



**SAINT
JOHN'S
CHURCH**

LAFAYETTE SQUARE
WASHINGTON, DC

ANNUAL PARISH REPORT

FOR THE YEAR 2024

Rector's Report

Wardens' Report

Reports of
Parish Organizations

*St. John's is a church for people of all races,
ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations,
and viewpoints grounded in love.
Whoever you are, we welcome you.*

FEBRUARY 2025

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St. John's shines as a beacon of God's love through faith, worship, care, and community, and offers a place of grace at our historic corner in the nation's capital.

RECTOR'S REPORT

St. John's Annual Report, February 2025

Dear Members of St. John's,

Building upon the work of Carl Jung, Franciscan priest and author Richard Rohr teaches that there are two halves of life. The first half of life is about "building the container." This is the time for establishing oneself with an education, a career, and perhaps starting a family. The second half it is about what you will put in the container.

Looking at this past year, we have faithfully tended to our container—our structure—literally and figuratively, and we are now poised to lean more deeply into the ways that we as a congregation will fill this magnificent structure that is St. John's Church.

The grandest and most obvious way we took care of our structure last year was with the bell tower project. This was a multifaceted project by which we repaired the tower that houses our historic Revere bell. We also replaced the shingled roof over the sanctuary. We were blessed by the remarkable leadership of Julia Koster and other lay leadership all along the way. To raise the needed \$1.9 million, we received generous support from the parish, as well as neighbors, former parishioners (including one president), and a large grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

On a beautiful day in October we celebrated this achievement and thanked our supporters with a gathering that included a visit from the Mayor and an opportunity to look down on the tower from a balcony of the AFL-CIO building that overlooks the church and the White House, a sight that almost no St. John's parishioners had been able to see before.

As a bonus, we were able to repaint the entire church and parish house exterior with insurance money received after the damage experienced in 2020. The church looks better than it has in many years, and the tower is ready to stand as a witness to God's presence in Lafayette Square for generations to come.

Less visibly, but also important to the life of St. John's, we have continued to improve our operational systems for just about everything we do. Not least of this includes utilizing an offsite accountant who has helped us streamline all our financial and accounting processes. A big achievement was completing an audit of 2023, which gets us back on our annual auditing schedule.

We have a beautiful, well-run church with a thriving music program and a dedicated team of clergy, lay staff, and lay leaders. Now, we get to focus on all the ways we will fill this container with opportunities for our people to grow in faith, fellowship, and service.

Some areas that I am particularly excited to highlight are the continuing strides of our music ministry. We have grown our chorister program to 19 youth and children. Our Evensong services are gaining traction on the third Wednesdays of the month. And a big highlight of the year was seeing our Christmas Lessons and Carols service swell dramatically, nearly doubling in size, on the last Sunday evening before Christmas.

The relatively new course offering called Being With has been a blessing to those who have participated, and we will continue to run it in 2025, along with a hope to offer Sacred Ground for those who have not yet experienced it. St. John's Pride and the relaunched Lafayette Fellowship continue to gain momentum.

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Holly Sukenik continues to coordinate our parish lunches, and there is a hope to start one or more small-group ministries. In Lent we will offer a series on contemplative prayer, to be led by the Rev. Sarah Coakley, formerly of Cambridge University. Our diverse outreach ministries continue to thrive, offering a variety of ways to serve those in need, led by Jess Sanchez and a dedicated team of lay leaders. During this time of great uncertainty in our nation, these ministries will likely be more important than ever.

We were saddened to say goodbye to the Rev. Shawn Evelyn, who moved when his wife was deployed to the Middle East with the Army, but we welcomed the Rev. Dcn. Eric Bailey, who has done great work building up our youth ministry and Latrobe fellowship for young adults.

On a very exciting note, the Vestry discerned a variety of ways that the Macauley gift will support the church. We established the Macauley Buildings and Grounds fund, which will endow a portion of the cost of maintaining our historic space, allowing more of our pledge dollars to be allocated to mission and ministry. Roughly half of the gift will go to that fund, with a smaller amount to go to special projects and building a small reserve. The other half of the Macauley gift will directly help the poor, sick, and homeless, which was Mrs. Macauley's wish. Desirée Davis Stolar and the Rev. Will Morris will be leading an effort to strategically use these funds to make a difference and, we hope, do transformative work in lifting up the lives of others while addressing some of the deep inequalities in our region.

In 2025, we sent a group to visit our partners at Kwasa College in Springs, South Africa. This was the first Kwasa trip since the pandemic, and those of us who were lucky enough to travel there were inspired at the good things happening under the leadership of the Rev. Sharron Dinnie. Kwasa now educates hundreds of students from preschool to middle school, and the atmosphere of the school is electric. While there, we planted trees that will grow and offer shade to students for years to come. We also experienced the remarkable natural beauty and history of South Africa from Johannesburg to Cape Town, and walked in the footsteps of Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu. On February 23, thanks to a generous gift, we will premiere a commissioned work by a South African composer in honor of Tutu, celebrating his life and witness.

Carl Jung wrote, "The privilege of a lifetime is to become who you truly are." I am grateful that we as a parish are getting to do this now.

Faithfully,
The Rev. Robert W. Fisher

WARDENS' REPORT

Dear Parishioners:

As usual, we had a busy and productive year at St John's, in which the Vestry focused on maintaining and improving our vibrant parish. Below are some of the significant accomplishments from 2024:

Completion of the Bell Tower Renovation & Fundraising Campaign

After years of careful planning and development, we completed the renovation of our historic bell tower. The Bell Tower Committee selected excellent architects, contractors, and owners' representatives, enabling the project to be completed on time and on budget. Importantly, although scaffolding encased the church for most of the summer, there was no interruption to our worship or programming. The final phase of the project included replacing the roof of the church. The completion of the renovation was capped by a celebration in October that included positive news coverage, viewings of the freshly gilded tower from the top of the AFL-CIO building, and a visit from Mayor Bowser.

We are also delighted to report that the fundraising campaign met its \$1.9 million goal to fund the project. Of the total raised, \$1.3 million has already been received, and we are scheduled to receive the remainder of the pledges over the next two years. We are fortunate to have been able to use some of the Macauley gift (see below) as a bridge loan to fund construction while we collect the remaining pledges.

Completion of the renovation and fundraising was an enormous undertaking. The wardens are indebted to Julia Koster, Chair of the Bell Tower Committee, as well as Chase Rynd, Chair of the Building Committee, and David Gallalee, Chair of the Fundraising Committee. Special thanks also go to Sharon Park, a member of the Building Committee whose experience as a historic preservation architect was invaluable.

Discernment and Allocation of the Macauley Gift

In late 2023, the church received an extraordinary gift of more than \$6 million from former parishioner Dorothy Macauley. Importantly, Mrs. Macauley's will directed half of the value of her estate to St. John's and half to an organization that "helped the poor, the sick, and the homeless." Mrs. Macauley's trustees chose to give the entirety of the estate to St. John's with the understanding that the church's outreach work supports the poor, sick, and homeless, as specified in her will.

The Vestry spent many months discerning how to allocate the Macauley funds, understanding the enormous positive impact it could have on the future of the church. We convened a Macauley Gift Committee, led by Lauren Edwards, Richard Metzger, and Rob Mosbacher, to collect feedback from the parish on how best to utilize the gift. That committee interviewed more than 20 parishioners and made written and oral recommendations to the Vestry for potential uses of the gift.

Informed by the recommendations of the committee, the Vestry voted in June to allocate the St. John's portion of the gift, then valued at \$3.4 million, as follows:

- \$2.75 million to a newly created Macauley Buildings and Grounds fund within our endowment;
- \$325,000 to Operating Reserves;
- and the remaining \$325,000 to a "special projects fund" to finance improvements to the church.

The Vestry has approved purchasing furniture for the parish house parlors out of the special projects fund and is considering other potential uses, such as improving our exterior landscaping and hiring a historian to research the church's history in relation to slavery.

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The Vestry is continuing to discern how to allocate the second half of the Macauley gift, which was directed to support the poor, the sick, and the homeless. In the meantime, those funds are invested under the direction of the Investment Committee and our investment advisors.

Painting of the Church and Parish House

Following the completion of the bell tower renovation, both the church and the Parish House received a much-needed painting. The exterior of both buildings had been significantly damaged by the protests and fire in 2020, and the cost of painting was fortunately covered by insurance. With a newly restored bell tower and fresh paint, our historic church is now more beautiful than ever.

Completed Audit of 2023 Financial Statements

The St. John's Audit Committee was reconstituted in 2023, after being dormant for several years. Chaired by Matt Bode, the committee led a request for proposals from several audit firms and ultimately selected Hozik & Company as our new auditor. With significant support from the church's operations staff and the Audit Committee, Hozik & Company completed an audit of our 2023 financial statements. The church's financial statements had not been audited since 2018. With our new auditor and Audit Committee in place, we will now resume the best practice of yearly audits.

Continued Work to Establish the St. John's Historic Preservation Fund

In 2023, we created the St. John's Historic Preservation Fund as a vehicle for donations that will be used solely to maintain our historic buildings and grounds. It is intended to encourage donations from institutions and individuals who do not donate to religious organizations but who will donate to historic preservation.

In 2024, we continued the lengthy process to obtain the relevant licenses and approvals for the foundation, most notably receiving designation as an IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation and beginning the process of obtaining charitable solicitation licenses in DC, Maryland, and Virginia. The foundation also held its first board meeting in 2024 and will continue to consider ways to support education and fundraising related to our historic buildings and grounds.

Adoption of Responsible Investing Policy

Informed by the Investment Committee and our investment advisors at Goldman Sachs, the Vestry adopted a policy to ensure that the investments in our endowment support companies that are aligned with our values. More specifically, the Vestry voted to follow, to the extent practicable, The Episcopal Church's list of prohibited investments, including any future amendments to that list.

In summary, the church can be pleased with the accomplishments of 2024, and thanks to the support of this extraordinary community, we are poised to continue our growth in 2025.

- ◆ Nora Rigby, *Senior Warden*
- ◆ Alfred Thesmar, *Junior Warden*

REPORTS OF PARISH ORGANIZATIONS

Adult Inquirers' Classes

The Rector's 2024 Spring Adult Inquirers' Class was held on May 11 and May 18, and the Fall Adult Inquirers' Class on October 26 and November 2. In total, 24 adults, many newcomers to St. John's, attended this lively two-day course that explores our faith, the history and tradition of the Episcopal Church, and the spiritual life of the Episcopal Church as practiced through St. John's.

The class is open to anyone seeking a faith practice or to deepen their own. This includes newcomers to St. John's; adults seeking baptism, confirmation, or reception into the Episcopal Church; and anyone, newcomer or longtime member, interested in learning more about St. John's and the Episcopal Church. The class is led by the Rev. Robert W. Fisher with assistance from the Rev. Sarah Akes-Cardwell.

Seven members of the combined fall and spring classes participated in the Service of Confirmation and Reception at Washington National Cathedral on Saturday, November 16.

The attendance at these classes, as well as the number of new members who have transferred to St. John's from other churches (see "Parish Register" later in this report, contributes to continued growth at St. John's.

♦ Lisa Koehler, *Program Associate and Executive Assistant to the Rector*

Angel Tree Gift Drive

The 2024 Angel Tree Gift Drive was a huge success, bringing our community together in the spirit of giving. This year, we partnered with four amazing organizations: DC Dream Center, Bishop Walker School, Cardozo Education, and Advocates for Justice and Education, ensuring a joyful holiday season for many in need. Our congregation's participation was outstanding. Angels were quickly chosen from the tree, and generous gift donations met the needs of every individual. The enthusiasm shown was truly inspiring. The wrapping party was a highlight, filled with fun, laughter, and holiday cheer. Volunteers worked together to wrap gifts, creating a sense of unity and purpose as we prepared to bring smiles to those we serve. A big thank you to everyone who contributed—whether by taking an angel and donating gifts or by helping with wrapping. Your support made this year's program possible and brought holiday joy to many families. We look forward to continuing this wonderful tradition in the future. Thank you for making the 2024 Angel Tree a success!

♦ Kevin Cordova-Brookey, *Chair*

Bell Tower Committee

October 20, 2024, marked a joyful day as St. John's rededicated its historic bell tower, with the sun glinting off the regilded dome. We gathered to celebrate the vision and commitment to move the bell tower restoration from idea to reality, and to thank all who provided their talent, resources, and encouragement. The restored tower serves as a renewed physical symbol of our commitment to be a beacon of grace and service in our White House neighborhood.

The rededication ceremony featured Carol Quillen, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation; Sean Wilentz, George Henry Davis 1886 Professor of American History at Princeton University; and Muriel Bowser, Mayor of the District of Columbia. Together, their remarks reinforced how our church serves as a witness to history and a vital part of the Washington, DC, community.

St. John's embarked on the much-needed project to restore the bell tower and install a new church roof in 2022. The Building Committee, led by Chase Rynd, worked closely and thoughtfully with our owner's representative and the architectural and construction teams to undertake the meticulous, sensitive work necessary to restore a National Historic Landmark. Sharon Park provided invaluable expertise in historic renovation. Once scaffolding went up, the need for extensive replacement of exterior materials was confirmed. Together, the team made thoughtful decisions to use durable, high-quality materials that will benefit us both today and into the future. Scaffolding went up and construction began in early 2024, and we were pleased to complete the project on schedule and within budget.

The Fundraising Committee, led by David Gallalee, conducted a quiet campaign to raise the majority of funds before launching a broader, open campaign in the spring. Together, our congregation, neighbors and civic organizations generously provided over \$1.8 million in pledges and gifts. With strategic guidance from the Vestry, Investment Committee, and St. John's staff, the construction work was initiated even as fundraising proceeded, with careful tracking of budget outlays and incoming funds.

Lastly, we are thankful for the wise and enthusiastic leadership provided by the Rev. Robert Fisher throughout this process.

I hope that the view of the restored bell tower provides a joyful reminder of our successful stewardship of this historic structure and our church home.

♦ Julia Koster, *Coordinator*

♦ DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION TEAM: DLR Group/Bowie Gridley, SGH; Regan Associates, LLC; Worcester Eisenbrandt Inc.; James R. Walls Contracting; Andi Adams; Gold Leaf Studios; and The Verdin Company

♦ BUILDING COMMITTEE: Chase Rynd, *Chair*; Rick Busch, Lauren Edwards, Cliff Elmore, Fruzsina Harsanyi, Michelle Mangrum, and Sharon Park, *Members*

♦ FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE: David Gallalee, *Chair*; Chandler Battaile, Stephen Crochet, Wendy J. Fibison, Richard Grimmett, John Herzog, Carter Keithley, Robert Mosbacher, and Gail West, *Members*

♦ SPECIAL EVENT COORDINATION: Sarah Agnew and Susan Feaster

♦ SPECIAL THANKS TO: Stewart McLaurin, White House Historical Association, for steadfast guidance; Andrew Clarke and Asia Pacific for designing and providing commemorative boxes; and Mike Ryan for his woodworking skills in preparing recognition gifts.

Book Group

The St. John's Book Group convenes monthly on Zoom to discuss a range of fiction and nonfiction works covering social justice, history and personal memoirs and to share in fellowship. The group traditionally meets on the first Thursday of the month. During 2024, the group met 11 times virtually on Zoom, with approximately 15 regular participants. There are more than 50 individuals on the mailing list.

In the spring and fall of 2024, we voted democratically on proposed books for our reading list for the next six months to one year. We continued to read books on a wide range of cultural, historic, and spiritual topics, both nonfiction and fiction.

The group also continued the tradition of sponsoring a diaper drive in April to help alleviate family needs, as inspired by the book *Broke in America*, which the group read several years ago. Through the generosity of parishioners, we collected more than 1,000 diapers for newborns to toddlers; 1,514 baby wipes; 306 adult products; and other hygiene-related products. We also raised generous cash and check contributions, both in person and through the Greater DC Diaper Bank website. These contributions make a significant difference in fighting poverty in our city.

The group also hosted the parish lunch on June 9, 2024, and contributed guest speaker suggestions to the Speaker Series organizers, based on books we have read.

♦ Janet Edmond, *Chair*

Care of Creation Ministry

The Care of Creation ministry seeks to be a forum at St. John's for conversation, study, and engagement around the biblical command to love all God's creation, with particular attention to environmental justice and sustainability.

In 2024, the ministry's focus turned to water quality. We solicited Outreach Committee support for the Anacostia Riverkeeper, with whom we planned a spring clean up and foray. On a very chilly and windy April Saturday, 20 parishioners and friends met to collect almost 150 pounds of litter in the riparian zone of a public park and to enjoy a picnic together. Those who could stayed for an informative tour of the river, covering its history, abuses, and clean-up measures. While we were appalled at the level of plastic waste collected along the river banks, clean-up efforts are being productive, with hope in time of restoring opportunities to fish and even swim safely in the river. However, planned river swim events have had to be cancelled twice, as conditions weren't safe.

The group sponsored a Speaker Series forum conducted by Nancy Stoner, Executive Director of the Potomac Riverkeeper Network. We hope to continue learning and sharing more about water quality in our area in the year ahead.

Two members of our ministry group also serve on the diocesan Creation Care Committee, which successfully passed a resolution at the 2024 annual convention recommending that parishes recognize and celebrate a season of creation, and planned support in winter 2025, in partnership with Interfaith Power and Light DMV, for parishes to conduct energy audits that will lead to cost-saving strategies.

♦ Joanne Hutton, *Chair*

Christian Education

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES (Pre-K through Grade 5)

We have continued to offer meaningful **Sunday morning faith formation** for young children in the 10 a.m. formation hour. Most Sundays children pre-K through 5th grade meet for class in the Parish House. The Rev. Sarah Akes-Cardwell and a team of three adult helpers lead classes that center around lectionary readings for the day and seasonal themes.

Children's Chapel is our most consistently well-attended Sunday morning offering for children and families. It is offered during the 11 a.m. service in the program year, and during the 10:30 a.m. service in the summer. Children participated every Sunday, and several weeks had more than 10 children present. Typically between one and three parents also attend. Dr. Lyn Loewi has continued leading music weekly, which is often a highlight. We look forward to growing this meaningful Children's Chapel ministry.

FAMILY MINISTRIES

In addition to our annual Advent wreath-making activity and Christmas pageant, we presented numerous opportunities for families with young children. Parents' Night Out and Family Meet-Ups continue to be popular among caregivers and children alike. Our year in Family Ministries included the following offerings:

- March: "Parenting through the Wilderness" lenten series on Zoom; Holy Week preview for families; Maundy Thursday family service
- April: Three families joined the Care of Creation / Anacostia Riverkeeper trash pick-up and boat ride
- May: Parents' Night Out and baptism reunion lunch for families
- Pentecost Sunday: Celebratory reception with activities
- June: Family Meet-up at Hains Point
- September: Parents' Night Out
- October: Blessing of the Animals; Fall Family Meet-up at the church
- November: Parents' Night Out offered, but we had no attendees due to travel and illness
- December: Advent party with kid-friendly activities; family-friendly Christmas service activity making cards and goodie bags

These offerings would not be possible without dedicated lay volunteers, the support of St. John's staff, and the commitment of families with young children to deepen the faith lives of their children and our youngest parishioners. We are especially grateful for Katherine Raab (Director) and Susan Cardwell (Costume Coordinator) for their leadership of the Christmas pageant. Many thanks to all parents who made it possible for their children and youth to participate in the pageant and our other family offerings.

♦ The Rev. Sarah Akes-Cardwell, *Associate for Parish Life and Family Ministry*

YOUTH MINISTRIES

The youth program at St. John's is dedicated to helping our young members in middle school and high school grow in faith and deepen their relationship with God and their faith community. The Episcopal Church defines formation as "lifelong growth in the knowledge, service, and love of God as followers of Christ." From its inception, St. John's youth program has focused on offering faith formation in meaningful

and engaging ways. Good formation includes helping youth learn about scripture, encouraging them to be responsible members of their communities, and helping them understand the mission of the Church. Our gatherings are meant to be a time for youth to have fun, ask questions, and connect with one another. Questions in this space are not only tolerated, but actively encouraged and celebrated.

Our weekly gatherings this year have centered around the liturgical calendar and lectionary cycle, with a special focus on the gospel lesson. Sometimes we have focused on creatively learning about the Church's feast days (e.g., arts and crafts for All Saints' Day or Epiphany). Our time together begins with an opening prayer or reflection, followed by refreshments and a brief check-in or ice-breakers. This allows youth to talk about their week and process whatever is going on in their lives. The weekly lesson is then read by one of our young members, after which the youth minister uses guided questions to lead a discussion.

As a group, we value marking special days, occasions, and achievements in the lives of our youth. With the changes in leadership this summer, Youth Group has settled into a steady rhythm. In 2024, our youth minister hosted a lunch for those interested in confirmation, attended by six of our youth and their parents, with hopes of our young members' being confirmed in May of 2025. In 2025, we are excited to add more activities beyond our usual Sunday gatherings—such as a bowling night and field trips.

♦ The Rev. Dcn. Eric Bailey, *Minister for Youth and Young Adults*

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

The Adult Bible Study meets on most Sunday mornings at 10 a.m., using a hybrid approach with both in-person and Zoom participants. This adult formation offering seeks to increase affinity groups within the congregation and to meet the interest in Bible study options. Retired minister and St. John's parishioner Jack Reiffer leads the class. Average Sunday attendance is five, but 30 members of the group receive the weekly study materials, and several who can no longer attend regularly on Sundays have asked to receive reports of class discussions. In 2024 the group discussed the structure, audience, and themes of the Gospels of Mark and John, focusing especially on the unique presentations of Christ and the early Church in these gospels. In December the class began Liturgical Year C with a focus on the Gospel of Luke, especially how the birth narratives in this gospel have shaped our celebrations of the birth of Jesus. On most Sundays our discussions include both the assigned gospel lesson for that day and the sermon.

♦ Jack Reiffer, *Coordinator*

BEING WITH

In the spring and fall of 2024 we held Being With groups at St. John's. This 10-week course exploring Christian life and faith was lay-led and held on Zoom. Both groups met after the completion of the course for time together in-person. Being With was developed at St. Martin in the Field (London) by the Rev. Dr. Sam Wells, and we are encouraged by the reception of this curriculum at St. John's. The way the group practices "being with" one another each week is just as valuable as the content of the course, and has been received well by participants. We also now have a cohort of Being With lay leaders, whose skills of presence, deep listening, and small-group facilitation will be useful going forward in this ministry and beyond. St. John's should also be proud of being one of the flagship offerings of Being With in our diocese and for sharing our experiences with other parishes in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington.

♦ The Rev. Sarah Akers-Cardwell, *Associate for Parish Life and Family Ministry*

Education for Ministry

In May 2025, three St. John's parishioners will celebrate their graduation from the Education for Ministry (EfM) program. Four years after embarking on the journey that is EfM, Fruzsina Harsanyi, Sara McGanity, and Jeremy Skog will graduate and receive a handsome hand-lettered certificate from the University of the South, the Episcopal school in Sewanee, Tennessee, where EfM is based.

EfM sets itself apart from other courses of Bible study through its combination of stimulating graduate-level theological studies and thorough exploration of our call to live our baptismal covenants through the many and varied ministries we exercise daily.

Prayer, study, worship, conversation, theological reflection, and laughter are among the joys discovered anew along the way. In our time together we learn to put together and lead worship services; we develop a vocabulary with which to describe our faith and beliefs; we share personal stories and discover their universal dimensions; and we spend time reflecting theologically on big questions. We approach each year through the lens of an overarching theme, such as living faithfully in a multicultural world, developing a mature spirituality, and exploring our journey with God.

Here in the Diocese of Washington, EfM groups meet in person and online. Most in-person groups meet at an Episcopal church and are often comprised of participants from a particular parish. The many online groups include participants from throughout the diocese—and sometimes beyond.

Learners register for one year of study at a time. The first year investigates Hebrew scriptures, the second takes up the New Testament, the third broadly covers Church history, and a fourth year focuses on theological questions and developing a personal theology.

Contact Carolyn Crouch for more information or visit the EfM website (efm.sewanee.edu) to read excerpts from the curriculum.

♦ Carolyn Crouch, *EfM Mentor*

Flower Guild

During 2024, St. John's Flower Guild lovingly created beautiful floral arrangements that enhanced the beauty of our historic church and enriched worship for all parishioners and visitors.

The guild provides arrangements in keeping with the church calendar for all Sunday morning services, weddings, baptisms, funerals, memorial services, and special events happening at the church. Duties include planning and ordering appropriate flowers and greenery for each occasion, as well as creating the arrangements that will be placed throughout the church. On the church's most celebrated holy days, Christmas and Easter, an overabundance of flowers and fellowship are in order as guild members gather en masse to prepare the church to celebrate the birth and resurrection of our Lord.

In addition to Sunday mornings, members arranged flowers for five weddings and eight memorial or funeral services in 2024. Guild members make every effort to honor parishioners' and loved ones' requests regarding flower choices and colors on these important occasions. One particularly notable event this past year that called for special flowers was the rededication of our restored bell tower on October 20.

Parishioners can honor loved ones by sponsoring all or part of the church's floral arrangements for any given Sunday. Designations will appear in the church bulletin along with a dedication in memory of, in celebration of, or in thanksgiving for the honored person or event.

The Flower Guild gladly welcomes new members who desire to learn more about flower arranging and have a sincere wish to participate. Prior experience is not necessary. Veteran members of the guild team with newcomers during Saturday morning arranging sessions to share their knowledge of floral arranging techniques and artistry.

The Guild operates under the skilled leadership of Katherine Kyle, who directs and oversees all activities. Katherine and her co-chair, Pat Dalby, monitor the online scheduling site to make sure all Sundays are covered, and are in direct contact with the church office regarding all floral arranging needs. Anne Harrington continues to serve as our wonderful wedding coordinator, providing an invaluable service to the guild and to the couples who wish to marry at St. John's.

The following members deserve a huge thank you for their service on the St. John's Flower Guild in 2024: Sarah Agnew, Paul Barkett, Pat Dalby, Nicole Feaster, Susan Feaster, Jamie Finch, Anne Harrington, Susan Heil, Amanda Claire Hoover, Joanne Hutton, Lara Kanitra, Julia Koster, Katherine Kyle, Elizabeth Lewis, Sherill Mason, Anne Leithauser McIntosh, Nicole Kleman Neufeld, Allie Raether, Zach Schutz, Adelle Simons, Becca Brown Todd, and Pamela Venzke.

Finally, we offer thanks to our dedicated sextons, Javier Obregon, GeeGee Bryant, David Gamboa, and John Queen, for their loving behind-the-scenes assistance in making flowers possible at St. John's.

- ♦ Katherine Kyle, *Chair*
- ♦ Pat Dalby, *Co-Chair*

Greeters Guild

The role of the greeter is to help everyone who comes to worship services feel welcomed. We stand outside the church offering St. John's literature and answering questions—and, often, giving directions. We say hello to everyone who comes in and introduce ourselves to those we might not know. We ask visitors where they are from and answer any questions they have about our church and its history. We want people to know St. John's as a welcoming community for all.

This ministry provides visitors and potential new members a first glance at St. John's. It is a genuinely fun ministry that gives you the opportunity to get to know lots of new people. We would love to have more volunteers and more ideas for warmly welcoming all. We now have 23 greeters and can always use more friendly faces. We try to have two greeters at both the 9 and 11 a.m. services, so the more the merrier!

- ♦ Peter and Eleanor Odom, *Head Greeters*

Investment Committee

The Investment Committee's charge is to help the Vestry in carrying out its duty to provide oversight and management of the church's endowment. The members of the Committee in 2024, consisted of: Lisa Kirchenbauer (Chair), Preston Cherouny, Justin Dean, Casey Evans, the Rev. Rob Fisher, Nora Haugh, Richard Metzger, Nora Rigby, and Alfred Thesmar.

Goldman Sachs was retained by the church in 2023 to manage the day-to-day investment portfolio. The Investment Committee relies on the expertise and guidance of the Goldman Sachs Team to increase the value of the church's portfolio over time through capital appreciation, dividend and interest payments, while also protecting the portfolio from significant market downturns. The church's endowment is a crucial asset, as it provides an annual income stream to support the church's operating expenses, at a historical cash equivalent of approximately 5% of the endowment's total value.

With respect to the draw-down of assets for operational purposes, in 2024, the church drew 5% (or \$860,455) from its investment accounts to fund operations.

The investment accounts managed by Goldman Sachs for St. John's various endowment and related accounts are as follows, as of December 31, 2024:

Endowment—General	\$7,537,116.68
Endowment—Macauley Outreach	\$3,551,123.90
Endowment—Macauley Buildings and Grounds	\$2,058,258.67
Quinby Fund Restricted Endowment	\$10,442,368.89
Total Endowment Assets Under Management	\$24,681,800.16

Important Changes in 2024

During 2024, there were three important projects that the Investment Committee undertook:

- Finalizing the new Investment Policy Statement (IPS) under the management of Goldman Sachs;
- Assessing the use of the Macauley planned gift received in 2023; and
- Supporting the short-term cash needs of the church's bell tower project.

After careful consideration and review, and discussions with the Goldman Sachs Team, the IPS was presented to the Vestry for final adoption on May 14, 2024. Some accounts were renamed, and appropriate investment strategies were agreed upon to support the timeline of the various goals that the church has, both short and long term.

In June, the Vestry voted to allocate the half of the Macauley gift directed for use by St. John's—valued then at approximately \$3.4 million. As a result of the discernment of the Vestry and informed by the Macauley Gift Committee, it was decided that \$2.75 million of the gift received would be separately allocated to St. John's Building and Grounds maintenance. A smaller amount of \$325,000 was also set aside for shorter-term planned expenditures to improve the church. The remaining approximately \$325,000 was directed to operating reserves. The other half of the Macauley gift directed to support “the poor, the sick, and the homeless” is invested while the Vestry discerns how to allocate it.

While the bell tower project was being completed, funds from the Macauley gift were set aside as a temporary loan to the church to cover the costs of the project while St. John's awaits receipt of remaining pledges of approximately \$800,000. As the pledges are received over the next two years, the funds will be repaid to the long-term endowment of the church, specifically the Macauley Buildings and Grounds fund.

Investment Committee Meetings

The Investment Committee met a bit more than quarterly with the team at Goldman Sachs to review performance and address other issues such as the finalization of the IPS.

Market Conditions and Portfolio Performance

2024 was a strong year in terms of stock market performance and economic outlook. Two key recommendations aided in the overall portfolio returns: U.S. preeminence and stay invested. Themes within the portfolio included (i) maintaining an overweight to U.S. equities relative to non-U.S. and (ii) holding an underweight to EM. The recommendation to stay invested was driven by the belief in the size, strength, and diversity of the U.S. economy, which was supported by strong 2024 earnings growth by U.S. companies alongside a healthy consumer.

U.S. equities outpaced all other major equity markets and returned 25% for 2024, ranking in the top quartile of all annual returns since 1962. This year marks the first time since 1998 and 1999 that the S&P 500 produced back-to-back years of >20% total returns. Earnings growth was an important driver of returns for the year.

There was considerable breadth in the market (more advancing stocks relative to declining stocks). All sectors, aside from one, posted positive annual returns, and 66% of S&P stocks posted positive returns, with only four names down 50% or more.

Developed international and emerging market equities both fell by roughly 8% in 4Q24 as a result of policy uncertainty following the U.S. presidential election. For the year, emerging markets returned 7.5% and outpaced international developed by 3.7%. This relative outperformance was driven by a rally in Chinese equities in the second half of the year coupled with a general weakness in the European economy, particularly in the manufacturing sector.

In 2024 the inverted yield curve began to normalize as the Fed launched its easing cycle. The yield curve disinverted as cash rates declined by 100 bps but the 10-year Treasury rate increased by 70 bps. As a result, shorter term Treasuries outperformed longer term Treasuries. The longest Treasuries posted negative returns with the 30-year Treasury returning -8.0%. The Barclays U.S. Aggregate index, which encompasses 1- to 30-year investment-grade bonds, posted a modest return of 1.3% as its coupon income was nearly offset by price depreciation.

High-yield corporate bonds posted strong 2024 performance, with a return of 8.2%. This return was primarily driven by attractive yields available in the market. To a much lesser extent, the market also benefitted from price appreciation as credit spreads tightened by 41 bps. As a result of the yield advantage and tightening spreads, the High Yield Index outperformed similar maturity Treasuries by 5.0%. At year-end, the index yield was 7.49% and the spread over Treasuries was 287 bps.

Given this backdrop, at year-end 2024, the St. John's endowment (\$7.5 million) and Quinby fund (\$10.4 million) portfolios had increased in value by 16.4% and 14.5% respectively. The Macauley assets finished at \$6,290,314 for a total endowment value of \$24.8 million.

Some one-time adjustments were made to the annual draw from the endowment to account for the Macauley gift received in 2023, which will allow the church to draw slightly more from the endowment in 2025 and beyond.

◆ Lisa Kirchenbauer, *Chair*

Lafayette Fellowship

The Lafayette Fellowship is a group for adults at St. John's who seek to build community with one another. Our events offer the time and space to build friendships, expand our hearts and minds, and have fun. We look to host a variety of activities—both at the church and offsite—and to continue to grow our membership.

In 2024, we welcomed the new year with a dinner in Togo West Parlor. Other events throughout the year included:

- Visiting the National Gallery of Art for exhibits on contemporary art and 20th-century photography
- Attending a discussion at Washington National Cathedral featuring Jon Meachem and Liz Cheney
- Joining with the Latrobe Fellowship to attend a Washington Nationals baseball game as part of a diocesan outing
- Hosting a Sunday parish lunch
- Dinner at the home of the rector
- Trivia night at Red Bear Brewing Company
- Sunday parish lunch together followed by a trip to the National Gallery of Art for the Paris 1874 impressionism exhibit
- Holiday dinner and festive game night at the church

As we plan for 2025, we hope to broaden our offerings, including incorporating faith-based discussions, while also continuing social events that have been enjoyed.

I am especially grateful to Christine Davies, who has joined as a co-chair, and to Caroline Mazzocchi, who provides additional assistance and is a ministerial presence. Thank you as well to Andrea Charters, who has assisted with coordinating our visits to the National Gallery. Finally, a special thank you to our rector and his family who opened their home to us and hosted a marvelous dinner.

♦ Hilary West, *Chair*

Latrobe Fellowship for Young Adults

In today's world, young people crave deeper connections, and life in the District can feel fast-paced, especially for young professionals. This is why the Latrobe Fellowship strives to be an intentional space for community where young adults can pause, pray, and build meaningful relationships with one another. Our goal is to offer a program where young people can find social and spiritual support. As a vibrant and welcoming group, we seek to model the outreach principles of the church, "seeking the face of Christ in neighbors far and near," through good works and faith. This is a line we include in our monthly newsletter and forms part of our stated goal and mission.

Latrobbers gather monthly, typically on the first Wednesday evening of the month, for a short contemplative service followed by refreshments, fellowship, and learning opportunities. Over the summer, the group experienced a change in leadership, with the departure of the Rev. Shawn Evelyn, one of St. John's associate priests, but with new leadership and a strong agenda, the group has adapted seamlessly. In 2024, among other things, we learned about the role of hymnody in Episcopal worship, discussed practical skills such as managing personal finances, and kept our beloved wine tasting tradition alive and well.

Importantly, as in other years, Latrobers continued to play meaningful roles in the St. John's community. We participated on Sunday mornings as ushers, greeters, readers, tech assistants, chalice bearers, musicians, Sunday school teachers, volunteers at Grace's Table, and in many other ways.

In 2024 the Latrobe Fellowship hosted the following events:

- January 3—Dry January-themed seltzer tasting and mocktail making
- February 7—Local Black History trivia night
- March 6—Personal finance workshop
- April 10—Holy Land debrief
- May 1—Rooftop worship service
- June 2—Brunch
- July 14—Brunch
- August 4—Brunch
- September 4—Wine tasting
- October 2—Halloween trivia night
- October 27—Brunch
- November 6—Liturgical music discussion with Brent Erstad
- December 4—Tiki Night: Feast of the Holy Sovereigns of Hawaii

This year, we welcomed several new members to the group and five more people joined our 2025 Planning Committee. Some young adults have expressed an interest in baptism, something we hope will take place in the coming year. One of our goals is to work our way to more frequent meetings, including occasional casual brunches on Sundays. We plan to visit Virginia Theological Seminary and introduce new activities that help Latrobers learn about faith, celebrate diverse cultural traditions, and deepen their understanding of the Episcopal Church and its liturgy.

We owe special thanks to 2024 Latrobe Planning Committee members Kate Benner, Conrad Briles, Autumn Brown, Claire Kim, Cami Pease, and Matthew Taylor, as well as to former co-chair Kate Seifert. Their leadership and support helped to make our gatherings possible.

♦ Jess Unger, *Chair*

♦ The Rev. Dcn. Eric Bailey, *Minister for Youth and Young Adults*

Livestream Ministry

St. John's Livestream Ministry uses live video streaming technologies to deliver services to a broader audience via the internet. During the church year, our weekly 11 a.m. service, monthly Evensong, and Christmas and Holy Week services are livestreamed, in addition to annual parish-wide events. During the summer months, when the 9 and 11 a.m. services are combined, we livestream the 10:30 a.m. service.

The livestream offering has become particularly meaningful to parishioners unable to attend services due to illness or travel as well as to anyone anywhere seeking to learn more about St. John's.

To livestream from the sanctuary, St. John's uses a DataVideo EZ livestream package that includes a desktop operating device that operates three PTZ cameras, each mounted under the balcony. To prepare for each event, a staff member creates a livestream link in YouTube Studio, underlay slides in Google, and links to associated bulletins. All bulletins and livestream links are then uploaded to our website for public access.

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Prior to each service, one of three volunteer technicians spends 15 minutes firing up the DataVideo, connecting the livestream links, and preparing the cameras. Once the service begins, the technician can add their creative touch in determining camera angles and focal points throughout the service.

While the professional installation of hard-wired equipment and cameras is a vast improvement over the previous maze of tripods, iPhone cameras and cables, some challenges remain. The DataVideo EZ unexpectedly fizzled during a service in July, necessitating emergency replacement. Fortunately, it was still under warranty. The first replacement had issues, so the company sent a second replacement. While the audio and video settings were lost in the process, our volunteers Ryan Wagner, Jeremy Skog, and Matthew Taylor collaborated to restore the settings. Jeremy Sheeler of Warehouse Productions and Keith Dorset of Dorset Sound and Communications, oversaw the shipping replacement, and reinstallation of the DataVideo. We are so grateful!

We have room for volunteers! If you are curious about this ministry and want to learn more, feel free to visit the livestream desk to chat with Ryan, Matthew, or either Jeremy any Sunday during or after services.

♦ Lisa Koehler, *Program Associate and Executive Assistant to the Rector*

Music Ministry

Now at the start of its second season, our **chorister program** has grown to include 18 young singers working in two separate groups: Our youngest singers take part in the **St. Cecilia Choir**, now led by St. John's Choir member Charlotte Stewart, where they continue to build a strong foundation in vocal technique, music theory, and an understanding of how to participate in worship. Our **advanced choristers** have worked at building their musicianship and their appreciation of the liturgy. They have contributed meaningfully to our monthly services of Choral Evensong, to semi-regular Sunday morning Eucharists, and to special events throughout the year. In addition to twice-weekly rehearsals, all our advanced choristers receive regular voice lessons with Elissa Edwards, who is a member of the St. John's Choir.

The **Parish Choir** has grown in number and accomplishment in the past year. We initiated a weekly education offering endearingly called "boot camp." This class meets prior to our regular rehearsals on Thursday evenings and provides an ongoing opportunity for singers to deepen their understanding of music theory and their skills in sight singing. The strong turnout for this class is further confirmation of how committed our volunteer singers are to offering their very best in worship.

Our longest-serving ensemble, the **St. John's Choir**, maintains the highest standard of music in the church. Their artistry and professionalism uphold our church's longstanding tradition of excellence in worship. In addition to Sunday morning duties, the St. John's Choir is primarily responsible for our monthly offering of Choral Evensong. Evensong has proven to be an effective means of inviting new people into our church who might not otherwise be in our neighborhood on Sunday mornings. Members of the St. John's Choir are involved in our parish life in many ways, from working alongside our chorister program, to serving on parish life committees, and representing our church in the community. Most recently, the St. John's Choir provided exemplary leadership during the pre-inaugural prayer service that the church hosted last month. They have also sung for many weddings and funerals throughout the year.

Together the choirs have provided music for more than 110 public services. Highlights include the annual Requiem Eucharist for All Souls' Day, the Ives *Missa Brevis* offered to celebrate the new program year, and Christmas Lessons and Carols, which included 45 singers and more than doubled last year's attendance with more than 450 in the congregation. None of this would be possible without our wonderful associate organist, Lyn Loewi, and Lisa Koehler, who helps so much on the administrative side of our program.

The St. Cecilia Choir

Sander Agnew-Molokken, Liam Agnew-Molokken, James Dudley, Ariavne Gordienko, Haven Flokstra-Udoewa, Vincent Gaziano, Peter Gullans, Grant Lucio, Cecily Stewart, and William Stewart

The Choristers

Gloria Burkhardt, Scout Fairbanks, Nathaniel Hersey, Beatrix Neal, Eudora Neal, Sydney Shepherd, Audrey Schepis, and Adam Perry (organ scholar)

The Saint John's Choir

Sopranos Elissa Edwards, Kerry Holahan, and Tory Wood
Altos Lisa Koehler, Charlotte Stewart, and Louisa Waycott
Tenors David Evans, Andrew Sauvageau, and William Watson
Basses Nathan Lofton, Justin Dean, and Christopher Jones

The Parish Choir

Sopranos Annette Anfinrud, Whitley Herndon, Kerry Holahan, Christina Wilson, Tory Wood, and Kitty Zhou
Altos Alison Adkins, Cay Buser, Barbara Burkhardt, Wendy J. Fibison, Sara Josey, Lisa Koehler, Lauren McLane, Katherine McClintic, LaFleur Paysour, Charlotte Stewart, Louisa Waycott, and Margaret Wiegenstein
Tenors Philip Anfinrud, Craig Burkhardt, David Evans, Austin Jordan, Tom Kingsley, Carlos Reyes, Andrew Sauvageau, and William Watson
Basses Jeffrey Bozman, Justin Dean, Matthew Ford, Christopher Jones, Nathan Lofton, and Bill Josey

♦ Brent Erstad, *Director of Music and Organist*

Outreach Committee

As Christians, we are called by baptism to “seek and serve Christ in all persons.” At St. John’s, our outreach ministries are focused on partnerships to serve others, both in our community and around the world.

In 2024, the Outreach Committee continued to build many of our longstanding local and international partnerships and, after reflection and consideration, started a new partnership with Anacostia Riverkeeper.

Dozens of parishioners and friends were involved in outreach during 2024, and we supported and served a variety of communities in Washington, DC; South Africa, and Jerusalem. The Outreach Committee utilized a budget of \$106,000 during 2024, and the committee is grateful to the Vestry for this generous allotment. Our resources were allocated as detailed below.

EDUCATION: \$40,000

- Communities in Schools of the Nation’s Capital (CISNCAP)—\$20,000
- Bishop Walker School—\$20,000

St. John’s provided significant support to **Communities in Schools of the Nation’s Capital (CISNCAP)** through funding for their general operations of the organization and through the time and talent given by parishioners as volunteers in DC’s public schools. Two St. John’s parishioners were among the founding members of this local affiliate and served for many years on its board of directors. Livy More and Ann Gardner continue to check in quarterly with the CIS executive director and program director to review the organization’s needs and spending. CISNCAP’s mission is to surround students in their schools with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. To do that, CISNCAP places a Site Coordinator in each of its partner schools to focus on case management, targeted interventions, whole-school prevention services, and parent engagement. Volunteers from St. John’s provide assistance with sorting, organizing, and bagging groceries at monthly food markets throughout the school year. In August, St. John’s again provided space in the Togo West Parlor for the CIS Site Coordinator Summer Institute. Included in the agenda for the three days were presentations on gun violence in schools, substance abuse intervention, CIS program updates, and data training. In the fall, St. John’s parishioner Matt Bode again made it possible for 2,800 DC public school students to receive backpacks from Amazon. Early in 2024, Dr. Rustin Lewis, CISNC Executive Director; Monique Baker, Program Director; and Johanna M’Bedgue, former student, did presentation at the St. John’s Sunday forum. The generous contribution from St. John’s was used to support site coordinator positions and help fund emergency supply closets in schools to provide food, clothing, shoes, winter coats, hats, and gloves, and hygiene products.

Bishop John T. Walker School for Boys (BWS) was organized as the Episcopal Diocese of Washington’s response to the serious educational challenges facing African American boys in historically underserved communities east of the Anacostia River. The school, named in honor of the first African American bishop of the diocese, is a tuition-free independent elementary school rooted in the traditions of Episcopal education and the educational philosophy of Bishop Walker. Through a collaboration of partner organizations, BWS provides access to high-quality educational, health, cultural, recreation, and social service programs. St. John’s offers a variety of supports for the school, including generous financial help and giving books, toys, and presents to students as part of our annual Christmas toy drive and Angel Tree. In 2024, graduates of BWS were accepted into Capitol Hill Montessori, Digital Pioneers, St. Andrew’s Episcopal School, Saint Columba, St. Mary’s of Piscataway, St. Thomas More Catholic Academy, Sandy Springs Friends School, Sheridan School, Statesmen Public Charter School, and Washington Episcopal School.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS: \$30,500

South Africa

- Kwasa College, South Africa—\$15,000
- Travel—\$8,000
- Clergy Education—\$2,500

Diocese of Jerusalem

- American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ)—\$3,000
- Princess Basma Centre —\$1,000
- Al-Ahli Arab Hospital—\$1,000

For more than 20 years, St. John's has partnered with **Kwasa College**, a pre-primary and primary school in the Anglican Diocese of the Highveld in South Africa. The school provides education and other critical services to children living in poverty in an informal settlement near Johannesburg. A group of nine parishioners from St. John's, led by our rector, the Rev. Rob Fisher, traveled to Kwasa in August. They were impressed by the comprehensive program and moved by the enthusiasm of the students and faculty. As has been done for many years, St. John's will invite the Rev. Sharron Dinnie, the founder and rector of Kwasa, to visit us with faculty and students in the fall of 2025 or the spring of 2026.

St. John's funds for **clergy development** in the Diocese of the Highveld provided valuable tuition support for a seminarian, Ms. Ntombomzi Sitinise, at the only Anglican residential seminary in South Africa, the College of the Transfiguration (COTT). Zomzi, as she is known, has expressed appreciation for the 2024 tuition assistance for this, her second year at COTT. In addition to her studies, Zomzi engaged in internships in the Diocese of the Highveld for local youth prison and orphanage ministries.

St. John's remains committed to supporting our friends in the **Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem**. We continued donations to the **American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ)** in support of ministries across the diocese, including the **Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza** and the **Princess Basma Centre in East Jerusalem**. Pilgrims from St. John's visited the Holy Land most recently in October 2023. St. John's hopes to return to the Holy Land as soon as practicable. Pilgrims from the 2018 and 2019 groups have hosted several events including parish lunch and Latrobe Fellowships to discuss their journeys.

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS: \$14,000

- Grace's Table—\$7,000
- Refugee Committee—\$5,000
- Anacostia Riverkeeper—\$2,000

This year the Outreach Committee continued its partnership with **Grace's Table**, an outreach ministry of Grace Episcopal Church in Georgetown that provides hot meals for those in our community who are unhoused or at risk of losing housing. Through this partnership, St. John's commits to providing volunteers to host Grace's Table on the third Saturday of each month. Teams of 3–7 volunteers prepare and serve the food, and then gather with guests to socialize, followed by a Bible study led by Grace Church. St. John's funds are used to cover the cost of supplies for Grace's Table, such as coffee/tea, eating utensils/paper products, and food items like salad dressing and sugar/creamer. In addition, Grace Church uses some of the funds to pay a small salary to a widowed immigrant who prepares hot meals for the guests on Saturdays when St. John's parishioners are not volunteering. The number of guests seeking food from Grace's Table has increased significantly. In November, we prepared and hosted a traditional Thanksgiving meal for the guests. We continue to think about additional ways we can support the ministry.

In 2024, the **Refugee Committee** allocated its funds to support housing stability and refugee youth in the DC area. First, funds were used to purchase backpacks and school supplies, ensuring we met our donation goals and provided essential resources to refugee youth for the committee’s annual backpack and school supply drive. Second, the majority of the funds supported the Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Region (LSSNCA) emergency housing and rental assistance program. This initiative helps refugees maintain their homes when in need. The funds we give allow the Refugee Committee to extend grace and build the Beloved Community to refugees around the region.

New in 2024, St. John’s committed funds to support a local environmental preservation project restoring the Anacostia River watershed: **Anacostia Riverkeeper**, a local non-profit environmental and educational organization. St. John’s Care of Creation Committee complemented this outreach funding by leading a river cleanup in April and organizing an educational boat tour hosted by Anacostia Riverkeeper. The new event was a great success!

EVENTS: \$1,000

- Annual Christmas / Angel Tree Gift Drive—\$1,000

The annual **Christmas / Angel Tree Gift Drive** collected hundreds of books, clothing, and other gifts. We partnered with Advocates for Justice and Education, Bishop Walker School, Cardozo Educational Campus, Southeast White House, and St. John’s Community Services to bring joy to children and Washingtonians in need during the holiday season.

LOCAL, FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP GIFTS: \$19,000

- Downtown Cluster of Congregations—\$7,000
- Samaritan Ministry of Greater Washington—\$5,500
- Washington Interfaith Network (WIN)—\$6,500

In 2024, the Outreach Committee continued our partnership with: (1) **Downtown Cluster**, an ecumenical group of Washington churches that cooperatively uses member resources to meet critical community needs, prioritizing homeless safety, seniors, and youth; (2) **Samaritan Ministry of Greater Washington**, a faith-based community partnership serving the greater Washington, DC, area that brings our neighbors who face poverty, challenges obtaining housing, or other debilitating obstacles together with partner leaders, donors, volunteers, and staff in a shared ministry that improves the lives of all throughout the Washington area; and (3) **Washington Interfaith Network (WIN)**, which aims to create a more just DC through interfaith community organizing and building power to effect positive, equitable change with respect to climate, health, public housing, public safety, public lands, and Black home ownership.

Samaritan Ministry in 2024 served more than double the number of program participants whom it had assisted during the prior year, ultimately offering its exceptionally personalized and supportive casework, coaching, education, and training to 2,973 DMV residents in need, up from 1,294 in 2023. The organization also undertook an operational overhaul aimed at right-sizing its assets and activities and positioning it for enhanced growth, resilience, and responsiveness to changing conditions.

Additionally, with the help of St. John’s and other donors, Samaritan was able to transform its management team, recruiting and hiring two new and highly experienced senior managers, and elevating its COO to the role of Acting Executive Director. It also enhanced and expanded its partnerships with government agencies and other nonprofits serving its target demographic, and redoubled its focus on its member partner parishes, including St. John’s.

WIN played a leading role in securing many policy gains and millions of dollars of funding for critical community-identified needs of DC residents in 2024. These achievements were in the areas of affordable housing, black equity through home ownership, public safety and gun violence prevention, green and healthy housing, and climate-change mitigation. Members of the St. John's core WIN volunteer team focused on the green and healthy housing/climate change mitigation campaign, helping to secure passage of the DC Healthy Homes Act and restoration of \$10 million for the Sustainable Energy Trust Fund (SETF). One of our members, Robin Pennington, also played a key role in producing WIN's citizen science report on the contribution of gas stoves to residential air pollution, "Cooking Up Danger: Community Study Reveals Hazardous Nitrogen Dioxide Levels in DC and Maryland Kitchens." The report found that in more than three-quarters of the nearly 300 homes with gas stoves tested, the appliances produced indoor NO₂ levels considered unhealthy by the EPA outdoors. (The EPA doesn't regulate indoor air pollution.) For more on WIN's results last year, see its 2024 Impact Report at bit.ly/win-impact-2024.

MOVING FORWARD

The Outreach Committee looks forward to continuing our work in the community and with our partnership organizations throughout 2025.

♦ Jess Sanchez, *Outreach Committee Chair*

Parish Lunch

The Sunday Parish Lunch is a wonderful and important fellowship opportunity at St. John's that provides an opportunity for parishioners and newcomers to get to know each other and become more connected in a casual, social setting.

In 2024, during the periods of January 7 to May 19 and September 22 to December 15, parishioners hosted or helped plan lunch events. Nine lunches were hosted by committees, six were hosted by individuals, and two were potlucks.

Potluck lunches were first held during the summer of 2024, one in June and one in July. They were very helpful in keeping parishioners connected during the summer, when lunches have not traditionally been held, and kicking off the fall return to church.

Special appreciation is extended to the following individuals and groups who organized, cooked and hosted these events, during which more than 600 parishioners enjoyed fellowship:

RJ Lyerly
Margo Wiegenstein
Elizabeth Morrison
Susan Cardwell
Marion Blakey
Caroline Faris

Vestry
Lafayette Fellowship
St. John's Pride (twice)
Bishop Walker School
Sisters at St. John's (twice)
Stewardship Committee
Greeters

♦ Holly Sukenik, *Parish Lunch Coordinator*

Parish Register for 2024

Transfers into the Parish

Beth and Mike DuMond—from St. John's, Tallahassee, FL
Kim Kennedy and Beverly Roberts—from St. Paul's, Foley, AL
Anya Victorovna Kleymenova—from St. James' Cathedral, Chicago, IL
Zachary Weston Lindsey—from All Saints', Atlanta, GA
Jacob Michael McNeill—from The Episcopal Church at Yale, New Haven, CT
John Christopher Northrup Jr.—from All Soul's, Washington, DC
Patrick Kershaw Smith—from St. Christopher's, Spartansburg, SC

Transfers out of the Parish

Hilary Albrecht—to All Saints', Chevy Chase, MD
Emily Louise Able and Patrick Bond—to St. James', New York, NY
Norman Bonnyman—to All Saints', Chevy Chase, MD
Collin and Kenlyn Kamper—to All Saints', Chevy Chase, MD
Mary Rachel Moncure—to Christ Church, Alexandria, VA
Thomas J. and Karis Gong Parnham—to St. Matthew's, Austin, TX
Scott and Elizabeth Payne—to St. Luke's, Alexandria, VA
Daniel B. Rosario-Paredes—to St. Elizabeth's, Ridgewood, NJ
Phineas Tune-Shanahan—to St. Andrew's, Burke, VA
Ben and Laura Siegrist—to St. Paul's, Alexandria, VA
Virginia Leggett Stevenson—to Christ Church, Charlotte, NC
Michael Tune—to St. Andrew's, Burke, VA

Baptisms

Jaya Virginia Bergen
Lachlan John Ford
Hugo Knowlson Kingsley
James McGrew Mandelson
Jo Alta Ornstein
Ella Elizabeth Sanchez
Margaret Maria Traxler

Receptions

Christopher Leon Janson
Nancy Cameron Smith

Confirmations

Meghan Keenan Burns
Douglas Burt
Ugochukwo Owen Owunmanne
Nicholas Rutherford Schoeneman

Reaffirmations

Anya Victorovna Kleymenova
Jeremy Owen Skog

Weddings

Caroline Jiayun Liang & William Oscar Ensor
Jessie Catherine Kennedy & Justin Kline
Anna Lee Price & Paul Joseph Melnick III
Susan Alexander Morefield & Tyler Jason Schubert
Eleanor Rose Warner & Devin Michael Urness

Burials, Funerals, and Memorial Services

Mark Stephen Begeny
Judith Lynn Campbell Bird
Honorable Arthur L. Burnett Sr.
Ayanna Dunn

Dr. William Hughes
John Francis Lansing
Harry Latane Martin
Daniel John McDermott

Pastoral Care Ministry

The Pastoral Care Ministry at St. John's Church complements and supplements the work of our priests by contacting and visiting members of the congregation. Ministry team members also pray regularly for those listed in the weekly list of prayer requests. We hope it gives comfort and encouragement to know that every day of the week someone from our team is praying for those who have requested prayers.

The Pastoral Care Ministry writes notes and delivers flowers at Easter (lily plants) and Christmas (poinsettia plants) for members of St. John's who have experienced a death in their immediate family and for those in rehabilitation programs or confined to home or medical facilities. The committee also assists clergy and staff with weekly delivery of bouquets to parishioners who are unable to be at church. Several worshippers lend their help in all these deliveries. It is gratifying to hear from so many members how much they have appreciated these gestures from the congregation.

The Rev. Sarah Akes-Cardwell, Associate Rector, is the lead clergy for this ministry. Current Pastoral Care Ministry members are: Laurie Adams, Krista Bradley, Mark Cardwell, Susan Cardwell, Kaye Edwards, Wendy Fibison, Sandra Hackworth, Debby Hailey, Anne Harrington, Joanne Hutton, Richard Price, Jack Reiffer (chair), Diane Spaulding, Susan Welch, Margaret Wiegenstein, and Sarah Wood.

♦ Jack Reiffer, *Chair*

Planned Giving Committee

At the end of 2024 the endowment funds totaled \$24,681,800.16, and we had record of 55 existing members of our parish who have committed to providing a legacy to St. John's through their estate planning bequests as part of the 1816 Society. Another 16 parishioners have indicated in their stewardship cards that they have added St. John's to their estate plans. We are grateful for this outpouring of both interest and action. In the fall of 2024, we welcomed and thanked members of the 1816 Society who have included St. John's in their estate planning to a reception and education session. Intentional estate planning and charitable giving continues to be essential for the life of the church and for our parishioners' personal financial planning. In the coming year, we look forward to continuing to offer financial education and support for planning for the future around planned gifts efforts.

♦ Lisa A.K. Kirchenbauer, *Chair*

Sisters at St. John's

The Sisters at St. John's is open to any and all women of St. John's. We gather at different times of the year for fellowship, social, and giving activities. In addition, we support each other in times of need. We maintain a listserv to stay in touch and let everyone know when one of the sisters has something to celebrate or needs assistance. At the end of 2024, the Sister's of St. John's had approximately 80 members.

Every year, we host a weekend of fellowship and spirituality at the A. Felix DuPont Memorial House in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. The 2024 retreat was held March 8–10, led by the Rev. Criscket, with 16 women in attendance. The theme of the retreat was "Living Our Baptism: Inspired by Faithful American Women." The retreat always starts Friday night and ends Sunday around noon. Women of all ages join in, and for those who do not drive, there is a carpool. New this year we brought in a local yoga instructor to lead a class.

On September 15 at the Ministry Fair, an additional 10 women signed up to be a part of our group. On Sunday, September 29, the Sisters at St. John's held our second tea after the 11 a.m. service. More than 30 women attend, including some who were new to the group. At the tea, we talked about the purpose of the women's group and spent time learning more about each other with plenty of opportunity for personal engagement. In addition, we discussed some of our plans for the remainder of the year and into 2025.

We also hosted a spring and a fall parish lunch. The spring lunch was a selection of wonderful salads and the fall lunch was a selection of chili. We plan to continue hosting two lunches every year. Other activities currently in the works are a monthly Zoom meet-up for Compline and connection, a possible lunch out one Sunday after church, and another gallery or museum tour.

Finally, in January 2024 the Sisters of St. John's collected products to benefit N Street Village. We plan to do this again in 2025 as the collection last year was a huge success. We will have a basket in the Parish House to collect items that include women's underwear (sizes 7, 8, 11, & 12), cleaning supplies, travel-size toothpaste, travel-size body wash, travel-size shampoo, travel-size lotion, travel-size deodorant, dishwashing soap, paper towels, adult incontinence items (sizes M–XXL), and toilet paper.

We continue to hope that more women will get involved with the Sister's group, and we anticipate hosting regular opportunities to connect in a variety of ways at times that accommodate people's differing schedules.

♦ Lisa Kirchenbauer, Joanne Hutton, and Emily Lucio, *Co-Leaders*

South Africa Pilgrimage

In August 2024, St. John's undertook a spirit-filled trip to visit our partner, Kwasa College in Springs, South Africa. Led by the rector, the Rev. Robert W. Fisher, the pilgrimage included nine parishioners, among them two teenagers. This was St. John's first visit to Kwasa in more than eight years, after a pause due to Covid and a transition in rectors. It also marked the 20th anniversary of the first St. John's trip to the school, in honor of which St. John's pilgrims and Kwasa students blessed and planted 20 indigenous trees around the campus. St. John's found an impressive educational program at Kwasa and a thriving campus. Since our last visit, Kwasa had built new classroom facilities and added staff to support a growing student population of 150 in pre-primary (ages 3 to 6) and 300 in grades 1 through 7.

St. John's worshipped at Kwasa on its first Sunday in South Africa, and thereafter enjoyed joining the students for educational projects and a sports day. Pilgrims and students on several occasions engaged in singing African folk tunes and American children's songs, led by the Rev. Sharon Dinnie, the founder and rector of Kwasa, with the Rev. Rob Fisher on guitar. During this cold mid-winter visit to Kwasa, we were pleased to gift knit caps to all the students, most of whom live in challenging housing conditions and do not have warm winter hats.

The St. John's group traveled as well to historic sites around Johannesburg to gain a deeper understanding of the South Africa struggle against apartheid. Additionally, to experience the African bush, the group spent several days at a game reserve located near Pretoria. Cape Town was next on the groups destinations, including visits to the Cape Peninsula and other scenic attractions. During the visit, the group showed their music talents, joining an African drumming jam session at a training center for young adults making djembe drums. The last Sunday in South Africa included worshipping in the morning in a most welcoming church in a Cape Town township with spirit-filled dancing and joyful singing by all. In the afternoon, the group worshipped at St. George's Cathedral in downtown Cape Town.

St. John's is considering a return trip to Kwasa and South Africa, possibly in 2027.

♦ Abbott McCartney, *Kwasa Leadership*

Speaker Series

The Speaker Series is held most Sundays from September through May at 10 a.m. in the Togo West Parlor on the first floor of the Parish House. An audio recording is made available on our website the week after each talk. The following speakers were featured during 2024:

Alan Cooperman, Director of Religion Research at the Pew Research Center: "What Americans Think About Religion" (January 14)

Rustin Lewis, Monique Baker, and Yohanna M'Bedgue, Executive Director, Program Director for DC Schools, and Volunteer, respectively, at Communities in Schools: "All In for DC Kids: Communities in Schools of the Nation's Capital" (January 21)

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Annual Three-Week Presidential Series: The Presidency of Calving Coolidge

Matthew Denhart, President, Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation (February 11)

Garland Tucker, Trustee, Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation (February 18)

Amity Shlaes, Chair, Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation (February 25)

Christopher Browne, Director: “The Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum” (March 3)

Michael Auslin, Research Fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution: “Contemporary Geopolitics in Asia” (March 10)

David Gallalee, Julia Koster, and Sharon Park, parishioners and members of the Bell Tower Restoration Committee, and **Robert Allen** of Bowie Gridley Architects: “St. John’s Bell Tower Restoration Project” (April 14)

Nancy Stoner, President, Potomac Riverkeeper Network, spoke about the work of the organization (April 21)

Mark Hudson, Executive Director, spoke about Tudor Place’s Historic House and Gardens (May 5)

Laura Onkey, Director of the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, spoke about the work of the school (May 12)

Columba Stewart, Executive Director and CEO of the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library: “Voices of the Ancestors: Saving the World’s Manuscripts from Destruction” (May 19)

Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary of the United States Department of Homeland Security, spoke about the work of the department (September 8)

Carroll Doherty, Director of Political Research at the Pew Research Center: “The 2024 Presidential Election” (September 22)

Ann Compton, parishioner and former ABC News White House Correspondent: “My Career at ABC News, and Thoughts on Media and Politics Today” (September 29)

Scott Sklar, President of the Stella Group: “Clean and Sustainable Energy” (October 6)

Maureen Corrigan, Professor of Literary Criticism at Georgetown University: “The Novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald” (October 13)

The Rev. Christine Dunn, Director for Community Engagement at Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area: “Welcoming Our Refugee Neighbors” (October 27)

Vice Admiral Frank “Trey” Whitworth, Director of the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency and St. John’s parishioner, spoke about the work of the agency (November 3)

Mara Karlin, former Assistant Secretary of Defense “The Middle East: Old Challenges and New Dilemmas” (November 10)

Laura Lavelle, Historian and Office Manager at Oak Hill Cemetery, spoke about her book, “Oak Hill Cemetery” (November 17)

George Musgrove, Professor of History at the University of Maryland, Baltimore: “Black Protest Politics in the 1980s and 1990s” (December 8)

Sharon Park, parishioner and Bell Tower Restoration Committee member: “Revisiting the Bell Tower Restoration” (December 15)

♦ Clark Ervin, *Coordinator*

St. John's Pride

St. John's Pride vision is to be an impactful and inclusive place of grace for the LGBTQIA+ community and allies. The group's mission is to share the good news of God's love for all in a nurturing, inclusive, and affirming space where the LGBTQIA+ community and allies may find connection and support, celebrate their identities, and walk in love as Christ loves us.

Relaunch

During a spring 2024 retreat, members of the former LGBTQ+ Fellowship gathered in ministry and fellowship to organize St. John's Pride, develop vision and mission statements, and strategically plan ways to impact our community. Sharing ourselves and God's love authentically with others can be a powerful way to break down barriers faced by the LGBTQIA+ community. Our approximately 40-member ministry group celebrates this community, their families, and allies every day.

Pride Month 2024

Refreshed T-shirts and banner in tow, St. John's Pride marched in the Capital Pride Parade to effect God's love and embrace for the LGBTQIA+ community. As a reminder of the celebration of LGBTQIA+ identities at St. John's Church, the Rev. Sarah Akes-Cardwell delivered a sermon on July 9 to share the good news of Christ's love for all.

Episcopal Diocese of Washington (EDOW)

As other parishes in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington took notice of the energy of St. John's Pride, we started a networking effort to empower the LGBTQIA+ communities of other congregations in building their own paths to connection, support, and celebration in their church home. We also established a working relationship with the EDOW Missioner for Equity and Justice to coordinate our mutual goals and move closer to becoming a people that loves our neighbors and ourselves as God loves us.

Looking Ahead

Building upon a solid foundation from 2024, this upcoming year brings an abundance of opportunities and even greater need for mission and evangelism in the LGBTQIA+ community. The United States is the host of 3 million visitors to World Pride 2025 right here in Washington, DC, this upcoming June. We will challenge ourselves and our parish to rise to the occasion in further investing in and advancing inclusivity at St. John's Church.

In 2024 St. John's Pride hosted the following events:

- April Host Parish Lunch
- Spring Retreat
- May Post-Evensong Social
- Grace's Table Service Activity
- June Capital Pride Parade
- Pride Month Sermon
- Gay Men's Chorus of Washington Concert
- Book Club (*postponed*)
- September Tiki Boat River Cruise
- Ministry Fair
- Business Meeting
- October Host Parish Lunch
- November Post-Evensong Social
- December Angel Tree
- Gay Men's Chorus of Washington Concert

♦ John Schutz, *Coordinator*

Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee's continues to focus on annual giving. Receipts from pledges account for 48% of the total budget at St. John's. The end-of-year record of pledge amounts received over the past few years are:

Year	Pledged	Units
2016	\$1,025,960	427
2017	\$1,020,000	371
2018	\$1,035,765	375
2019	\$933,468	368
2020	\$940,383	336
2021	\$1,016,726	367
2022	\$1,084,393	367
2023	\$1,129,641	338
2024	\$1,134,412	309

As of January 22, 2025, we had received 279 pledges totaling \$1,114,500 (compared with 265 units totaling \$1,070,570 received by January 31, 2024). We've seen at least 34 new or reinstated pledges as of January 22, 2025, compared with 22 by the end of January 2024, and 96 increased pledges as of January 22, 2025, compared with 110 at the end of January 2024. The average increased pledge was approximately 43% higher than in the previous year.

This year, we enjoyed talking intentionally with our pre-pledgers, those members of our parish who have not yet pledged. On Sunday, November 3, when I addressed the congregation about stewardship, we challenged all our pre-pledgers to pledge that day. We had eight pre-pledgers take up the challenge to become pledgers! We may continue to mark the first Sunday in November as an annual opportunity for our pre-pledgers to pledge, encouraging those who have not yet pledged to pledge together on that day.

Parishioners typically continue to submit pledges for several months into the new calendar year, as new members join our church or as members reevaluate their charitable giving plans. To those in our parish family who have not yet pledged for 2025, we ask you to please carefully and prayerfully consider making a pledge. Any pledge, no matter the size, makes a difference. For those whose financial situation allows for a pledge increase, this helps us meet the higher costs we face due to inflation.

Website updates make both pledging and donating more straightforward. If you have any suggestions for continued improvements, please send them our way.

Membership of this year's Stewardship Committee includes: Tony Anikeeff, Powell Hutton, Carter Keithley, Elizabeth Morrison, Chris Northrup, Eleanor Odom, Richard Price, Toby Stock, Alfred Thesmar, and Richard Young. In December 2024, our committee hosted a delicious and well attended BBQ parish lunch, and we enjoyed the opportunity to gather and mingle with our fellow parishioners in the lovely Togo West Parlor.

We were pleased once again to benefit from wonderful stewardship testimonials—this year we heard from Nora Haugh, Justin Dean, and Fruzsina Harsanyi. We also want to recognize the outstanding support that the St. John's office staff provides in facilitating our stewardship work. Charley Griffin and Preston Cherouny are the backbone behind the logistics, data analysis, and data management of the stewardship process.

The Rev. Robert W. Fisher continues to provide steadfast leadership and unwavering support for stewardship. Rob's participation in both our committee meetings and our monthly leadership meetings, his outreach to individual pledgers and heartfelt expressions of deep gratitude and thanks, as well as his constant encouragement of stewardship during services, make a critical difference in our stewardship results.

♦ Caroline Faris, *Chair*

Sunday Liturgical Ministries

Worship at St. John's would not be possible without the faithful commitment of our acolytes, chalice bearers, crucifers, and readers. On Sunday mornings, at funerals, evensongs, and a host of other worship occasions, these dedicated lay leaders add so much to our community. It is encouraging to see participation in these ministries extend across multiple generations, and among both newcomers and longtime members. Through their teaching and mentorship, the thoughtful leaders of these liturgical ministries continue to help parishioners grow in their confidence and skill in facilitating meaningful worship.

Crucifers

Crucifers carry the cross, leading the procession of choir and clergy at the beginning and conclusion of worship services. In addition, they carry the Gospel book in the Gospel procession, receive the offering from the ushers and the flagon of wine and box of wafers from the element bearers. Crucifers also assist in replenishing the wine when the chalice bearers run low during communion.

Our regular and occasional crucifers in 2024 were: Eric Bailey, Paul Barkett, Matt Bode, Finley Buchanan, Mark Cardwell, Kevin Cordova-Brookey, James Doyle, Mike DuMond, Wendy J. Fibison, Stewart Jeffries, Anya Kleymenova, Paul Winslow Mandelson, Michelle Mangrum, Brandon Montgomery, Greg Morrison, Felicia Owunwanne, Rachel Pepper, Eric Peters, Jack Reiffer, and Beverly Roberts.

We are always looking for new talent, so please consider taking part in this important ministry.

♦ Kenny Kraft, *Coordinator*

Chalice Bearers & Lay Servers

Chalice bearers and lay servers support the eucharistic liturgy at 8, 9 and 11 a.m. Sunday services during the program year, and at 8 and 10:30 a.m. during the summer. Availability for weekday services and memorial services, as needed, is requested but not expected. The role of both chalice bearer and lay server is to administer wine to communicants. Lay servers, who are only scheduled at the 8 a.m. service, have the additional responsibility of reading the lessons and prayers and holding the gospel for the priest to read. At this time, 20 parishioners serve as chalice bearers and five as lay servers. If you are interested in sharing sacramentally the blood of Christ with others during services, please speak to a member of the clergy or contact the lay coordinator of chalice bearers, Joanne Hutton, to find out more.

♦ Joanne Hutton, *Coordinator*

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Readers / Lectors

Our dedicated group of 64 lectors and readers continued to assist in proclaiming the Word with excellence during each worship service. Whether reading Old Testament scripture passages, Epistle texts, or leading the psalms, our readers continued the vital leadership in opening our hearts and minds and listening to God's word. Their ability to lead us in the prayers of the people helped us to respond to God's word, lifting our praises, thanks, and intercessions on high. We will continue trainings to help lectors develop and refine their skills for this important role in the Ministry of the Word.

♦ Martha Ellison, *Coordinator*

Youth Acolytes

Our youth acolyte program retained all 10 participants this year, and we hope to add newly eligible middle schoolers in 2025. The participating middle and high school students serve at the 11 a.m. service as torch bearers, assist with Children's Chapel, and help set the altar for communion. We continue to have a once-per-month participation schedule and were excited to expand into select holiday services this year. We look forward to further expanding to serve in additional evening and holiday services as the ministry grows.

♦ Nora Haugh, *Coordinator*

Tour Guide Guild

Tour guides Kevin Cordova-Brookey, Richard Busch, Susan Cardwell (who joined the guild in July), and Richard J. Price welcomed over 300 visitors during 2024. This number included three large groups of weekday visitors: 155 eighth graders, who had successfully completed mid-term examinations, and their chaperone parents from Idaho; and two groups of secondary school teachers (40 each) invited to Washington, DC, by the White House Historical Association to study the activities of those living and working in the Executive Mansion. Sixty-four visitors from 18 states across the United States stayed for Sunday morning tours (Arizona, Arkansas, California, the District of Columbia, Georgia, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, New York State, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington State, and Wisconsin), as did 14 visitors from Canada (British Columbia), Slovakia, South Korea, the United Kingdom (Yorkshire), and a family of six wonderful Indian folks living in Kuwait.

♦ Richard "Rick" Busch, *Head Tour Guide*

Treasurer's Report

2024 Highlights

St. John's received approximately \$2.27 million in operating revenue in 2024, of which nearly half (\$1.134 million) came from annual pledges. As of December 31, 2024, the volume of unpaid pledges was 3.86%; it is typical to receive pledge payments for the prior year into the following year. St. John's also collects revenue through non-pledge contributions, offerings, program/event income, space rentals, and transfers from our endowment.

St. John's program expenses increased in 2024, and the Vestry approved a budget with a \$175,000 deficit as an investment in the future of the church with plans to work to grow revenue. The church realized some savings due to the departure of a clergy member and the fact that most formation activities, outreach, parish life, and program support came in under budget, so we ended the year with a deficit of \$90,000 to be funded from reserve savings.

2024 Operating Income/Revenue

Total pledges in 2024 (approximately \$1.134 million) fell short of the 2023 budgeted pledge amount by more than \$25,000. Some 309 households pledged in 2024 (down from 338 in 2023). However, more than 35 households were new or returning pledges, increasing the average pledge from \$3,340 to \$3,670. The median pledge was \$2,000.

Non-pledge contributions (\$23,337) and offerings (\$118,678) lagged for the year, compared to budget, reaching 62% and 84% of their targeted revenues, respectively. Notably, while pledges have increased year over year, offertory has been a decreasing/under-performing source of revenue since 2020, a trend we have been closely monitoring and factoring into our budgeting process.

Program and event income exceeded its \$56,000 budget by nearly \$2,000 while facilities rental fell short of expectations, bringing in \$13,500 as compared to \$40,000 budgeted. However, looking at reservations in 2025 that are already scheduled, plus new rates that are more competitively priced for the market, program, event, and rental income show promise as growing revenue streams for the church.

2024 Disbursements

The majority of St. John's 2024 projected expenses (\$2,359,929) fell the following categories:

- Administration* (\$433,203)
- Buildings and grounds* (\$507,017)
- Clergy* (\$443,143)
- Music* (\$405,686)
- Outreach (\$233,576)

Other operating expenses include:

- Formation (\$26,308)
- Parish Life (\$26,438)
- Program Support* (\$141,690)
- Worship (\$94,906)

** Personnel costs are St. John's largest expense (\$1,409,003) and are spread across several categories, reflected in this line item.*

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St. John's remains a top contributor to the diocese and has distributed almost \$100,000 in outreach grants to local and international community organizations (in particular, to the Holy Land and South Africa, where we maintain long-standing partnerships).

St. John's also continues to maintain and provide updates to our building and grounds. St. John's restored the bell tower and roof in 2024. This project has its own budget and is separate from our annual operations. Please review the Bell Tower Committee report to learn more about that budget and fundraising.

2025 Financial Outlook

The Vestry approved an operating budget of \$2,350,433 for 2025, based on an anticipated \$1,140,000 in income from pledges. Additional revenue is expected from offerings, gifts, event income, and transfers from our endowment and reserve funding.

The following are the principal budgetary assumptions for revenues and expenses:

- \$1,140,000 anticipated pledge income
- \$118,335 in offering income
- \$46,400 in event income for use of the church's space (lower than the amount budgeted for 2024)
- 5% draw from endowment, based on a rolling 12-quarter fund average
- \$114,150 for outreach contributions and grants, 10% of pledge revenue
- \$135,000 pledge to the diocese
- 2.5% salary increase for staff and clergy (in line with diocesan guidelines)
- 3.73% in reserves for unpaid pledge balances
- 4% increase to cover increased building and grounds costs (e.g., increased maintenance expenses and overall vendor costs)

Due to increased expenses and rising costs, the Vestry approved drawing up to \$20,158 from reserve savings to balance the budget.

♦ Casey Evans, *Parish Treasurer*

♦ Nora Haugh, *Assistant Parish Treasurer*

Usher Guild

For the past 138 years, ushers have had an integral role at St. John's Church, Lafayette Square, more than 200 years after the placement of its cornerstone on September 14, 1815. Over 70 years after services began on October 27, 1816, the Vestry approved the hiring of ushers from the local community to seat growing numbers of visitors and parishioners. In 1894, volunteer male members of the congregation were given the opportunity to serve as ushers to offer service to the church and on committees and the Vestry. In 1941, the Usher Guild was formed. In the 1970s, volunteer female members of the congregation began to serve on the Vestry and in the 1980s as ushers. In 2003, female parishioners assumed roles as Assistant Head Ushers.*

Today's volunteer ushers are members of that legacy Usher Guild, and warmly greet and assist parishioners and visitors as they attend services at St. John's Church. Ushers help with seating, so as not to disrupt the worship of others, and participate during the offertory and administration of the Holy Eucharist. Ushers serve in small teams once a month at each of its Sunday services. They may also volunteer to serve as ushers for funerals, memorial services, and other special events during the week. Members of the Usher Guild have sponsored one of the splendid festival music programs, including that featured at the Easter Sunday services, for the past 19 years.

Ushers strive to ensure that appropriate decorum and the integrity and personal security of worshipers are maintained. Wearing white carnation lapel arrangements, they are easy to identify as they assist worshipers in the event of emergency situations that may occur during church services. As first responders, many assistant head ushers and ushers have been certified in use of emergency cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) techniques and automated external defibrillator (AED) equipment.

During 2024, more than 50 parishioners volunteered as ushers. Teams of ushers were led by assistant head ushers Jeff Agnew, Matt Bode, George Diliberto, Bud Harrell, Robyne Johnston, Grant Kraus, Richard Metzger, Anthony Pegues, Hap and Nora Rigby, and Alfred Thesmar. Church attendance continued to increase during the year despite the continuing aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic health situation. The Christmas Eve Pageant and Easter Sunday services continue to be the most highly attended regular services held at St. John's Church.

Ushers look forward each Sunday to serve the entire St. John's parish and surrounding community. I invite you to consider being part of this exciting and dedicated ministry. If you would like some additional information, please contact me at any time.

♦ James H. Czerwonky, *Head Usher*

* Information was sourced, in part, from Green, *The Church on Lafayette Square*; Harper, *Years of Change*; and Grimmett, *St. John's Church, Lafayette Square*.

Vestry Nominating Committee

Per parish bylaws, the Vestry of St. John's, Lafayette Square, is the governing body of the parish and acts as our agent and legal representative for all matters concerning our corporate property and relation to the clergy. The Vestry consists of the Rector, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, and 12 at-large members elected by the parish. The Vestry is assisted by the parish officers—Parish Counsel, Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer. Officers are appointed by the Vestry annually.

The Senior and Junior Wardens serve one-year terms while the 12 at-large members serve staggered terms of four years. Each year, the terms of three members of the Vestry expire. This year the departing members of Vestry are Krista Rimple Bradley, Wendy J. Fibison, and David Gallalee.

The Vestry Nominating Committee, chaired by a departing Vestry member, met to consider nominees to fill these vacancies. Based on the committee's recommendations, the following parishioners have agreed to stand for election to the Vestry:

Senior Warden—Nora Rigby

Junior Warden—Alfred Thesmar

At-Large Vestry Members (three to be elected):

Brian Cordova-Brookey

Doug Estes

Debby Hailey

Laura Herzog

Julia Koster

Eleanor Odom

On Sunday, January 26, 2025, the candidates introduced themselves during the Speaker Series hour and spoke briefly about their backgrounds and their plans and priorities if elected. Voting will take place at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 2, 2025, and the results will be announced at the end of the meeting.

♦ Wendy J. Fibison, *Chair*

WELCOME!

At St. John's Church, we believe Christ is calling us to be a renewed church in a changing world. Empowered by the Spirit of God, we respond to Jesus' call as we deepen our bond with Christ through worship, become a community where all are accepted, and work together as laity and clergy to do God's work in the world.

St. John's was organized in 1815 to serve as a parish church for Episcopalians residing in the neighborhoods in the west end of the District of Columbia. Its cornerstone was laid on September 14, 1815, and it was consecrated on December 27, 1816. Beginning with James Madison, every person who has held the office of President of the United States has attended a service at the church. Several Presidents have been communicants. Thus, St. John's is often referred to as the "Church of the Presidents." Pew 54 is the President's Pew. The architect of the church was Benjamin Henry Latrobe, who assisted in the rebuilding of the U.S. Capitol and the White House after the War of 1812. Twenty-five of the stained glass windows in St. John's were designed and executed by artisans of the noted Lorin firm of Chartres, France.

If you are visiting, please fill out the visitor information card found at the end of each pew to enable us to welcome you personally into the life of our parish.

St. John's website (www.stjohns-dc.org) has up-to-date information about the church including the Sunday service schedule, Speaker Series speakers and topics, and newsworthy events.

Vestry Leadership & Members

Nora Rigby, *Senior Warden*

Alfred Thesmar, *Junior Warden*

Tony Anikeeff, Krista Rimple Bradley,
Kaye Edwards, Casey Evans, Wendy J. Fibison,
David Gallalee, Fruzsina Harsanyi,
Elizabeth Cavert Morrison,
Ucheora Onwuamaegbu, Jack Reiffer,
Matthew Taylor, and Jess Unger, *Members*

Casey Evans, *Treasurer*

Nora Haugh, *Assistant Treasurer*

Allie Raether, *Secretary*

Harker Rhodes, *Parish Counsel*

Head Usher—James H. Czerwonky

Head Greeters—Eleanor and Peter Odom

Heads of Flower Guild

Pat Dalby and Katherine Kyle

Worship & Program Staff

The Rev. Robert W. Fisher, *Rector*

The Rev. Sarah Akes-Cardwell, *Associate Rector*

The Rev. William Morris, *Assisting Priest*
for Engaging Local Communities

Brent Erstad, *Director of Music and Organist*

Lyn Loewi, *Associate Organist*

The Rev. Dcn. Eric Bailey, *Minister for Youth and*
Young Adults

Staff

Preston Cherouny, *Chief Operating Officer*

Charley Griffin, *Operations Manager*

Lisa Koehler, *Program Associate and*
Executive Assistant to the Rector

Javier Obregon, *Sexton*

GeeGee Bryant, David Gamboa, and John Queen,
Assistant Sextons

Anne Stone, *Publications*

ST. JOHN'S MISSION STATEMENT

St. John's shines as a beacon of God's love through faith, worship, care, and community, and offers a place of grace at our historic corner in the nation's capital.

Parish House

1525 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005-1005

(202) 347-8766 ♦ www.stjohns-dc.org