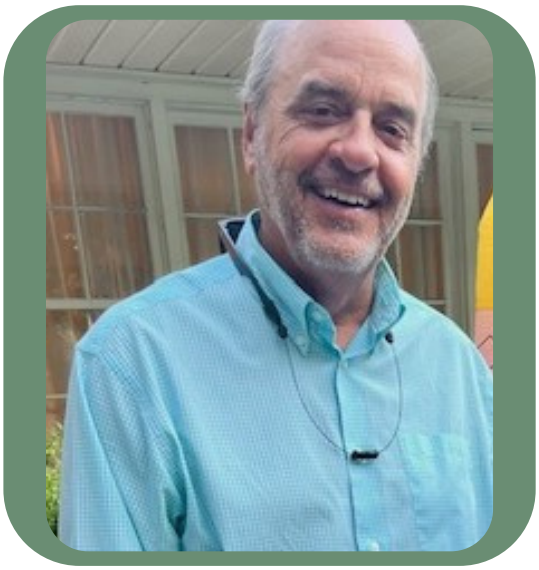
2026 Deacon Nominees



Doug Hammond has been a member of St. John's for 38 years. Doug is a member of the McLeod-Brown Sunday School class. He has previously served as Deacon Chair, Finance Chair, Youth Basketball Coach, Sunday School Teacher, RA Leader, Senior Minister Search Team, and youth chaperone on mission trips.

In Doug's own words:

My journey started in 1988 after becoming an active member of SJBC. Prior to that, I was a CoE participant at best. My faith grew as I immersed myself with the people of SJBC and was allowed to grow my faith being around open, honest, and loving members of this congregation. My vision for St. John's is for it to become a more vibrant and active part of the Elizabeth community, as well as Greater Charlotte.

Ashley Maready has been a member of St. John's for 28 years. Ashley is a member of the Chancel Choir. She has previously served on the Finance Resource Team, Worship & Arts Resource Team, Church Council Team, Administrative Deacon Panel, and Room in the Inn.

In Ashley's own words:



I was raised in a very active and engaged Baptist family on both sides. I was also a church kid with my mother being a career church organist. I spent many Wednesday evenings completing homework assignments in the church office during choir rehearsals when both parents had commitments those evenings.I saw my home church, that had influenced me in the formative years of my faith journey, succumb to the painful split that took place within the SBC in the early 1990's, which led to my family separating from that church in 1995. I discovered St. John's shortly after moving to Charlotte in 1997 and learned of its move away from the SBC to the CBF to preserve its Baptist identity through its new member orientation. Those discussions with Jack and Virginia Allen provided clarity and closure of a very painful and confusing time in my faith journey. I knew I had found my faith home and have now been part of St. John's over half my life. My vision for St. John's is for it to be a vibrant, multi-generational church with balanced congregational ministry and programming.



Todd Stillerman has been a member of St. John's for 28 years. Todd is a member of the Adventure-Cheers Sunday School class. He is currently part of the Brotherhood of the Biscuit, serving as a Sunday School Teacher, Youth and Children's Basketball Coach, in the Handbell Choir, and Leader for St. John's participation in the Charlotte Pride Festival and Parade. Todd has previously served as Chair for the Board of Deacons, Chair for the Finance Resource Team, Chair for the Personnel Resource Team, Co-chair for the Mission Resource Team and Capital Campaign, as CROP Walk Captain, and has served on numerous committees, tasks forces, and leadership initiatives over the years.

In Todd's own words:

My spiritual journey began as the son and grandson of Baptist ministers, and I have been active in congregational life for as long as I can remember. The church taught me the importance of worship, service, community, and compassion, and it provided the foundation for my faith. Since joining St. John's in 1998, I have been blessed by a congregation that has nurtured me and my family through every stage of life. Debbie and I have raised our children, Mattie and Will, within this church family, and many of our most meaningful friendships and experiences have grown out of our involvement at St. John's. Through worship, teaching, mission work, fellowship, and leadership opportunities, God has continued to deepen my faith and call me to serve others. I am grateful for the ways St. John's has shaped me as a disciple of Christ, as a husband, and as a father.

My prayer is that St. John's will continue to be a welcoming, Christ-centered congregation that embraces both its rich heritage and God's call to serve a changing world. I hope we will continue to be known for meaningful worship services (ideally that last no more than 60 minutes each), deep concern for our neighbors, and a commitment to extending Christ's love to all people. As someone whose family has been nurtured by this congregation for nearly three decades, I hope St. John's will remain a place where children, youth, and adults can grow in faith, discover their gifts, build lasting relationships, and find opportunities to serve. I pray that we will continue to be a church that values both tradition and innovation as we seek to follow Christ together.

Serving St. John's in a variety of leadership and ministry roles over the past twenty-eight years has been one of the great blessings of my life. I am honored by the opportunity to serve as Chair of Deacons and look forward to working alongside the congregation's deacons, staff, and congregants as we seek to support the mission and ministry of St. John's Baptist Church. Through prayer, encouragement, service, and leadership, I hope to help strengthen the sense of community and shared purpose that has made St. John's such an important part of my life and the lives of my family.



Ryan Crowder has been a member of St. John's for 38 years. Ryan is currently a member of the Adventure Sunday School class. He is currently serving on the Technology Resource Team, SJBC Livestream Team, Saturday Basketball MC, and Men of the Church. He has previously served as a Children's and Adult Sunday school Teacher and as a Pastoral Deacon.

In Ryan's own words:

Since joining in 1988, I have gone from Sunday school attendee to Sunday school teacher… from Discipleship student to Discipleship sponsor… from Youth group participant to Youth group leader – St. John's is my church, and I love my church. My desire is for St. John's is to do Good – over and above our desire to do well – We continue striving to do Good.



James Laney has been a member of St. John's for 40 years. His current activities and service include: Ministries Deacon, Immigrant and Refugee Ministry Group, Room in the Inn Volunteer, Chancel Choir, Care Committee, Worship and Music Team, Men's Shelter Volunteer, Church Teller, CROP Hunger Walk, and Transition Team. He has previously served as Administrative Deacon, on the Finance Team, Stewardship Team, Hackney Scholarship Team, as a Youth Mission Trips Chaperone, Holy Grounds SS, and on the Habitat for Humanity Team.

In James's own words:

My friendships and experiences at St. John's continually help me develop a better understanding of God's purpose for me, and nurture my faith journey.

I look forward to a sustainable and stable future for St. John's as we right-size our facilities and welcome a new senior minister who will help us grow into our next century of service for Charlotte and our community based at the corner of Hawthorne and 5th.



Nancy Fuller has been a member of St. John's since her childhood. She is a member of the Far Side Sunday School Class. She has served as a Pastoral Deacon and as part of the Leadership Committee. She is currently serving with the Memorial Garden, Women of the Church, on the Care Committee, in the Chancel Choir, and in the Handbell Choir.

In Nancy's own words:

I was raised in the family of St. Johns, with the guidance of more than I could ever remember. These lessons have stayed with me all of my life.



Aidan Salmeron has been a member of St. John's for 4 years. Aidan is a member of the Chancel Choir and the Memberships Committee. He is currently serving on the Messaging and Media Resource Team and as a Room in the Inn volunteer.

In Aidan's own words:

I grew up as a Catholic and spent the first 20 years of my life as a practicing Catholic. Towards the end of my journey as a Catholic, I felt very disconnected from my relationship with God. When I met my wife Chloe, we began going to church together and I found my place in the Baptist faith. We visited a couple of Baptist churches before visiting St. John's and, upon visiting St. John's for the first time, found the Lord and our new home together. We have never looked back since.

My vision for St. John's is a neighborhood church, both for the Elizabeth and broader Charlotte area, where all can come and grow in their relationship with God and Jesus Christ through devotion, music, volunteership, and being a minister of Christ's love and acts of service in everyday life.

Ellen Smith has been a member of St. John's for 29 years. Ellen is a part of the Pathfinder Sunday School Class. She has served as Deacon, in the Nursery, with her Sunday School Class, and the planning committee for several Women's Retreats. Ellen is currently serving on the Pastor Search Team and the Nursery Care Team.



In Ellen's own words:

I grew up in the Catholic Church, but post college graduation, I wanted to explore other church experiences. Ken and I visited several area churches and ended up deciding on St Johns. The priesthood of every believer spoke to me. I love the family atmosphere and servant nature of our church and value the relationships that we have built over the years.

I strive to find God in everything I do and represent in the community. I think St Johns supports me well in that effort.

I pray for strength and growth in our numbers at St Johns. I pray for our new pastor and her leadership. I pray that God will use me to the benefit of this congregation.



Selina Swofford has been a member of St. John's for 65 years. Selina has previously been a member of the Chancel Choir, served as a Deacon, on the Arts Committee, Interiors Task Force, Worship Resource Team, Sunday School Teacher, Sanctuary Renovations, and Memorial Garden. She is currently serving on the Renovation Task Force and as a Pastoral Deacon.

In Selina's own words:

St. John's has always been the building block for my spiritual journey. A safe place where we come together as a family to worship, support, and care for one another. It is my prayer that St. John's will continue to make a lasting difference in the lives of it's members, the community, and in the world for many years to come.

Becky Skidmore has been a member of St. John's for 11 years. Becky is a member of the Joy Sunday School Class. She has served on the Leadership Task Force and as a Nursery Volunteer. She is currently serving on the Senior Paster Search Team, Mission Resource Team, Membership Resource Team, Needle Ministry, Sunday Welcome Team, Care Team, Church Fellowship Resource Team, Hospitality Action Team, Sandwich Ministry, and as a Deacon.



In Becky's own words:

Although I was raised, baptized, and came to know Christ in a Baptist church, I became a Methodist after I married. Following the loss of my husband in 2015, I was invited to visit St. John's. From the first time I attended the Joy Class, I knew I had found my church home and my people. I feel truly blessed to be part of this congregation and grateful for the many opportunities God has given me to serve others.

Vision for St. John's

I am excited about the future of our church and look forward to being part of the changes that lie ahead. My prayer is that St. John's will continue to be a servant church, welcoming and loving all people as we share Christ's love with our community. I am especially grateful to have been part of the search process that brought our eighth—and first female—Senior Pastor, Reverend Dr. Laura Heikes, to St. John's. I am confident and excited about the ways God will continue to lead and use us together.



Nancy Wilson has been a member of St. John's for 20 years. Nancy is a member of the Joy Sunday School Class. Her current activities and services include: Women of the Church (Secretary/Treasurer), Sunday School (Scribe/Communicator/President), Worship, Nursery Volunteer, Church Office Sub - Volunteer, Greeter Committee Chair, Endowment Resource Team, Safety and Security Task Force, House and Grounds Resource Team, and Ministry Deacons. Her past services include: Administrative Deacons - Chair, Personnel Resource Team – Vice Chair and Chair, Budget Review Committee, Joy Class – President, Vice-President, Group Captain, Associate Deacons, Associate Deacons Chair, Backpack (donations), Room In the Inn (food service/donations), Vacation Bible School Volunteer, Church Council – Chair, Minister of Music Search Team, Women of the Church – Fellowship/Hospitality, and Sandwich Ministry.

In Nancy's own words:

I believe God led me to attend St. John's Baptist Church. From the very beginning, when I was visiting, I felt welcomed and accepted. This church provides me with a sense of belonging and I truly feel blessed to have found such a supportive and caring fellowship. I pray St. John's can continue to provide a loving and caring environment for all those who many enter through its door. May God's love always be the focus.



Phillips Bragg has been a member of St. John's for 50 years. He is a member of the Pathfinders Sunday School Class. His current activities and services include: Outgoing Deacon Chair, Chair Endowment Resource Team, and Member Real Estate Task Force. His past service includes: Sunday School Teacher, Multiple Committees and Task Forces.

In Phillips's own words:

It is difficult to separate my "spiritual journey" from my SJ experience. God sometimes rides shotgun, occasionally drives, but is too often in the trunk. She's never far from me, but I'm lousy at consistently relying on her for daily bread. I pray that we trust God, each other, and reject fear. Living by our covenant on this corner. The blessings this church family has bestowed on me and mine are immeasurable.

Eric McCombs has been a member of St. John's for 11 years. Eric has served on the Youth and Young Adult Search Team, Music Minister Search Team, and Brotherhood of the Biscuit. He is currently serving as a Deacon, on the Personnel Resource Team, in the Chanel Choir, and is an active participant in SJBC basketball and softball.



In Eric's own words:

I have always grown up in the church. My journey officially began at First United Methodist Church in Fuquay-Varina, NC. During middle school, I accepted Jesus into my life while in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, then months later was confirmed into the church. After meeting Kelli (wife) we longed for the right church. Oddly, after a google search, we found St. John's. We love it here and our kids have been so involved and welcomed by many starting from the nursery till now. St. John's is home for our family. I pray, under the vision of our new Senior Minister and church leadership, that we continue to grow spiritually, fellowship intergenerationally, that younger families see this church as home, and that our church be seen as a pilar of love to everyone in the community regardless or gender, race of other affiliations. I humbly appreciate the opportunity to serve.



Treva Bridges has been a member of St. John's for 45+ years. Treva is a member of the Joy Sunday School Class. She is currently serving on the Sandwich Ministry (Co-leader), Pastoral Deacon Board, on the Usher/Greeter Team, and Needle Ministry. Her past service includes: Associate Deacon, Worship Resource Team, Sanctuary Guild, Weekday School teacher, Nursery assistance, Bible and Book Studies.

In Treva's own words:

I accepted Christ as my Savior during VBS in my youth, and have been faithful in church attendance most of my life. I have gained much from the many outstanding Sunday School teachers, Study leaders, and Ministers I have been privileged to learn from. During the difficult events happening in my life, I have been so grateful for the love and support of my Church. My prayer is that St. John's continues and even improves in being the positive, welcoming church where all are welcome and supported.



Jeff Almond has been a member of St. John's for 35 years. Jeff is a member of the McLeod-Brown Sunday School Class. His current activities and service include: Pastoral Deacon Chair, Church Council member, Leadership Resource Task Force member, McLeod-Brown Sunday School Class member, and St. John's Homebuilding Team member. Jeff's past service includes: Pastoral Deacon, Administrative Deacon, Ministries Deacon, Church Council, Leadership Task Force, Usher & Greeter Coordinator, House & Grounds Committee, Personnel Committee, Youth Sunday School Teacher, Children's Sunday School Teacher, Chair - Associate Minister Search Committee and member of other search committees.

In Jeff's own words:

I have been a lifelong Baptist, and through the years I have come to understand that there are many expressions of Baptist faith. At St. John's, I found a church whose values and spirit align closely with the CBF tradition and with my own understanding of faith. From my earliest involvement, I sensed that St. John's was different in the best possible way—welcoming, thoughtful, and deeply committed to living out the way of Jesus. St. John's has become my spiritual center, and I will always be grateful for the people who welcomed me, guided me, and showed me grace. Because of what I have received here, I am thankful for the opportunity to give back and serve others in this community.

St. John's is a welcoming community for all who seek to belong, grow in faith, and follow the way of Jesus in daily life. It is a place where people can serve one another, give generously of themselves, and help meet the needs of others. My prayer is that St. John's will continue to evolve in ways that preserve this spirit of belonging, service, and faithful witness for generations to come.



Leslie Bragg has been a member of St. John's for 31 years. She is part of the Pathfinders Sunday School Class. Her current activities and service include: Personnel Resource Team, Youth Sunday School substitute, and Sunday morning Greeter. Her past service/involvement include: Pastor Search Team (chair), Admin Deacon, Deacon (before we had the three panels), Youth Sunday School teacher, Women of the Church, Membership Committee (chair), Companions in Christ, and Women of the Church retreats.

I**n Leslie's own words**: I feel fortunate to have grown up in the church and am grateful for the many people who have shaped my faith over the years - Sunday school teachers, youth leaders, ministers, friends, and family. More than anything, I am inspired by the life of Christ and his example of loving others with compassion, grace, and humility. For me, love and inclusion are at the heart of the Gospel and are the foundation of my faith. My relationship with God is not static but an ongoing journey of faith and doubt, learning and discovery, and I am grateful that God's grace is present through it all.

As I look to the future, my deepest hope is that St. John's will continue to be a church known for its love. I pray we will always welcome people with open hearts, embrace the diversity of God's family, and have the courage to follow where the Spirit leads. I hope we will remain grounded in the example of Christ, caring for one another, serving our community, and growing in faith with conviction and with humility. My prayer is that generations to come will find at St. John's what I have found: a place to be challenged, to be loved, and to experience the transforming grace of God.



Steve Carter has been a member of St. John's for 24 years. He is a member of the McLeod-Brown Sunday School Class. His current activities and service includes: Greeter, Teller, Employee Handbook Task Force for PeRT, and Transition Team (for senior minister transition). His past service includes: Deacon, Personnel Resource Team member and chair, Hackney Scholarship Committee Chair, Ministerial Search Team, Finance Committee, Children's Sunday School Teacher, and multiple volunteer events.

In Steve's own words:

I was lucky enough to be raised in a progressive Baptist church, so I have always identified with the theology and definition of "church" that we have here at St. John's. I was baptized as a teenager and have continued to evolve and mature my own understanding of the divine and my place in their plan since then. We joined St. John's soon after moving to Charlotte in 1995, and with the exception of 6 years at churches in the University area and Davidson, have been members at SJBC ever since.

My vision for SJBC is that it redefines through our new leadership model and senior minister the right mix of family, theology, and programming that is attractive to us and others who are seeking a church home, and that we can continue to grow as a congregation despite national trends in the other direction. I am honored to be one of the newly defined Deacons as we adjust to a new lay leadership model.



Ethel Harris has been a member of St. John's for 55 years. Ethel is a member of the Encouragers Sunday School Class. She is currently serving on the Resource Teams, Task Forces, Sunday School Teacher/Leader, Women of the Church, in the Choir, and Ministry Areas. She previously served on the Leadership Committee as Chair, Membership Committee, Youth Committee, Hunger Committee, and as a Nursery Volunteer.

In Ethel's own words:

I was raised in a loving Christian home where God was the foundation. I was baptized at age 12. St. John's has been my church family for 55 years. My prayer and vision is for St. John's to grow and continue in its Servant Church Covenant.



Don Hinson has been a member of St. John's for 47 years. Don is a part of the Farside Sunday School Class. He has served as a Deacon, House and Grounds Chair, Brotherhood of the Biscuit, and in the Nursery. He is currently serving on the Pastor Search Team, with the Farside Sunday School Class, and as an Usher.

In Don's own words:

I was born and raised in the Methodist Church, where my faith was first nurtured. Nearly 50 years ago, when we started our family, I joined St. John's, and it has been my church home ever since.

I am excited to welcome our new minister, Dr. Laura Heikes, whose Methodist background is especially meaningful to me. I look forward to growing in faith, supporting her leadership, and sharing God's love with others. My prayer is that God's light continues to shine on and from St. John's at 300 Hawthorne Lane, that our pews are filled with worshipers, and that all who enter feel welcomed for generations to come.



Debbie Pittman has been a member of St. John's for 13 years. Debbie is a member of the Seekers Sunday School Class. She has served on the Pastoral Deacon Panel, as a WNC/Hurricane Helene Recovery Volunteers, and on the Personnel Committee. She currently serves as a MRT chair, Women of the Church, CROP Hunger Walk Co-Captain, as a Youth Group Parent, and she assists with program planning for the Seekers Sunday School Class.

In Debbie's own words:

I was blessed to grow up in the church. My early church experiences were rooted in a very conservative tradition, where the emphasis was often on fear, judgment, and moral repentance. While those experiences gave me a foundation in Scripture, it wasn't until my teenage years that I began to truly understand the depth of God's love and grace.

When my family joined a church centered on God's unconditional love, I encountered Jesus in a new and more personal way. I began to recognize the transforming work of the Holy Spirit in my life and came to understand that faith is not simply about following rules but about living in a relationship with the living Christ. At the age of sixteen, I publicly professed my faith and was baptized, marking the beginning of a lifelong journey of discipleship.

Since then, God has continued to draw me closer, faithfully deepening my understanding of His character, His Word, and His purpose for my life. My relationship with Him has grown through seasons of learning, prayer, worship, and service, continually shaping me into the person He is calling me to be.

Much of that spiritual growth has taken place with my church family at SJBC. Through meaningful worship, Bible studies, book discussions, authentic relationships, and opportunities to serve alongside fellow believers, God has strengthened and refined my faith. I have been encouraged to ask difficult questions, examine my beliefs, and seek a deeper understanding of Scripture and the work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Today, my faith is more deeply rooted than ever before. I continue to grow in my love for God, becoming more grounded in the truth of the Gospel and more committed to living a Christ-centered life. I know that spiritual growth is a lifelong journey, and I am grateful that God continues to lead, teach, and transform me through His grace, His Spirit, and the SJBC community of faith He has provided.

I am filled with gratitude and hope for the future of St. John's. I give thanks for the faithful work of the Converge Task Force, the Selection Committee, and the many individuals who have prayerfully served to help position our church for a bright and God-led future.

My prayer is that the same Spirit-filled processes that have guided us thus far—valuing diverse perspectives, encouraging the participation of all members, fostering collaboration, and seeking God's wisdom together—will continue to lead us as we move forward. With our new Lay Leadership structure, I pray that all members will have the opportunity to use their God-given gifts in service to the church. May we remain steadfast in our mission to embrace and express God's inclusive compassion and faithfully continue the ministry of Jesus Christ.

I wholeheartedly welcome Rev. Heikes as our new Senior Minister and give thanks and lift her up in prayer as she begins this historic chapter as our first woman to serve in that role. I pray that God will pour out His Holy Spirit upon her and give her the wisdom to discern His will and to follow Christ in all things. I also pray for our congregation as we journey through this season of transition. May we continue to seek God's will in all that we do, trusting His guidance, growing in faith, and serving our community with love, grace, and compassion.

I am deeply honored to serve at St. John’s, and I do not take this calling lightly. I recognize that serving is both a privilege and a sacred responsibility. My prayer is that the Holy Spirit will guide my words, my actions, and my heart so that I may faithfully reflect Christ in all I do.



Suzanne Taylor has been a member of St. John's for 11 years. Suzanne is a member of the Joy Sunday School Class. Her current and past activities and services include: Sunday school teacher in Joy Class, Leader of Needle Ministry, Spiritual Growth committee, Faith Journey Book Study, Sandwich Ministry, RA panel community missions, ministry outreach, Women of the Church and participates in On the Way, She will be leading the Banana Pudding gathering for Men's Shelter and will be a member of MRT.

In Suzanne's own words:

Being a part of St John's has given me so many blessings in friendships and opportunities to share faith and to support so many meaningful missions. It has been a heart opening journey supported by so many amazing and loving people. I pray that with the new leadership structure and our new senior minister our church continues to walk the talk and grow.



Bobbie Hinson has been a member of St. John's for 65 years. She is a member of the Farside Sunday School Class. Bobbie has served as a Deacon, as Pastoral Panel Chair on the Church Council, Hunger Team, and Youth and Pastor search teams. She is currently serving on the Women of the Church Board, Faith Journey Book Study, as a Nursery Worker, and with the Farside Sunday School.

In Bobbie's own words:

I was dedicated as an infant at St. John's, and it has been my church home ever since. Here, I grew in faith through Sunday School, choir, handbells, GAs, youth activities, camps, and the guidance of caring adults who helped shape my relationship with God.

St. John's has also been the place where I celebrated many of life's greatest blessings, including my marriage to Don and the dedications of our children and grandchildren. Through every joy and challenge, my church family has been a constant source of love, encouragement, and faith.

My excitement for the future of St. John's is hard to contain! I believe our future is bright under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Laura Heikes. Her enthusiasm, deep faith, and sincere commitment to guiding us in our spiritual journey and service to God's kingdom give me great hope for the years ahead. I am grateful and humbled to serve this church and look forward to all that God has in store for St. John's.



Kathy Turner has been a member of St. John's for 9 years. She is part of the Pathfinders Sunday School Class. Kathy has served with the Women of the Church Board and previously as a Deacon.

Kathy is a Clinical Chaplain certified through the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC). She holds a Master's in Divinity from Duke University and ordination within the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Kathy brings a wealth of insight to every "Angels 2nd Class" episode.



Elizabeth Peacock has been a member of St. John's for 40 years. She is part of the Weekday School Board and a member of the Handbell Choir. She previously served on the Ministries Deacon Panel and as Converge Lead Designer.

In Elizabeth's own words:

My faith has been shaped by a lifelong desire to see Christ's love made tangible in the world. St. John's has been central to that journey. It has given me opportunities to worship, serve, learn from others, and build relationships that have deepened both my faith and my understanding of what it means to love our neighbors. Through the life of this church and through experiences serving alongside people from many cultures and backgrounds, I have come to believe that Christ continually calls us to be bridge-builders—people who choose compassion over division, reconciliation over conflict, and hope over fear. My faith continues to grow as I discover new ways to live out those values in my family, my community, and the wider world.

My prayer is that St. John's will continue to be a place where people from every walk of life experience the radical love of Christ. I hope we become an even stronger convener and connector—bringing together our congregation, neighbors, community organizations, and people with diverse experiences to address the needs around us with humility, courage, and compassion. I believe the Church is uniquely called not only to care for those who are hurting, but also to help heal divisions, pursue justice, welcome the stranger, and demonstrate that God's kingdom is built through relationships rooted in grace. I pray that St. John's continues to be known as a community where faith is lived out through service, hospitality, and love in action.

Serving at St. John's has been one of the greatest privileges of my life. As a deacon, my hope is simply to listen well, encourage others, and help create spaces where people can encounter Christ through authentic relationships and meaningful service. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside this church family and continue discerning together where God is leading us.



Scott Kerley has been a member of St. John's for 31 years. He is a member of the Farside Class and was a deacon at First Baptist Church in Monroe. Scott's currently serves on the House and Grounds Committee.

In Scott's own words:

My journey started MANY years ago at Southside Baptist Church (Charlotte, NC). Our pastor, Doug Agnew, helped guide me through the journey of becoming born again, giving my life over to God. Because of that decision I was able to eventually find St. John's. Oddly, I wasn't looking for a church, I was looking for a place to play volleyball of all things. I met many great St. Johnsians during that time. When Jan and I came back to St. John's, we came back for the people of St. John's. Jan and I were looking for a church and St. John's ticked all the boxes. Jan had met a few members and remembered how welcoming they made her feel. She's done so many great things at church we're now referred to as Jan and her husband, what's his name.

My desire and prayer for St. John's future is that we keep an eye on our many seemingly innocuous encounters we have in and around our beloved church. You never know what encounter that seems meaningless will have the biggest impact. Whether it's greeting a guest, saying hey to a member, or connecting with a person in another country on behalf of St. John's, sometimes a "hey", even though it's simple on our part, it could have profound impact on someone who NEEDS a "hey".

Lee Gray and I, through conversation, realized we'd played youth basketball against each other many years ago. Some people say I let Lee's team win, I'm not saying that, some are, but to be clear, not me, at all. Some people though.



Lynn Erdman has been a member of St. John's for 59 years. She is part of the Farside Sunday School Class. Her current activities and service include: Administrative Deacon, Technology Task Force, Communications Task Force, Chair, Spiritual Growth Committee, Women of the Church, and Monday book group. Her past service includes: Teacher for young married couples, Deacon, Task Force to negotiate Dennis Foust's initial contract for employment at St. John's, Choir, and a volunteer nurse.

In Lynn's own words:

Growing up at St. John's helped begin and nurture my spiritual journey. Through Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, Sunday evening youth gatherings, choir camp, church camp, and other activities, my curiosity about God was sparked and my desire to learn more began to grow.

As I moved through college, work, marriage, and raising a family, it became important for spirituality to remain a steady part of my life. My journey has included many twists and turns, shaped both by personal challenges and by my years of work as a cancer nurse. Walking alongside patients as they were dying sometimes led me to question where God was in the midst of such suffering. I found comfort, answers, and peace through prayer and scripture.

I continue to learn and grow spiritually. In my most recent nursing role, which ended earlier this year, I provided healthcare to women recovering from drug and alcohol addiction in a Christian-based setting. Watching many of these women learn about God and Jesus for the first time—and seeing their hunger for understanding—deepened and expanded my own faith journey.

I now want to continue growing spiritually so that I can share God's word through both my actions and my words. I am, and always will be, a lifelong learner.

My prayer for St. John's is that it will continue to be a servant church—within our community and beyond—and always remain a welcoming church for all people. I also pray that St. John's will continue to grow and thrive as it enters its next hundred years of ministry and service.



Randolph (Randy) Mahnesmith has been a member of St. John's for 11 years. He is a part of the McLeod-Brown Sunday School class. Randy also participates in the choir, Safety and Security Task Force, and is the Care Ring liaison. He has served as a deacon previously.

In Randy's own words:

I became a Christian with my confession of faith in 1957 at Stewart Memorial Baptist Church of South Bend, Indiana. I previously served as a deacon at University Baptist here in Charlotte. I was a Religion minor at the University of Virginia. My desire for St. John's is for there to be a new infusion of energy and a spiritual revival. I hope we can reach out ot young families in Charlotte. I pray for the beginning of a new era for St. John's.