

# ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



## ANNUAL REPORT: YEAR IN REVIEW 2024

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Vestry Classes	2
Annual Parish Meeting Agenda	3
The State of the Parish Report	4
Senior Warden's Report	5
Property Steering Committee Report	6
Treasurer's Report	7
Community Engagement Steering Committee Report	8
Youth Ministry Report	9
Children and Family Ministry Report	10
Music Ministry Report	11
Music on the Corner Report	12
Adult Education and Formation Report	13
Endowment Report	15
Meal Ministry Report	15
1850 Society Report	16
Parish Life Committee Report	17
2024 Financial Report	18
St. John's Clergy and Staff	Back Cover

# VESTRY CLASSES

## **Eligible Voters—Canon 14, Section 2 of our Diocesan Canons Reads:**

*“Communicants belonging to the congregation, and all adult baptized members who for three months preceding have been regular worshipers in the congregation, regular contributors to its support by pledge, subscription or some other method by which they shall be known to the treasurer of the congregation and relied upon as such, shall be entitled to vote in the election, and the voting shall be by ballot.”*

### **Retiring December 31, 2024**

Alison Blanton  
Jacob Jackson  
Kathleen Jackson  
Tom Schroeder  
Clair Spencer

### **Retiring December 31, 2025**

Stephen Belderes  
Laura Hale  
Paul Jenkins  
Hansford Leake  
Jennifer Casteel

### **Retiring December 31, 2026**

Carrie O’Keeffe  
Wayles Dandridge  
Bill H’Doubler  
Lydia Leake  
Jeremiah Walker

**According to our present rotation system, each person elected to the vestry serves a three (3) year term and is then ineligible for re-election until after a two-year period.**

# ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AGENDA

DECEMBER 15, 2024

1. Call to Order, Welcome, and Opening Prayer

2. Thank You to Outgoing Vestry Members

Alison Blanton

Jacob Jackson

Kathleen Jackson

Tom Schroeder

Clair Spencer

3. Vote for New Vestry Members

Ruth Cassell-Huynh

Brian Loop

Allison Parry

Ken Robison

David Todd

4. The Treasurer's Report

5. The State of the Parish Report by the Rector

6. Closing Prayer and Blessing

# THE RECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

Each day I walk into St. John's, I am amazed by the amount of activity that takes place in this parish. The surprise has not lessened for me over a decade as your rector. While other churches I have served had flashes of activity seasonally, none maintained the extent of programs and community support we provide. It is downright rare that there is a really quiet day at St. John's.

I mention this because it speaks to the health and vitality of our church. Also, it demonstrates the vast impact we have on our community. The types of activities taking place in our space broaden far beyond our own robust programs as we welcome in area partners who are intent on making the world a better place. This is a vital mission of our parish, that we partner with all people of goodwill to make the world look more like God intends it to be.

As this call to servanthood is central to the life of our parish, it is at the forefront of things which I hold up within this report. What I mean is that it remains a pleasure once again this year to let you know that the state of our parish is strong because the soul of our parish is whole. Our people and leadership are focused on doing impactful Christian ministry, and that is precisely what is being accomplished in the power of the Holy Spirit through our efforts.

Of course, to maintain this level of activity and program strength, our staff and vestry are charged with the heavy task of matching your gifts to the immense needs of this community and the church campus where all of this occurs. To be honest, this is becoming ever more challenging, as giving and participation trends across American churches have shifted, and not for the better. However, through innovative and dedicated leadership, we strive to find the best balance possible that allows God's mission to continue in the astonishing ways you witness day after day.

We will soon have changes to our clergy staff. As I recently announced, David Olson will begin a part-time role at the start of the new year, and as much as we need to hire another full-time associate, the aforementioned strains on finances make this a stretch. I hope it is one we can overcome, as it's necessary, given the ministry demands of the parish. St. John's has a great staff who provide an incredible breadth of offerings for people across all generational lines. It is a vital strength of our church that there are educational and social groups for every age group in our congregation. While some still struggle to find their place, there is a place for everyone, and very often, many more places than one. This is not an accident, but the result of the hard work of my colleagues in ministry.

The reports which follow will provide insight into all that God is doing through our gifts. Perhaps none of us on our own feels as though our work could ever have enough impact, but as seen in this annual report, when we put our efforts together and offer them to Christ, much good can be done.

I am proud to be the rector of St. John's. It is a great honor to work with a wonderful staff and loving parishioners intent on offering kindness, grace, and mercy to a world where those things are in too short a supply. I thank God for you and the work you do. Please take the time to see a snapshot of each of our efforts within these reports. As you do so, offer a prayer of gratitude to the God who continues to inspire the hearts of our people in ever-new ways.

Again, St. John's is a strong church, because the soul of this parish bears the marks of Christ, and our people regard living into that truth beyond all else. We have accomplished much this year. We will accomplish more the next. I am confident of this because St. John's is a faithful, Christ-centered community.

Thank you for your commitment to Jesus.

Blessings,

The Reverend Eric Long, Rector

# SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

It has been an honor to serve as senior warden of our vestry for 2024. We have had many notable milestones throughout the year that speak to the history and important traditions of our parish, as well as our adaptability in continuing to fulfill our calling to do God's work in the world.

Our music ministry continues to flourish under the direction of Mike Milam, who we are grateful is now serving full-time as of this past summer. The music ministry is an important way we involve our children in worship and reach the broader community through things like Music on the Corner and hosting the opening of a national silent film tour that showcased our magnificent organ. As a parent, I can tell you finding out your teenager has chosen to spend their Friday night at a church-sponsored event is pretty exciting.

For the first time we took on a Habitat for Humanity home building project with our friends at Second Presbyterian Church. What an amazing undertaking to have so many members of our community getting their hands dirty and working hard to help a family have a home of their own. As our society seems increasingly to focus on division and distrust of people with different views or beliefs, projects like this are more important than ever to remind us and the broader community of our fundamental commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves.

This year also marks a crossroads in the financial sustainability of our church to continue to support all of our good works. The five-year pledges that so many made in support of our Cornerstone Capital Campaign have been fulfilled in the current year. Our 1850 Society recently recognized and thanked those contributors, and others who have chosen to help sustain our church in other ways. I know it will be incumbent upon all of us in the coming years to continue to prioritize financial support of St. John's to ensure our ability to carry on and grow our ministry in the Roanoke community and in the world.

With so much accessibility to information and misinformation, fear and hatred is far too prevalent in our society. Our church is more important than ever to continue to raise Jesus's counter message of love, compassion, and service. As Jesus said in the Parable of the Good Samaritan, "Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy,' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise'" (Luke10:36-37).

Respectfully,

Kathleen Jackson, Senior Warden

# PROPERTY STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

Thanks to our parishioners generous giving through pledges, the Cornerstone Capital Campaign and the St. John's Endowment Fund, we continue to improve and maintain our facilities.

Here is a summary of this year's work.

The following was completed:

1. Replaced the elevator pump.
2. Installed new HVAC chiller.
3. Upgraded to LED lighting on the 4th floor and on the outdoor stairwell from the Mountain Ave. entrance to the garden.
4. Updated and improved security for CYP on the third floor with a new lock system.
5. Installed a new ice machine in the kitchen.
6. Resolved the leak issue at the bottom of the grand staircase in the narthex.
7. Replaced the eaves over the narthex doors to the garden.
8. Completed landscaping on the Elm Ave, side of the church.

The following are in progress:

1. New lighting for the sanctuary.
2. Refinishing the wood on Porte Cochere and the doors on the Elm Ave. narthex entrance.
3. Light House renovation.
4. Playground gate repair and stone repointing.
5. Exterior security cameras.
6. Steps/path to connect Elm Ave. parking lot to the Mountain Ave. entrance.
7. Repair/reseal Elm Ave parking lot.
8. Assist in capital improvements to the church's Elm and Mountain Manor apartments for our ministry to the low-income elderly and the mentally handicapped.

Tom Schroeder, Junior Warden

# TREASURER'S REPORT

For 2024 the overall financial position of St. John's remains strong but significantly challenged if not weakened with respect to the budget and operating results for 2024 and 2025.

2024 estimates indicate it may be necessary for St. John's to use about \$85K of reserves built up from prior years to meet budgeted parish operational needs. Moreover, the proposed budget for 2025 is forecasting a draw of \$23K from reserves. And this shortfall is against a backdrop of the fact that St. John's in 2025 will in essence 2.5 clergy positions compared to 3.75 at the end of 2022. And inflationary pressures are a factor in practically every expense category for both years.

The budgeted use of reserve funds for 2025 would have been significantly higher were it not for a most generous donor's unpledged gift to cover a significant part of the budget shortfall. These reserve funds have accumulated over several prior years and represent an excess of cash over expenses for the calendar year. The accumulation of reserves has been a continuing, wise, and prudent goal of St. John's over the last several years. Given the timing of the annual meeting, financial reporting is not complete and available until 2025. We remain hopeful for more favorable actual 2024 results.

The stewardship campaign for 2025 is ongoing and not complete. This time last year 256 pledges had been submitted. As of December 9, 257 pledge cards had been completed. To those parishioners who have not submitted a pledge card, it is not too late to please consider making one for 2025. A gracious thanks to all the generous parishioners who have submitted a pledge card. The latest pledge report shows a net favorable increase in total amount pledged of \$126,826 with a total of \$1,092,915 and over 127 pledging units have increased their pledge.

The Finance Committee of St. John's approved on December 5, a proposed balanced budget for 2025 in the amount of \$1,745,820 or a 3.8% increase over the estimated year-end total of \$1,681,846 for 2024. The vestry of St. John's will vote on the budget December 16. Actual revenues for 2023 were \$1,818,824. Actual revenues for 2022 were \$1,650,140. For 2025, outreach ministries is \$ 94,000 or 5.4 % of the budget.

A financial report is presented on page 18. The report includes YTD October analysis of current year results. Please contact me or Lisa Cayse if you have questions or prefer to have additional detail.

The Endowment Board report is on page 15. The endowment funds are a significant portion of the make-up of St. John's asset mix. Endowment funds distributions are currently restricted for use toward community engagement, property, music, and education. No more than 4 % to 6% of the appropriate balance may be distributed annually with the approval of the vestry. The distribution is not to fund the annual operating budget of the parish but to be expended to fulfill the purposes described above.

The Cornerstone Capital Campaign for St. John's is in its last and fifth year of highly successful collections. We are grateful to all those who have contributed to this important undertaking. From an accounting perspective The Capital Fund is a subaccount (property reserve) of the Endowment Fund. This allocation facilitates the benefit of perhaps increased investment income.

In April, the accounting firm of Davidson, Doyle, and Hilton (DDH) audited the financial records of St. John's and issued without comment(s), an unqualified opinion. An unqualified opinion means that the financial statements of St. John's for 2023 are presented fairly and appropriately without any identified exceptions, and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. The audited statements including balance sheet reports as presented by DDH are available for review. To do so, you may contact me, Lisa Cayse, or the rector.

Continued thanks and acknowledgement for the constant efforts of the three teller teams for their faithful weekly and monthly work! The parishioners on the teams are Mary Green, Sally Moulse, Patty Good, Billy Kingery, Bill Cleveland, Ray Cobb, and Jim Niederlehner. Thanks to Wayles Dandridge for his excellent work with cash account reconciliations. Thanks to Joel Benson who has been with St. John's for more than a year now whose expertise was instrumental in another successful audit. Lisa Cayse continues in her critical role of minister of parish administration whose long-term experience, talent, and institutional knowledge are invaluable. Thank you, Lisa!

St. John's continues to appreciate the awesome, faithful generosity of all parishioners who contribute throughout the year in many different categories and ways. St. John's stands out in this regard as many church organizations have either had to cut back or closed their doors. We will strive to ensure the generosity continues as St. John's faces additional challenges.

St. John's continues to experience the generosity of several generous donors who have made special, unplanned gifts. We are grateful and thankful for these contributions as well.

Thanks, blessings, peace to all who contribute to St. John's on a miscellaneous basis, with pledged and unpledged offerings, and either by volunteering or with fungible assets. The work, presence, mission, and many attributes of St. John's could not exist as it does without you!

Hansford B. Leake, Treasurer

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Matthew 25:40: *And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."*

Community engagement, previously called outreach, had another busy year. Its name changed from outreach to community engagement to reflect the collaboration between St. John's and the community.

Thanks to the **Community Engagement Guiding Team** for providing lay leadership of the community engagement ministries. It is chaired by church member Jensen Mellnick and composed of leaders of the church's various engagement ministries. The team meets, collaborates, and discusses similar problems which might have similar solutions, and shares resources between ministries.

St. John's extends continued appreciation for the **Daughters of the King** who provide relief to homeless through **The Little Food Pantry**. The pantry was established in the fall of 2023 in the Jefferson Street parking lot roundabout and is stocked with food and hygiene items.

Thanks for the leadership of Alison Blanton working with other Episcopal churches in the area on the **Afghan Resettlement Ministry**. This ministry helps to welcome and settle newly arrived families from Afghanistan.

Going forward this year, we are searching for more opportunities to involve parishioners directly with **Roanoke Area Mission House (RAM House)** and their clients. Aside from the financial donation that we make to RAM House, we have supported them with bagged lunches and donations of extra food following our church events. RAM House is finalizing a capital campaign that will relocate their facility from Campbell Avenue to Elm Avenue, just a few blocks from the church, which will give us more of an opportunity to help our neighbors.

Many thanks for all the other community engagement activities that St. John's is involved in that are longstanding. We hope to get more parishioners directly involved in these ministries so they have a greater understanding of the extent of St. John's local efforts and so they can live out their discipleship in service to the community with other members of the church. St. John's longstanding ministries are listed and summarized below.

1. Regular **Red Cross** blood drives are hosted at St. John's in early February, April, June, August, October, and December and led by Bill Cleveland. The drives have been surpassing their targets recently.
2. St. John's **Literacy Ministry Team** helps English language learners (adults and children) improve their literacy skills with leadership from Heidi Anne Mesmer.
3. **Congregations In Action** supports students and teachers at Highland Park Elementary and is spearheaded by Gates DeHart.
4. **Family Promise** supports and provides a stop gap for families facing homelessness also under the leadership of Gates DeHart.
5. **Kimoyo**, whose offices are now on the third floor of the church, supports our ministry in Ghana and in Roanoke-city schools teaching African culture. Thanks to Clair Spencer who runs the Roanoke educational component and the St. John's members who are on the board of Kimoyo.
6. The annual **CROP Hunger Walk** which St. John's participated in on October 20, 2024, raised money and awareness for hunger relief both locally and abroad. The St. John's team under the leadership of Ruth Cassell-Huynh raised over \$1,200 in total donations contributing to the surpassed goal of \$21,000 that churches and businesses from the Roanoke Valley raised together for the cause. The donation was split between Feeding Southwest Virginia and Church World Service.
7. St. John's hosted a **Rise Against Hunger** meal packing event following the 10:00am service on Sunday, March 17, 2024, with the congregation packing over 21,000 meals. This took the total meals packed for all 5 of the events hosted by St. John's over the years to over 100,000!!! Special thanks to Sara Brooks who put together a rice and spice meal for the congregation to share before packing these meals. We will be packing another 20,000 meals in 2025 on March 9 following the 10:00am service.
8. St. John's is as always proud to host the **Community Youth Program (CYP)** under the leadership of Executive Director Jackie Smith. CYP provides a safe, stable, and productive space and time for youth ranging from the 3rd grade to the 8th grade to focus on their studies and grow as people. This is especially necessary during this difficult time following the pandemic which set so many of these young people behind.

One of the biggest undertakings for St. John's this past year was the collaboration with Second Presbyterian Church in the building of a **Habitat for Humanity** house for the Mussa family. Thanks to all of those volunteers who donated their time, blood, sweat, and tears through construction, gardening, or meals to feed other volunteers.

St. John's is also involved with **Friends of Old Lick Cemetery** with retired priest Richard Fife being the lead organizer from St. John's. The Friends of Old Lick Cemetery is dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the historically African American Old Lick Cemetery which exists along Orange Avenue and was largely destroyed for the sake of creating the entry and exit to 581.

St. John's supports the "**Lion's Share**," a food pantry run out of St. Mark's Lutheran Church with donations and volunteers. Thanks to Jensen Mellnick our primary coordinator for this work.

There are so many more people to thank and there simply isn't enough space. St. John's is only able to take such an active role in all of these and so many more ministries because of the unbelievably generous support of the congregation. I am grateful to be involved with so many people who are willing to donate their time, talent, and treasure to these ministries, the community, and to the church overall. If this report has spoken to you at all in wanting to get involved, please don't hesitate to reach out to me either by calling the church or emailing me at [tlight@stjohnsroanoke.org](mailto:tlight@stjohnsroanoke.org).

Thank you all and God's peace,  
The Rev. Tray Light

# YOUTH MINISTRY REPORT

The youth ministry of St. John's continues to grow and change as the new realities of post-pandemic scheduling reveals more activities on the weekends and changing calendars that continue to compete for the attention of youth and families. The middle and high school youth groups returned to meeting at the same time on Sunday evenings this past winter and spring to accommodate the need for Confirmation classes following the 10:00AM service. In conjunction with Rev. David Olson and Christine Oiler, as well as dedicated volunteerism of Jack Garst, Kate Alice Brown, and Larissa Mellnick, we are working on a new vision for the St. John's youth which involves more lay leadership from the parents going forward. This is in hopes of both reenergizing the youth program and getting greater lay involvement in the program.

We had nine youth confirmed at the bishop's visitation this past spring and are grateful for the extra leadership of Jo Loop and Earle Shumate with those classes. We continue to have a robust acolyte program for children and youth from preschool through high school participating thanks to the leadership of David Todd. Additionally, the youth were very active at the St. John's Fall Festival at which they created a haunted floor from their youth room on the 1st floor as well as participating and leading other fun activities. Finally, our high school youth continue to be heavily involved in leadership roles for the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia youth program, as well as our youth simply participating in diocesan events which introduce the youth to the wider Episcopal Church. The events include but are not limited to:

1. Annual Youth @ Convention, which is a weekend lock-in hosted here at St. John's the last full weekend of January for both middle and high school youth.
2. Fall Youth Event for middle and high school youth which took place at the Boys Home.
3. The Province 3 Youth Event which is a weekend for middle and high school youth from all over Province 3, which extends from Pennsylvania down through Virginia.
4. Mission trips for both middle and high school youth to Grace House in St. Paul, VA.

Looking ahead both middle and high school youth will continue to meet regularly on Sunday evenings unless otherwise noted and advertised. Each meet for about an hour from 6:30 to 7:30 exploring different activities, but the four central themes are social, biblical, church tradition, and community engagement. We will begin another round of confirmation classes this winter as we look forward to the bishop's visit on Mother's Day, May 11, 2025. We will also have a busy schedule of ski trips, mission trips, and diocesan events in 2025.

Thanks and God's peace,  
The Rev. Tray Light

# CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRY REPORT

I'm grateful to be your minister to children and families! Thank you to an amazing and dedicated group of Sunday school teachers and Crystal Fernatt, our Child Care Center coordinator, and all the Child Care Center staff for all you do. 2024 was a busy year at St. John's, with several new families joining us.

Some highlights of the children and family ministry program in 2024 were:

- The Little Lambs (Pre-K and K) and The Shining Lights (1-2) worshipped in Children's Church and attended Sunday school. Sunday school teachers used the Holy Moly curriculum in the parish hall during the summer. In the fall and spring, children learn from the Whirl Lectionary curriculum. The children worked through Year C Lectionary cycle and the Gospel of Mark this year. Children's Church included singing, praying, an offering, and Bible storytelling during the church program year.
- The Kids Care Crew (3-5) engaged in service projects each Sunday in the fall and winter/spring and learned Bible stories in Sunday school. Sunday school during the program year was based on Whirl Lectionary curriculum. Service projects included making Thanksgiving placemats for RAM House guests, baking sweets for a fundraiser for the Crop Hunger Walk, and drawing pictures to include in the Kids Care Crew Cookbook.
- The Kids Care Crew illustrated the Kids Care Crew Cookbook, a collection of St. John's members recipes. They sold the cookbooks, and profits will go toward Christmas gifts for the children in the Mussa family. St. John's built the family a home in partnership with the Mussas, Habitat for Humanity, and Second Presbyterian Church in the spring of 2024.
- St. John's Scribes, a creative writing group for third through fifth graders, met for its second iteration. Church member and published children's author, Nancy Ruth Patterson, was a mentor to the children, and special thanks to Mark Rosemond and Anne Tiffany for chaperoning. For six Sundays, children learned creative writing techniques and then they presented their final stories to their parents at a Writer's Café in Canterbury Corner.
- Nine children were welcomed into the church family and baptized.
- Children heard New Testament stories and created Bible-based crafts during St. John's Summer Music Camp.
- *The Mustard Seed*, the St. John's e-newsletter for parents, went out monthly through the year. It shares children's program events, photos, birthdays, and more.
- The children enjoyed Easter crafts and activities, flowering the cross, and an egg hunt to celebrate Easter. Advent was and will be celebrated by reading Advent/Christmas picture books, listening to Christmas music, and creating Christmas crafts. The children also had the opportunity to sing Christmas carols for the residents at Brandon Oaks.
- Pre-Youth Group for third through fifth graders met several times for activities including Ihop and Christmas shopping for children in the Head Start program, Tree Top Quest for zip lining, mini-golf and Mexican food, the Jeter Farm outdoor fall fun like hay cart riding, and more.
- Children and parents were offered Parents' Nights Out for free on several Fridays throughout the year. PNOs give parents a chance for two hours out, while their children have dinner and play at church.
- The Child Care Center was open for our littles ones during worship services, choir practices, Parents' Nights Out, and more.

Please support the children and families of St. John's and celebrate the Christmas story by attending the Christmas pageant on December 22 at the 5 p.m. St. John's youth Margaret Bass and Samantha Belderer will be directing this year's pageant!

If you would like to become involved with or have any questions about our Children and Family Ministry, please reach out to me at [coiler@stjohnsroanoke.org](mailto:coiler@stjohnsroanoke.org) or come by the church office. Please also reach out to me or literacy ministry leader, Heidi Anne Mesmer, if you are interested in tutoring an adult learner or Community Youth Program student in English as a second language as a member of the St. John's Literacy Ministry Team.

Christine Oiler, Minister for Children, Families, and Lifelong Formation

# MUSIC MINISTRY REPORT

This has been a wonderful year for the music ministry! Thank you to the many folks who dedicate themselves to the musical leadership of this parish. Thanks also to the clergy, staff, and vestry for their support in keeping our active program moving forward.

Upon my retirement from Botetourt County Public Schools this past spring, it was my honor and privilege to move into my work at St. John's full-time. I'm thrilled to dive deeper into this work, and I appreciate the trust that the parish has placed in me.

This year saw other music staff changes as well. **Gretchen Jensen** completed her time with us, coinciding with her own retirement from the public schools. We are most appreciative of her years of service to our parish and our children. We were thrilled to welcome **Ani Silva-Berrios** as our new children's music associate. Ani is a music educator in Roanoke County Schools and brings a wealth of training and experience. **Dr. Erma Rose**, who served as our interim handbell director since 2019, also completed her time with us as I transitioned to full-time. I am grateful for her expert leadership of St. Cecilia Bells as well as her guidance and counsel as I have assumed leadership of the group. **Griffin Pivarunas** continues to do a fantastic job leading our Gathering musicians and coordinating music for that service, and I thank him for his dedicated leadership.

Other highlights of this year:

- The St. John's Choir led regular services each week while also preparing for many special services throughout the year (Pride Eucharist, All Saints, Advent Lessons and Carols, Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Choral Evensong, Holy Week, Lessons and Anthems). Over the course of the year, the choir rehearses and presents an enormous amount of music and has fun doing it; but the cornerstone of our work together continues to be *community*. Our choir supports and cares for one another in amazing ways.
- We have welcomed new members into both St. John's Music Academy (grades K-6) and St. John's Singers (grades 6-12). We look forward to a spring musical, "Rescue in the Night: The Story of Daniel in the Lion's Den" (date and time TBA).
- St. Cecilia Handbells has also enjoyed welcoming new members this year, and we are glad they are on board. Some of our ringers have been dedicated members of the group for many years, and their long-time gifts of time and talent are most appreciated.
- We hosted another successful Summer Music Camp this past June—singing, dancing, and playing our way through the week. Friend and colleague Annie Chilcote joined us again and led participants in creative movement throughout the week. One of the highlights of the week was "open house" on our final morning, where parents joined in on the fun!
- Choral Evensong was again offered during Lent, and our second Advent Lessons and Carols service was offered on the second Sunday of Advent. The contemplative nature of these services, largely led by the choir, offers space for reflection and praise.
- *Music On the Corner* is again enjoying a well-attended, financially well-supported season featuring a variety of concerts. A full report from committee chair, Sara Brooks, follows this report.

Thank you again to our parish for its support. Here's to an equally busy and exciting 2025!

*Soli Deo Gloria!*  
Michael Milam  
Minister of Music

# MUSIC ON THE CORNER REPORT

*“Music is what feelings sound like.”* – Dan Locklair, composer

Music on the Corner has continued to expand its focus to help foster the appreciation of music in the Roanoke area by partnering with other local music organizations. Concerts planned for 2024 included programs in coordination with Opera Roanoke and Virginia Children’s Theatre. Using our expanded mailing lists and publishing the concert information in a variety of local community calendars as well as on the local NPR station have helped grow our audiences.

Our first concert of 2024 was held on January 12, with a performance of Gian Carlo Menotti’s opera *Amahl and the Night Visitors* as a collaboration between St. John’s singers and musicians, dancers from Roanoke Ballet Company, and repertoire members of Opera Roanoke. A full house enjoyed the music, acting, and dancing for a memorable evening.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Virginia Children’s Theatre was unable to perform for our advertised concert on May 10. However, three of Roanoke’s very talented musicians, Julee Hickock (flute), Akemi Takayama (violin), and Kelly Mikkelsen (cello) created a beautiful program in tribute to John Preston Smith IV, a beloved member of the Roanoke community who suddenly and tragically passed away at the age of 63 on May 15, 2023. John was a musician in the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra for over thirty years and contributed his talents to many *Music on the Corner* concerts as well as to other musical performances in our area.

On October 4, back by popular demand, Dorothy Papadakos reprised the Silent Movie Night of last year’s program. The apse of St. John’s was transformed into a 1920s movie theater with an enormous screen over the organ that was rolled out to face the audience. A nationally renowned organist, author, and composer, Dorothy, at our Aeolian-Skinner/Quimby organ, accompanied the famous 1922 silent movie *Nosferatu*, a retelling of the Dracula story. The rafters were shaking, as was the audience!

November 8 was the annual All Saints Memorial Concert. The concert this year was a departure from previous years of performing classical requiems. The program, entitled “Eternal Light,” featured a selection of works by contemporary American choral composers, concluding with a performance of Elaine Hagenberg’s *Illuminare*, a modern piece that moved the listeners from light to darkness and back to light again.

There are two more concerts to finish our ‘24-25 season. On February 7, in partnership with the Thursday Morning Music Club, Virginia Tech professor Richard Masters will join us at the piano for an evening of classical music mixed with excerpts from the Great American Songbook. On April 25, the nationally renowned Garth Newel Piano Quartet from Warm Springs, Virginia, will treat our audience to a selection of romantic favorites, including Brahms’s dramatic *Piano Quartet No. 1*.

*Music on the Corner* truly appreciates the support of the St. John’s parish and staff in providing administrative support and such a beautiful venue for our concerts, and we could not exist without the financial support of our many patrons. We are looking forward to planning the ‘25-26 season with more beautiful and exciting musical offerings.

Sara Brooks  
Chairman, *Music on the Corner* Committee

# ADULT EDUCATION AND FORMATION REPORT

St. John's offered a robust array of education and formation opportunities in 2024, that spanned subject areas and interests. We strived to meet and respond to the various needs of a large and diverse congregation. Many thanks to all the teachers and facilitators who brought their knowledge, compassion and passion, and wisdom to each of these offerings.

## SUNDAY MORNING EDUCATION

The following Sunday morning education classes were offered in 2024. These classes are offered on Sundays from 9-9:45 a.m. and are held in the parish hall. All are welcome and childcare is available in the Childcare Center for babies through fifth graders.

***Epiphany: The Story of How Jesus' Birth Spread to the Whole World***, Led by the Rev. Tray Light

***Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Letters from a Birmingham Jail***, Led by Members of St. John's

***A Place to Call Home: The Importance of Creating Places of Shelter and Peace for all God's People***, Led by the Rev. David Olson, Habitat for Humanity, and Matt Chittum, City of Roanoke

***Touchdown Jesus: Does Prayer Change Football and Our Lives?***, Led by John Jackson

***St. John's Lenten Class: Wilderness Wanderings***, Led by St. John's Clergy

***The Holy Spirit and the Brain***, Led by Dr. Wink Weaver

***Episcopal 101***, Led by the Rev. Eric Long

***People of the Land: A Brief History of Israel and Palestine***, Led by the Rev. Eric Long

***Time with the Bishop***, Led by the Rt. Rev. Mark A. Bourlakas

***Program Year Recap***, Led by St. John's Clergy and Staff

***Between Heaven and Mirth***, Led by John Jackson

***Grace, Mercy, and Caring for People who are Incarcerated***, Led by the Rev. David Olson and Linda Ricker, Deacon in the Diocese of Southwest Virginia

***Faith & Aging*** Led by Dr. Brian Unwin, Chief of Geriatrics & Palliative Medicine at Carilion Clinic, and Dr. Cyndy Unwin, Children's Writer, Literacy Specialist, Professor, Artist

***The Servant King: Transforming Tragedy into Victory***, Led by the Rev. Eric Long

***Who Is Coming to Save Us?***, Led by Tray Light

***Visio Divina and Images of Christmas***

## WOMEN'S RETREAT

We offered a women's retreat in April 2024 at the Skelton Center at Smith Mountain Lake. The Rev. Dr. Janet Fuller led an educational and worship component. Shelley Long, Stace Todd, Chesley Fobare, and Christine Oiler were on the planning team.

## SUNDAY EVENING EDUCATION

We offered the following Sunday evening education opportunities in 2024. These classes are offered on Sundays from 6:30-7:30 p.m., following the 5 p.m. Gathering service and the Sunday supper. All are welcome and childcare is available in the Childcare Center for babies through fifth graders.

*The Adult Wellness Circle*, Led by Lydia Leake

*The After Party*, Led by Billy Faires

*The Art & Architecture of the Washington National Cathedral*, Led by Alison Blanton, Anne Beckett, and Christine Oiler

*Let's Talk Religion: A Religion-Based Card Game to Build Community*, Led by Dr. Jennifer Berenson

*Unafraid: Living with Courage and Hope in Uncertain Times*, Led by Amelia Ross and Christine Oiler

*Healing Music*, Led by Michael Milam and Friends

## BECOMING BELOVED COMMUNITY

St. John's Becoming Beloved Community Guiding Team met throughout the year and organized this year's Pride Eucharist and contributed several pieces to the newsletter.

## JOURNEY GROUPS

*Hearts for Healing Ministry and Needlepoint Guild*, Led by Emily Schmedtje, Jane Coulter, and Katherine Knopf

*Lenten Bible Study with Clergy*, Led by St. John's Clergy

*Growing Together Through Grief: 6-Week Grief Support Group*, Led by Michelle Topi, Bereavement Counselor at Good Samaritan Hospice

*Soup Group*, Led by Amy McGinnis

*How to Read the Bible*, Led by the St. John's Clergy

*Companions in Christ*, Conference Room

## THE RECORD

The monthly newsletter *The Record* is part of our church's education and formation program. Articles covered the Habitat for Humanity house build for the Mussa family, Rise Against Hunger, Ash Wednesday, Companions in Christ, Family Promise and Alexa House, Community Engagement opportunities, J.S. Bach, mothers of St. John's, RAM House, the history of Grace House, caring for incarcerated women, the Pride Eucharist, the Bible study: The Bible in Black and White, healing music, the new presiding bishop, the Crop Hunger Walk, faith and aging, and more.

Please be on the lookout for the education and events poster for the winter and spring of 2025. If you are interested in leading a class or journey group or have an idea for either, or if you have an idea for a *The Record* article or would like to write an article for *The Record*, please reach out to Chrissy or David.

Christine Oiler, Minister for Children, Families, and Lifelong Formation  
The Rev. David Olson

# ENDOWMENT BOARD REPORT

The St. John's Endowment Fund was established in 2010 to support the ministries of St. John's. It provides annual distributions allocated by the vestry. Funds are currently used toward community engagement, property, music, education, and general needs outside the operating budget.

In 2024, \$60,247 was distributed from the fund by the vestry. As of September 30, 2024, the Endowment Fund totaled \$2,661,824.

An 1850 Society dinner was held as appreciation for those who have made a contribution or commitment for the benefit of the Endowment Fund or a planned gift to St. John's.

The 2024 Endowment Fund board included:

Jim Hale, Chair

Robert Brailsford, Financial Reporter

Wayles Dandridge, Vestry Representative

Chris Moore, 1850 Society Chair

David Todd, Secretary

Jane Coulter

Patricia Fellabaum

Ginny Riddle

The Reverend Eric Long

## MEAL MINISTRY REPORT

The Meal Ministry has been revitalized recently to provide meals to parishioners and their caregivers as a way to express our support for one another at St. John's. We are looking for both volunteers to help provide meals as well as the names of people who might appreciate a meal during challenging times. The ministry is simple—we use the Mealtrain website to send out a meal request with information on dietary restrictions/preferences as well as contact information and delivery instructions. Volunteers simply sign up online to provide the meal. Meals can be homemade, purchased at a store (such as Fresh Market), or delivered by DoorDash. Gift cards can also be sent!

Please contact Ann Marie Wood ([amwood2@cox.net](mailto:amwood2@cox.net)) or Alison Blanton ([alisonsblanton@gmail.com](mailto:alisonsblanton@gmail.com)) if you would like to join this ministry and provide a meal to a fellow parishioner or their caregiver. Please also help spread the word of this helpful and meaningful ministry and let us know of anyone who could benefit from someone reaching out to them to see if they could use a meal.

Ann Marie Wood and Alison Blanton, Meal Ministry Co-Chairs

# 1850 SOCIETY REPORT



The Endowment Fund of St. John's was founded in 2010, to provide support for the mission and ministry of St. John's. Those gifts helped ensure our parish would remain vibrant in the Episcopal Church for generations to come.

In 2023 the Endowment Fund Board and the vestry approved the establishment of the 1850 Society, honoring all who make planned gifts to St. John's. All donors to the Endowment Fund over the past thirteen years became members of the 1850 Society. The name was chosen to celebrate the founding of St. John's in 1850.

St. John's is a vibrant parish that receives support from its parishioners in so many ways. These gifts may include kneeling together at the communion rail, enjoying the beautiful music during our worship services, being part of joyful services such as baptisms, weddings, and confirmations, and supporting one another during funerals and other times of loss and need. Hands-on participation in one of our outreach programs increases our closeness to one another and to our broader community. Awareness of the importance St. John's makes in the Roanoke Valley brings pride and grateful appreciation to all whose lives are touched by our church.

You can help St. John's continue our mission and ministry to others for generations to come through a "Planned Gift." A planned gift is any gift, made while living or at death as part of a donor's overall financial and/or estate planning. There is no minimum amount and these include gifts of stock, life insurance, real estate, personal property, or cash. Planned giving is also referred to as legacy giving or gift planning. These arrangements enable you to make larger gifts to charitable organizations than you could make from ordinary income.

Planned gifts provide additional support to our church ministry beyond what is possible in our annual operating budget and contribute to its strong financial future. The 1850 Society would like to recognize and honor those commitments.

More importantly, you are helping others to experience the love, comfort, and the many ways St. John's has touched your and your family's hearts.

If you wish to make a gift, please share this information with your estate planning attorney. St. John's has special forms available for this purpose. It's easy to start the process with a confidential conversation. In this confidential conversation, you may share your thoughts and wishes for your planned gift. You can choose to speak with our rector or one of our clergy.

# PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Parish Life Committee has spent 2024 providing food for various parish events. As the co-chairmen of the PL Committee, Alison Blanton and Sara Brooks have been covering most of the functions that required food preparation pulling in other PL volunteers to help with some of the larger events.

The Parish Life Committee provided food for the following St. John's activities in 2024:

- Opened the year by gathering our faithful Pancake Supper Committee members to cook 200 pancakes, sausages, and baked apples for the annual Shrove Tuesday event
- Provided refreshments for the monthly book club meetings
- At Home Bakers brought homemade breads and muffins for the Sunday breakfasts, funerals, and celebrations
- PL breakfast teams, led by Linda Andrews, have been providing the refreshments for the Sunday morning coffee time prior to the Christian education programs
- Prepared kid-friendly meals for the Parents' Night Out events
- Prepared the food and organized several parish-wide receptions and meals
- Provided the cookies in the garden after the Sunday services
- Assisted with parish-wide gatherings
- Prepared and served the *Music on the Corner* receptions
- PL serves fresh baked cookies & hot cocoa for the Christmas parade watchers using our parking lots

In addition to providing food for the church's celebrations and weekly gatherings, a separate arm of the Parish Life Committee is the Funeral Reception Ministry. There are 2 teams of members who are on call at a moment's notice to prepare the sandwiches and baked goods served at the receptions following funerals held at St. John's. These receptions are provided at no cost to the families. If families wish to make a donation to the church for the reception, these funds are used on a "pay it forward" model for future receptions.

The Parish Life Committee can always use more volunteers! We are an equal opportunity committee! Anyone interested in cooking is welcome to join us. We have men, women, and teens as members. A large part of our committee is made up of our "At Home Bakers" who prepare baked goods at home for use at Sunday morning coffee, funerals, and celebrations. Parishioners interested in participating in the cooking, baking, and serving activities for our church, please contact Alison or Sara.

Alison Blanton and Sara Brooks, Co-Chairmen, Parish Life Committee

# 2024 FINANCIAL REPORT

Accounts	MTD Actual (This Year)	October Budget (This Year)	MTD Budget/Actual (This Year)	YTD Actual (This Year)	YTD Budget (This Year)	YTD Budget/Actual (This Year)	YTD Actual (Last Year)
<b>Revenues</b>							
Pledges-Current Year	83,084.42	103,280.00	(20,195.58)	884,730.93	932,172.00	(47,441.07)	945,322.64
Plate and No Pledge	8,399.86	10,945.00	(2,545.14)	97,433.14	92,545.00	4,888.14	121,808.42
Holiday Special Collections	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,433.34	6,080.00	1,353.34	5,505.00
Interest Income	2,179.64	2,000.00	179.64	26,060.40	21,615.00	4,445.40	15,112.18
Property Rents	8,343.57	9,917.50	(1,573.93)	90,775.49	95,275.00	(4,499.51)	94,473.98
Miscellaneous Income	1,667.00	4,500.00	(2,833.00)	21,840.54	51,700.00	(29,859.46)	41,763.50
Music Program Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Outreach Income	571.00	1,800.00	(1,229.00)	35,923.50	42,205.00	(6,281.50)	40,045.14
Unrestricted Fund Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,728.50	20,730.00	(1.50)	21,570.24
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>104,245.49</b>	<b>132,442.50</b>	<b>(28,197.01)</b>	<b>1,184,925.84</b>	<b>1,262,322.00</b>	<b>(77,396.16)</b>	<b>1,285,601.10</b>
<b>Expenses</b>							
Personnel	86,426.04	90,654.00	4,227.96	837,975.65	868,086.00	30,110.35	830,281.10
General Expenses	12,651.98	19,795.00	7,143.02	159,585.90	167,339.00	7,753.10	168,648.76
Parish Programs	12,771.57	4,696.00	(8,075.57)	61,067.12	62,121.00	1,053.88	52,875.71
Parish Music	4,624.72	3,317.00	(1,307.72)	32,946.58	35,956.50	3,009.92	29,257.11
Repairs and Equipment	12,508.56	8,257.00	(4,251.56)	98,593.98	90,781.00	(7,812.98)	84,770.87
Perimeter Properties	235.38	540.00	304.62	15,999.63	15,935.00	(64.63)	14,772.40
Property Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	32,217.55	31,994.25	(223.30)	31,655.28
S/C Support to Outreach	0.00	0.00	0.00	21,605.00	21,605.00	0.00	21,605.00
Diocesan Pledge	13,364.67	13,364.67	0.00	133,646.70	133,646.70	0.00	130,645.00
Seminary Support	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00
Outreach Ministry Expenses	(96.54)	600.00	696.54	50,504.68	81,645.00	31,140.32	71,447.42
Unrestricted Fund Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Depreciation Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>142,486.38</b>	<b>141,223.67</b>	<b>(1,262.71)</b>	<b>1,446,142.79</b>	<b>1,511,109.45</b>	<b>64,966.66</b>	<b>1,437,958.65</b>
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>(38,240.89)</b>	<b>(8,781.17)</b>	<b>(29,459.72)</b>	<b>(261,216.95)</b>	<b>(248,787.45)</b>	<b>(12,429.50)</b>	<b>(152,357.55)</b>
<b>Other Revenues</b>							
620.140 - Outreach Carryover	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,238.44	20,000.00	238.44	20,000.00
642.000 - Advance Pledges	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Other Revenues</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>20,238.44</b>	<b>20,000.00</b>	<b>238.44</b>	<b>20,000.00</b>
<b>Net Operating Total</b>	<b>(38,240.89)</b>	<b>(8,781.17)</b>	<b>(29,459.72)</b>	<b>(240,978.51)</b>	<b>(228,787.45)</b>	<b>(12,191.06)</b>	<b>(132,357.55)</b>

# ST. JOHN'S CLERGY AND STAFF

## **Clergy**

The Rev. Eric Long, Rector

The Rev. David Olson, Senior Associate Rector\*

The Rev. Tray Light, Curate

## **Program Staff**

Lisa Cayse, Minister for Parish Administration

Michael R. Milam, Minister of Music

Griffin Pivarunas, Gathering Band Leader\*

Ani Silva-Berrios, Children's Music Associate\*

Christine Oiler, Minister for Children, Families, and Lifelong Formation

## **Community Youth Program Staff**

Jackie Smith, Executive Director

Beth Reedy, Program Coordinator

Joyce Thomas, Chloe Palov, and Delaney Panzarelli\*

## **Support Staff**

Joel Benson, Financial Controller

Kristi L. Brown, Rector's Secretary

Crystal Gills-Fernatt, Childcare Coordinator\*

Evan Hines, Communications Coordinator\*

Cyndi Fletcher, Wedding Director\*

## **Maintenance Staff**

Robert V. Butler, Sexton \*

Teresa Kemper, Custodial Supervisor

Brittany Morris, Custodial Assistant \*

*\* Denotes those staff employed part-time*



## St. John's Episcopal Church

Jefferson Street and Elm Avenue

Roanoke, Virginia

540-343-9341

[www.stjohnsroanoke.org](http://www.stjohnsroanoke.org)

Facebook: [facebook.com/stjohnsroanoke](https://facebook.com/stjohnsroanoke) | Instagram: [@StJohnsRoanoke](https://instagram.com/@StJohnsRoanoke)