday morning services in person. For a variety of reasons, the decision was made to offer two services each Sunday, the first at 8:00am and the second at 10:00am. The challenge, of course, is that some of our people prefer a traditional service while others prefer a more contemporary expression. Our response to this difference in preference is to alternate between traditional and contemporary every other week at the 10:00am service. As a result of the faithful work of staff and parishioners who have been operating the cameras each Sunday, we have offered a livestream option for at least one of our Sunday services and for several funerals. This has been much appreciated by many parishioners and friends and will continue to be a ministry offered by St. John's. In addition, we have continued to offer Morning Prayer and Compline online via Google Meet. While the number of parishioners taking advantage of these online services has been relatively small, it has been an important component of our effort to provide opportunities for regular worship.

Of course, our common life at St. John's over the course of the last year has been replete with many other programs and ministries. A significant number of parishioners have taken advantage of formation, fellowship and service opportunities, and the reports of many of our ministries over the past year may be found in the reports section of the Annual Report.

In addition to all of the visible ministries that have been occurring, a lot of good and faithful work has been happening behind the scenes as well. There were a number of staff changes this year, and much of this work was orchestrated by the Personnel Committee with Jim Petersen as Chair. The Vestry was led this past year by Senior Warden, Harvey Caldwell. As you may know, the Vestry is charged with monitoring and, if necessary, altering the Financial Plan that is presented at the Annual Meeting. Through your generous giving and with staff and others entrusted with the money keeping expenses in check, the parish ended the year with a slight surplus of money. It's important to note that interest from the Heritage Society funds also contributed to the continued healthy financial state of the parish. All of this has placed St. John's in a strong position for faithful and loving ministry in the future.

Ah, yes, the Church of the future. While it is important that we attend to the here and now, it is also critical that we simultaneously work to create a Church that is viable and effective and faithful ten or twenty years from now. But what exactly might that Church look like, and how might we get there?

At this year's diocesan convention, Bishop Loya invited us to imagine a Church radically different than the Church most of us have become accustomed to. Instead of something to be built, such as the Tower of Babel, the bishop painted a picture of the Church as a garden, such as the Garden of Eden. Our work in and for the Church, accordingly, would be more like playing in the dirt than stacking bricks. Our bishop encouraged us to try new things and to allow a bit of a mess just as one might try a new seed variety, knowing that one's efforts, whether or not ultimately fruitful, might at least be faithful. And just as most gardeners that I know take supreme joy in their work, so whatever else our work in and for the Church may be, I pray that it may be characterized by joy.

A second important piece of what Bishop Loya communicated to us is that the Church of the future will be *lay-led and clergy-supported*. This will be a radical departure from the Church in which I grew up and for which I was trained to be a priest. That Church was clergy-led and lay-supported. Practically speaking, what this means is that for our parish to be strong and vital in the future, we must become serious about the business of building disciples of Jesus and empowering all of us, lay and clergy, to tenaciously follow in the Way of Love that Jesus taught and modeled. And our laity, all of you, must become just as serious about your call as a Christian as I am as a clergy person. All of us must take our baptismal promises seriously and engage as fully as we may in the life of a disciple.

A final component to a strong Church of the future is a connection to others that goes well beyond greeting each other on Sunday mornings, worshiping together and sharing some conversation over cups of coffee. These activities are not to be denigrated, but if we are to grow as disciples of Jesus, we must become willing to be more vulnerable with each other and to put ourselves in situations of love and service that stretch us.

So, these three elements are characteristic of a future, healthy, strong St. John's: **(1) joyful play, (2) lay-led/clergy-supported ministry, and (3) vulnerable connection**. As we continue to pray and grow and serve, we will be doing so in ways that are joyful; by encouraging, raising up and empowering our laity; and by encouraging vulnerable connection to each other. I am confident that in so doing, and by trusting in the Spirit of Jesus to lead us, we will grow as disciples, be both faithful and fruitful in our ministry, and position our parish for strength for the future.

My thanks, of course, are extended to all of you who have given so much of your lives to the life of this parish. There are too many to name here, but a faithful, loving and generous community requires so much, and so many of you have given so much. I am immensely grateful to be on the journey with you. May God bless God's Church here at St. John's as we journey forth in service and love.

Respectfully and lovingly submitted to all God's children at St. John in the Wilderness Church in White Bear Lake, Minnesota on January 15, the second Sunday after the Epiphany, 2023.

The Reverend Arthur Hancock
Rector

Nominations

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee is appointed and approved by the Vestry. This year's Nominations Committee consisted of Kathy Smith, Art Hancock, Dick Halbert, and Megan Jahnke. The Vestry shall consist of the Rector, two (2) Wardens and nine (9) elected Vestry members. In addition to these persons, the Vestry is assisted in its work by the Treasurer, the Clerk, and St. John's staff. Each member of the Vestry shall be an Adult Communicant in Good Standing. It is preferred that nominations be received at least two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting so that all nominations may be printed in the Annual Report. Nominations from the floor of the Annual Meeting, including self-nominations, are allowed.

Nominee for Warden

- Kathy Smith, Warden (for a two year term)

Nominees to the Vestry

- Sara Harker Olson (for a three year term)
- George Gorbatenko (for a three year term)
- Stephanie Sulentic (for a three year term)
- Jim Demay (to serve the one year remainder of a three year term)

Nominees to ECMN Convention

- Kathy Smith (for a three year term)
- Deb Strum (for a three year term)
- Angie Gordon (for a three year term)
- Jim Demay (for a three year term)
- Melissa Sturges (for a three year term)

Parish Vital Statistics

Numbers of worship services, types of worship services, and attendance at worship services are still being tabulated at the time of the Annual Meeting. Accurate numbers will be recorded and communicated to the parish as soon as tabulated. A permanent record of these numbers will be recorded in the digital record of the 2022 Annual Report.

- **Sunday Morning Prayer Services:**
- **Attendance at Sunday Morning Prayer Services:**
- **Weekday Daily Office Services:**
- **Attendance at Weekday Daily Office Services:**
- **Sunday Holy Eucharist Services:**
- **Attendance at Weekday Daily Office Services:**
- **Weekday Holy Eucharist and/or Healing Services:**
- **Attendance at Weekday Holy Eucharist and/or Healing Services:**
- **Baptisms:**
- **Celebrations of Holy Matrimony:**
- **Burial of the Dead Services:**



Reports

Senior Warden Report

2022 has been an exciting year with covid restrictions being reduced and our Church moving back to live services, additional people returning to worship, and our activity level increasing as the months went by. It was fun to see people returning to Church and the participation increasing.

It was also fun to see the Vestry meet face to face each month and not have to try and do business via google. It was also fun to work with the Vestry and create an organized process for completing our responsibilities, managing our fiscal resources, and maintaining our physical plant.

This has been a busy year for work with the Personnel Committee and Finance Committee. Some of the accomplishments have been the development of a policy manual that supports our Church Bylaws, the development of new positions, position descriptions, and the establishment of 2 new positions and the placement of individuals into those positions. In addition we have improved our chart of accounts, operated within our budget, improved reporting, established new reports to be implemented in January, and have established a budget for 2023.

As we get back to normal, we are reminded that we have an old building that needs lots of care. Through the Property Committee and Vestry we have established a work plan that allows us to fix some structural issues, remodel the main office and parlor, clean out the basement, remove unneeded furniture, and clean and organize our fire proof room, remove dead trees from our cemetery, and get a door for Kate's office.

The Senior Warden has the responsibility of leading the Vestry. The Vestry is the administrative head of the Church. The Vestry is responsible to manage all temporal activities and affairs of the parish congregation, subject to the authority, duties, and responsibilities as granted by Church Canons. The Vestry is directed by the Bylaws which are the legal foundation that the church is founded on and are important for structure, administration, ministry, and service. All activities of the Parish Congregation conform to the Constitution and Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America and the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Minnesota.

2023 brings new members to our Vestry. New challenges will face us but we anticipate continued financial health and enjoyment as we celebrate our love of God in our many ways.

Harvey G. Caldwell
Senior Warden

Associate's Report

In my third year at St John's, I am continually grateful for the call to be here. Working with the incredible staff of St John's and the privilege of serving with the rector, Art Hancock, are sources of blessing and wonder for me. Over this past year I have had the delight of working alongside a number of incredibly gifted, thoughtful and faithful members of the community. The inauguration of the Liturgical Planning and the Adult Formation Visioning Teams has been exciting. Working alongside the hardworking and devoted members of the Altar Guild and the amazingly flexible and capable Vergers is a joy.

Presiding in the Sunday Eucharist and assisting with baptism and funerals is a privilege every time. The congregation has accepted my offerings in sermons with great generosity. I very much appreciate the feedback of the congregation, as it makes me a better preacher. The opportunities for pastoral ministry both with members of St John's and residents of Cerenity fill my heart.

In this next year, I look forward with eagerness to a growing leadership role of parishioners in liturgical planning and pastoral ministry as the Liturgical Planning Team becomes more confident and Community of Hope gets up and running. The Women's Retreat in April will deepen our knowing of each other and our spiritual journeys. Over the next year, we will focus on small group experiences of all sorts in the congregation. I would also like to invite members of the parish to reflect with me regularly on the Sunday scriptures and inform my preaching through that fellowship.

I very much look forward to the adventures of 2023.

The Rev. Kate Maxwell, OSB
Associate

Deacon's Report

The Commission on Ministry (COM) prepared a document called "ECMN Discipleship Hallmarks for Leadership: The Four Orders of Ministry". In this document, the call for the diaconate describes the deacon, in part, as someone who "embodies servant ministry, encouraging the church in its ministry to the world, following Christ already at work in the world, empowering others to discern their gifts and ministries, and interpreting the needs of the world to the church."

I am called by God to serve the Church as a deacon in various ways. I preached regularly this past year reminding all of us of our call to follow the work Christ in the world. I actively participate in worship by proclaiming the gospel, selecting and bidding the prayers of the people, setting the table, and dismissing us to go into the world to serve Christ. I support and encourage others to serve their neighbors primarily through food ministry and MICAH. I am on the board of the White Bear

Lake Area Food Shelf where I see the needs of our neighbors up close. I worked with the food shelf to advertise for our 24/7 food shelf to help those who are unable to use the larger food shelf during the open hours.

At the diocesan level, I am currently on a team facilitating and walking with others in discerning their call to serve in the Church. I am mentoring our deacon intern, Linda, as she learns the role of the deacon in the parish. After serving three years on the COM, the Bishop asked me to chair the Commission on Ministry which is called to affirm and develop the call to ministry of all baptized persons. I assisted in writing the new Deacon Customary for all deacons to use within our diocese.

I traveled to Baltimore as a deputy to General Convention. In that role, I elected our new lay and ordained leaders, voted on resolutions affecting the policies and call of the Episcopal church in the world, and listened to many stories from our Episcopal siblings within the United States and those from around the world. In those stories I heard the desire and hopes for our work as disciples of Christ and ways we can do this work. I was reminded again and again of the importance of relationship building as we do God's work. I am now a member of the board for the Fund for the Diaconate which supports many deacons financially.

I am grateful to be at St. John in the Wilderness and pray that I embody servant ministry so that you too feel the call to serve Christ in the world.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Margaret Thor, Deacon

Deacon Intern Report

I would like to begin my short report by thanking you all for a warm and wonderful welcome. I am getting to know the lay leadership and the ordained leadership. I am really impressed with the amount of lay leadership in all aspects of the place. The rota for all the volunteer slots is more organized than I have seen in previous parishes. Dwelling in the Word before meetings is really a dwelling in the Word. You are ahead of the diocese in committing to a scriptural study of a text at the beginning of meetings. It brings meaning to the room.

As the sacred observer I am entrusted to the care of Rev. Margaret Thor. She is my tutor and guide. Each week I become more comfortable as a servant at the altar. Some new practices are being taught such as being the thurifer on Christmas Eve. I am reading as a lector regularly and serving as a Eucharistic Minister most services.

I see faithful innovation at work. One forward thinking innovation is to skip the sermon. Watching the instructed eucharist is something I am going to tuck away for the future. You have initiated scripture studies before meetings in Dwelling in the Word. You offer the Daily Offices online which builds disciples and brings prayer to our daily routine.

I see congregational vitality at work. Each Sunday I see a sincere welcome happening from the doors to the pews and to the coffee hour. I really resonate to worshipping outside. It is a wonderful way for neighbors to see who and what is going on each Sunday. There is something particularly poignant when I see walkers going by and hearing the music and liturgy. At our parish, there is a proximity that illustrates who these people are. The picnics, Christmas tree and bonfires all make a welcome that helps the barriers to “walking in the door”. We can reimagine the “new church” as one that is not in a building but perhaps one that meets in outdoor spaces or restaurants or community buildings. We are hearing that the idea is to give up on “saving” the church and join hands with small groups of people who want to be intentional about their life and want to pray together.

Linda Brandt, Deacon Intern

Music Ministry Report

Psalm 95 proclaims, “let us sing to the Lord; let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation!” exhorting us to use our voices in song to praise God. In our worship, music is perhaps the glue that holds the liturgy together and provides a thread by which all of the other elements connect. Our hearts become full when in song and our worship comes alive. There is no doubt that music has a key role in our common life.

The year of music at St. John’s has been an exciting but challenging one. Just as we began to come back to in-person worship, our Music Minister left us to take a position at another church. Throughout the course of the year we have been searching for a new Music Minister while also exploring new models of leadership in our music ministry. A number of supply organists have been used over the year, some of whom have been exceptional and have worked well with our patient and tenacious Chancel Choir. Stephanie Sulentic provided both her exceptional voice and her leadership skills to hold the choir together and be the bridge between supply organists and the choir. We are in debt to Stephanie for her faithfulness throughout the year.

In addition, our very own jazz pianist Jeffrey Merrill stepped into a new role as the Temporary Music Coordinator at St. John’s to lead the contemporary band HeartBeat and to offer his own take on both old hymns and new compositions. HeartBeat has grown to include several new musicians, and many have come to truly appreciate a fresh way of approaching music in worship.

Finally, on a number of occasions during the year, special music was offered. Sylvia Lovett played her viola on several occasions, sometimes joining HeartBeat, other times accompanying the choir, and always inspiring us with her gift for music. Jim Berry led the children, youth and some adults in the bells during Holy Week and Christmas. Stephanie Sulentic offered her beautiful voice on many solo pieces

throughout the year. Lynda Halbert led the congregation in a special Kyrie during the season of Advent. In short, many contributed to a wonderful year of music at St. John's.

As we head into the new year, we continue to search for a Music Minister that may be able to both play the organ and to offer exceptional leadership in contemporary music. Simultaneously, we will be experimenting with a new team approach to leadership for our music ministry. Rather than depending on one Music Minister to be a jack of all trades, we will employ a Music Coordinator that leads the contemporary worship while also lifting up parishioners to use their gifts of music, coordinating with supply organists and a Choral Director that will work with our choir.

As 2023 commences, we will most likely need to invest substantial financial resources in maintenance work on our pianos and organ. Deferred maintenance has caught up with us, and we must attend to some significant issues that have developed with our instruments. We are hopeful that we will be able to do the necessary work on these instruments using funds that are already available in the budget and reserve accounts, but we may need to approach the congregation with a special appeal if those resources are not sufficient.

We are excited to see where the Spirit of God will lead us in 2023!

The Rev. Arthur Hancock
Rector

Rising Generations Report

Our Rising Generations programming is feeling more and more like a program by the people, for the people. This fall, our children created beautiful artwork as they considered big questions like, What is God like? Generations came together to sing and make music. We met up at the coffee shop, gathered in the cemetery for an All Hallows' Eve party, and came together for a special young adult dinner. We gave service to our community in fun and engaging ways. We celebrated Advent with a pageant, in which we expressed our excitement and wonder at the coming of Christ. Each time we gathered, I felt a growing sense of fellowship as God worked amongst us.

We are trying to provide opportunities that are engaging during times that work with busy schedules. The reality is that during the first years of COVID, we had to put programming on pause. We were unable to regularly provide a space for our young folks to bond as a community. It's fun to come to youth group when you're part of a tight knit group, so we're going to stay the course as we continue to provide opportunities for youth to come together in all kinds of ways- through service, expression, play, outdoor exploration, and, of course, conversation about what it means to live a life in Christ.

I am excited to see us grow together as a community. I am excited for meaningful service opportunities that are youth driven. I am excited for lock-in retreats and Diocesan youth events. I am excited to go out into the world with all of you to do God's work.

Maggie DeSmet
Rising Generations Coordinator



Altar Guild Report

Members:

Director: Shelley Page, Secretary: Jackie Danda, Supplies: Cyndi Domin, Weddings: Emily Waymire, Devotions: Kelly DeSmet, Flowers: Pris Campbell, Shelley Page, Sunshine: Anne Johnson, Pris Campbell and Judy Caldwell, Other valued members Al Bradley, Pam Hove, Derrill Pankow, Katherine Schneider and Pat Pickering. Jane Kyle retired during this past year. Our mentors are Rev. Art Hancock and Rev. Kate Maxwell.

Because our group is hands on and service oriented, I started with the list of our dedicated members! This year we have continued the virtual and in-house meetings that we started due to Covid. Many thanks for the dedication and service of our members during this past year! And a big welcome to our new members Derrill Pankow and Katheryn Schneider. Many thanks to our Sacristans, Steve Johnson, Mark Hosfield and Harvey Caldwell. Many thanks to our previous

directress, Judy Caldwell for her leadership last year and for her continuing service. If anyone would like to be a member of the altar guild or a sacristan, please let us know as more people are always welcome.

What from 2022 are we most proud of, what worked best and where did we see God?

We are most proud of the work done by the Altar Guild members through the year in preparing the Altar area for each Sunday and for all the other times a service was to be held. (Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals, outdoor Services, Healing Services, etc) Also proud of the way we care for all the furnishings, hangings, ornaments, and items in our care. We saw God at the Altar area as we prepared and readied the church and in all the interactions with each other.

What from 2022 was frustrating or you knew could have “gone better”?

I think all of us would agree that change is difficult. And I think everyone on Altar Guild agrees that the continuous changes we have experienced have been difficult. Set ups that had been the same for years changed and continue to change. We adjusted to a new scheduling system and that is changing again. I’m not sure how we can do it better, but we have learned to continue to ask questions and depend on each other to do the best work possible- and change is always an adventure!

What are you most excited about for 2023?

Continuing to do the best work possible, updating all the Altar Guild Books to bring them up to date to reflect what we are doing now, but most of all excited about the continuing fellowship at church and working with the Altar Guild members and the Clergy to continue the beautiful traditions at St. John in the Wilderness.

Respectfully submitted,
Shelley Page

Liturgy and Planning Team

In early summer of 2022, the SJW Liturgy Planning Team met for the first time; the goal of the LPT is to have both lay and clergy members planning the community’s Sunday Eucharist. The team is composed of five lay members of the congregation with an interest in liturgy (Jim Berry, Jason Knauss, Maxine Kobinski, Katheryn Schneider, and Emily Waymire) and three staff members (Jeffrey Merrill, Coordinator of Music Ministries; Margaret Thor, Deacon; and Kate Maxwell, Associate Priest).

Over the summer we met to build a sense of community and studied The Liturgy Explained together so we would have some common knowledge about the shape and parts of the Eucharist. Later in the summer, we planned our first season, Advent 2022, gathering to reflect on the readings, discover seasonal themes, and make choices about the liturgical texts to be used. The team also made suggestions about music and the liturgical environment.

We are looking forward to gathering and planning each liturgical season throughout the next year. In January we are working on Lent and Holy Week and will begin looking at the Easter season in February. One exciting development over the next year will be that lay members of the group will be taking more leadership in the planning gatherings.

Without a doubt, the most challenging aspect of this team is scheduling so many gifted and busy people!

The Rev. Kate Maxwell, OSB



Pastoral Care

When we hear the words Pastoral Ministry, we sometimes have an image of clergy visiting hospitals and homes. At St John in the Wilderness, there are a number of lay ministers (who probably wouldn't call themselves that) who keep in touch with the needs of many members of the congregation. These ministers make phone calls, write notes, visit with folks, and make sure that sick members of the community are able to get to medical appointments when they can't drive.

The importance of this ministry cannot be overstressed. As a way to support and recognize these ministers, SJW is working with St David's Minnetonka, St Mark's Minneapolis, and ECMN to offer training and ongoing support, as well as recognition, to those who are called to be present to members of the congregation in these ways.

Beginning with a retreat on February 24-25, 2023 and continuing with online sessions through the winter and spring, the Community of Hope will be established formally at SJW. The participants will be commissioned as Pastoral Ministers at St John's after the training, and will gather monthly in a Circle of Care, a small group experience that supports their ongoing development in skills and spiritual life as a community.

We also hope to reinvigorate the Eucharistic Visitor program in the coming year. These ministers bring the Eucharist to members who cannot be physically present on Sunday mornings.

Anyone interested in information on Community of Hope or other pastoral opportunities can contact Kate Maxwell, OSB, at kate@stjohnwilderness.org.

The Rev. Kate Maxwell, OSB



Adult Formation

After two plus years of Covid, in the spring of 2022 a group of members of the congregation with an interest in adult Christian formation were gathered to form the Adult Formation Visioning Team. They helped organize and energize formation opportunities for adults at St John's in the fall. In 2022, we were fortunate to have the Transformed by the Word bible study group as a steady and faithful presence in our midst. Several book studies with the rector drew members into discussion on theological topics.

One disappointment has been the lack of participation in the Adult Sunday Forum

offerings. The two year lapse in Sunday in-person attendance because of Covid contributed to low engagement in adult formation, no doubt. But we also realize that the experience of isolation brought about by Covid has caused many people to reevaluate their priorities and needs in church involvement as well as in other activities. What people wanted and committed to in 2019 doesn't seem to be what is needed in 2023.

To get a sense of the current needs and wants of the member, St John's members will be asked to participate in a couple of ways to give feedback to the staff. In January, there will be a Focus Group gathering during the 9:00 Connection time over three Sundays. These will provide an opportunity for parishioners to reflect on what is working for them in Adult Formation and what other topics or opportunities are needed as we move into 2023.

In addition, there will be a parish-wide opportunity to give feedback on several areas of our common life in a survey that will give more information about the needs and wants of parishioners. Look for news of this in early February. The results of this initiative will be presented to the community in the spring.

The Rev. Kate Maxwell, OSB



Property Committee

Property Committee meetings were held on Feb 24, Oct 11, and Nov 15.

Activities/Projects:

- Annual spring cemetery cleanup held first Saturday in May (7th).
- Initial fireproof room straightening and assessment of contents in anticipation of clearing out old records and unwanted items. Sub-committee formed to assess contents for historical, architectural and legal value. Kathy Smith and Will McBride are the sub-committee members.
- Rev. Kate moved her office space to the library. Judy Ferrell of the Property Committee designed a door and is leading the project to get that installed so Kate may have some privacy as she prepares for worship services and provides pastoral care.
- A sub-committee was formed to take an inventory of assets of the church. This is being done primarily for insurance purposes, but also for our edification to understand what we own. Emily Brunner of the vestry and Tom Hove of the Property Committee are the sub-committee members.
- Removed a number of dead and dying trees from the cemetery at an expense of \$7500.
- Fire marshall inspection in December. Several findings that need to be addressed, but nothing major.
- Planned 2023 projects:
 1. Complete Kate's door installation for the library and construction work to make a proper landing at the top of the ramp, outside the new door.
 2. Replace water heaters in the utility room.
- Possible 2023 projects:
 1. Re-grading of the north side of the church to improve drainage and protect foundation.
 2. Replace air conditioning condensers

Property Committee Members:

Brent Torgerson, John Brunner, John Kobinski, Jim Peterson, Judy Ferrell, Tom Hove, John Pasch, Tom Napiwoski and Dennis Thoemke-Chair

Finance Committee

2022 Financial Committee Members: Angie Gordon – Chair, Andrew McLaren – Treasurer, Fr. Art Hancock, Jason Knauss, Jim Peterson, John Allen, Larry Mahoney, Linda Carpenter, Margaret Thor, and Steve Johnson.

At St. John in the Wilderness we value good liturgy, music, strong preaching and invigorating Christian education for all ages. We believe we are called to be stewards of God's creation and cherish the beauty of the land that surrounds us. We believe that it is critical that the love we have received from God be offered in very practical and concrete ways to those in need. We also value one another; we give each other strength and comfort in times of difficulty and rejoice together in times of good fortune and grace.

The Finance Committee looks at the mission of St. John in the Wilderness to service our community through Kid's Hope, the White Bear Food Shelf, Giving Gardens, MICAH (Metropolitan Interfaith Council of Affordable Housing, Habitat for Humanity, The Gathering, and the Hope for the Journey Home, as well as the need to keep the building heated/cooled, maintained and the staff paid.

In 2022 St. John in the Wilderness accomplished these goals and will end the year in a very positive financial position. Our final 2022 reconciliation is still pending however, we anticipate a positive balance between \$50,000 - \$55,000. Our expenses in 2022 were projected at \$475,000 with an income of \$426,000. As of the end of December the total expenses were \$453,600 and total income was \$508,000.

Planning for 2022 was challenging, we faced uncertainty and staffing changes. Our plans are always developed using historical data along with our most realistic and best optimistic view forward.

We do not have any disappointments to report, only our most gracious and heartfelt thanks to all of you for your support both spiritually and financially! We came back together; we supported the mission and each other. For all this our group is very thankful.

The Finance Committee embarked on several projects in 2022 including the development of a Financial Policies and Procedures document. This project will continue into 2023 and well beyond. The project is supported by the Vestry and will be comprehensive, addressing areas such as the safeguards around congregation income and offerings, expenditures, credit card usage and bank reconciliation. With the help of a plan developed by the Diocese of Massachusetts the Committee will continue to develop policies that support the mission of St. John in the Wilderness. In 2022 we hired a consultant, Pamula Ackerman Hofstadter, to review our current financial practices, make recommendations, and outline best practices. The Committee also worked in conjunction with The Personnel Committee and Father Art to support the staffing needs for the positions of Parish Coordinator, Parish Finance Coordinator, Music Coordinator and Rising Generations.

Looking into 2023 the Committee will add Tom Sturm, and Maureen Vruno, Angie Gordon, Andrew McLaren have agreed to stay on the committee albeit in slightly different roles, as have Margaret Thor, Jim Peterson, Steve Johnson and Father Art. Linda Carpenter, Jason Knauss and Larry Mahoney will step down, thank you Linda, Jason and Larry for your time and talents we are all grateful for your participation.

The Committee looks forward to serving this important function at St. John in the Wilderness. With your support, our missions at St. John in the Wilderness can come to fruition, together, with all of us, and with God's help, we can do this!

John Allen, Committee Chair 2023



St. John in the Wilderness

2023 Financial Plan

<i>St John in the Wilderness Episcopal Church</i>							
<i>Financial Plan 2023 Approved by Vestry 2022-12-18: Actual December 31 Preliminary Numbers</i>							
Income	Income	2023	2022	2021	2020		
		Plan	Actual 31 Dec	Plan	Actual 31 Dec	Plan	Actual 31 Dec
Offerings							
400 Pledges	350,000	362,175	336,000	339,128	300,000	325,653	300,000
402 Plate Cash	5,000	5,037	2,500	1,607	5,000	2,057	10,000
403 Non-Pledge Offerings	35,000	41,815	20,000	24,453	40,000	46,371	35,000
404 Seasonal Offering/Holy Days	2,500	6,285	2,000	1,895	2,000	2,331	10,000
405 Prior Year pledges		23,230		1,955	-	4,115	-
	392,500	438,542	360,500	369,038	347,000	380,527	355,000
Special Income							
406 Unrestricted Gifts to Church		2,144	-	1,163	-	16,366	-
407 Church Use	5,000	5,220	4,200	6,508	3,000	2,135	7,500
	5,000	7,364	4,200	7,671	3,000	18,501	7,500
Other Income							
408 Endowment Earnings	50,000	50,797	50,000	48,306	48,000	48,336	48,000
409 Investment Income	6,000	5,436	5,220	37	250	232	400
413 Child/Youth Endowment Earnings	6,300	6,287	6,000	5,955	5,800	5,882	5,800
	62,300	62,520	61,220	54,298	54,050	54,449	54,200
Total Income	459,800	508,425	425,920	431,007	404,050	453,477	416,700
Expenses							
Payroll and Related							
Rector Compensation							
531 Rector Salary, Hsg	82,400	89,120	80,000	89,120	80,000		80,000
531 Rector SE, Auto	9,304		9,120		9,120	89,120	9,120
540 Rector's Benefits	40,993	53,947	48,820	46,370	49,324	45,888	47,776
	132,696	143,067	137,940	135,490	138,444	135,008	136,896
Rector Compensation Totals							
Staff Compensation							
532 Staff Salaries, Wages	153,557	116,250	148,965	139,072	135,000	144,558	173,880
546 FICA - Employer's Share	11,747	8,335	11,396	10,088	10,500	11,006	13,302
567 Staff Benefits	9,502	6,348	4,680	4,969	4,700	5,292	5,217
	174,805	130,933	165,041	154,130	150,200	160,856	192,399
Staff Compensation Totals							
Staff Miscellaneous Expenses							
514 Education	4,000	1,452	1,000	-	3,000		
Auto Reimbursement Staff	1,000		1,000				
	5,000	1,452					
Staff Miscellaneous Expenses Total							
Payroll Service Fee							
504 Payroll service fee	2,000	1,983	2,000	1,888	2,000	1,816	2,000
Episcopal Church in Minnesota							
545 Mission & Ministry Support	56,028	58,956	58,956	57,012	57,010	57,672	57,679
521 Convention Expense	2,000	1326.76	2,000	40	1,000	-	1,000
Safe Church Training	2,000						
	60,028	60,283	60,956	57,052	58,010	57,672	58,679
Episcopal Church in Minnesota Totals							
Church & Grounds Maintenance							
549 Building Maintenance	20,000	14,142	20,000	13,401	15,000	14,631	15,000
Utilities							
553 Natural Gas	15,000	11,268	9,750	4,829	6,500	5,162	8,600
554 Electricity	7,000	6,960	5,500	5,136	5,000	4,760	6,500
555 Water & Sewer	1,000	1,124	700	849	700	675	600
556 Sanitation/Disposal Services	4,000	2,724	3,000	2,035	3,000	3,284	3,600
	27,000	22,076	18,950	12,849	15,200	13,881	19,300
Utilities Total							
Insurance							
558 Insurance	21,000	19,316	20,000	17,986	17,000	16,658	16,000

St. John in the Wilderness

2023 Financial Plan

	2023		2022		2021		2020	
	Plan	Actual 31 Dec	Plan	Actual 31 Dec	Plan	Actual 31 Dec	Plan	
Office								
522 Office Supplies	1,500	897	250	348	250	230	600	
523 Telephone & Internet	5,000	5,181	4,800	4,510	6,000	4,350	4,000	
524 Postage	800	692	800	431	800	620	700	
525 Legal and Accounting	250	533	250	-	250	-	500	
526 Office Equipment & Computers	2,600	9,462	6,000	9,559	7,000	6,943	7,000	
IT								
527 Bank Fees	2,000	1,640	2,500	2,167	3,000	2,523	1,500	
Office Total	12,150	18,406	14,600	17,015	17,300	14,666	14,300	
Communications								
528 Digital & Print Media	10,000	9,666	11,330	8,341	11,000	7,321	10,000	
Music								
501 Music/Choir Supplies	1,800	249	1,800	1,297	2,500	1,190	2,500	
505 Organ/Piano Maintenance	1,700	1,148	1,000	520	1,000	20	1,000	
513 Supply Music/Special Music	10,000		1,000		2,000	4,830	16,800	
Music Totals	13,500	1,396	3,800	1,817	5,500	6,040	20,300	
Worship								
502 Altar Guild	1,000	1,300	600	736	600	572	1,000	
506 Worship Supplies	500	1,895	600	977	600	1,000	1,440	
507 Supply Clergy	500	9,234	500	666	800	199	1,040	
Worship Total	2,000	12,428	1,700	1,713	2,000	1,771	3,480	
Stewardship								
529 Campaign, Fundraising, ACH, CC Fees/Mo	1,000	1,702	1,000	740	1,000	727	1,000	
530 Heritage Society	500	-	500	298	500	-	1,000	
581 Creation Care	-	1,142		-				
Stewardship Totals	1,500	2,843	1,500	1,038	1,500	727	2,000	
Rising Generations								
509 Children's Ministry		1,347	1,500	1,848	1,000	1,042	2,250	
503 Youth Ministry Programs		1,397	2,000	2,867	2,000	3,030	4,400	
575 Child Care Supplies		25	50	-	50	-	100	
Rising Generations Totals	3,500	2,770	3,550	4,715	3,050	4,073	6,750	
510 Adult Christian Formation								
Pastoral Care								
519 Clergy Hospitality	1,000	56	0					
580 Pastoral Care Supplies/Expenses	1,000	1,024	0					
Pastoral Care Totals	2,000	1,081	0					
Fellowship								
518 Sunday Hospitality & Special Events	4,000	4,047	1,500	1,549	2,500	2,614	5,000	
Evangelism								
517 Welcoming	250	-	250	41	250	1,530	820	
Service								
515 Faith in Action (Formerly Outreach)	10,000	7,177	7,000	750	4,000	6,800	2,200	
516 New Initiatives					2,500	-	4,600	
544 Theological Education			500	7	500	-	500	
Service Total	10,000	7,177						
Total Expenses	501,929	453,625	473,017	429,949	449,354	446,162	510,824	
Total Income	459,800	508,425	425,920	431,007	404,050	453,477	416,700	
Total Expenses	501,929	453,625	473,017	429,949	449,354	446,162	510,824	
Total Income less Total Expenses	(42,129)	54,800	(47,097)	1,058	(45,304)	7,315	(94,124)	

Award for Outstanding Service

Church work can often be challenging, exhausting, and never-ending. While there are many at St. John's who love the church and offer their lives and resources to help make it strong, few are able to do so day after day and year after year.

The recipient of this year's Award for Outstanding Service has consistently demonstrated her love for God and God's people at St. John's by steadfastly providing leadership in behind the scenes resource ministries. She has shown perseverance and wisdom as the structures of parish ministry at St. John's have been adjusted to account for new realities. She has mentored and trained others who are learning new skills. And she has even provided leadership for online worship opportunities that are important but out of the limelight.

Angie Gordon has served as Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer for over ten years at St. John's. In addition, she has served as an advisor to a number of other important committees that have benefited from her wisdom and experience. She has led online Morning Prayer services throughout the year. She has represented the people of St. John's at the ECMN Convention. She is almost always at the weekly Bible study. In short, Angie is as active and giving as one can imagine.

Angie received the Outstanding Service Award back in 2020. Because so many at St. John's give so much, we try to give the award to a new person each year. Angie's service to St. John's, however, has been so exceptional, so extensive, and over the course of so many years, we felt that she was the most deserving of the award this year. Angie will be stepping down from some of her roles this year, but rest assured, her love for God and the people of this parish will never fail, and she will continue to find ways to serve. Angie, on behalf of all the people of St. John's, thank you.

The Award for Outstanding Service at St. John in the Wilderness this year goes, once again, to Angie Gordon.

