



SAINT JOHN'S CHURCH

LAFAYETTE SQUARE
WASHINGTON, DC

ANNUAL PARISH REPORT

FOR THE YEAR 2025

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 2026

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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 2026

Dear Members of St. John's,

As I write this, snow and ice are all around, and the Washington, DC, region is still digging out from a snowstorm that forced us to hold both church and presentations from this year's six vestry candidates online on Sunday. But the speeches were remarkable. I was particularly struck to see each candidate look into the camera and share how St. John's has been a place of community, spiritual growth, radical welcome, and grace for him or her. We often use the phrase "place of grace" to speak about our mission, and these individuals testified to how we have been living into this calling.

This past year was one of steady and faithful growth. Our attendance has ticked upward nearly each Sunday compared to the prior year. Easter and Christmas were the biggest we have seen since the pandemic. Our music program continues to flourish, driving dramatic growth in our evensong and Lessons and Carols services in particular. Our Pride Fellowship and Latrobe Fellowship groups are also growing in energy as well as in numbers. I regularly meet people after services who express that they are astonished at how welcome they feel, and how nourishing they find the worship that we offer.

When we started the year, our assistant priest, Eric Bailey, was still an hourly seminarian from Virginia Theological Seminary, serving St. John's primarily with youth ministry and the Latrobe Fellowship, our young adults' group. But in late spring he graduated, became a priest, and now as a regular staff member has taken on the newcomer ministry. We are already seeing the fruits of his efforts.

Sarah Akes-Cardwell continues to provide clergy leadership in pastoral care and children's ministries, making sure that we care for one another well, and that St. John's is a place where young ones and their families can be nourished in their faith life. Although she serves us half-time, her ministry is far-reaching and she arranges her schedule to be with us nearly every Sunday.

We are fortunate, too, that Will Morris continues to share his gifts of ministry, including preaching, during the time that he is available when not flying around the world for his "day job" with PwC.

All of our clergy have been generous in offering their gifted preaching.

About two years ago we received a remarkable contribution from the estate of Dorothy M. Macauley. The details are spelled out in the Warden's Report. Half of the gift is to St. John's with no strings attached, and after much discernment, the vestry has allocated the majority of that gift to a buildings and grounds endowment. Two smaller portions have been used to fund our operating reserve and a fund for special projects. We have used the special projects money to do a number of good things that give an immediate, noticeable improvement to the church, including the fixing of our patio, the greatly improved exterior lighting, and the furniture in the parlors.

Importantly, we are also allocating special project funds to learn about our church's history in light of race and slavery. We seek to be a place of grace, and to do that we also need to be a place of truth. We have completed a search for a historian, and have selected Michael Guy, who recently received his Ph.D. in history from George Washington University. We expect Michael's work to take 18 months and to result

in a publishable book. We also plan to build upon what we gained from the experience of Sacred Ground and to find ways for our whole community to engage with this work. We do this freely and out of a sense of mission, because we know that history is something that we value here and we want to tell our story more fully. Grace and truth go together, and a more complete knowledge of our past will help empower us to make our present better for our neighbors and ourselves.

On that note, we are poised to do something remarkable with the half of the Macauley gift that was provided for serving those in need. After much discernment, we have set up a grant-making process that is about to launch, led by Anthony Pegues and Krista Bradley and a committee comprising a diverse and highly skilled group of parishioners. Because the money has grown since it was received, we have significant funds to give away, and the vestry has voted to give at least \$1M in grant awards in the first set of grants to be offered this year, and potentially more. Our guiding qualifications are that the funds will support the sick, poor, and homeless first and foremost, which was specifically stipulated by Mrs. Macauley, and that the gifts will make a transformative difference for the recipient organizations and the lives they serve. We will seek ways to support those doing work locally that promotes healing, dignity, and belonging as we live into the church's ongoing commitments to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice.

This year, also, we said goodbye to Preston Cherouny, who over the years served in many capacities, most recently as Chief Operating Officer. He will be missed, but we are fortunate to welcome John Stowe, who has just recently become our COO and brings many gifts and a genuine heart for ministry.

We also sadly said goodbye to vestry member Elizabeth Morrison and Treasurer Nora Haugh, who both had to move away from our area due to unexpected work transitions. Kate Benner is now filling out the rest of Elizabeth's term, and Anya Kleymenova has moved from Assistant Treasurer to Treasurer.

Finally, I need to say what a blessing our vestry is, as they serve with faithfulness and share their many talents for the sake of this community. Nora Rigby, who is concluding her term as Senior Warden, has been an especially impactful leader in her total of seven years of vestry service (including three as a member, two as Junior Warden and two as Senior Warden). It is hard to convey just how much she has dedicated of herself to support the life of this church over those years. In addition to leading with energy, brilliance, and integrity at every step, she is reflective and also fun. We owe her our enormous gratitude, and many of the ways St. John's is flourishing today are a direct result of her efforts.

It is for me a privilege to serve this church as its rector, and I look forward to the exciting things we will do in 2026.

Faithfully,
The Rev. Robert W. Fisher

WARDENS' REPORT

Dear Parishioners:

St. John's began 2025 on a historic note, with visits from two presidents in the same week. President Biden attended a small service during his final week in office and President Trump held his pre-inaugural prayer service just a few days later. Blessedly, the rest of 2025 was quite ordinary, allowing the wardens and vestry to focus on improving the physical and administrative foundations of our church. Following several extraordinary years that included the Covid-19 pandemic, Black Lives Matter protests, and renovation of our historic bell tower, the wardens very much appreciated the relative normalcy of 2025.

Bell Tower Renovation Project—Final Costs and Fundraising

While the construction work for the bell tower renovation was completed in 2024, the final invoices carried over into 2025. As you may recall, the estimated cost of the project was \$1.9M. We are pleased to report that the total cost of the project came in just over \$1.8M (almost \$100,000 under budget), while the fundraising campaign raised just over \$2M, exceeding its target by more than \$100,000. Assuming all bell tower pledges are paid as promised, the church will come out ahead on the project. If there is a surplus, the vestry will determine how best to use it.

The wardens are indebted to Preston Cherouny, our former COO, who carefully managed and reported on the costs of the project and the fundraising totals. We are also grateful to Julia Koster, Chair of the Bell Tower Committee; Chase Rynd, Chair of the Building Committee; and David Gallalee, Chair of the Fundraising Committee, each of whom greatly contributed to the success of the project.

Macauley Outreach Grants

In late 2023, the church received an extraordinary gift of \$6.4M from former parishioner Dorothy M. Macauley. Her estate plans 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. With this in mind, the vestry set aside the "outreach half" of the Macauley gift while it considered how best to use it to fulfill those objectives. Thanks to growth in the market, it is now valued at \$4.1M.

To discern a plan for the outreach half of the money, the vestry formed the Macauley Grant Committee, composed of Krista Bradley, Anthony Pegues, Will Morris, Jess Unger, Nora Rigby, Peter Odom, Sandy Sierck, and Richard Price. The committee developed a process to make grants to local organizations that support the poor, the sick, and the homeless in greater Washington, DC. After reviewing the proposed process, the vestry voted to approve making grants of at least \$1M (and possibly more) in 2026. The Macauley Grant Committee will solicit and review grant applications from local organizations and make recommendations to the vestry about grant recipients and amounts. The committee will also develop a plan to audit grant recipients to ensure funds are used as intended.

As we reported last year, the roughly \$3.2M of the Macauley gift that went directly to St. John's has been put to use in three ways. The majority of the money (\$2.75M) has become an endowment for buildings and grounds, which generates funds from the interest that help us cover the costly expense of maintaining our historic and irreplaceable property. The remaining amounts were divided evenly between an operating reserve and a special projects fund (\$325,000 each) that will be used to make improvements to the church in the near term.

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St. John's History Project

In spring of this year, the vestry voted to spend \$75,000 to undertake a history of enslaved people in the life of St. John's. This project comes out of the vestry's desire to advance the church's ongoing commitments to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice through its Beloved Community and Sacred Ground initiatives. Led by parishioners Clark Ervin, Krista Bradley, and Fruzsina Harsanyi, the church hired Dr. Michael Guy (Ph.D., History, The George Washington University) to research and write this history. We expect that the written history will be completed by the end of 2026.

Improvements to the Interior and Exterior of the Church

St. John's invested in several long-needed improvements to its buildings and grounds in 2025, thanks to the Special Projects Fund of the Macauley Gift. First, we purchased furniture, mirrors, lamps, and rugs for the Togo West parlors on the first floor of the parish house. The rooms are now both more attractive and more useful for gathering before and after services. Second, we installed new lighting outside the parish house entrance on H Street and replaced the broken lighting outside the main entrance on 16th Street. The new lighting looks beautiful and provides additional security to our buildings at night. Lastly, we replaced many broken and cracked stones outside the 16th Street entrance to the church, some of which were damaged during the inauguration and others that had worn down from years of regular wear and tear. The cost to repair the stones broken during the inauguration was paid for by the contractor that caused the damage. We also replaced the stone edging for the flower beds along 16th Street and H Street. In the spring, we plan to install new plants and flowers in those beds.

Renewed Properties Committee

After being dormant for several years, we reconstituted the St. John's Properties Committee. It will be co-chaired by Sharon Park, a historic preservation architect, and Doug Estes, a civil engineer with years of experience managing historic properties for the federal government. The Properties Committee will advise the staff and vestry when repairs or renovations are needed at the church, and it was instrumental in the repairs to the plaza stones and lighting this year.

New Strategic Objectives

In October, the vestry refined the strategic objectives for St. John's, which the staff and vestry will work to achieve over the next several years. These objectives, updates to those first adopted in late 2022, are:

1. Sustain St. John's buildings and grounds through thoughtful planning, space use, and partnerships, given the unique opportunities of our location and mission.
2. Attract and retain families with babies, children, and youth as measured by the number of families and children who engage with St. John's each month.
3. Increase hands-on parishioner participation in outreach efforts as measured by the number who participate.
4. Build and strengthen connections in St. John's community as measured by growth in both newcomer engagement and existing ministry groups.

Conclusion

In summary, the church can be pleased with the accomplishments of 2025, and thankful for the support of our extraordinary community. We are poised to continue our growth in 2026.

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

REPORTS OF PARISH ORGANIZATIONS

Adult Inquirers' Class

The 2025 Adult Inquirers' classes were offered in both spring (April 5 and 12, with 17 participants) and fall (October 11 and 18, with 10 participants) and provided opportunities for exploration and formation across the year. The engaging two-day course explores the Christian faith, the history and traditions of the Episcopal Church, and the spiritual life of the Church as practiced at St. John's. The class is open to all who are seeking a faith practice or wishing to deepen their spiritual understanding. Participants typically include newcomers to St. John's; adults preparing for baptism, confirmation, or reception into the Episcopal Church; and both new and longtime members interested in learning more about St. John's and the Episcopal tradition. The classes are led by the Rev. Robert W. Fisher, Rector, with assistance from the Rev. Sarah Akes-Cardwell and the Rev. Eric Bailey. Services of confirmation and reception were held at Washington National Cathedral on Saturday, May 10, and Saturday, November 15, with a total of 10 adults from St. John's confirmed or received. Participation in the Adult Inquirers' classes, together with the number of new members transferring to St. John's from other congregations (see "Parish Register" later in this report), reflects and supports the continued growth of St. John's.

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

Book Group

St. John's Book Group is an active community of dedicated readers exploring emerging issues and themes of local and national concern. We convene 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 typically meets on the first Thursday of each month. During 2025, the group met 11 times, with approximately 15 regular participants and more than 50 individuals on the mailing list. In June, we solicit suggestions from members and vote on books to read the following year, on a wide range of cultural, historic, and spiritual topics. In 2025, we read and discussed the following books:

- *The Plague*—Albert Camus
- *American Midnight: The Great War, a Violent Peace and Democracy's Forgotten Crisis*—Adam Hochschild
- *Klara and the Sun: A Novel*—Kazuo Ishiguro
- *Who Is Government: The Untold Story of Public Service*—Michael Lewis
- *North Woods: A Novel*—Daniel Mason
- *The Sisterhood: The Secret History of Women at the CIA*—Liza Mundy
- *The Bee Sting*—Paul Murray
- *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand*—Helen Simonson
- *The Magician*—Colm Tóibín
- *Master Slave Husband Wife: An Epic Journey from Slavery to Freedom*—Ilyon Woo

The group also hosted the parish lunch on March 16, 2025, 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 at St. Johns includes some 40 parishioners as part of a Google group communications circle. In 2025 the activities we undertook included:

A spring nature walk—The Rev. Sarah Akes-Cardwell (and family) led Eucharist after a delightful walk through the National Arboretum to enjoy its blooming azaleas and precious fellowship time in April.

An Earth Week presentation on water quality—Dr. Jesse Meiller, a professor at Georgetown University, gave a Speaker Series presentation on the problems of microplastics in our bodies and the waterways that supply our drinking water.

Hosting a sustainable pescatarian luncheon—with grateful thanks for all contributions and, particularly memorably, Linda Gaines' New Orleans seafood gumbo.

A fall outreach cleanup—Abbott McCartney organized a cleanup morning at the Suitland Parkway Nature Preserve with the Ward 8 Woods Conservancy, to which we also dedicated a portion of the parish's outreach budget in recognition of their fine work on limited financial resources.

Improvements to our limited parish vegetated space—The parish front plaza saw numerous hardscaping improvements in 2025, and we are in discussions with our landscaping team about replanting beds with an eye to their sustainable management. Along the columbarium sidewalk and ramp access, beds are now planted with Mid-Atlantic native groundcovers that we hope will get established over the next year or two, and we expect to do some education for parishioners about why native species are so important in our landscapes.

Discussions about improving parish sustainability practices—Research was done this past year on the feasibility of installing solar paneling on the parish house rooftop to make use of credits and subsidies offered through the District of Columbia and Biden IRA. However, due to the roof structure's shape, Secret Service restrictions on rooftop activities, and related costs, solar is not presently an option for reducing our parish's carbon footprint; this can be re-examined in the future. Two of us serve on the Diocesan Committee for Creation Care, which meets monthly and was working on energy use benchmarking of parishes throughout the diocese this year to help plan for improvements; Abbott McCartney takes a strong leadership role in these efforts. Sarah Wood has been active with the Washington Interfaith Network (WIN), working on electrification initiatives. Some of our members are likewise looking into the feasibility of parish composting programs in 2026.

We are grateful to all who prepare Parish Lunch making use of china and silverware in place of disposable materials that add to our trash stream. We know this requires extra effort and time, but groups are learning how to use our highly efficient dishwasher. We are similarly grateful to our sextons and other staff who pay attention to purchasing and limiting single-use plastic consumption in our parish life. We nonetheless generate a lot of garbage and should continue to consider ways that we can reduce this trash stream in the future.

♦ Joanne Hutton, *Coordinator*

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 from September through May, children in pre-K through 5th grade meet for class in the Parish House. Like many peer parishes, we have struggled to maintain consistent numbers for this formation hour with young children—although Sundays with a special activity, such as our December care package assembly for guests of Grace's Table and the Communion Class for Families, tend to garner higher attendance. The Rev. Sarah Akes-Cardwell and a team of two 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. Beginning in the fall of 2025, we extended the offering to include the 9 a.m. service. This better meets the needs of families with young children, and it has been a joy to grow this offering. Children's Chapel is offered at 9 and 11 a.m. services 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 12 children present. Typically between three and five parents also attend.

FAMILY MINISTRIES

In addition to our annual Advent wreath-making activity and Christmas pageant, we presented numerous opportunities for families with young children to participate in meaningful and more inclusive ways. Our year in Family Ministries included participation in the following offerings:

- March: Holy Week Preview for families; Maundy Thursday Family Service
- April: Care of Creation National Arboretum Walk and Eucharist; trash pick-up and boat ride
- Pentecost Sunday: Celebratory reception with activities
- July: Ice Cream Social on the Plaza following the Fife and Drum service
- September: Parents' Night Out
- October: Blessing of the Animals
- November: Communion Class for Families; Parents' Night Out
- December: Advent party with food and kid-friendly activities; family service activity making cards and goodie bags for Grace's Table guests

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 Susan Cardwell, Katherine Raab, and Elizabeth Thesmar for their leadership of the Christmas pageant. Many thanks to the 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 Family Ministry and Pastoral Care*

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 and connect with one another. Questions are not only tolerated, but actively encouraged.

Our time together usually begins with an opening prayer or reflection, followed by refreshments and brief check-ins or icebreakers. 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. While retaining this model, we explored other structures this year and encouraged youth to personally handle and familiarize themselves with scripture. Our weekly gatherings centered on the liturgical calendar and lectionary cycle, with a special focus on the gospel lesson.

The 2025 youth program also included fellowship activities such as a haunted tour of Lafayette Square, a bowling night, a youth lock-in, and even decorating a tree together during the season of Advent. Youth also collaborated with Grace's Table to feed and serve the unhoused community in Georgetown.

As a group, we value marking special days, occasions, and achievements in the lives of our youth. We encourage youth to serve as acolytes and learn about our shared tradition. In the spring of 2025, seven youth from St. John's were confirmed. We expect another class of youth to be confirmed in 2026.

♦ The Rev. Eric Bailey, *Assistant Priest for Parish Life and New Member Engagement*

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. In 2025, this adult formation offering completed its sixth year, marking our second time through the entirety of the three-year cycle of gospel readings. The class is led by retired minister and St. John's parishioner Jack Reiffer, and 20 people receive the weekly study materials, including several who can no longer attend regularly on Sundays and have asked to receive reports of class discussions. In 2025 the group discussed the structure, audience, and themes of the Gospel of Luke, focusing especially on the unique presentations of Christ and the early Church in this gospel and its companion book, the Acts of the Apostles. The "Great Reversal" announced in the Magnificat set the tone for Luke's special focus on the marginal. On most Sundays our discussions include reflections on that day's sermon. In December the class began Liturgical Year A, with its focus on the Gospel of Matthew. We studied how the birth narratives of Jesus and the accounts of John the Baptist in this gospel contribute to our celebrations of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, as well as how these narratives represent Matthew's special presentation of the Messiah.

♦ Jack Reiffer, *Coordinator*

BEING WITH

Being With is a 10-week course exploring Christian life and faith that was developed at St. Martin in the Field (London) by the Rev. Dr. Sam Wells. In the spring of 2025 we held an online Being With group at St. John's, our fourth cohort course. Our first in-person Being With group began in the fall, meeting on Tuesday evenings at the church. The way the group practices “being with” one another each week is just as valuable as the content of the course, and has been well received by participants. We continue to grow 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. Discernment about how to use and maintain the skills of these facilitators, as well as exploration of offering the core Being With course or shifting to some of their newer curriculums, will be the next steps for spring 2026.

♦ The Rev. Sarah Akes-Cardwell, *Associate for Family Ministry and Pastoral Care*

Education for Ministry

In May 2025, three St. John's parishioners completed the four-year Education for Ministry (EfM) program. Fruzsina Harsanyi, Sara McGanity, and Jeremy Skog received their certificates from the University of the South, where EfM is based. The leadership of EfM mentor Carolyn Crouch was also recognized during worship in appreciation for her shepherding of this group for the past several years. St. John's is taking a pause from EfM until new mentors are identified from within the parish. In the meantime, parishioners can connect with groups at parishes in our region online or in person. To learn more about Education for Ministry visit efm.sewanee.edu or talk to a member of the clergy.

Flower Guild

During 2025, members of St. John's Flower Guild continued their loving tradition of creating beautiful floral arrangements that enhanced the beauty of our historic church and enriched the worship experience for all who attended.

The guild provided floral arrangements for all Sunday morning services and special events listed on the church calendar, such as weddings, baptisms, funerals, memorial services, our annual Advent party, and other occasions. Duties included planning and ordering the appropriate flowers and greenery and then creating the actual arrangements to be placed around the church. Guild members made every effort to honor parishioners' and family members' requests regarding flower choices and colors for the four weddings and 12 funeral or memorial services. Whenever possible, the guild strove to match the flowers to the occasion. A good example was the February 23 special Sunday service featuring sacred music composed by the South African composer Franco Prinsloo and reflecting the values shared by Nobel Prize recipient Archbishop Desmond Tutu; the altar flowers that day featured the exotic protea, the national flower of South Africa.

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Notable special events that speak to St. John's unique spiritual presence in our nation's capital occurred during the whirlwind weekend of January 17–20, 2025. On Friday, January 17, the Rev. Rob Fisher and a select group of vestry members welcomed outgoing President Joseph Biden to a mid-morning tour of St. John's, culminating with a private prayer service. Flowers from the guild enhanced the historic and personal significance of that visit. On Saturday, January 18, the guild created magnificent arrangements for Sunday morning worship that extended into Monday, January 20, Inauguration Day, when St. John's welcomed incoming President Donald Trump and members of his administration for a pre-inaugural prayer service led by St. John's clergy, a tradition that had its origins in 1933 with the first inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Flowers in gold and crimson hues adorning the altars and narthex greeted the incoming President and Vice President when they arrived for the service.

On the church's most celebrated holy days, Christmas and Easter, an abundance of flowers and fellowship are in order as guild members gather to prepare the church to celebrate the birth and resurrection of our Lord. And every week parishioners have the opportunity to honor their loved ones by donating to the flower fund. Contributors can sponsor all or part of the church's floral arrangements for any given Sunday. The name of the designated loved one appears in the church bulletin along with a dedication which can be in memory of, in celebration of, or in thanksgiving for that person or event.

St. John's Flower Guild gladly welcomes new members. The only requirement is a desire to learn more about flower arranging and a sincere wish to participate in this ministry at St John's. Prior experience is not necessary; newcomers team up with a veteran guild member during Saturday morning arranging sessions. These mentors graciously share their knowledge of design techniques and artistry.

We would like to express our gratitude to our dedicated sextons Javier Obregon, GeeGee Bryant, David Gamboa, and John Queen for their weekly assistance with flower delivery and placement. Wedding coordinator Anne Harrington also provides an invaluable service to both the guild, as well as to the couples who marry at St. John's.

Thank you to the following Flower Guild members for their service throughout the year: Sarah Agnew, Paul Barkett, Allison Childress, Pat Dalby, Susan Feaster, Jamie Finch, Ellie Fullerston, Anne Harrington, Susan Heil, Amanda Claire Hoover, Joanne Hutton, Lara Kanitra, Nicole Kleman, Julia Koster, Katherine Kyle, Elizabeth Lewis, Sherill Mason, Allie Raether, Sarah Schreiber, Zach Schutz, Adelle Simmons, Becca Todd, and Pamela Venske.

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

Greeters Guild

The role of the greeter is to make everyone who comes to our worship services feel welcomed. Greeters stand outside the church offering St. John's literature, answering questions, and giving directions. We say hello to everyone who comes in and introduce ourselves to the people we do not know. We invite visitors to tell us about themselves—for example, where they are from and how they found St. John's. We 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, and this ministry provides visitors and potential new members a first glance at St. John's. It is a genuinely fun ministry that gives those of us

who are greeters the opportunity to get to know more people. We would love to have more volunteers and more ideas for warmly welcoming all. We strive to demonstrate that all are welcome! We currently have 22 greeters and can always use more. We try to have two greeters at both the 9 and 11 a.m. services, so the more, the merrier. Contact either Peter or Eleanor if you are interested.

♦ 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. Members of the 2025 committee were Lisa Kirchenbauer (Chair), Preston Cherouny, Justin Dean, the Rev. Rob Fisher, Nora Haugh, Richard Metzger, Nora Rigby, and Alfred Thesmar.

In 2023, the church retained Goldman Sachs 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 and 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 2025, the church drew 5% (or \$949,608) from its endowment to fund operations, covering roughly 43% of the church's expenses for the year.

The endowment consists of the first three accounts listed below: (1) General unrestricted funds; (2) Quinby restricted funds, from which the church may spend only the income and no principal; and (3) Macauley Buildings and Grounds, which funds are directed to support those specific operating expenses. The Macauley Buildings and Grounds endowment was established following the receipt of the Macauley Gift in late 2023 and has allowed the church to draw slightly more from the endowment this year and in future years.

The investment accounts managed by Goldman Sachs for St. John's various endowment and related accounts are as follows, as of December 31, 2025:

Endowment—General	\$8,343,061.12
Endowment— <u>Quinby</u> Fund (Restricted)	\$11,654,135.68
Endowment—Macauley Buildings and Grounds	\$3,077,115.50
Macauley Outreach Fund	\$4,130,253.13
Operating Reserve	\$746,805.02
Special Projects Fund	\$279,359.96
Rectory Investment Account	\$49,439.04
Brown Advisory Alternatives	\$43,635.00
Total Endowment Assets Under Management	\$28,323,804.45

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Important Changes in 2025

During 2025, the Investment Committee undertook three important projects:

- Finalizing the new Investment Policy Statement (IPS) under the management of Goldman Sachs;
- Implementing account streamlining and account asset allocation strategies to support the expected timelines for each account's use; and
- Supporting the short-term cash needs of the church's bell tower project.

While the bell tower project was being completed, a temporary loan of \$800,000 was transferred from the Macauley Buildings and Grounds endowment to the church to cover the costs of the project until such time as pledges were paid. As a result of receiving many of the funds to pay for the bell tower project in the first year, the church was able to pay back \$700,000 of the loan balance in August 2025.

Investment Committee Meetings

The Investment Committee met 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

2025 was a strong year in terms of stock and bond market performance. The bond market had a solid year as the Federal Reserve began lower interest rates. The U.S. stock market had a strong year, while international markets had one of their best years in an extended period of time. At year-end 2025, the overall performance of St. John's endowment across all accounts was 15.71%.

The economic and market outlook continues to be a bit unknown, as the U.S. labor market has softened and inflation remains above the Federal Reserve's target of 2%. The impact of tariffs, AI investments, and geopolitical issues remains unknown, although modest positive market returns are still a possibility in 2026.

♦ 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. Our 2025 events included:

- Faith forum dinner with discussion led by the Rev. Will Morris on his unique faith journey and how we approach the intersection of the spiritual and the secular in our own lives
- Sunday parish lunch followed by an outing to the National Gallery of Art
- Lenten devotional and dinner with group discussion led by seminarian Caroline Mazzocchi, which offered participants a chance to reflect on their Lenten journeys
- Evening Prayer followed by dinner at a neighborhood restaurant
- Trivia nights—Jeopardy and Christmas-themed
- Hosting a parish lunch

Special thanks to Beth DuMond, who has agreed to help lead the group following the departure of previous co-chair Christine Davies, and to seminarian Caroline Mazzocchi, who offered additional assistance and ministerial presence. Going forward, we have the goal of establishing a planning committee to bring in new leadership and assist with planning a strong agenda and exciting programming.

Thanks to all who have joined our gatherings. We look forward to welcoming new and returning members in 2026.

♦ Hilary West, *Chair*

Latrobe Fellowship for Young Adults

The Latrobe Fellowship strives to build a community where young adults can pause, pray, and build meaningful relationships with one another. We aim to create programming where young people can find social and spiritual support. As a vibrant and welcoming group, we look to model the outreach principles of the church, “seeking the face of Christ in neighbors far and near,” through good works and faith.

Latrobers gather regularly, typically on the first Wednesday evening of the month for a short worship service followed by refreshments, fellowship, and learning opportunities. Importantly, as in other years, Latrobers continue to play meaningful roles in the wider St. John’s community. We participate on Sunday mornings as ushers, greeters, readers, tech assistants, chalice bearers, musicians, Church School teachers, Grace’s Table volunteers, and more.

In 2025 the Latrobe Fellowship hosted the following events:

- January—Three Kings’ Day celebration
- February—Field trip to Virginia Theological Seminary
- March—Cherry blossom walk
- April—Anglican prayer beads workshop
- May—Prayer in the Bishop’s Garden and fellowship at St. Albans
- June—Brunch
- July—Brunch
- August—Brunch
- September—Annual wine tasting
- October—Trivia night
- October—Brunch
- November—Ecumenical foliage walk and contemplative worship service
- December—Latrobe Advent party

We help Latrobers learn about faith, explore different cultures in our congregation and the Washington metropolitan area, and deepen their understanding of the Episcopal Church and its liturgy. Providing a community space for this active and dedicated group of young adult parishioners helps to ensure a strong future for St. John’s membership. In 2025, we welcomed many new members to the group and engaged a higher number of volunteers for our Planning Committee. Toward the end of the year, the Latrobe Fellowship hosted up to 30 monthly attendees—a nearly 100% increase from the prior year.

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We offer our special gratitude to Jess Unger for his dedicated service to the group. As part of a planned leadership transition, Cami Pease will succeed Jess as Chair of the Latrobe Fellowship. Similarly, we owe thanks to the 2025 Latrobe Planning Committee members Kate Benner, Conrad Briles, Autumn Brown, Michael Butler, Thomas Gould, Olivia Hynes, Claire Kim, Apiyo Oloya, Cami Pease, Will Priest, Matthew Taylor, and Helena Upshaw. Their leadership and support helped make our gatherings possible.

♦ The Rev. Eric Bailey, *Assistant Priest for Parish Life and New Member Engagement*

Livestream Ministry

St. John's Livestream Ministry provides a valuable resource for St. John's by bringing worship services to parishioners who cannot attend in person due to illness or travel. We also extend a warm welcome to our online guests, some of whom eventually join the parish.

The 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. During the summer months, when the 9 and 11 a.m. services are combined, we livestream the 10:30 a.m. service.

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

Prior to each service, a technician turns on the DataVideo system, connects the livestream link, and prepares the cameras. Once the service begins, the technician can add their creative touch in determining camera angles and focal points throughout the service.

Our volunteers enjoy the challenge of bringing St. John's services to an even wider audience—and you might, too. We invite you to join this fun and engaging ministry. Visit our livestream desk after a service and introduce yourself to Seth Gilmore, Jeremy Sheeler, Jeremy Skog, Matthew Taylor, and Ryan Wagner. Free onsite training is provided.

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

Music Ministry

Rooted in a strong choral tradition and supported by a dedicated community of singers and musicians, our music ministry continues to deepen its role in the worship life of the parish. This report reflects the health of our choral program, the expanding reach of our musical offerings, and important transitions that will shape the ministry in the year ahead.

The music ministry is anchored by our three choirs, each contributing in important ways to the worship life of the parish. **The St. John's Choir**, our fully professional ensemble, continues to model the highest standards of sacred music-making. These musicians bring not only exceptional skill to their work, but also a deep sense of vocation and a commitment to the life of the parish. As colleagues, they support one another with care and professionalism, taking pride in the artistry and consistency required to sustain a program of this caliber week after week.

The Parish Choir, our volunteer ensemble, experienced notable growth over the past year with the addition of several new members. Alongside this growth came an expanded musical ambition, as the choir undertook the preparation of Choral Evensong in October and prepared several larger-scale works, including Louis Vierne's *Messe Solennelle* on Christ the King Sunday. At the same time, the **Chorister Program** for children and youth was restructured, consolidating two choirs into one and adopting a mentorship model. Older, high school-aged choristers now guide and support younger probationers as they develop their musical and liturgical skills. Choristers rehearse twice weekly and sing regularly for worship on Sundays and the monthly evensong.

Choral Evensong continued to gain momentum this year, with average attendance more than doubling over the course of the year. These services, along with the annual Requiem Eucharist for All Souls' Day and the service of Lessons and Carols for Christmas, which welcomed approximately 450 people into the church, have become an important means of widening our reach beyond the regular Sunday congregation. Increasingly, visitors and guests are discovering St. John's through these evening services. The receptions that follow provide opportunities for Christian fellowship, deepening our shared sense of community. It has been especially rewarding to see other parish groups, including St. John's Pride and members of the Latrobe Fellowship, actively embrace evensong and the social events that follow.

This work would not be possible without the generosity and commitment of many people. I am deeply grateful to the donors whose support of special musical offerings allows the music ministry to go above and beyond, enriching the worship and life of the parish. My sincere thanks also go to Linda and Chappy Stowe, who joined us in September as interim assistant organists and have become valued colleagues and true partners in ministry. They will continue with us through the end of the current program year, by which time we hope to have our next associate organist in place. I am especially thankful for Lisa Koehler, the backbone of our music program, whose tireless work behind the scenes ensures that this complex and growing ministry runs smoothly. Today, the music ministry includes more than 50 people who rehearse, worship, and socialize together several times each week, and I am grateful for each of them and for the community we continue to build together.

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The Choristers

Gloria Burkhardt, Scout Fairbanks, Peter Gullans, Nathaniel Hersey, Grant Lucio, Ailene Neal, Beatrix Neal, Eudora Neal, Sydney Shepherd, and Audrey Schepis

The Saint John's Choir

Sopranos Elissa Edwards, Kerry Holahan, and Tory Wood
Altos Adrin Akins, Lisa Koehler, and Jennifer Mathews
Tenors David Evans, Nathaniel Roper, and William Watson
Basses Nathan Lofton, Justin Dean, and Christopher Jones

The Parish Choir

Sopranos Annette Anfinrud, Elissa Edwards, Whitley Herndon, Kerry Holahan, Helena Upshaw, Christina Wilson, Tory Wood, and Kitty Zhou
Altos Alison Adkins, Adrin Akins, Cay Buser, Barbara Burkhardt, Thea Crouch, Wendy J. Fibison, Sara Josey, Lisa Koehler, Jennifer Mathews, Katherine McClintic, LaFleur Paysour, Emma Shealy, and Margaret Wiegenstein
Tenors Philip Anfinrud, Craig Burkhardt, David Evans, Austin Jordan, Tom Kingsley, Carlos Reyes, Nathaniel Roper, Ian Stimson, William Watson, and William Yale
Basses Jeffrey Bozman, Justin Dean, Matthew Ford, Christopher Jones, Bill Josey, Nathan Lofton, and Vincent Scauzzo

♦ Brent Erstad, *Director of Music and Organist*

Outreach Committee

In 2025, the Outreach Committee continued to nourish our longstanding local and international partnerships. Dozens of parishioners and friends were involved in outreach, and we supported and served a variety of communities in Washington, DC, South Africa, and Jerusalem. The Outreach Committee allocated funds from an overall budget of \$110,000 during 2025, and the committee is grateful to the vestry for this generous allotment. Resources were disbursed as detailed below.

EDUCATION: \$40,000

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

The mission of **Communities in Schools of the Nation's Capital (CISNCAP)** is to surround students in their schools with community supports, empowering them to stay in school and succeed in life. To do that, CIS places a site coordinator in each of its nine DC schools to focus on case management, targeted interventions, prevention services, and parent engagement. Two St. John's parishioners were among the founding members of this local affiliate and served for many years on its board of directors. Ann Gardner and Livy More continue to check in regularly with the CIS executive director and program director to review the organization's needs and spending. St. John's provided significant support to CIS through funding for general operations and through time and talent given by parishioners. Funding from St. John's

was used to support site coordinator positions and to help fill school-based community closets with emergency supplies of food, clothing, shoes, warm outerwear, and hygiene products. Volunteers from St. John's have assisted at monthly food markets and been on call for transportation and delivery needs. In August, St. John's once again provided space in the Togo West Parlor for the CIS Site Coordinator Summer Institute, and in December, parishioners gave generously to CIS children through the Angel Tree gift project.

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. The school, named in honor of the first African American bishop of the diocese, is an independent elementary school rooted in the traditions of Episcopal education and the educational philosophy of Bishop Walker. Each student is provided a full scholarship. Through a collaboration of partner organizations, and with the support of parishes and the philanthropic community, 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 providing books, toys, and presents to students as part of our annual Christmas toy drive and Angel Tree. In 2025, 5th grade graduates of BWS were accepted into Fessenden Boarding School (Massachusetts), Maret, Riverdale Baptist, St. Andrew's, St. Columba Catholic, St. Francis Xavier, St. Peter's Catholic, St. Thomas More, Sidwell Friends, Templeton Academy, Washington Episcopal, and Washington Jesuit.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS: \$34,500

South Africa

- Kwasa College, South Africa—\$18,000
- Travel to support the partnership with Kwasa—\$3,500
- Clergy education for seminarians in the Diocese of Highveld—\$2,500

Diocese of Jerusalem

- American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ)—\$10,500

In 2025, St. John's remained closely linked with the **Kwasa College** in Springs, South Africa. Through regular contacts with the Rev. Sharron Dinnie, Rector of Kwasa College, St. John's kept abreast of life at the school. During the year, Kwasa offered pre-primary education to about 150 students ages 3 to 6, and primary school education to about 350 students in grades 1 through 7. Kwasa serves students living in a nearby informal settlement, where many families are unable to afford basic school costs. Sharron expresses appreciation to St. John's and to all who made contributions through St. John's in 2025 for tuition assistance to students who otherwise would be unable to attend. Sharron has always extended an open invitation to anyone from St. John's who wants to tour Kwasa while in South Africa; several St. John's parishioners had planned to visit during 2025 but were unable due to late travel adjustments. In 2025, St. John's enjoyed the performance of a new choral work, *Cantata "Ubuntu,"* written by South African composer Franco Prinsloo and commissioned for St. John's celebration of its 20-year partnership with Kwasa. The music was dedicated to former Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who along with the Rt. Rev. John Walker, former Bishop of Washington, established the first link between the Episcopal Diocese of Washington and the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. That link became the springboard to St. John's partnership with Kwasa. Plans are now underway for Sharron and others from Kwasa to visit St. John's in the spring of 2026. Early planning has also begun for another St. John's pilgrimage to Kwasa and South Africa in 2027.

St. John's provides funds for **clergy development** as part of our partnership with the Diocese of the Highveld. In 2025, we offered tuition support for a seminarian, Ntombomzi Sitinise, at the College of

the Transfiguration (COTT), the only Anglican residential seminary in South Africa. Zomzi, as she is known, finished her third and final year at COTT in 2025, and engaged in internships for local youth prison and orphanage ministries. In prior years, St. John's had supported Teboho Molefe's studies at COTT, and we are happy to share that the Diocese of the Highveld ordained Teboho in December 2025.

St. John's remains committed to the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, primarily through 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, and St. John's hopes to return to the Holy Land as soon as practicable.

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS: \$16,000

- Grace's Table—\$9,000
- Refugee Committee—\$5,000
- Ward 8 Woods Conservancy—\$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 6–8 volunteers prepare and serve the food, followed by a Bible study led by Grace Church. Funds from St. John's 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, sugar, and creamer. As in 2024, the number of guests seeking food from Grace's Table has increased significantly. In the last 6–9 months, we have seen an estimated 75–90 guests on any given week, compared to 65–75 previously. That has meant that St. John's volunteers have prepared more food each month than ever before. To help meet the demand, we expanded and diversified the group of parishioners regularly volunteering at Grace. For example, St. John's Pride hosted one month, as did the St. John's youth confirmation class. Beyond meeting the heightened demand for food, St. John's worked over the past year to deepen its partnership with the Grace's Table ministry in other ways. Most notably, in addition to hosting our third annual Thanksgiving meal (with turkey, ham, and traditional sides), we provided gift bags with personal hygiene and other items to each guest. In December, we hosted our first Christmas meal, with turkey, ham, Christmas cookies, apple cider, and other treats. These special meals and gifts were met with sincere gratitude, as was the warmth of St. John's parishioners who took time to connect with the guests—inspiring at least one to begin attending services at St. John's on Sunday.

In 2025, the **Refugee Committee** gave \$5,000 of committee funds, plus an additional \$1,000 gift from a committee member, to the Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSSNCA) to be used for emergent needs. In addition, the committee once again conducted a backpack and school supplies drive, assuring that refugee youth would have essential school supplies. The committee also participated in two volunteer days at LSSNCA, hosted a parish lunch, and sponsored Aaron Reichlin-Melnick from the American Immigration Council for the Speakers Series. Because of cutbacks in the Refugee Program from the State Department, LSSNCA saw their staff cut from 100 to 10 during 2025, so the volunteer efforts of the Refugee Committee will be more important than ever in the future.

New in 2025, St. John's committed funds to the **Ward 8 Woods Conservancy**, a nonprofit that works to increase the health, beauty, and public enjoyment of urban forests east of the Anacostia River. The Care of Creation Ministry complemented this outreach funding by leading a successful cleanup project in October of the Suitland Parkway Nature Preserve. The event enjoyed a good turnout across all ages.

EVENTS: \$1,500

- Annual Christmas / Angel Tree Gift Drive—\$1,500

The 2025 Angel Tree Gift Drive was a wonderful success and reflected the heart of our congregation. Once again, our community came together in the spirit of generosity and service to help make the holiday season brighter for children and families across the nation's capital. This year, we partnered with four organizations—Bishop Walker School, Advocates for Justice and Education, Communities in Schools of the Nation's Capital, and the DC Dream Center—and through these partnerships we were able to serve more than 140 local children. As soon as the angels went up on the tree, they were quickly taken, and the generosity that followed was nothing short of amazing. Generous gift donations met the needs of every child. The enthusiasm, kindness, and care shown by our community were both inspiring and deeply appreciated. The wrapping party remains a favorite part of the season, filled with laughter, conversation, and lots of holiday cheer as volunteers worked side by side, wrapping gifts and sharing in the joy of preparing something special for others. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed—whether by selecting an angel, donating gifts, or volunteering at the wrapping party. Your generosity made this year's program possible and brought warmth, dignity, and joy to many families across our city. We look forward to continuing this beautiful tradition and growing its impact in the years to come. Thank you for helping make the 2025 Angel Tree Gift Drive such a meaningful success.

LOCAL, FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP GIFTS: \$18,000

- Downtown Cluster of Congregations—\$7,000
- Samaritan Ministry of Greater Washington—\$4,500
- Washington Interfaith Network (WIN)—\$6,500

In 2025, 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, a shared ministry of St. John's and a network of other mostly Episcopal churches and many diverse individuals across the DMV, continued to serve our neighbors in need with dignity, respect, and compassion in 2025. Thanks to partners and supporters like St. John's, Samaritan provided coaching, exceptional and highly personalized casework, workforce development, and holistic care to those seeking stability and opportunity. In all, Samaritan served 4,395 people in 2025, a 47% increase from the prior year, reflecting both the depth of need in our community and the strength of our shared commitment to respond. During this period, Acting Executive Director David Grove concluded his service to accept a leadership position at his home church in Vienna, Virginia.

To ensure strong continuity of leadership, Jennifer Longmire-Wright and Julio Da Silva (previously the heads of Development and Programs, respectively) were promoted to Deputy Directors of Development and Program and are co-leading the organization during the Board of Director's search for a long-term executive director. Samaritan has continued to make thoughtful organizational changes, always placing

the needs of its Next Step program participants first. The organization's focus also remains on the vital relationships with its member churches like St. John's and the shared ministry that these partnerships make possible. In March 2025, the Rt. Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde made a special major grant to Samaritan and called on Samaritan's supporters to join her in increasing their gifts at a critical time in the financial life of the organization. In June, St. John's hosted a major donor reception for Samaritan. As the organization celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2026, it looks ahead with optimism, including rebuilding its foundation, further right-sizing its operations, and continuing to serve its brave and resilient participants, who are working hard toward creating brighter outcomes for themselves.

St. John's partners with WIN to join with other local congregations of diverse faiths to lend our strength in ensuring that the needs of DC's vulnerable and marginalized are reflected in District of Columbia budget and policy decisions. This work gradually helps diminish the city's severe economic and racial inequities. As in recent years, the St. John's core team of WIN volunteers focused its efforts in support of the public health, environmental justice, and climate protection goals of the WIN Healthy Homes campaign. Robin Pennington, for example, helped plan the next phase of testing of indoor air pollution caused by burning natural gas inside DC homes. The project is successfully raising awareness of the adverse respiratory and cardiovascular health impacts of residential combustion of fossil fuels, as well as expanding funding to ensure that all DC residents may gain the personal health and planet-friendly benefits of replacing their gas appliances with high-efficiency electric models, and fuel them with clean, free electricity through the Solar for All program.

At the same time, St. John's 2025 monetary gift of \$6,500 to WIN helped subsidize the dues of small DC churches that stand to gain most from WIN's work, yet are least able to support it financially. Our 2025 donation also supported WIN's successful campaigns promoting affordable housing, public safety, and community benefits from economic development projects. The many tangible results that WIN helped deliver to DC residents in 2025 include:

- The start of a new year-long youth enrichment and mentoring program provided by Georgetown University at the Tyler House affordable housing complex;
- The passage of the Vacant-to-Vibrant Act, providing incentives and other assistance to convert vacant properties into new opportunities for middle-income homeownership in the District;
- The opening of Legacy, the second of three new affordable housing complexes that WIN helped to negotiate to replace the former Temple Courts community, for families displaced when their old homes were torn down;
- Rezoning that will provide new and significant dedicated affordable housing in Chevy Chase, DC;
- The reversal of many of DC's planned 2025 cuts to violence intervention; and
- The securing of a minimum fund of \$50 million to benefit the community surrounding the new RFK Stadium, \$900 million of tax revenues over 30 years, plus other benefits including a labor agreement, and \$20 million in annual transit funding.

MOVING FORWARD

The Outreach Committee looks forward to continuing our work in the community and with our partnership organizations throughout 2026.

♦ Jess Unger, *Outreach Committee Chair*

Parish Lunch

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 2025, during the periods of January 5 to June 1 and September 21 to December 14, parishioners hosted or helped plan 18 lunch events. Eleven lunches were hosted by committees, seven by individuals in teams. Potluck lunches kicked off New Year's/Three Kings' Day in January and the start of the program year in September. We held a potluck lunch in June and one in July, both of which were well attended, and parishioners seemed grateful for the opportunity to connect during the summer.

Special appreciation is extended to the following individuals and groups who organized, cooked and hosted 2025 events, during which more than 900 parishioners enjoyed fellowship:

Laurie Adams and Matt Bode	St. John's Book Group
Tony and TL Anikeeff	Care of Creation Committee
Marion Blakey	Kwasa
Autumn Brown & Vincent Scauzzo	Lafayette Fellowship
Susan Cardwell	St. John's Pride (twice)
Marion Blakey	Sisters at St. John's (twice)
David and Liz Gallalee	Refugee Committee
Debby Hailey	Stewardship Committee
Elizabeth and Greg Morrison	Vestry
Margo Wiegenestein and Friends	

♦ Holly Sukenik, *Parish Lunch Coordinator*

Parish Register for 2025

Transfers into the Parish

Susan and Steve Roehrich—from St. Stephen's, Charleston, SC

Alexander Keivahn Smith—from Christ Church, New Haven, CT

William Albert Yale—from St. Alban's, Tokyo

Transfers out of the Parish

Scott and Sally Barnes—to the Cathedral of St. Philip, Atlanta, GA

Carolyn Crouch—to Washington National Cathedral, Washington, DC

Matthew, Adrienne, Vincent, Claire, and Bianca Gaziano—to St. Luke's, Alexandria, VA

Michael Jones—to Christ Church Cathedral, Nashville, TN

Brad and Lily Kosegarten—to St. David's, NW, Washington, DC

Michelle Mangrum—to Christ Church, Alexandria, VA

Cameron McBride—to St. Peter's, Savannah, GA

Zachary and Erika Northcutt—to Christ Church, Kensington, MD

Robert, Faith, Patrick, and Elliott Ottenhoff—to St. James Parish, Lothian, MD

Ryan Morgan Toney and Ryan Anthony Schowen—to Saint Mark's Cathedral, Seattle, WA

Louisa Waycott—to St. John's, McLean, VA

Baptisms

Joelle Gamble Copeland
Zachary Brian Lee Copeland
Seth Michael Gilmore
Ella Han
Anderson Alan Haugh
Elizabeth Grayson Hoover
Elliot Alderman Howe
Walker Stuart Johnston
Gracie Sadie Kozlowski
Blaire Sue Lindsey
Carter Clara McElroy
Colin Kennedy McMurray
James Rose
Martin William Slattery Stock
Vivian Cook Trepagnier
Theodore Ray Underwood
Jordan Pierce Wiggins
Pierce Theodore Wiggins

Receptions

Constanza Macarena Vidal Bustaman
Brad James Harbaugh
Babita Susa Kuruvilla

Confirmations

Benjamin Gallard Chew, Jr.
Ellie Elisabeth Fullerton
Gerby Jean-Noël
Seth Michael Gilmore
Kenner Paul Guterman
Ella Han
Charles Austin Jordan
Elle Nicolette Fledermaus Neufeld
Chloe Michaela Kleman Neufeld
Sara Adele Schrieber
Graham Field Singer
Zhijun Yang

Weddings

Meghan Burns & Douglas Burt
Hayley Thayer Lyerly & Joseph Robert Cowan
Elena Michelle Wornom & John "Jake" Kerr, Jr.
Marianne Spencer & Armando Rojas

Burials, Funerals, and Memorial Services

Louise Ritchie Beale
Charles Thomas Bleha
Anne Boardman
Anne Gage Field
Barbara Quarles Harper
John Allen Kinsey
Mary Kloss
Bernard Mathis Malloy

Anne "Nancy" Newhard Martin
Robert Eugene Park
Diane Louise Melvin Allison Spaulding
David Edward Springer
Jennifer C. Urquhart
Paul Swift Van Nice
Susan Scott Van Nice

Pastoral Care Ministry

The Pastoral Care Ministry at St. John's complements and supplements the work of our priests by visiting members of the congregation and contacting them with notes and calls. Ministry team members also pray regularly for those listed in the weekly list of prayer requests.

Team members deliver flowers and notes at Easter (lily plants) and Christmas (poinsettia plants) to those at St. John's who have experienced a death in their immediate family and those in rehabilitation programs or confined to home or medical facilities. The committee also assists clergy and staff with weekly delivery of cards and 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, and current members include Laurie Adams, Krista Bradley, Mark Cardwell, Susan Cardwell, Betsy Danello, Janet Edmond, Kaye Edwards, Wendy J. Fibison, Sandra Hackworth, Debby Hailey, Anne Harrington, Fruzsina Harsanyi, Joanne Hutton, Richard Price, Susan Welch, Margaret Wiegenstein, and Sarah Wood.

One of our team members, Diane Spaulding, died on March 18. We praise God for her many years of service in this ministry.

♦ Jack Reiffer, *Chair*

Planned Giving Committee

As of the end of 2025, there were 62 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, including nine new members in 2025. Unfortunately, one member of the 1816 Society died in 2025. We are grateful for the outpouring of both interest and action, and for the support of those who have come before them. At the end of 2025, the endowment funds totaled \$28.7M, having gained 13.42% in a balanced portfolio for the year. Intentional estate planning and charitable giving continue 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 giving efforts.

♦ Lisa A.K. Kirchenbauer, *Chair*

Property Committee

This year marked the re-establishment of the Property Committee after several years of suspension. A position paper will be produced in 2026 with the assistance of new COO John Stowe to set up procedures and reporting protocols for maintenance contracts and special infrastructure projects. The committee appreciates all the help that Preston Cherouny gave over the past year.

The focus of projects in 2025 was on the exterior and grounds, including the following initiatives:

- The paving of the Plaza to replace broken and deteriorated stone and to create edges for planting beds. Approximately 80 sandstone pavers were replaced and some smoothing of unlevel paving stones was accomplished. Approximately 1/3 of the plaza was replaced with stones from the original quarry (older stones set around 1970s), and new stones were about double the thickness for more durability. Serra Stone Corporation was our contractor, and they did a wonderful job. The cost was \$98,000 for pavers and planting bed edging, with \$40,000 being contributed by the contractor for the inaugural in January 2025. That third-party contractor was responsible for damaging half of the replaced stones while installing a temporary bulletproof barrier on the north side of the plaza.
- Upgrading some of the underground wiring (damaged by rats), installing new efficient lights for the exterior of the Parish House, for both beauty and safety, and replacing the Plaza lights for the front illumination of the church and bell tower. Most of the relighting was completed in 2025, and the remainder along H street and the walk near the ADA ramp will be considered as a project for 2026. Our contractor, Gustavo Del Granado of Electrical Style Services, LLC of Bethesda, did a remarkable job.
- Landscape planting improvements to the north walkway adjacent to the ramp and the columbarium and in front of the Parish House. Will Hiley is the landscape gardener with monthly allowances, and Joanne Hutton has supplied design direction and installed a number of plants, both purchased by St. John's and donated. The planting will be supplemented in 2026 as weather permits.
- Reviewed a report by the Sound Committee and recommended working on safety issues with improved wiring as a first effort.

The work slated for 2026 will involve the completion of exterior lighting and the assessment of security liabilities on the property. The committee will work on coordinating maintenance contracts with the help of John Stowe so there can be planned upgrades and maintenance to all the utilities within the property.

- ♦ Sharon Park and Doug Estes, *Co-Chairs*
- ♦ Joanne Hutton, *Landscape Subcommittee*

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 start of 2025, the Sisters at St. John's had approximately 80 women as members of our group. As of January 2026, there are close to 100 members.

During the month of January 2025, we collected products to benefit N Street Village, a major provider of housing and essential services for women experiencing homelessness in DC. Donations included travel sizes of toothpaste, body wash, shampoo, lotion, and deodorant, as well as cleaning supplies, dishwashing soap, paper towels, toilet paper, women's underwear (sizes 7, 8, 11, and 12), and adult incontinence items (sizes M-XXL).

In early March, we hosted our annual weekend of fellowship and spirituality at the A. Felix DuPont Memorial House in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, with 19 women in attendance. The 2025 retreat was led by the Sarah Akes-Cardwell on the theme "Wilderness Blessings: Featuring the poetry of Pádraig Ó Tuama, Jan Richardson, and Cole Arthur Riley." 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. For the second year in a row, we brought in a local yoga instructor to lead a class.

In September at the Ministry Fair, an additional six women signed up to be a part of the group. On Sunday, September 28, the Sisters at St. John's held our third annual tea after the 11 a.m. service. More than 30 women attended, including some new to the group. At the tea, we talked about the purpose of the 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 2026.

We also hosted a spring and a fall parish lunch. The spring lunch was a selection of wonderful salads, and the fall lunch a sampling of different chilis. We plan to continue hosting two lunches every year. Another activity currently in the works is a gallery or museum tour.

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.

♦ Emily Lucio, *Leader*

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 about a week after each talk. The following speakers were featured during 2025:

David Marchick, former Director of the Presidential Transition at the Partnership for Public Service, talked about the presidential transition process in general and the transition then underway from the Biden presidency to the second Trump presidency. (January 12)

Charles Lister, Senior Fellow and Director of the Syria and Countering Terrorism & Extremism programs at the Middle East Institute, spoke about the fall of the Assad regime in Syria and its implications for the future of that country and the wider Middle East. (January 19)

Annual Presidential Series: The Presidency of Herbert Hoover

Bertrand Patenaude, Hoover Institution research fellow and lecturer at Stanford University on history and international relations, spoke on the topic, “Herbert Hoover and War, Revolution, and Peace.” (February 9)

George Nash, historian, author, lecturer, and noted authority on the life of our 31st president, concluded the series with a talk on highlights of the Hoover presidency. (February 16)

Franco Prinsloo, an award-winning South African composer, discussed his newest piece, commissioned by St. John’s and in honor of Archbishop Tutu, and performed excerpts. (February 23)

Dr. Adam Rothman, Professor of History at Georgetown University and Director of Georgetown’s Center for the Study of Slavery and its Legacies, spoke about the work of the center. (March 2)

The Rev. Professor Sarah Coakley, an Anglican/Episcopal priest-theologian and author, commenced a three-part Lenten series on prayer titled, “A Living Relationship with God,” offering Parts One and Two. (March 9 and 16)

The Rev. Martin L. Smith, likewise an Anglican/Episcopal priest-theologian, author, and spiritual guide, concluded the series with Part Three. (March 23)

Hilary and Cooper Thesmar, Abbott McCartney, Sigi Block, Jonathan Miller, Lilly Strieder, Zoe Fisher, Sarah Wood, and Rob Fisher, St. John’s parishioners who made a pilgrimage to South Africa in furtherance of our partnership with Kwasa College, spoke about the pilgrimage and the amazing work of the Rev. Sharron Dinnie and her colleagues to enrich the lives of its students. (March 30)

Dr. Jesse Meiller, marine ecologist and environmental toxicologist who teaches at Georgetown University as part of its Earth Commons Institute, spoke, at the invitation of the Care of Creation Committee, on “Microplastics, Water Quality, and Caring for Creation.” (April 27)

Aaron Reichlin-Melnick, Senior Fellow at the American Immigration Council, spoke, at the invitation of the Refugee Committee, on the current state of immigration in the U.S. (May 4)

John Muller, local historian and Twain enthusiast, spoke about his book “Mark Twain in Washington, DC: The Adventures of a Capital Correspondent.” (May 11)

Dr. Angelina Arrington, Head of the Bishop John T. Walker School for Boys, spoke about the work of the school and St. John’s longtime partnership with it. (May 18)

Ted Koppel, legendary ABC broadcaster, most famous for his *Nightline* news magazine, reflected on his long and distinguished career in journalism and commented on the current state of the Fourth Estate. (September 14)

Daniel Shapiro, former Ambassador to Israel and former Deputy Secretary of Defense for the Middle East, discussed the war between Israel and Hamas. (September 28)

Debra Bruno, journalist and author, spoke about her family’s connection to slavery, documented in her book, “A Hudson Valley Reckoning.” (October 5)

Karim Sadjadpour, noted Iran expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, spoke about the U.S. strike on Iran’s nuclear facilities; Israel’s strikes against other targets in Iran and its proxies; and how these developments are reshaping regional geopolitics. (October 12)

William Taylor, former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, discussed the state of Russia’s war against Ukraine and the prospects for ending it. (October 26)

Stephen Vladeck, Professor of Law at Georgetown and noted constitutional scholar, spoke about the Supreme Court's past and current terms. (November 9)

The Rev. Richard A. Burnett, General Secretary of the Colleges and Universities of the Anglican Communion, spoke about the important work of this institution. (December 7)

♦ Clark Ervin, *Coordinator*

St. John's Pride

The vision of St. John's Pride 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.

A Year of Witness and Resilience

In 2025, St. John's Pride demonstrated remarkable faithfulness and perseverance amid unprecedented challenges. Building on the strong foundation established in 2024, our ministry expanded its witness while navigating a year marked by both extraordinary celebration and profound adversity. Our 50+ member ministry group welcomed 10 new members this year and stood together as a sanctuary of God's unwavering love for the LGBTQIA+ community during a very difficult year for many in our community.

Institutional Affirmation: Visible Signs of Welcome

In 2025, St. John's Church took a historic step by displaying the Episcopal Church Pride Shield on our exterior signage alongside a welcoming message for all. This public declaration represents an institutional commitment to LGBTQIA+ inclusion and serves as a prophetic witness at our historic corner in the nation's capital. For many passersby, this visible signage communicates what words alone cannot, that 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.

Branded Materials and Outreach

St. John's Pride distributed St. John's Church branded handouts featuring service days and times during WorldPride 2025 and made them available in the narthex throughout the year. These materials served as a concrete invitation to the wider community, signaling that we are actively welcoming LGBTQIA+ visitors and inviting them into our church community. The distribution of these materials at Pride demonstrates that our welcome is not passive but actively proclaimed.

WorldPride 2025: A Historic Witness

Pride Shield Pin Ministry—Early in 2025, St. John's Pride commissioned lapel pins featuring the Pride Shield logo of the Episcopal Church as a powerful symbol of theological affirmation. These pins proved extraordinarily popular within our parish. The demand extended beyond St. John's, with a rector from another parish in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington requesting pins to bless parishioners before they marched in WorldPride and give them as blessed gifts.

WorldPride March—St. John's Pride marched with visibility and joy in the WorldPride 2025 parade displaying signage "You Belong, No Exceptions" to the estimated 1.2 million visitors. The crowd reacted

with powerful emotion to seeing our church so highly visible in the parade, affirming the profound need for faith communities to publicly proclaim God's inclusive love.

Sustained Fellowship and Community Building

St. John's Pride continued strong fellowship traditions throughout 2025 such as post-evensong socials that attracted visitors from other parishes and people of other faiths; parish lunches that built bridges across the broader congregation; support for the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC, through participation in their Spring Affair fundraiser and December holiday show; and the beloved Angel Tree gift drive and wrapping event in December. These gatherings created consistent, welcoming spaces for connection and spiritual nourishment in a year when many in the LGBTQIA+ community felt isolated and under attack.

Navigating Extraordinary Challenges

The year 2025 brought severe challenges through a series of actions that systematically targeted LGBTQIA+ rights and protections as well as erasing diversity programs across federal agencies. Several members of St. John's faced direct and serious challenges resulting from changes in federal government staffing, personnel policies, and diversity and care programs that affect livelihoods, healthcare access, and mental health. The visible institutional support from St. John's took on deepened significance as a source of pastoral care and affirmation.

Looking Ahead to 2026

As we enter 2026, St. John's Pride must chart a path forward that honors the pain of this year while rekindling hope, purpose, and joyful witness. We recommend:

- Deepening spiritual practices with contemplative prayer gatherings and scripture focused on God's liberating love and belonging. Spiritual resilience grows through intentional practice.
- Building resilience through community with small group fellowships for deeper sharing and mutual support and establishing mentorship pairs connecting newer and established members.
- Reclaiming joy with regular social and service events and new partnerships.

Conclusion

In 2025, St. John's Church proclaimed that LGBTQIA+ individuals belong fully and completely in the body of Christ. We will continue supporting spaces where all individuals and allies find connection, support, and celebration. We will deepen our spiritual roots, reclaim joy as spiritual discipline, and bear prophetic witness to God's inclusive love.

"Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39)

2025 Events Summary

- Spring Affair, Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC
- WorldPride 2025 March
- Monthly Post-Evensong Socials
- Parish Lunch (multiple dates)
- Angel Tree Gift Drive and Wrapping Event
- Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC, Holiday Show

♦ John Schutz and Brian Cordova-Brooke, *Co-Chairs*

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	Year	Pledged	Units
2016	\$1,025,960	427	2021	\$1,016,726	367
2017	\$1,020,000	371	2022	\$1,084,393	367
2018	\$1,035,765	375	2023	\$1,129,641	338
2019	\$933,468	368	2024	\$1,134,412	309
2020	\$940,383	336	2025	\$1,183,555	307

As of January 15, 2026, we had received 256 pledges totaling \$1,065,685 (compared with 286 units totaling \$1,122,100 received by January 31, 2025). We have received 34 new or reinstated pledges as of January 15, 2026, which is the same number of new or reinstated pledges by the end of January 2025. We had 87 parishioners increase their pledges as of January 15, 2026, compared with 96 at the end of January 2025. The average increased pledge was approximately 50.6% higher than in the previous year.

In 2025, we enjoyed talking intentionally with our pre-pledgers, those members of our parish who have not yet pledged. On Sunday, November 9, 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 and make a pledge! We may continue to mark a Sunday in early 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 2026, we ask you to please carefully and prayerfully consider making a pledge. Any pledge, no matter the size, makes a difference. Due to the longest government shutdown in fall 2025, we understand this situation may have provided a hardship for members of our congregation and may affect the number of pledge units we receive for 2026. For those whose financial situation allows for a pledge increase, this helps us meet the higher costs we face due to inflation. Parishioners may continue to pledge online via St. John's website or with a traditional pledge card. Pledge cards are no longer mailed out, but provided at the Parish House front desk.

This year's Stewardship Committee members are Stephen Crochet, Powell Hutton, Elizabeth Morrison, Chris Northrup, Eleanor Odom, Richard Price, Alfred Thesmar, and Richard Young. On December 7, 2025, our committee hosted a delicious and well-attended parish lunch of sandwiches, chips and cookies catered from Corner Bakery.

We were pleased once again to benefit from wonderful stewardship testimonials—this year Eleanor Odom, Stephen Crochet, Debby Hailey, and Will Priest spoke eloquently and earnestly to our congregation. We also want to recognize the consistently outstanding support the St. John's office staff provides in facilitating our stewardship work. Charley Griffin is 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 our stewardship efforts. Rob's meetings with me and our committee, his outreach to individual pledgers, and his encouragement of stewardship during services all 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 2025 were: Eric Bailey, Paul Barkett, Matt Bode, Brandon Boothe, Finley Buchanan, Mark Cardwell, Kevin Cordova-Brooke, Mike DuMond, Wendy J. Fibison, Stewart Jeffries, Anya Kleymenova, Kenny Kraft, Paul Mandelson, Brandon Montgomery, Greg Morrison, Felicia Owunwanne, Rachel Pepper, Eric Peters, Jack Reiffer, Beverly Roberts, and Andrew Turvey.

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, 17 parishioners serve as chalice bearers and six 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*

Readers / Lectors

Our dedicated group of 57 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 acolytes play an integral part in worship at St. John's. Comprised primarily of middle and high school students, our acolytes regularly serve at the 11 a.m. service and participate as torch bearers, assist with Children's Chapel, and help set the altar for communion. This year, acolytes served in new roles, performing the duties of the thurifer and assisting during special evening services in the holiday season. Presently, the acolyte program includes 11 volunteers. In 2025, three young members of the church joined the program, and Vincent Scauzzo became the new coordinator.

This coming year will be one of growth for the acolyte program. Multiple high school seniors will graduate this year, so the highest priority for the program is recruitment. We will embark on an active and direct recruiting campaign in order to expand participation and meet more potential acolytes where they are. We will also review scheduling and communications methods to optimize operations between program leadership, acolytes, and families. Finally, we will evaluate the overall roles, responsibilities, and appearance of the acolytes to make sure that they best suit the worship needs of St. John's and the goals of volunteers.

♦ Vincent Scauzzo, *Coordinator*

Tour Guide Guild

Susan Cardwell, Kevin Cordova-Brooke, Richard Price, and Richard Busch continued as tour guides during the calendar year 2025, welcoming 100 visitors following the 11 a.m. service. These visitors came from Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and Virginia.

The following large groups visited on weekdays for a total of 151 people: from Roland Park Retirement Community in Baltimore (10); a group from the Hudson River Valley in New York State (8); incoming freshmen from Lubbock Christian College in Lubbock, Texas (38); Alabaster House, a Christian group (30); and a group of high school sophomores visiting our nation's capital from around the United States (65). Nine visitors from other countries included Canada (1), Singapore (4), Scotland (1), and China (3). This brings the total number of visitors to 260.

Additionally, our rector Rob Fisher conducted a tour when he was alerted to the fact that among a number of visitors on a Sunday was a young man who attended his former parish in California. Also, following a 9 a.m. service, parishioner Julia Koster happened to notice a group of visitors standing around. She queried the group and determined that they wanted a tour, to which she responded.

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

Treasurer's Report

2025 Highlights

The preliminary and unaudited results for our nearly \$2.5-million operating budget for the year ending December 31, 2025, show St. John's had a strong year. St. John's received approximately \$2.47 million in operating revenue in 2025, of which nearly half (\$1.184 million) came from annual pledges. As of December 31, 2025, the volume of unpaid pledges was \$58,821, representing 4.97% of total pledges made. It is typical to receive pledge payments for the prior year into the following year, especially in January and February. St. John's also collects revenue through non-pledge contributions, offerings, program/event income, space rentals, and transfers from our endowment. In 2025, we received \$226,951 in non-pledged and restricted gifts.

St. John's program expenses increased in 2025, and at the start of the year, the vestry approved a budget with a \$16,459 deficit as an investment in the future of the church, with plans to continue to grow revenue. The church saw increases in some revenues and kept costs in line with the proposed budget, except for recognizing additional security costs toward the end of the fiscal year. The preliminary estimated deficit for the December year-end is \$7,629, to be funded from reserve savings.

2025 Operating Income/Revenue

Total pledges in 2025 (approximately \$1.184 million) exceeded the 2025 budgeted pledge amount by more than \$43,000. The church had 307 households pledge in 2025 (slightly lower than the 309 in 2024). However, 50 pledges were new, and 257 households renewed their pledges, with 101 pledgers increasing their pledges. The average pledge amount also increased from \$3,671 to \$3,855. Non-pledge contributions and offerings (\$185,946) were 37% higher than the budgeted amount. Notably, this year, both pledges and non-pledge offerings have increased.

Program and event income exceeded its \$44,400 budget by nearly \$20,000, although, sadly, we saw more funerals than weddings this year. Facility rental fell short of expectations, bringing in \$21,839 compared to the \$27,000 budget. However, looking at reservations in 2026 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.

2025 Disbursements

The majority of St. John's 2025 projected expenses (\$2,482,379) fell into the following categories:

- Administration* (\$445,039)
- Buildings and Grounds* (\$584,131)
- Clergy* (\$481,605)
- Formation (\$30,878)
- Music* (\$436,837)
- Outreach (\$242,533)
- Parish Life (\$24,653)
- Program Support (\$70,576)
- Worship* (\$112,644)

**Personnel costs are St. John's largest expense (\$1,404,946) and are spread across several categories, reflected in this line item.*

St. John's remains a top contributor to the diocese, giving \$135,000 this past year. In direct outreach support, we allocated \$110,000 in grants to local and international community organizations supporting education ministries, homeless services, and long-term ministry partners in the Holy Land and South Africa.

St. John's also continues to maintain and update our building and grounds. St. John's restored the bell tower and roof in 2024. This project had its own budget and was separate from our annual operations. The project was successfully completed and came under budget. Payments for invoices and the bell tower work were completed in 2025.

2026 Financial Outlook

In January 2026, the vestry approved a balanced operating budget of \$2,490,454 for 2026, based on an anticipated \$1,160,000 in pledge income. Additional revenue is expected from offerings, gifts, event income, and transfers from our endowment.

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

- \$1,160,000 in anticipated pledge income
- \$180,950 in other offerings income
- \$60,000 in event income for use of the church's space (higher than the amount budgeted for 2025)
- 5% draw from endowment, based on a rolling 12-quarter fund average
- \$111,360 for outreach contributions and grants, 10% of the expected pledge revenue
- \$135,000 pledge to the diocese (same amount as in prior years)
- 2.0% cost-of-living adjustment increase for staff and clergy (in line with the diocesan guidelines)
- 4% in reserves for unpaid pledge balances
- 30% increase in worship expenses to cover increased attendance and security costs

♦ Anya Kleymenova, *Parish Treasurer*

Usher Guild

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

For the past 139 years, ushers have had an integral role at St. John's Church, Lafayette Square, almost 210 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 20 years.

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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 2025, 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, Claire Kim, Grant Kraus, 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.

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 additional information, please contact me at any time.

♦ James H. Czerwonky, *Head Usher*

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 Senior Warden Nora Rigby and at-large members Anthony H. Anikeeff, Casey Evans, and Ucheora Onwuamaegbu.

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—Alfred Thesmar

Junior Warden—Julia Koster

*At-Large Vestry Member to Complete
an Unexpired Term (one, unopposed)*

Kate Benner

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

Jordan Baugh

Elizabeth Field

Apiyo Oloya

Brian Schoeneman

John Shutz

Annie Simonds

On Sunday, January 25, 2026, 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 1, 2026, and the results will be announced at the end of the meeting.

♦ Anthony H. Anikeeff, *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, Brian Cordova-Brooke, Kaye Edwards, Casey Evans, Debby Hailey, Fruzsina Harsanyi, Julia Koster, Ucheora Onwuamaegbu, Jack Reiffer, Matthew Taylor, and Jess Unger, *Members*

Anya Kleymenova, *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

Clergy & Staff

The Rev. Robert W. Fisher, *Rector*

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

for Family Ministry and Pastoral Care

The Rev. Eric Bailey, *Assistant Priest for Parish Life and New Member Ministry*

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

Brent Erstad, *Director of Music and Organist*

Linda Morgan Stowe and John Chappell Stowe, *Interim Assistant Organists*

John Stowe, *Chief Operating Officer*

Charley Griffin, *Parish Administrator*

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

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