



ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

THE ROCK ON LOCKE

2024

ANNUAL REPORT



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Minutes
Church of St. John The Evangelist
Annual Vestry Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Sunday, February 25, 2024
11:30 a.m. – Activity Centre

1. OPENING PRAYER

The Reverend Andrew Rampton opened the meeting in prayer

2. CALL TO ORDER

Andrew welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. The Eligibility to Vote document was circulated during the meeting for members of the congregation to sign.

3. A CONSENT ORGANIZING MOTION

It is MOVED by Michael Bowering and SECONDED by Deborah Bowen,

1. THAT the published agenda within the circular be adopted; and
2. THAT all present be granted the privilege to address the meeting; and
3. THAT the written reports contained within the circular for this meeting now be received;
and
4. THAT this Vestry now ratify and confirm all decisions, agreements and documents entered
into and
5. THAT the minutes of the Special Vestry Meeting of September 18, 2022, and Annual Vestry
Meeting of March 26, 2023, be adopted as distributed.

The motion was CARRIED.

4. ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF PARISH OFFICERS

Continuing in Office in 2024:

Rector's Warden	Deborah Bowen	2 of 2	ex officio to Parish Council
Deputy People's Warden	Sue Newbery	2 of 2	ex officio to Parish Council
Lay Delegate to Synod	Susan Little	2 of 2	ex officio to Parish Council
Chair of Climate Justice	Norm Newbery	no term	ex officio to Parish Council
Chair of Property	Norm Newbery	no term	ex officio to Parish Council
Chair of Stewardship	Sarah Wayland	no term	ex officio to Parish Council

Nominees for Election in 2024:

People's Warden	Mary Donkin	1 of 2	ex-officio to Parish Council
Lay Delegate to Synod	Graham Cubitt	1 of 2	ex officio to Parish Council
Alternate Delegate to Synod	Margaret Wilding	1 of 1	ex officio to Parish Council
Youth Delegate to Synod	Vacant		
Parish Council Member	Sharon Klassen	1 of 1	
Parish Council Member	Connor Jay	1 of 1	
Parish Council Member	Sarah Jones	1 of 1	
Parish Council Member	Judith Purdell-Lewis	1 of 1	
Parish Council Member	Sue Samson	1 of 1	
Parish Council Member	James Steeves	1 of 1	
Parish Council Member	Patti Troughton	1 of 1	
Parish Council Member	Felicia Van Dyk	1 of 1	

Members present were all in favour of electing the above slate to the offices indicated for 2024.

Announcements and Appointments:

Deputy Rector's Warden	Vacant
Vestry Clerk	Sue Newbery
Treasurer	John Loukidelis
Envelope Secretary	Ruth Sutherland

Directors of Artaban Non-profit Homes:

Please note that Patricia Troughton is a member of the Board of Directors as a tenant representative.

Current Directors

Directors until 2025	Sharon Klassen
	Alex Urquhart
	Margaret Wilding
Directors until 2026	Susanne Adams
	Sue Samson
	Richard Woodward

Nominations

Director until 2027	Mary Donkin
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Members present were all in favour of electing Mary Donkin to the Board of Directors to 2027.

5. ADOPTION OF MINISTRY REPORTS

It is MOVED by Sue Newbery and SECONDED by Deborah Bowen, THAT the ministry reports contained in the circular for this annual meeting, having been received, now be adopted and approved.

Please Note: (This motion is a duplicate. It was stated in the Consent Organizing Motion, point number 3).

6. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS AND STATEMENTS FOR 2023

Before the below motion was voted on by Vestry, John Loukidelis gave highlights of the financial statements for 2023. We had a surplus of \$30,000 although he said we should take into account the following: some of the gifts for the Gift Day carried forward in 2023, our investments performed better in 2023 than in 2022 and our expenses were lower especially pertaining to staff wages. However, donations for 2023 were down by \$50,000 compared to 2022. It was noted by some of the members of the Stewardship committee who were told by the Diocese that offerings tend to go down between rectors. It was suggested perhaps we need to make more of an effort to newer members to put not only money, offering envelopes but also the direct deposit cards on the plate. We need to find new ways for people without having cash to donate. Members of the Stewardship committee were thanked for their work this year.

It is MOVED by Sue Newbery and SECONDED by Deborah Bowen, THAT the financial reports having been received and presented be adopted and approved.

The motion was CARRIED.

7. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITING COMMITTEE FOR 2024

It is MOVED by Michael Bowering and SECONDED by Margaret Wilding, THAT Parish Council be empowered to appoint an auditing committee for the 2024 Financial Statements in accordance with the

Canons and Policies of the Diocese of Niagara.

The motion was CARRIED.

8. APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED MINISTRY BUDGET FOR 2024

Before the below motion was voted on, John Loukidelis pointed out a few things about the budget. We are budgeting a substantial increase in offering giving. Twenty thousand has been budgeted for the sump pumps but this does not address any other capital improvements. The charge for our insurance has been received from the Diocese and it will be \$121.00 higher than the budgeted figure. Staff wages have been increased in keeping with the cost of living. We will once again be drawing on the Rectory Fund. Twelve thousand is not shown in the budget since this is not really income. There was great concern in the increased budget of donations. We need to look a new ways for people to give and additional fundraising efforts. There is a Financial Sustainability Group looking into this. Members were encouraged and challenged to suggest some fundraising ideas – have a goal and go for it. Members should approach the Corporation for any guidance on insurance or liability issues. A question was asked whether St. John's could invest on their own. The answer to this question was no, the Diocese invests our money. It was also asked where we bank and has any thought been given to bank with a Credit Union.

It is MOVED by Deborah Bowen and SECONDED by Sue Newbery, THAT the Ministry Budget for 2024 proposed by the Corporation, and approved by Parish Council now be approved by this Vestry.

The motion was CARRIED.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. A motion to empower the Corporation to enter into site use agreements of less than three years.

It is MOVED by Michael Bowering and SECONDED by Deborah Bowen, THAT this vestry authorizes the Incumbent and Churchwardens to consider and, if they deem it advisable, to approve leases, licenses, or space agreements of less than three years inclusive of all renewals

AND THAT this authorization shall extend only to agreements that include the following provisions:

- That the agreement may be terminated by Name of Church upon sixty days' notice
- The lessee or licensee shall provide proof of liability insurance

AND THAT if there is any conflict between this resolution and any authorization or approval resulting from it, the Canons of the Diocese of Niagara, it is understood that the Canons shall prevail.

The motion was CARRIED.

- b. A resolution to elect Directors for Artaban Non-Profit Homes Inc

IT IS MOVED by Michael Bowering and SECONDED by Susan Little,

THAT WHEREAS the Letters Patent and by-laws of Artaban Non-Profit Homes specify that the Church of Saint John the Evangelist shall at a meeting of Vestry nominate seven of the total of ten members of the Board of Directors of Artaban Non-Profit Homes, and that such nominees shall at the next Annual Meeting of Artaban Non-Profit Homes be duly elected as directors; and

WHEREAS the following Vestry members currently serve on the Board of Directors: Susanne Adams, Mary Donkin, Sue Samson, Margaret Wilding, Richard Woodward, Sharon Klassen and Alex Urquhart

WHEREAS it is deemed that Mary Donkin's term on the Board of Director's concludes at the end of 2024, and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the following persons be elected as this Vestry's nominees to serve a three-year term beginning at the next Annual Meeting of the Corporation of Artaban Non-Profit Homes: Susanne Adams, Sue Samson and Richard Woodward.

The motion was CARRIED.

It was brought to the Vestry's attention that once the mortgage for Artaban Non-Profit Homes is paid, it will be the responsibility of St. John's to take over the running of the building.

c. A motion regarding additional signing officer

IT IS MOVED by Deborah Bowen and SECONDED by Michael Bowering, THAT Michael Bowering be removed, and Andrew Rampton be added as a signing officer on the St. John the Evangelist bank account.

The motion was CARRIED.

To take the pressure off of future Vestry meetings, Andrew has recommended holding a couple of Town Hall meetings to be held during the year. The first meeting will be held Sunday, June 2 followed by a second meeting to be held Sunday, October 20.

A presentation was made to Michael Bowering to thank him for his time and service as Warden over the years. Also thanks were given to John Loukidelis for his work as Parish Treasurer. Thanks were also given to Patti Troughton, Sue Samson, Linda Palmer and Ruth Sutherland for their hospitality in preparing the hot dog lunch.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The Vestry meeting was adjourned.

11. CLOSING PRAYER

We closed the Vestry meeting by saying the Doxology together.

Annual Vestry Meeting Details

Sunday, February 23, 2025, 11:30 am in the Church Proper

Agenda

1. Opening Prayer
2. Call to Order
3. Consent Motion (Motion 1)
4. Election and Appointment of Parish Officers and the Artaban Board of Directors. (Motion 7)
5. MAP 2.0 Presentation
6. Adoption of Ministry Reports (Motion 2)
7. Approval of Financial Reports and Statements for 2024 (Motion 3)
8. Appointment of an Auditor for 2024 Financial Statements (Motion 4)
9. Approval of the proposed Budget for 2025 (Motion 5)
10. Other Business:
 - a. A motion to empower the Corporation to enter into site use agreements of less than three years. (Motion 6)
 - b. A motion regarding signing officers. (Motion 8)
11. Adjournment
12. Closing Prayer

Motions

Motion 1: A Consent Organizing Motion

It is MOVED by Deborah Bowen and SECONDED by Mary Donkin,

1. THAT the published agenda within the circular be adopted; and
2. THAT all present be granted the privilege to address the meeting; and
3. THAT the written reports contained within the circular for this meeting now be received; and
4. THAT this Vestry now ratify and confirm all decisions, agreements and documents entered into and signed by the Corporation on behalf of the parish since the last Annual Vestry; and
5. THAT the minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting of February 2024, be adopted as distributed.

Motion 2: A Motion to Adopt and Approve Ministry Reports

It is MOVED by Sue Newbery and SECONDED by Deborah Bowen,

THAT the ministry reports contained in the circular for this annual meeting, having been received, now be adopted and approved.

Motion 3: A Motion to Adopt and Approve Financial Reports

It is MOVED Sue Newbery and SECONDED by Deborah Bowen,

THAT the financial reports having been received and presented be adopted and approved.

Motion 4: A Motion to Appoint an Auditor

It is MOVED by Mary Donkin and SECONDED by Sue Newbery

THAT KPMG be appointed to conduct a financial review of the 2024 Financial Statements in accordance with the Canons and Policies of the Diocese of Niagara.

Motion 5: A Motion to Approve a Ministry Budget for 2025

It is MOVED by Deborah Bowen and SECONDED by Sue Newbery,

THAT the Ministry Budget for 2025 proposed by the Corporation and Parish Council, and approved by Parish Council now be approved by this Vestry.

Motion 6: A Motion to Empower the Corporation to Enter Into Site Use Agreements of Less than Three Years

It is MOVED by Mary Donkin and SECONDED by Deborah Bowen.

THAT this vestry authorizes the Incumbent and Churchwardens to consider and, if they deem it advisable, to approve leases, licenses, or space agreements of less than three years inclusive of all renewals

AND THAT this authorization shall extend only to agreements that include the following provisions:

- That the agreement may be terminated by Name of Church upon sixty days' notice
- The lessee or licensee shall provide proof of liability insurance

AND THAT if there is any conflict between this resolution and any authorization or approval resulting from it, the Canons of the Diocese of Niagara, it is understood that the Canons shall prevail.

Motion 7: A Resolution to Nominate Directors for Artaban Non-Profits Homes Inc.

IT IS MOVED by Sue Newbery and SECONDED by Mary Donkin,

THAT WHEREAS the Letters Patent and by-laws of Artaban Non-Profit Homes specify that the Church of Saint John the Evangelist shall at a meeting of Vestry nominate seven of the total of ten members of the Board of Directors of Artaban Non-Profit Homes, and that such nominees shall at the next Annual Meeting of Artaban Non-Profit Homes be duly elected as directors; and

WHEREAS the following Vestry members currently serve on the Board of Directors: Susanne Adams, Mary Donkin, Sue Samson, Margaret Wilding, Richard Woodward, Sharon Klassen, Alex Urquhart

WHEREAS it is deemed that Margaret Wilding, Sharon Klassen and Alex Urquhart's terms on the Board of Director's concludes at the end of 2024 and as Mary Donkin has resigned as a member of the Artaban Board of Directors;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the following persons be elected as this Vestry's nominees to serve a three-year term beginning at the next Annual Meeting of the Corporation of Artaban Non-Profit Homes:

Motion 8:

IT IS MOVED by Deborah Bowen and SECONDED by Mary Donkin,

THAT Deborah Bowen be removed and the following people be as signing officers on the St. John the Evangelist Bank account:

Leadership and Administration

The Rector's Charge

Rector's Charge 2025

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. *Jeremiah 29:11*

Once my appointment to St John's was made public, many people offered me their experiences and observations of the parish. Of the messages I received, my favourite was one that said "St John's is like a coiled spring, full of energy, ideas, and possibilities, ready to burst into the world." I like this image. Having spent a year with you in the parish, I think it's an apt one for this community.

There is plenty already happening at St John's. So many powerful ministries of worship, prayer, outreach, education, formation, hospitality, pastoral care, and on the list goes. What's more impressive than the quantity of ministry is that so much of it, especially mutual support in the community, happens naturally in response to needs as they arise. This speaks of a strong commitment to living out our shared baptismal covenant and consistent practice of prayerful discernment, listening for God's call to be lived out in word and action. The Holy Spirit moves in this community and the people of God respond to her. It is beautiful to see.

Hardly a week goes by where I do not have a conversation with someone about a need they've identified, inspiration they've received for a ministry, or a new way to support what is already happening at St John's. That coiled spring is moving. The excitement and energy in the parish for all kinds of ministry is palpable. It is amazing, in 2025 amidst all of the talk of church decline, to see a parish where a common complaint is that there are too many events on the calendar to attend all of them. St John's energetically supports its own parish life, community events in and around our building, and across the Diocese of Niagara. We are, truly, a vibrant Christian community that looks forward to the future with hope that God has promised us.

This is not meant to sound like a Pollyanna refrain. To be sure, there are challenges for us to meet. We are called to be the Body of Christ in a time and place that has, perhaps, never been in greater need of the good news of Christ. How to share the Gospel in a culture that seems more and more at odds with it every day? We strive for peace, justice, and respect for the dignity of every human being while voices rise around us, agitating for conflict and denying the humanity of our neighbour. We have a great inheritance from our ancestors in the faith at St John's in our history, traditions, and church building. We are faced with decisions about the care and just use of these gifts as well as the responsibility of planning for the generations who will follow us; no small task in times as uncertain as these.

The good news for us, as we face these challenges, is that we are not alone in this. We walk this path alongside friends and neighbours in our parish, with the love and prayerful support of our diocese, and of all our faithful siblings in Christ. Most importantly, we walk by faith, trusting in God to reveal the divine plan for our welfare, seeking to see and serve Jesus in everyone we meet, and renewing our commitment to our calling daily, even when it is costly to us. Each morning we hear the call, “Will you take up your cross and follow me?” And each morning, with loving, trusting, praying hearts, the people of God at St John’s reply, “Jesus, we will, with your help.”

I know that I speak for many when I say: It is good to be here. God bless you and all of your ministries for the sake of the Gospel.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Andrew Rampton
Rector

Then [Jesus] said to them all, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”
Luke 9:23

Wardens’ Report

2024 was Rev. Andrew Rampton’s first year with us as our new Rector, and it’s been an encouraging one. Numbers at services have grown; financial contributions, though still not sufficient to cover our annual expenses, are also growing. But, more importantly, we have seen a fresh energy and excitement at St John’s about our calling as God’s people in this area of Hamilton, and we are very grateful to Andrew for his teaching, his vision, and his pastoral gifts.

Finances

(See separate report.) Work to regularize and clarify our parish finances continues. We have been continually grateful to John Loukidelis for his dedicated and thorough work as our treasurer this year. Many thanks also to Amylynn Loader in the church office, who has recently taken on some of the regular administrative tasks related to the finances. We are now looking confidently toward an external review of our finances in 2025, in accordance with diocesan policy. Meanwhile we continue to recognise the commitment of Ruth Sutherland as envelope secretary, and Sue Samson and her team as counters of the weekly collection.

Property

(See separate report.) Norm Newbery has continued to do stalwart work as chair of the Property Committee, and has been able to fulfil a number of significant tasks this year, with help from

several members of the congregation. We were delighted that Norm was honoured with the Order of Niagara this year.

The recent introduction of “work days” has been a great way to include more congregation members in regular tasks of maintaining our property. We are also considering the use of an outside company to give a thorough “industrial-quality” clean to the Activity Centre in the spring of 2025, for the first time in a number of years.

Several groups are regular users of the Activity Centre; as well as a large AA group on Friday evenings, we now have a smaller group on Wednesday evenings, and a local sports group that rents on Saturday mornings. In the summer there will be a STEM children’s camp renting our facility every weekday for 2 ½ months.

Office

With Michael Bowering’s stepping down as Deputy Rector’s Warden at Vestry in February 2024, we’ve had only three wardens this past year. We’ve really missed Michael! It will be good to return to the full complement of wardens after this 2025 Vestry meeting.

We continue to be very grateful for our office secretary Amylynn Loader, whose diligent work and friendly presence impress all who come into contact with her. Amylynn has looked after *Parish News* as well as all her regular duties when Judith Purdell-Lewis has been absent, and has done a stalwart job.

Missions and Outreach

(See separate report.) The reintroduction of Missions Days twice a year, with visiting speakers, has been an encouraging boost to our missions commitments, as has the focus on several of our missions at the Sundays UnLocked at which St John’s has had a booth.

Music

(See separate report.) We continue to be very grateful to Paul Grimwood and the choir for lovely music at the 11.00 a.m. services and on special occasions. We also really appreciate Susan McKay’s work with the children’s choir, and love hearing them regularly, as well as being delighted at the way this ministry brings in families from the community.

Eduardo Farias has given fine leadership at our 9.30 a.m. services, and is working on creating a roster of additional volunteer musicians so that the core group can have more times off.

Children’s Ministry

(See separate report.) Our church school is growing: though most of the kids are very young, there is a little group of elementary-aged children who are increasingly needing more specific programming. Daniela is hoping for two regular classes as the year develops. Meantime the church school volunteer teachers have been wonderfully reliable, and they are much appreciated.

Ministries of welcome and administration

We would like to thank our greeters, servers, and sacristy guild members for all the work they do that makes such a difference to our services, as well as to the general flavour of life at St John's. We are also very grateful to those who have worked in the area of hospitality, especially with coffee and snacks on Sunday mornings. A number of newcomers have mentioned how friendly they have found the welcome at St John's: this is a lovely thing for a church to be known for!

We would be remiss not also to mention here those stalwarts who regularly look after the slides at the 9.30 a.m. service and the technology at all our services. Many thanks for this important work, cheerfully fulfilled.

There is a general sense at St John's this year that, with our new rector at the helm, we are moving into a new stage of our church's life. As we continue with new initiatives like the "4th at 10" services and teaching times, and as we look again at our MAP goals, we are excited to see what God has in store for us in the year ahead, and we pray that we will always strive to keep in tune with His Spirit.

With gratitude to God,

Deborah Bowen, Rector's Warden
Sue Newbery, Deputy Rector's Warden
Mary Donkin, People's Warden

Property Committee

Your property committee was primarily engaged in doing hands on work on the fabric of the building in 2024. Meetings were kept to a minimum since there is a large backlog of work that volunteers were able to do in order to keep costs down. This list of jobs included:

EXTERIOR

- 1) Repairs to the flat roof over the vestry and sacristy. Leaking was identified in the ceiling over the stairwell. Tom Weaver and Norman Newbery were able to reseal the flashing where the flat roof joins the exterior wall of the church. They also added a 4 inch wide peel and stick tapes made for flashings over the joint and attached also to the wall. This was done to provide extra protection. This flashing requires annual inspections in order to prevent leaking.
- 2) Four church windows on the south side of the building that are easily accessible from the flat roof were inspected. Much of the caulking and mastic that helps hold and seal the

windows was loose and needs replacement. This was not done in 2024 because of inclement weather in the fall. This is a priority job for 2025.

- 3) The remaining windows that are not accessible without a high ladder or boom will need to be cleaned and resealed by a professional. The work includes ensuring that the windows and stained glass panes are secure; Lexan or tempered glass should be used to protect the windows. Ventilation needs to be provided to ensure that the leading around the stained glass does not soften from overheating. We recommend adding Lexan to the other windows that do not have it. This work will need to be done by a professional because of the height of them. Small holes need to be provided in the bottom and top of the Lexan to provide adequate air circulation so that the airspace in between does not overheat.
- 4) The moisture is migrating through the exterior walls around the basement windows on the North Side of the crypt.. It is worsened when snow is piled up against the windows when the driveway is being cleared of snow. This is low level work and can be done by volunteers provided that the correct procedures are followed. This work was begun last fall. A number of deep fissures in the stone foundation were filled with reinforced lime-based cement
- 5) The work of removing heavy protective security grills over the basement windows was begun in the fall. The rebar holding the grill in place was cut free using a steel cutting blade and loose cement was also removed. A deep hole was present in which the cement had washed out and only sand was left. We are confident that our repair with lime-based mortar strengthened with a 10% addition of Portland cement will stop the ingress of moisture and will strengthen the foundation wall for another generation.
- 6) A lengthy section of stone foundation beside the north stairwell of the church was repointed. Hopefully this will prevent further moisture damage at the base of the stairs. Loose cement was removed and this area was also repaired with structural mortar. The work to reseal the foundation will need to be continued in 2025 beginning in the spring. Volunteers who are interested can easily be trained to do this.

INTERIOR

- 7) In the spring loose cement plaster was removed from the interior of the windows on the North side of the Crypt area. This was followed by resurfacing with structural cement-based plaster that was then primed and painted.
- 8) In the colder weather, the Lidgery Room and the Sunday School room beneath the Sacristy were both repainted. The baseboard that was missing in the Lidgery room as a result of the folding wall that used to be there which was removed was replaced. It was necessary to paint the walls of both rooms with three coats of paint. However the final results show that it was well worth it. The window well areas in the Lidgery room still require painting. It is on

hold until suitable blinds can be installed over the windows to ensure the privacy of occupants.

- 9) The largest and most expensive item for the building was the purchase and installation of two new furnaces to heat the crypt and the main church.

REMAINING WORK

NEW FURNACE

An expanded committee including the Rector; Adam Dobson, Graham and Emma Cubitt; Norman Newbery, Tom Weaver, Alex Urquhart, and Sue Newbery was involved in researching our options; selecting an HVAC contractor; and considering options for the installation of a cold climate heatpump system. The cost and design considerations for a Cold Climate Heat Pump meant that there was not enough time or money available to design and install such a system in 2024 before cold weather came. We were very pleased to receive a very affordable quotation from Spurr Heating and Cooling and the decision to go ahead with the Gas Furnace was made with the hope that we would be able to install a Heat Pump system within 5 years.

ELEVATOR REPAIRS

The handicapped lift nearest the gym was inspected in the summer by the TSSA. They recommended repairing/replacing the overhead lamp and determining the integrity of the hydraulic base. Although this lift is not used much, moisture collects in the elevator pit because of historic drainage issues. Brock Elevator who replaced the hydraulic relief valve and cables in 2023 were able to attest to the current condition of the elevator pit.

We had hoped that they might take over the maintenance contract for both of our lifts in December 2024 but they were not able to fit it into their busy schedule.

CLEANING DAY

In the spring the property committee hosted a cleaning day in the church proper, the crypt and the Activity Centre. Sue Newbery and Susanne Adams did the organizing. Nearly twenty people showed up. We could not have done this without all of their help. A second cleaning day was organized about one month later in order to complete many of the jobs started at the first day. Although fewer people were able to attend the second day it was also very successful.

Submitted by

Norman Newbery, Property Committee Chair

Ministries of Christian Formation, Nurture, and Care

Pastoral Visiting

Under the direction of the Rector, Andrew Rampton, we (Susan Little and Patti Troughton) are entrusted to visit members of our parish who are unable to join Sunday or mid-week worship. While this ministry often takes place in a retirement home or a long-term care setting, most of our visits occur in a parishioner's home, happening every month to six weeks, depending upon the person's health and needs. A few times this year we have made hospital visits. After the restrictions of COVID, we are now offering communion in both kinds (bread and wine) when we visit. When a person is unwell, we limit our visit to prayers and readings.

Each personal visit includes a recent service bulletin and, if possible, a copy of *Parish News* and *The Niagara Anglican* so they can connect with what is happening and stay in touch. Although each person is different, they often like to recall some part of their experience at St. John's and share it with our willing ears. It is always heart warming to hear their stories and reminiscences. It is always time well spent.

Each visit is different because each person's needs vary. We think of ourselves as the hands and feet of the Church, called to respond to each request. That is why this ministry brings such joy and satisfaction. Sometimes, a visit is more of a check in and involves little sharing of readings or prayer. More often, it is a longer visit including a request for Communion. It is always a special privilege to share Communion and we are grateful to represent St. John's at such times, being able to share God's presence in this way.

At Easter and Christmas, we delivered seasonal goodies and notes to remind our parishioners how much their parish family misses them on these holidays. Through the intervening months, we maintain regular contact in different ways. We make informal visits to drop off *Parish News* and they receive a telephone call when their name will be mentioned in the *Parish Cycle of Prayer* at Sunday services. When someone has to cancel with us, we have usually managed to rearrange a visit and share communion with them. Our persistence is always rewarded with heartfelt appreciation. They know that although they are absent, they are not forgotten.

Beyond the work the two of us have been doing, there are parishioners who do pastoral care in other ways. They routinely keep in touch with members of our parish family who have been unwell or unable to come to church. In fact, many of these people have been providing such care long before the pandemic and they faithfully continue to do so now. Like good brothers and sisters, they have been reaching out, maintaining relationships from 'normal' times together. Thanks be to God for those who continue to take the light of Christ into the lives of people whom we know and whom we all miss. This is what being 'family' is all about!

Since the middle of 2024, Patti has no longer been able to accompany pastoral visits. A number of people have stepped in to carry on this important ministry. As the year concluded, a new

possibility of organizing the care of parishioners has become a topic for consultation and prayer. It is our earnest hope that the quality of care and the joy of serving will continue on in the name of our Lord and Saviour. We give thanks that we have been able to represent you, our parish family, in this valuable ministry.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Little

Prayer Chain

Intercessory prayer is a means available for everyone to use.

Prayers requests can be submitted to the Rector rector@rockonlocke.ca

or Susanne Adams

Many prayers have been offered to the Lord through this wonderful team of intercessors. It is always encouraging to hear how God has answered our prayers and how profoundly the prayers have affected people.

All prayer requests are kept confidential with the Prayer Chain Team.

In His service,

Susanne Adams & Members of the Prayer Chain

Bibles and Bagels

We are a group of faithful women who met every other Saturday (omitting the summer months) in the Lidgley Room to study God's word. We met at 10am and committed to finishing and on our way by 11:30 am.

Over a cup of tea or coffee, we followed a study guidebook format. We studied people in the old and new testaments, and topics related to the Bible. Besides learning by studying God's word, we learned and gained insight from each other. We also laughed. We ended our sessions with confidential prayers and praise.

During the winter months this year (2025), we will be meeting in Room C. to accommodate an outside group. If you are interested in joining us, contact Adrienne – toleafs8@gmail.com

Respectfully submitted,

Adrienne Devins

Saturday Stuff For Guys

We are a group of men who meet every other Saturday in the Crypt (Church Cafè) for an informal bible study. We start at 10am and are committed to finish by 11:30am.

This informal bible study group focuses on the appointed bible readings for the following Sunday service. The format is simply to read each passage and then share our thoughts and insights about each reading.

We have a lot of time for discussion and it is amazing what we can learn from each other.

If you are interested in joining us, contact Hal – toleafs8@gmail.com, or see me at church.

Respectfully submitted,

Hal Devins

BeHive

Throughout 2024, five members of the BeHive small group bible study met bi-weekly to study scripture, learn, pray and grow. Building on the foundation of servant leadership, this group continues to love to learn and study scripture together and it has discovered a new way of studying this year.

Following the model of another bible study in the parish, we use the lectionary of the current week to direct the text of our study. Although at first we adopted this method temporarily, thinking that we would have heard the sermon and ‘exhausted’ all possible understandings before we got to our study session, after a few sessions we realized that we gained a much richer experience. First, the sermon rarely touched upon all the readings for one Sunday. Secondly, we did not hear all the readings on any one Sunday. It didn’t take us very long to see the benefits of this method give us more depth and breadth in our study of scripture. Now we are very attached to our new method of bible study.

All year through, then, we have enjoyed grappling with the Old Testament reading, the psalm, the epistle and the gospel for the Sunday closest to our meeting. We have discovered the overlapping themes of these readings give us special understandings and viewpoints on aspects of our lives. Each member of the group brings different perspectives and experiences to enrich our discussions.

The format of our meetings is hybrid: some choose to meet in person and some choose to meet via ZOOM. This has enabled our group to meet through the challenges of sickness, conflicting schedules and significant distances. When most of us can gather in the Crypt Cafè, our sessions are longer. It seems, because we always enjoy the presence of one another.

No matter where we meet, our sessions always conclude with prayer, remembering what upcoming events need our prayer attention and the needs present among the members of St.

John's community. As we share in confidence our own needs, we feel a special bond of community. We feel blessed to be able to gather so that we can challenge one another, finding joy and growth in our discussions and study. Our greatest challenge continues to be saying the Doxology – together – and we are getting better with each session!

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Little

Good Book Club Bible Study Group

This is a weekly study group meeting over Zoom on Saturdays at 8:30am, usually running until around 10:00am. The leadership is shared so that we take turns organizing and leading the sessions. We use a type of Lectio Divina. Our reading is at the discretion of the leader for the day, usually the gospel appointed for Sunday services. We read it out loud 3 times with a question to be answered after each reading. No detailed knowledge of the Bible is required because we focus mostly on the specific passage and these three questions, although the leader can broaden the discussion. There follows a time of sharing our thanksgiving and concerns for our group to include in personal prayer over the following week. We have between 2- 8 participants at each session, depending who is free. Please contact me or any member to join us! mjwilding8@gmail.com

Respectfully submitted by Margaret Wilding

Meal Train Ministry

The Meal Train Ministry provides support to the members of our congregation in the form of hot meals or stocking freezers with prepared food in times when that task is a lot - whether because of a joyous event such like the arrival of a baby or harder times like illness or grief.

In 2024, our cooks provided about 100 meals to 4 families. Some meals were provided a couple days a week over a month or more, and some were daily over both short and long terms. I am especially proud of and grateful for the way we have been able to support one of these families on a daily basis through a prolonged illness. Thank you to all those who have made these 100 meals possible!

My hope for the coming year is to solidify our team of cooks and for more folks to access the love and care we have here when life happens. My email address is see750@gmail.com and my phone number can be found in the church directory if you ever want food, or if you would like to be contacted whenever we have a need.

-- Submitted by Sarah Jones

Middle Ground

Middle Ground is a small group that met for fellowship, study, and prayer on alternating Sunday evenings throughout 2024. Although there were 16 in the group, generally only about half of that number were able to gather each time. We started the year meeting in people's homes with a simple meal of soup and bread, but later in the year we simplified and started meeting in the Crypt Café for tea and treats only. While eating together, we would share what had been going on in our lives since we last met—our joys and our sorrows. As part of our 2024 activities, we studied passages in Luke that aren't found anywhere else in the Bible; went to a "Middle Ground Welcomes Reverend Andrew" dinner hosted by Bethany and Ed; attended Meryline's birthday party hosted by Emma and Graham; watched a video series called *Thinking? Answering Life's Five Biggest Questions* written by Andy Steiger, which Adrienne and Craig had suggested (once while having pizza-oven pizza at Emma and Graham's and once while having dinner in Adrienne and Craig's new home); went for a walk at the RBG followed by hotdogs at Easterbrook's; and, finally, watched a video series called "The New Testament in its World," written by N.T. Wright, which Graham had suggested. Judith, Emily, and Cathy also hosted Middle Ground in their homes during the year. Our evenings always ended with prayer. Our group also contributed to providing three gift bags for St. Matthews House seniors at Christmas.

Middle Ground always welcomes new members. Contact information can be found at: <https://www.rockonlocke.ca/what-we-do/small-groups>.

Prayer Team

The Prayer Team is a group of faithful people possessing the gift of intercessory prayer who lift up prayers on behalf of individuals who have specific needs or thanksgivings while also lifting up the unspoken needs of the rest of our parish. This ministry thrives well at both the Discovery and the Choral Service each Sunday and at the main service in the summer months. It is not offered at the special combined service of Morning Prayer on the Second Sunday or Fourth Sunday.

In early 2024, the Prayer Team sponsored a half-day Prayer Workshop led by Fr. John Stevenson, our Priest-in-Charge during December 2023. Through carefully crafted instructions and materials, he led us through practices easy to use in our regular lives. With such examples and with time to actually pray together, we gained confidence in how we pray.

As members of the Prayer Team, we are highly committed to the power of prayer in our own lives and in the lives of others. We find deep satisfaction and joy in serving St. John's family each week!

Each Sunday during the distribution of Communion, the Prayer Team gathers in the Baptistry to pray for any concerns we are aware of among the congregation. When a person comes to us with a specific need or thanksgiving, we add our voice to their request. "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." (Matt. 18:20)

We are always eager to have new members join this powerhouse of prayer. Do you pray regularly? Do you want to grow a regular discipline of personal prayer? Do you feel comfortable in offering prayer aloud in a quiet setting? If you are discerning a call to exercise your gifts (once a month or less), please speak with a person on the Prayer Team or its co-ordinators. We will provide you with as much preparation and training as you need before you begin.

Please pray for us as we pray for you!

Respectfully submitted

Susan Little, Susanne Adams

Co-ordinators, Prayer Team

Crafters

Every Wednesday afternoon from 1:00-3:00 p.m., a group of women gather in the Crypt Café to work on crafts of their choice – knitting, crocheting, needlepoint- to name a few and to share some hospitality. Some come primarily for the social visiting and have no crafts to work on. That's fine for the whole group because these women gather to share skills and wisdom from one another's lives. Weekly numbering from 3 to 10, throughout the year, these women gather as the Crafters Group, but this year, they have been particularly productive!

In 2024, this core of women did amazing things to raise funds for St. John's, bringing lots of enjoyment to the lives of others!

They sponsored a Pancakes & Valentines Lunch when St. Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday collided on the calendar. Gathering in the Crypt Café and offering a variety of Valentine desserts and treats, they served over 70 people and contributed over \$700 to the Rector's Discretionary Fund.

They offered homemade treats, hand knit chicks, home baking and crafts on Palm Sunday, after each service and raised over \$700 for Church funds.

A month later, they sponsored a Cake Sale on Mother's Day, offering 20 cakes and raising over \$500 for Church funds.

In early December, this Crafters Group provided the Seniors of the parish with a Christmas Potluck Lunch with food and good singing to get everyone into the Christmas spirit.

Before Christmas, this group sponsored a Christmas Craft & Bake Sale. They joined forces with others in the parish who had been making aprons, jams and jellies and offered an abundance of crafts and Christmas treats. The 'regular' Crafters gathered together a variety of handmade items including hand sewn doll outfits, crocheted blankets, baby sweaters, mitts, hats & toques, Christmas stockings, and other accessories for kitchen and bath, and offered them for sale on Sunday after each service. Other parishioners contributed to this event by adding a good variety of

Christmas cookies, candy, cakes and treats to make this event a sweet success! Overall, this event totalled almost \$800 for Church funds.

It is humbling to work with such a talented, hard-working group of Christians who craft together and enjoy life by helping others.

AND it's not just the women who get the credit!

Our great thanks go to several men of this parish who assisted in each event because, if it weren't for their muscles & physical support, none of this would have happened!

Thanks be to God!

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Little

Refugee Committee Report for the Annual Vestry

Barbara Ruttan

Parish Committee Members – Barbara Ruttan (Overall Coordinator) Sarah Wayland, Elizabeth Steeves, Susanna Adams, Emma Cubitt, Andrew Rampton (Ex Officio)
Community Committee Member - Sara Gilliam

The Refugee Committee of St. John's is working closely with the Venerable Bill Mous, the diocesan Executive Officer to coordinate the successful settlement of the Akbari family from Pakistan who are originally from Afghanistan.

There is a detailed Settlement Plan in place which provides a framework for the successful integration of this family to Hamilton. The necessary actions are extensive and include matters relating to Finances, Housing, Household Furnishings, Clothing, Health, Transportation, Employment and Recreation.

Presently, the family have all their required documentation in order and are scheduled to fly from Pakistan to Canada, February 20, 2024.

The funds raised so far are \$32,000.00. There is a place on the church website for more ongoing donations using this direct link to the Diocese of Niagara:

<https://niagaraanglican.ca/refugee-support/how-to-donate>

Donors are directed to change the 'designated for' box from regular giving to 'other' and indicate St. John's Hamilton Sponsorship in line below to track donations. If donors are writing cheques, the memo line should say "Refugee Sponsorship - St. John's Hamilton."

The primary task of the Committee presently, is to find a permanent two-bedroom rental which is preferably located close to a school, park, and the public transportation system. Sarah Wayland and John Loukidelis have generously offered to house the family temporarily when they arrive if necessary. There has been a positive response with parishioners offering various household items and articles of clothing. An inventory is being maintained.

New members to the Committee are welcome.

Hearts and Minds

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”

(Matthew 22:37)

Purpose: An informal group, meeting monthly on a Friday evening for a potluck, to hear a member of the congregation or an invited guest respond to the main question, **“How do you live out your faith through your daily life and work?”**

To further guide speakers in preparing for their talks, the following sub-questions were developed:

- a) How does your faith affect your thinking or understanding about your work?
- b) How does your faith help you in your daily experience of your work?
- c) How has your faith grown or been challenged through your daily life and work?

Hearts and Minds is in its thirteenth year of growth, after being restarted in 2012. This group proves to be a meaningful way by which our community can share faith journeys in an intimate setting, as well as often acting as a catalyst for new experiences or ministries. Since there is no expected commitment to attend regularly, most people choose to attend based on the specific topic of the evening. Due to the variety of topics, our attendees include not just church members and friends but those with whom we might not otherwise connect, which we see as an encouraging way of fostering community, within and beyond the walls of St. John’s.

We aim to balance church members as speakers with invited guests, and individual speakers with panels, on a range of topics and experiences. Again, this year, we enlisted the help of parishioners to offer topics or speakers of interest and again we chose to hold most of our sessions at the church, for accessibility reasons. Some attend the potluck, and some choose to come for the presentation, and we hope that design allows an easy entry point for all.

Committee: The committee is responsible for organizing the schedule for the year, promoting the sessions, communicating with speakers and hosts, facilitating the sessions, and thanking the

speakers. Our committee consists of **Deborah Bowen, Jenna Bowering, Rebekah Little and Elizabeth Steeves**, with **Tamara Watson** designing our bookmarks and posters.

During 2024, we heard from:

January: *Working as Christian Architects* (Emma Cubitt and Meaghan Burke of Invisij Architects)

February: *Shalem Mental Health Services* (**Jennifer Bowen, Felicia Van Dyk** and Ruth Jackson)

March: *Working as Christians in the Press and Social Media*. (Connor Jay from *Niagara Anglican*, and **Bill Fledderus**, from *Faith Today*)

April: *The Challenges and Joys of Being a Hospice Doctor*. (Dr. Jane Dobson)

May: *Meet Our Refugee Family and Learn About Afghanistan*. (Sabira and Jawad Akbari and **Marzia Mohammadi**)

June: *Being Vegans as Christians* (Barbara and Brian Ruttan)

June: *Planning for Next Year!* Everyone welcome for a brainstorming potluck.

Summer Break

September: *The Housing Crisis in Hamilton: How Churches Can Help* (Dan Panagakos from HATS, Graham Cubitt and Jessica Brand from Indwell)

October: *PWRDF Indigenous Water Initiative* (Reverend Canon Martha Tatarnic)

November: *Faith and Friendship Across Borders: Celebrating the Rich Diversity of the Church with our East African Friends* (Andrew, James, Alfred, Ivan, and Emily)

December: *“Putting the Christ Back into Christmas”* (family dinner with crafts and carol singing)

Attendance at these evenings was generally between 15 and 30, consisting of SJE members from all three Sunday services as well as some visitors from beyond St John’s. *The Housing Crisis* topic was widely advertised and generated a great deal of community interest, as we hosted close to 100 people.

Check out the bookmark for our upcoming topics!

If you would like to contribute to and/or become more involved with Hearts and Minds:

1. Join our organizing committee (this is a once-a-month commitment)
2. Suggest a topic for discussion (offering yourself or someone you know as a speaker)
3. Speak to one of the committee members to find out more about any of these opportunities.

In His Service,

Rebekah Little

for the committee

Little Library

St John's Church Library

<https://www.rockonlocke.ca/programs/st-johns-church-library>

Since its new beginnings after a good sort-out during COVID, our church library has grown to 778 books on the shelves by 492 authors, plus a raft of children's books not yet in our general catalogue. Our books cover a wide range of topics related to Christian belief and the Christian life: the big questions of faith, the spiritual life, Christian fiction and poetry, biographies, church renewal, understanding the Bible, and many more – 23 categories altogether.

The catalogue is online here: <http://www.librarything.com/catalog/Rockonlocke>
Click on "Your books" to see all the titles we have; then click on "tags" to discover what our categories are, or on "authors" to find out what books we have by any given writer. Books may be borrowed for three weeks, and there is a little notebook on the library shelves where you can sign them out and in again.

One innovation this past year has been to feature very brief book reviews by various members of the congregation in *Parish News*. If you'd like to review a book in the library that you would recommend for others, please be in touch!

In the coming year we would like to grow our Library Team to include a couple more people who are interested in books and in encouraging our congregation to read them. Again, if this is something you'd like to be involved with, please be in touch.

Meantime, next time you're enjoying your after-church coffee in the crypt, take a few minutes to browse the library shelves and see if a title catches your eye. As we seek to continue learning and growing in our faith, books are a great gift, as some of our avid library-users have already shown!

*John Bowen
for the library team*

Concerts

St. John's continues to host about one concert each month primarily presented by Hammer Baroque. There is a small group of dedicated volunteers who host these events where wonderful music is performed by very talented musicians. If you are interested in volunteering please speak with a member of the organizing committee.

Sue Samson on behalf of Susan McKay, Mary Donkin, Steve McKay and Debbie Rudderham

Hospitality

The Hospitality Committee This has been a busy year for the committee. We have been able to provide refreshments after both the 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. services throughout the year and have helped with the other social events. Thanks to the generosity of church members who have signed up and brought cookies etc. and the Donut Sundays we have not had to purchase very much food.

We purchase the milk, cream, juice and other kitchen necessities. Please sign the sheet in the crypt if you are able to bring Sunday refreshments (cookies, loaves cheese and crackers etc.) It doesn't have to be homemade. We would like to thank Patti Troughton for her many years as coordinator of the Hospitality and her faithful helper Gayle Shears. They worked cheerfully and tirelessly for many years and kept everything in order, getting needed supplies and training new volunteers. The committee needs more volunteers for set up and clean up. Please come into the kitchen and talk to us if you would like to help. This is a very rewarding ministry as the coffee hour allows us to provide a time to welcome newcomers and visitors. It also church members to get to know one another better and communicate about church activities.

Thank you – the Hospitality Team

Stewardship Committee

Scrolling through our parish photo library, I see loved ones, people I would likely not know if St John's were not here. This is a very special place. We support each other, and we love our neighbours. We are not perfect, but we are always growing, if not in numbers then in faith.

Many of my friends are not churchgoing. They don't have any kind of community like this, where people gather across the generations sharing common beliefs and loving one another.

The above is a piece of the gratitude moment I shared one Sunday morning last July. These short talks are a way that we can share meaningful, personal experiences of how we encounter God in our lives through our connection to this Church of St John the Evangelist. They are intended to provide a glimpse into the deep, varied experiences of God in our community.

Gratitude moments are now part of the monthly combined service. This fall we heard from Graham Cubitt, Margaret Wilding, and Peter Van Dyke, and a few more speakers are lined up for the new year. Guidelines are provided to all speakers, and parishioners are encouraged to consider speaking. Please contact a member of the stewardship team with your interest and any questions.

The Stewardship Committee focuses on the people of St John's and works throughout the year to cultivate gratitude and grow spiritual understanding of our place in creation. Members of the Stewardship Committee are Sarah Wayland (chair), Susan Little, Peter Van Dyk, Graham Cubitt, and Andrew Rampton (ex officio). We meet about eight times a year to monitor the financial health of the parish and especially to think of ways to encourage stewardship as a spiritual practice.

Stewardship happens when we recognize God's generosity and respond by committing ourselves and our possessions to the service of God. This includes financial giving as well as offering our time and talents (volunteering).

In recognition of the multiple ways that people contribute to the life of the parish, this committee has overseen a working group on volunteer management in recent years. This working group was

dormant in 2024, but it is hoped that revival will occur in the coming year. A first order of business would be to meet with the Diocesan HR and Volunteer Co-ordinator.

A few notables from 2024:

Parish website update. The website continues to be tweaked, with the goal of a user not needing to click more than twice to find what they are looking for. Language about WHY to give has been added to the Give page alongside the HOW to give information, as well as noting that donations are charitable. The parish logo has been subtly redesigned, featuring the Canterbury cross and proper church name with “Rock on Locke” underneath.

Parish pledge drive. A mailing was sent out in late October. Parishioners were requested to return pledges for 2024 on or before Reign of Christ Sunday which marked the end of the church year. The number of pledging households for 2025 was 28, and several new households signed up for pre-authorized giving. By contrast, requests for offering envelopes are declining. Phone calls of appreciation were made to all households who made a financial pledge to the parish for 2025. Many other parishioners give regularly but do not take the step of pledging. St John’s has about 60 donor households.

Legacy giving workshop. Diocesan Stewardship Advisor Dr. Drew MacDonald spoke about planned giving to a small group of parishioners on the afternoon of December 11. The Stewardship Committee is open to suggestions of topics to present in future workshops.

Special Christmas envelopes were available in the pews during Advent, thanks to efforts of Susanne Adams and Amylynn Loader.

Capital campaign. Decennial inspection will be happening in 2025, and the results can form the basis for a list of expected upcoming capital expenses. A formal parish capital campaign is expected in 2025, after the decennial inspection, and donations towards capital projects will be welcomed in advance of the launch.

In closing, here is another piece of my gratitude moment from July:

If this church is important to you, if you like what we are doing here, if you want to support life-giving ministries, I would encourage you to take some time to dwell on whether your financial giving to St John’s reflects that. Is there room to grow, increase the proportion that you give? If yes, you can make that change right away by speaking with our envelope secretary Ruth Sutherland or going online to the GIVE TODAY page on our parish website.

Report submitted by Sarah Wayland

Niagara Diocesan Synod Report

On Saturday, November 2, 2024, the 150th Session of Synod for the Diocese of Niagara was convened at the Burlington Convention Centre for its delegates, clergy and laity, as well as

diocesan staff members. From 9 a.m until 3:30 we heard reports from many committees which form the foundation of our institutional church. There were the usual changes in canons, the acceptance of people into new roles on the committees that keep the wheels of church business rolling and functioning smoothly. The Bishop's Charge, her annual speech to propel us into service, was as powerful as ever. With this Synod's theme of "Faith in the Future", Bishop Susan challenged us to contribute to the 150th Anniversary Curacy Fund, which will support the training and formation of priests in new ministries in our communities. as a sign of our 150th Anniversary as a Diocese.

The hope-filled Synod saw the renewal of the Mission Action Plan to adopt its 2.0 parish guide. Our own Emily Hill, the Diocesan Parish Development Missioner, led one of the key parts of this year's Synod. You'll remember that each parish has created three priorities to reflect the diocesan priorities with specific targets in mind. Centring on the Diocesan vision, "Called to Life - Compelled to Love", here at St. John's, we have created our parish Mission Action Plan (MAP). The important part of our MAP is to make us intentional about putting into place strategies to enrich the lives of our own people and the communities surrounding us. (Check with our own parish MAP committee for more details.) At Synod we heard about the amazing work which three different parishes have created to respond to needs in their communities. It was definitely hope-inspiring!

We heard reports from the Anglican Foundation of Canada which supports all kinds of programs and initiatives across Niagara. We also heard officially the new name of PWRDF - now to be known as "Alongside Hope": it's the same organization with the same power to exercise social justice and emergency relief across the world!

Similarly, there was a short presentation about the Provincial Synod held in Sault Ste Marie in the Fall; along with usual canon changes and other routine business, it honoured our diocesan Chancellor by naming him as the first Vice Chancellor in the Ecclesiastical Province. One part of its presentation poignantly reminded us that healing and institutional changes are still in progress, the ongoing realities

Another hopeful sign at Synod is that our Diocesan finances are looking good. The Treasurer reported that through the steady contributions of parishes throughout the pandemic, they are able to expect an increase in 2025 which reflects our official recovery from the pandemic. The significant efforts of the Diocese to maintain costs and its generous legacy-based investments have provided this projected state of a balanced fiscal health. The Chair of the Budget Committee concluded, "The sesquicentennial budget affirmed the continued growth in the energy and enthusiasm within parishes for leaning more deeply into Jesus-shaped living and discipleship that moves us closer to God's reign." What a sign of good management and God's blessings!

The highlight of this Synod was the presence of our recently retired Primate, Linda Nicholls. She addressed Synod on Saturday afternoon, speaking on "This Anglican Communion of Ours". Drawing on her own inspiring and though-provoking experiences through her years of leadership

and episcopal ministry, she delivered an insightful perspective about the workings of the Anglican Communion.

Later on, in the evening, at a special 150th Gala Anniversary Celebration, the retired Primate shared an hour long conversation with Bishop Susan at the end of the meal. As only the second woman to serve as a Primate in the Anglican Communion, Archbishop Linda served as an icon for many women in ministry, especially for Bp Susan. Her pioneering ministry and her ongoing emphasis on the importance of engaging the knowledge found in science with our faith will direct her energies as she retires. Her “Faith in the Future” is a daily and living reality, she said.

Synod as it begins its 150th year has been blessed with people, programming and purposes to live out. As a somewhat ‘quiet’ business meeting, it was a good opportunity to reflect on what we can be doing to bring life and hope and love to our world. From the beginning to the end of the day, we prayed and sang and gave thanks for yet another day in God’s great creation and in gratitude for the Diocese as it celebrates 150 years! Thank you for entrusting this role to us. As the first Synod in Niagara for our Rector and for Graham Cubitt, it was a wonderful introduction to the business side of our life in Christ.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Little, Graham Cubitt

Elected Delegates

Children, Youth, and Family Ministry

Children, Youth, and Family Ministry

I have been blessed to be back as the Children, Youth, and Family Coordinator at St. John’s after the birth of our lovely Clarissa and my maternity leave. It is great that our lovely volunteers were able to keep the work going in the meantime.

It is such a pleasure to see that we have many young children at St. John’s! During the year of 2023, we planned our activities and Bible storytelling to be accessible to our precious little ones. Also, our Discovery Service Band Leader, Eduardo Farias, has been singing songs with the kids regularly at the beginning of our Children’s Church.

Overview

What a joyful year it has been for our Children, Youth, and Family Ministry in 2024! I am truly thankful for the ongoing support of our volunteers, whose dedication keeps this ministry thriving. We have seen growth, new faces, and lots of energy, particularly as we split our children’s group into two age-appropriate categories: toddlers and children 5 and up. This change has allowed us to provide more focused and engaging activities for each group. With more volunteers, we hope to expand this model every Sunday!

Ministry Highlights

This year, we have been blessed to see many young children actively participating in the life of St. John's. Our programming, which includes Bible stories, songs, and hands-on activities, has helped nurture their spiritual growth and wonder. A special thank you to Eduardo Farias, our Discovery Service Band Leader, whose musical leadership has added so much joy to our Children's Church.

Children's Choir & Christmas Pageant

Our Children's Choir, led by Susan McKay, also had an amazing year, culminating in a beautiful Christmas Pageant on December 8. Thanks to the hard work of volunteers like Susanne Adams and Sharon Klassen, the pageant was a true highlight of the season. It was wonderful to see so many choir members—some of whom are not regular St. John's attendees—join us in Children's Church for the performances, further strengthening their connection to our parish. On that Sunday, we had more than 140 people attending the service!

Outreach – PWRDF

We have also embraced a wonderful outreach project this year, raising funds to provide donkeys for families in need in Kenya through the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF). I am thrilled to share that we raised enough to provide the funds to purchase three donkeys! This effort really showcased the generous hearts of our children and families.

Looking Ahead

As we look toward 2025, my prayer is that we continue to grow this ministry, reaching more children and families, deepening their spiritual connections, and expanding our volunteer base to sustain our programs. Together, we are building a vibrant, loving community. Thank you for your continued prayers and support for this ministry.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniela Cruz

Children, Youth, and Family Coordinator

Christian Youth Formation and Mission Fund

A proposal for this fund was made at our Town Hall Vestry meeting on Sunday, June 2. The fund's purpose is to provide meaningful support to young adults going through periods of transition and to make accessing those opportunities easier. Funds would be made available to young adults preparing to participate in programs of Christian education, formation, community service or missions. Applications would be received and the money disbursed on a set schedule. Preference would be given to St. John's members, Anglicans, and for Anglican programs/institutions.

Eligibility criteria is 16-26 years of age and participant must be enrolled in a program of Christian education, formation, community service or mission.

Sue Newbery, Aaron Jones and Connor Jay were appointed as the 'award committee' for this fund. Miranda Pilcher was the fund's first applicant. Miranda was seeking financial assistance to apply to Act Five. Act Five is a program that offers an 8-month Christian gap year program filled with adventure, travel, service, learning and mentorship. A total of \$6,430.00 was received in donations. The Klassen/Pilcher family were very grateful for the generous support of this new parish initiative and its first recipient. In Miranda's own words "Thank you for helping me go on adventure to Act Five. Support from the parish is another reminder for me that that all things work together for those who love the Lord, as it says in Roman 8."

Respectfully submitted by:

Sue Newbery, Aaron Jones and Connor Jay

Our Life of Worship

Choral Music

Report of the Organist and Choir Director

2024 has been a year in which it has been a privilege to offer praise to God at The Church of St John the Evangelist, and it has been an exciting year, with the advent of our Rector, Andrew Rampton.

Andrew's first service with us was on January 7, and the choir and I were surprised and pleased at his musical knowledge and ability. His beautiful voice adds much to our services.

At the Easter service we welcomed guest musicians Mary Jay and Shawn Spicer, trumpet; Courtney Prizrenac, horn; Janice Owens, trombone; and John Brownell, timpani. It was thrilling to make music again with these fine musicians from the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra.

We sang Evensong and Benediction for Ascension Day in May, as well as music for our Patronal Feast the following Sunday.

The season ended in June with a choir get together at my place on a lovely summer afternoon. Standing over a barbecue added to the enjoyment! It was great to see some of our Junior Choir singers and their parents as well.

In September, Adrienne Devins retired from singing after more than sixty years of faithful service. Adrienne started her choral career with the Girls' Choir, and later moved to our adult choir. We miss her calmness, her pretty voice, and her penchant for keeping us in line. However, it is good to see her and her husband Hal in church, singing along with us mentally.

In October, we were invited to sing Evensong at St James' Cathedral, Toronto, joining their professional choir. It was thrilling to be singing in a large building, with a magnificent organ. On a

side note, their Director, Thomas Bell, was ill that day. Direction fell to the capable hands of Nathan Jeffery, and because of this, I was asked to accompany the service at the last moment. Nathan had started many years ago as one of my students, and I am very proud of his accomplishments.

In November, for Remembrance Day, we sang the Fauré *Requiem*, again with a full choir. We were grateful to Tim Burns for acting as Crucifer, and for his reading of the Roll of Honour. Andrew joined us as well reading the lessons: we were all pleasantly surprised to see a very full church.

The Carol Service in December was another pleasant occasion, and the choir sang well. It is always enjoyable putting together a blend of new and familiar items, and this year seemed to be well received. A full house was wonderful to see, and hear.

I would also like to thank Susan McKay, and our Junior Choir. They lift our spirits whenever they sing. Susan has been tireless in keeping this group singing during the pandemic, and we cannot all be grateful enough for her dedication, and the children's music-making. This season, the choir has grown to about fifteen children, and have sung at the newly-instituted "Second Sunday" service..

2024 brought some challenges, but I am grateful, week after week, working with these dedicated singers.

Paul Grimwood

Children's Choir

This past year saw a large change in the choir membership. Although our numbers remained at 15 throughout the year, we said goodbye to 5 choristers in May and hello to 5 new choristers in the fall. Of the 15 choir members, 6 are church members and the other 9 are members of the community. The age range is from 5-11 years. The children learn about God and Jesus through songs. While developing music skills, our focus continues to be on the choristers' ministry to touch the hearts of those listening and draw them closer to God and Jesus.

Through the winter and spring, the children sang 5 times, concluding the season with a Concert on May 16. Penninah Mwangi led the children in a Kenyan call-answer song – Making Melody in My Heart, to the great delight of all! We celebrated the achievement of our choir with personal certificates and a reception for family and friends.

In the fall, we held Choir Camp on Saturday Nov. 2 from 12 noon to 4 p.m. This gave us time to get to know each other better, to focus on our music skills, and to have great fun together! Musically, we began to focus on more solo opportunities for our experienced choristers as well as harmony. We sang at the new joint services on Second Sundays in October and November, then prepared for our musical Pageant, God With Us. The choir opened the pageant with The Carol of the Bells, accompanied by our parent bell ringers! Duncan McKay, Willa McKay and Ranen Thomas sang Once in Royal David's City unaccompanied. The Choir and Children's Church introduced a new song by Carey Landry, Born to Be Our Saviour. We thank Paul Grimwood and Eduardo Farias for

supporting us beautifully with their accompaniments. The Choir was also invited to sing at the 9 Lessons and Carols service on Sunday, Dec. 15 where they repeated the trio and Carol of the Bells. It was a wonderful experience.

We continue to be blessed with Dave McKay as our friendly face on the door. We are so thankful for the many talents of Emma Reilly McKay and Kelly McKinney as part of our leadership team. Ranen Thomas and Duncan McKay continued in their role as youth leader, modelling excellence in each aspect of the choir program. We are so very thankful for Susanne Adams and Sharon Klassen, who filled in if one of the leaders had to be absent. In addition, we appreciate the generous support of Paul Grimwood with regular, beautiful accompaniments for the choir.

It is a great joy for us all to watch the children grow in their faith and their musicianship. All children in Junior Kindergarten and older are most welcome to join us!

Respectfully submitted by Susan McKay

Discovery Band

What a blessing it has been to direct the Discovery Band at St. John the Evangelist in 2024. Our Ministry's ultimate goal is to support the worship at the Discovery Service by providing hymns and songs for congregational worship. Our greatest challenge is to expand the pool of volunteers, encourage variety, and prevent burnout among our current participants.

The band has been blessed to have a core group of members, including Margaret Wilding, Susanne Adams, and Sue Samson, who have been pillars of this Ministry for several years. Aaron Jones, Michael Bowering, and Lynda Jane Southon have also made significant contributions to our band this year. Furthermore, we are aware of a couple of other singers and instrumentalists within the congregation whom we hope to collaborate with in 2025.

We've prioritized making repertoire choices that align with the readings of the week and include hymns alongside contemporary songs. We'll also maintain inclusivity in our invitation process, as there's no strict commitment required—people can contribute their time as they can.

I am personally grateful for the immense time and effort that all the singers and instrumentalists invest in being a part of our Discovery Band. We also appreciate the unwavering support from our congregation every week. Our goal is to continue doing this work, and hope that it will keep on impacting the hearts of our congregation through the Word of God in music form.

Respectfully submitted,

Eduardo de Farias Machado, DMA
Discovery Band Leader

Ministries of Outreach

Artaban Non-profit Homes

Artaban Non-Profit Homes, Inc.

Artaban Non-Profit Homes Inc. is a non-profit company created by the parish to develop and operate Artaban Place, the 29-unit residence adjacent to the Church. The name “Artaban” is derived from the name of the protagonist in Henry Van Dyke’s book, *The Fourth Wise Man*, and was adopted as the name of an Anglican summer camp operated in the Dundas Valley from the late 1930s to the late 1960s. This parish had a principal role in the building and operation of that camp, and the name Artaban represents our strong tradition of faith and service.

While the company is legally separate from the Church, the majority of the directors are members of the parish. The day -to -day operations were administered by a property management firm. TAG (The Active Group) Management Ltd., of Burlington.

The Board Directors meet monthly to review the management of the facility and to provide oversight and policy direction.

As a housing provider in receipt of public funds, City of Hamilton, Artaban Place does not make private discriminations in the provision of housing, and residents do not have to be members of the congregation. A large number of our apartments provide specially adapted living facilities: 12 are barrier free, 3 have adaptations to assist people with visual impairment and 3 to assist people with hearing needs. Artaban Place provides rent-geared-to-income housing on a tight, non-profit budget. To apply to be a resident of Artaban Place, fill out an application form at Hamilton Housing and check Artaban Place as your first choice.

Submitted by Susanne Adams, President

Missions and Outreach

Missions and Outreach:

At St John’s there are many individuals who give time and support to all kinds of outreach and missions. There are also eight missions and outreach opportunities that Vestry has particularly mandated us to support as a parish. Here they are, with the parish reps’ names and contact info:

Hamilton Out of the Cold
Hôpital Albert Schweitzer, Haiti
Indwell
Micah House
Migrant Farmworkers Project

Tom Fleming fleming@judymarsales.com
Hal & Adrienne Devins toleafs8@gmail.com
Graham Cubitt graham@indwell.ca
Tom Fleming fleming@judymarsales.com
Susan Little salittle208@gmail.com

Mission to Seafarers

Tamara Watson tea4tamara@gmail.com

Primate's World Relief & Development Fund

Deborah Bowen dcbowen@redeemer.ca

St Matthew's House

Elizabeth & James Steeves esteeves74@gmail.com

We have a "Missions and Outreach" board at the back of the sanctuary, as well as using a display board in the foyer, and we aim to focus on two missions each month from September through June. The parish rep. is encouraged at that time to provide a brief commentary for *Parish News*, and/or to give a brief announcement about that mission in our worship services. We pray for that mission in our prayer intentions, and relevant literature is pinned up on the bulletin boards.

Of course, if an urgent need arises in any of the missions at a different time of year, or in another area of concern to the congregation, we make space for that to be raised with the congregation too, as is ongoingly the case over the winter months with the Cathedral Café for the unhoused & those in need of respite. We have also been able this year regularly to provide kitchen space for the volunteers with HATS (Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters) to make meals for those they serve who are in need of the basics.

This past spring we reintroduced the tradition of a Missions Day with invited speaker at St John's, followed by a display of all our missions in the Lidgely Room during coffee-hour. In May our speaker was Stephanie Schreuders from Micah House; in October we heard from Judith Alltree from Mission to Seafarers. We plan to continue with this twice-yearly pattern of inviting a speaker from the missions we support to address the whole congregation in our regular services. We also featured two missions at each of the Sundays UnLocked events in which St John's had a display: the Migrant Farmworkers' Project and Indwell in September, and Mission to Seafarers and Hamilton Out Of The Cold in October.

We were also very glad to have the Church School participate for the second year in a row in raising funds during Advent to support the purchase of a donkey to help women in rural Kenya with the transportation of water, through PWRDF (now Alongside Hope). So successful was the children's fundraising that they were able to provide the funds for not one donkey, but three! Way to go!

With gratitude to God for the Good News we have to share --

Deborah Bowen

Warden for Missions and Outreach

St. Matthew's House

The Church of St. John the Evangelist has supported the mission of St. Matthew's House for many years. Its current programmes include Childcare Services, Seniors Support, the Holiday Hope Programme, and Housing Focussed Street Outreach.

The primary way in which we support these initiatives is by donating canned goods and personal hygiene items week after week, throughout the year. Many parishioners regularly leave donations

at the top of the stairs leading into the church. These are collected every one to two weeks and delivered to St. Matthew's House by your current St. Matthew's House representatives.

In the spring, the parish responded with much enthusiasm to our second annual Fresh Food Drive, in collaboration with Melrose United Church. In the weeks leading up to Holy Week, parishioners were invited to order produce from Fiddes Wholesale Produce, to be delivered to St. Matthew's House for distribution to vulnerable clients before Easter. Our parish won this friendly competition, donating 1340 pounds of fresh produce to St. Matthew's House. Most importantly, we donated a total of 2330 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables with Melrose United Church to people who do not have access to enough nutrient-dense food.

Though we did not run a Halloween Food Drive as the parish has sometimes done in the past, we did make an extra push for donations in October. Not surprisingly, parishioners rose to this challenge.

We also participated in the Holiday Hope Campaign this past year. With the oversight of Judith Purdell-Lewis once again, 10 gift bags were filled by church members with requested gifts and a grocery gift card for named seniors. These gift bags made Christmas a little brighter for a number of households.

As St. Matthew's House continues to listen to the needs of our community, its mission develops and evolves. The 4Twelve Barton project is seeing the property at 412 Barton St. converted to 12 deeply affordable units. They are intended for seniors facing homelessness, with a special focus on Indigenous and Black older adults 55+, with 50% of those units designated for women.

If you have questions about how you or our parish might further support the work of St. Matthew's House, please feel free to speak to your St. Matthew's House representatives.

Respectfully submitted,

James and Elizabeth Steeves

Income-Tax Clinic

John Loukidelis

2024 was the 16th year that we have had a Volunteer Income Tax Clinic at the parish. Harold Wilson was the only volunteer in addition to myself. Nevertheless, we (Harold really) completed about 115 tax returns in 2024 for low-income residents of our city. That number was up somewhat from 2023. We continue to operate virtually, for the most part, but we have met with clients in-person on an ad hoc basis, if they find it difficult to work via email and video conference.

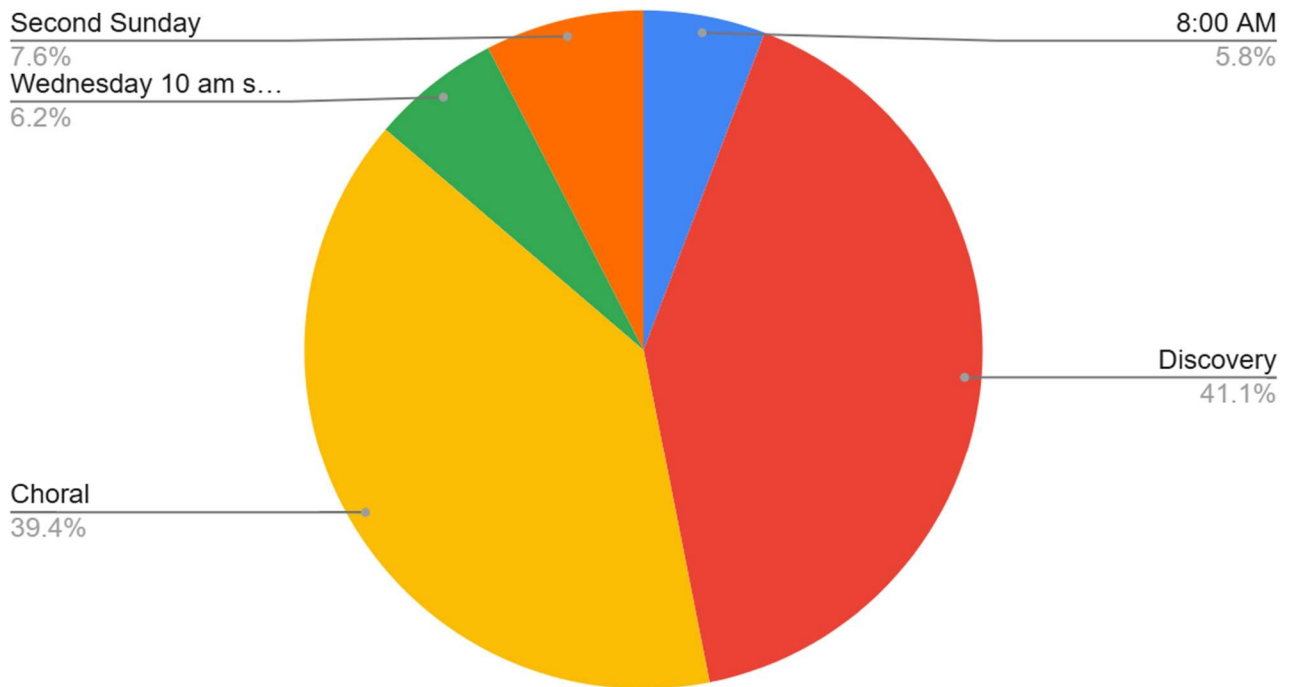
The great majority of the individuals for whom we prepare returns do not end up owing tax, but they can't get certain benefits without filing a return. Examples include the Climate Action incentive and the HST rebate. Other agencies require a CRA notice of assessment as evidence of income. For instance, Hamilton Housing requires a notice of assessment to determine whether

someone is eligible for a rent subsidy.

The tax clinic has received a grants from the CRA in past years that defray clinic expenses, which are minimal. The clinic continued to rely on those grants in 2024 and will do so again in 2025.

Statistical Report

Total Attendees and Number of Services



Average worship attendance	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All Sunday services	125	-	61	90	94
Wednesday Eucharist	9	-	5	5	8
Livestream views	146	52	>15 each	N/A	N/A

Designated Sundays & Holy Days Attendance	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Easter	-	-	78	141	153
Christmas Eve	-	-	107	113	137
Pentecost	-	-	55	96	88

2 nd Sunday in September	-	24	67	68	82
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Number of Services	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Eucharist	58	46	132	183	162
Matins or other Morning Service	65	12	3	1	5
Evensong or other Evening Service	4	2	3	3	3
Baptism	-	1	1	3	3
Weddings	1	1	0	0	1
Funeral or Burial	4	-	2	3	2

Other Statistics	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Eligible Voters at Annual Vestry	120	96	114	118	130
Identifiable Regular Financial Contributors (families)	116	97	75	79	79
Identifiable Contributors	169	153	105	TBD	116
Children Newborn to 4	4	-	-	4	
Children Aged 5-11	6	-	-	12	
Children Aged 12-18	4	-	-	2	
Youth Group Junior High	4	-	-	-	
Youth Group High School	2	-	-	-	
Adult Baptisms	-	-	-	-	2
Children Baptisms	-	1	2	3	1
Confirmations	-	-	-	-	4
Persons received	-	-	-	-	-
Parish member weddings	-	-	-	-	0
Non-Parish member weddings	1	1	-	-	1
Parish member funerals	4	-	2	2	1
Parish non-member funerals	2	-	-	1	1

Financial Reports and Statements

Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)

Church of Saint John the Evangelist Statement of Financial Position Church of Saint John the Evangelist Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2024

	Total		
	As of Dec. 31, 2024	As of Dec. 31, 2023 (PY)	% Change
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash and Cash Equivalent			
Credit card security account			
1007 Raffle Account - Chequing	5,005.17	5,002.67	0.05%
	\$	\$	
Total Credit card security account	5,005.17	5,002.67	0.05%
Operating Account			
1001 Operating Acct - Chequing	18,043.00	32,109.03	-43.81%
	\$	\$	
Total Operating Account	18,043.00	32,109.03	-43.81%
	\$	\$	
Total Cash and Cash Equivalent	23,048.17	37,111.70	-37.90%
Accounts Receivable (A/R)			
Accounts Receivable (A/R)	429.00	1,358.00	-68.41%
	\$	\$	
Total Accounts Receivable (A/R)	429.00	1,358.00	-68.41%
1010 Endowment Fund	89,260.64	95,053.70	-6.09%
1014 Rectory Fund	239,203.24	217,816.35	9.82%
1015 General investment fund			
1011 Memorial Fund	1,869.51	1,703.67	9.73%
1012 Parish Hall Capital Reserve Fund	501.17	4,830.91	-89.63%
1013 Organ Restoration Fund	3,208.53	2,923.90	9.73%
	\$	\$	
Total 1015 General investment fund	5,579.21	9,458.48	-41.01%
1018 Prepaid Expenses & Deposits	-0.03	0.00	
1019 GST Rebate Receivable	636.54	1,667.46	-61.83%
1020 PST Rebate Receivable	1,738.52	4,338.72	-59.93%
Uncategorized Asset	75.00	75.00	0.00%
	\$	\$	
Total Current Assets	359,970.29	366,879.41	-1.88%
Non-current Assets			

Property, plant and equipment			
1100 Fixed assets	35,632.60		
1101 Fixed assets depreciation	-2,375.51		
	\$	\$	
Total 1100 Fixed assets	33,257.09	0.00	
	\$	\$	
Total Property, plant and equipment	33,257.09	0.00	
	\$	\$	
Total Non Current Assets	33,257.09	0.00	
	\$	\$	
Total Assets	393,227.38	366,879.41	7.18%
Liabilities and Equity			
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable (A/P)			
Accounts Payable (A/P)	336.91	6,439.93	-94.77%
	\$	\$	
Total Accounts Payable (A/P)	336.91	6,439.93	-94.77%
Credit Card			
2001 TD Visa credit card	660.56	839.79	-21.34%
	\$	\$	
Total Credit Card	660.56	839.79	-21.34%
	\$	\$	
Total Current Liabilities	997.47	7,279.72	-86.30%
	\$	\$	
Total Liabilities	997.47	7,279.72	-86.30%
Equity			
3001 Opening Balance Equity	306,877.68	306,877.68	0.00%
Retained Earnings	67,150.89	20,060.31	234.75%
Profit for the year	18,201.34	32,661.70	-44.27%
	\$	\$	
Total Equity	392,229.91	359,599.69	9.07%
	\$	\$	
Total Liabilities and Equity	393,227.38	366,879.41	7.18%

Church of Saint John the Evangelist
Profit and Loss
January - December 2024

	Total		
	Jan - Dec. 2024	Jan - Dec. 2023 (PY)	% Change
INCOME			
Donations to Designated Funds			
4005 Donations to Endowment Fund	800.00		
4006 Donations to Capital Fund	13,350.00		
4007 Donations to Memorial Fund	200.00	700.00	-71.43%
4008 Donations to Organ Restoration Fund	193.90		
	\$	\$	
Total Donations to Designated Funds	14,543.90	700.00	1977.70%
Interest Earned on Investments			
	11.00		
4045 Endowment Fund, Interest	14,206.94	8,505.88	67.02%
4048 Rectory Fund, Interest	33,386.89	23,739.95	40.64%
4049 General Investment Fund, Interest	920.73	1,006.58	-8.53%
	\$	\$	
Total Interest Earned on Investments	48,525.56	33,252.41	45.93%
Non Profit Income	1,005.90	1,408.50	-28.58%
Offerings			
4001 Envelope, Online, and Other Identifiable Donors	77,331.75	90,849.08	-14.88%
4002 Preauthorized Giving (PAG)	132,654.00	114,760.00	15.59%
4003 Other Offerings	5,836.25	2,152.10	171.19%
4004 Loose Offerings	4,045.53	4,122.14	-1.86%
	\$	\$	
Total Offerings	219,867.53	211,883.32	3.77%
Receipts from Parish Activities			
4010 Fundraising	828.00		
4011 Bazaar (Pies, crafts, calendars)	1,544.00	-117.73	1411.48%
4012 Shopping Cards	27.10	938.85	-97.11%
	\$	\$	
Total 4010 Fundraising	\$2,399.10	821.12	192.17%
Other Income from Parish Activities			
4014 Rentals	1,125.58	601.51	87.13%
4015 Concerts	2,079.78	2,759.59	-24.63%
4020 Forward Day by Day	-79.00	-168.35	53.07%
	\$	\$	
Total Other Income from Parish Activities	3,126.36	3,192.75	-2.08%
Outreach Income			
4016 RDF Support (Rector discretionary fund)	988.21	640.00	54.41%
4017 Refugee Support	20.00		
4018 Outreach Support (other)	315.12	225.15	39.96%
	\$	\$	
Total Outreach Income	1,323.33	865.15	52.96%

Total Receipts from Parish Activities	\$ 6,848.79	\$ 4,879.02	40.37%
Total Income	\$ 290,791.68	\$ 252,123.25	15.34%
GROSS PROFIT	\$ 290,791.68	\$ 252,123.25	15.34%
EXPENSES			
Facilities			
5047 Furnishings and Equipment	1,171.84	1,052.80	11.31%
5048 Organ repair and maintenance	573.34	227.47	152.05%
Building Maintenance	243.06	0.00	
5043 Elevator Maintenance and Fees	1,293.35	4,095.48	-68.42%
5044 Regular Maintenance	13,305.49	16,890.75	-21.23%
Total Building Maintenance	\$ 14,841.90	\$ 20,986.23	-29.28%
Utilities		0.00	
5040 Heating	3,539.81	4,979.31	-28.91%
5041 Water	663.43	478.24	38.72%
5042 Hydro	6,519.88	5,531.33	17.87%
Total Utilities	\$ 10,723.12	\$ 10,988.88	-2.42%
Total Facilities	\$ 27,310.20	\$ 33,255.38	-17.88%
Ministry and Worship			
5001 DM&M	41,549.54	42,512.74	-2.27%
5002 Synod Delegate Fee	285.00		
5003 Community Marketing	179.52	220.36	-18.53%
5004 Children's Ministry	735.22	613.58	19.82%
5005 Youth Ministry	-57.52	163.91	-135.09%
5006 Worship Supplies & Resources	2,052.31	2,163.35	-5.13%
5007 Worship Music Expense	3,064.80	2,208.92	38.75%
5008 Outreach Committee	-20.00	88.65	-122.56%
5009 Hospitality and Christian Growth	2,964.08	1,856.81	59.63%
5010 Volunteer Expenses, Miscellaneous	10.34	191.88	-94.61%
Total Ministry and Worship	\$ 50,763.29	\$ 50,020.20	1.49%
Office and Administration			
5030 General Office Expenses	8,660.31	8,195.26	5.67%
5031 Bank Fees and Interest	978.62	608.21	60.90%
5032 Insurance	19,010.16	18,158.88	4.69%
5033 Other Miscellaneous Office and Admin	7,748.01	1,935.95	300.22%
Total Office and Administration	\$ 36,397.10	\$ 28,898.30	25.95%
Outreach Disbursements			
5012 Refugee Expenses	-37.75		
5014 Outreach Disbursements, Other	876.45	250.00	250.58%
Total Outreach Disbursements	\$ 838.70	\$ 250.00	235.48%
Salaries and Benefits			

5020 Rector's Salary	52,287.00	38,902.93	34.40%
5021 Housing Allowance	22,713.00	15,103.00	50.39%
5022 Administrator	9,968.40	10,269.60	-2.93%
5023 Organist and Choirmaster	15,486.00	15,823.80	-2.13%
5024 Discovery Service Music Director	16,145.07	11,382.99	41.84%
5025 CPP/EI/WSIB	339.50	501.89	-32.36%
5026 Pension & Benefits	22,623.32	14,280.24	58.42%
5027 Employee Absense Coverage	479.99		
5028 Professional Development	2,099.34		
5029 Other Employment Expense	158.28		
5035 CYFM Coordinator	12,597.36	4,984.00	152.76%
Total Salaries and Benefits	154,897.26	111,248.45	39.24%
Transfers to Investment Funds			
5052 Transfers to Memorial Fund	9.00		
Total Transfers to Investment Funds	9.00	0.00	
5100 Depreciation	2,375.51		
Total Expenses	272,591.06	223,672.33	21.87%
OTHER INCOME			
Prior period (formerly CEWS)	0.00	4,210.78	-100.00%
Total Other Income	0.00	4,210.78	-100.00%
OTHER EXPENSES			
Other Miscellaneous Expense	-20.72		
Reconciliation Discrepancies	20.00	0.00	
Total Other Expenses	0.72	0.00	
PROFIT	18,201.34	32,661.70	-44.27%

Church of Saint John the Evangelist
Statement of Cash Flows
January - December 2024

	Total
OPERATING ACTIVITIES	
Net Income	18,201.34
Adjustments to reconcile Net Income to Net Cash provided by operations:	
Accounts Receivable (A/R)	929.00
1010 Endowment Fund	5,793.06
1011 General investment fund:Memorial Fund	-165.84
1012 General investment fund:Parish Hall Capital Reserve Fund	4,329.74
1013 General investment fund:Organ Restoration Fund	-284.63
1014 Rectory Fund	-21,386.89
1018 Prepaid Expenses & Deposits	0.03
1019 GST Rebate Receivable	1,030.92
1020 PST Rebate Receivable	2,600.20
1101 Fixed assets:Fixed assets depreciation	2,375.51
Accounts Payable (A/P)	-6,103.02
2001 TD Visa credit card	-179.23
GST/HST Payable	0.00
Total Adjustments to reconcile Net Income to Net Cash provided by operations:	-\$ 11,061.15
Net cash provided by operating activities	\$ 7,140.19
INVESTING ACTIVITIES	
1100 Fixed assets	-35,632.60
Net cash provided by investing activities	-\$ 35,632.60
FINANCING ACTIVITIES	
3002 Retained Earnings	14,428.88
Net cash provided by financing activities	\$ 14,428.88
Net cash increase for period	-\$ 14,063.53
Cash at beginning of period	37,111.70
Cash at end of period	\$ 23,048.17

A-1: Mission Statement

The mission statement of the Church of St. John the Evangelist is as follows:

God calls us to help people become followers of Jesus, equipped for ministry in the church and in the world, through nurture, worship, evangelism, and service.

A-2: Brief Description

The Church of St. John the Evangelist is a Christian community of faith and parish within the Anglican Diocese of Niagara in the Anglican Church of Canada, part of the worldwide Anglican Communion. The church was established in 1890 and is located in west downtown Hamilton. The church is a registered charity under the *Income Tax Act* (Canada). It serves a large population of diverse people who live in the immediate neighbourhood of the church and beyond. In addition to the financial support the parish receives for its work, the parish relies significantly on the voluntary contribution of the time and talent of its members and community supporters. The impact of these non-monetary contributions are fundamental to understanding the Church of Saint John the Evangelist and cannot be measured in financial terms. The annual vestry report which accompanies these annual financial statements provides this information to explain and demonstrate the parish's performance in advancement of its shared mission with God.

Section B: Financial Statement Notes

B-1: Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Presentation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and on an accrual basis, which includes the year's cash flows and any amounts owed to and payable by the parish at year-end. Donated property is accounted for at its estimated market value when donated.

Fund Accounting

The parish follows the restricted fund method of accounting for revenues and expenditures. The general fund (not restricted) reports revenues and expenses related to program delivery and administrative activities. All unrestricted investment income is recorded in the general fund.

The internally restricted funds, such as the Endowment Fund, Memorial Fund, Organ Restoration Fund, Parish Hall Capital Reserve Fund, and Capital Fund, report revenues contributed for which their expenditure is restricted by the donors and church policy or until their purpose is completed. Externally restricted funds, such as the Rectory Fund (restricted by provincial statute and canon law) report revenues contributed for which their expenditure is restricted for specific activities.

Investments

Investment funds held by the Diocese of Niagara are recorded at year-end actual or estimated market value and unrealized gains or losses are accounted for in the related fund. Changes in market value are recognized as gains or losses in the statement of activity. When an investment is sold, redeemed, or written off, the actual gain or loss is also recognized in the statement of activity for the year.

Capital Property

The church property (land and buildings) are owned by the Diocese of Niagara and are therefore not included as assets in the financial statements of the parish.

Revenue Recognition

Pledges and other commitments to restricted funds are recognized as restricted revenue only when received. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue for operations when received or if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is assured.

Contributed Supplies and Services

Due to the difficulty in determining their fair financial value, contributed services and supplies are not recognized in these financial statements, nevertheless the real value of these are significant and the operation of the parish would not be possible without them.

B-2: Audit Status

The financial statements of the parish are not audited by a firm of accountants. The parish treasurer did meet with an audit committee appointed by Corporation to review the accounts of the parish for 2022 and 2023. The committee reviewed a random sample of entries for various expenses, and it reviewed the support for the balances of the bank and investment accounts of the parish as at the end of 2022 and 2023.

B-3: Notes on Statements of Investment and Restricted Funds

Rectory Fund

This fund is entirely restricted by civil statute. The first endowed capital portion is the original capital from the sale of the parish rectory in the amount of \$180,347.73. The law requires that the endowed capital portion be kept whole in the fund. The remainder of the fund is restricted by the same statute for use in support the housing allowance paid to the rector.

Capital Fund

The Capital Fund is not a segregated account as with the other funds. The Capital Fund is held in the cash accounts.

Endowment Fund

The Endowment Fund is internally restricted by the decision of the parish vestry. The vestry policy requires the approval of vestry for the use of these funds. Such approval may be in the form of a ministry budget that calls for a draw from this account or may be in the form of a separate motion approved by the vestry at an annual or special meeting.

Certificate of Approval of Reports

This Annual Report was received and approved with corrections included in this final document at the Annual Vestry Meeting of the Church of Saint John the Evangelist, Sunday, February 23, 2025

The Reverend Andrew Rampton

Sue Newbery, Vestry Clerk

Line Budget, Notes, and Narrative Budget

	2025 Budget	2024 Budget	2024 (est.)
INCOME			
Designated Funds			
4005 Endowment Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 800.00
4006 Capital Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 13,350.00
4007 Memorial Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 200.00
4008 Donations to Organ Restoration Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 193.90
TOTALS	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 14,543.90</u>
Interest from Investments			
4045 Endowment Fund, Interest	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 3,802.16	\$ 14,206.94
4048 Rectory Fund, Interest	\$ 10,400.00	\$ 8,712.64	\$ 33,386.89
4049 General Investment Fund, Interest	\$ 230.00	\$ 378.32	\$ 920.73
TOTALS	<u>\$ 14,380.00</u>	<u>\$ 12,893.12</u>	<u>\$ 48,514.56</u>
Non Profit Income	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,005.90
Offerings			
4001 Envelope, Online, and Other Identifiable Donors	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 77,331.75
4002 Preauthorized Giving (PAG)	\$ 142,000.00	\$ 170,000.00	\$ 132,654.00
4003 Other Offerings	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 5,836.25
4004 Loose Offerings	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 4,045.53
TOTALS	<u>\$ 226,500.00</u>	<u>\$ 276,000.00</u>	<u>\$ 219,867.53</u>

Receipts from Parish Activities

4010 Fundraising			\$	828.00		
4011 - Bazaar	\$	-	\$	-	\$	1,544.00
4012 - Shopping Cards	\$	3,000.00	\$	2,500.00	\$	27.00
TOTALS	\$	3,000.00	\$	2,500.00	\$	2,399.00

Other Income from Parish Activities

4014 Rentals	\$	9,000.00	\$	2,000.00	\$	1,125.58
4015 Concerts	\$	2,000.00	\$	3,000.00	\$	2,079.78
4020 Forward Day by Day	-\$	150.00	\$	-	-\$	79.00
TOTALS	\$	10,850.00	\$	5,000.00	\$	3,126.36

Outreach Income

4016 Rector's Discretionary Fund	\$	1,000.00	\$	1,000.00	\$	988.21
4017 Refugee Support	\$	-	\$	-	\$	20.00
4018 Outreach Support	\$	500.00	\$	500.00	\$	315.12
TOTALS	\$	1,500.00	\$	1,500.00	\$	1,323.33

Transfers from Investments and Grants

4025 Transfers from Endowment Fund	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
4026 Transfers from Capital Fund	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
4027 Transfers from Rectory Fund Growth	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
TOTALS	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-

TOTAL INCOME \$ 256,230.00 \$ 297,893.12 \$ 290,780.58

EXPENSES

Facilities

5046 Capital Furnishings or Equipment	\$	-	\$	-	
5047 Furnishings or Equipment	\$	1,200.00	\$	1,000.00	\$ 16,658.90
5048 Organ Repair and Maintenance	\$	600.00	\$	250.00	\$ 573.34

Building Maintenance

					\$ 243.06
5043 - Elevator Maintenance and Fees	\$	3,000.00	\$	3,500.00	\$ 1,293.35
5044 - Regular Maintenance	\$	20,000.00	\$	17,000.00	\$ 33,373.80
5045 - Capital Maintenance	\$	-	\$	20,000.00	\$ -

Utilities

5040 - Heating	\$	4,000.00	\$	5,500.00	\$ 3,539.81
5041 - Water	\$	700.00	\$	600.00	\$ 663.43
5042 - Hydro	\$	7,000.00	\$	6,000.00	\$ 6,519.88

TOTAL FACILITIES

	\$	36,500.00	\$	53,850.00	\$ 62,865.57
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Ministry and Worship

5001 DM&M	\$	42,800.00	\$	41,549.54	\$ 41,549.54
5002 Synod Delegate Fees	\$	300.00	\$	160.00	\$ 285.00
5003 Community Marketing	\$	500.00	\$	300.00	\$ 179.52
5004 Children's Ministry	\$	2,500.00	\$	2,500.00	\$ 735.22
5005 Youth Ministry	\$	750.00	\$	750.00	-\$ 57.52
5006 Worship Supplies & Resources	\$	2,500.00	\$	2,500.00	\$ 2,052.31
5007 Worship Music Expense	\$	6,850.00	\$	2,500.00	\$ 3,064.80
5008 Outreach Committee	\$	150.00	\$	150.00	-\$ 20.00
5009 Hospitality and Christian Growth	\$	3,500.00	\$	2,200.00	\$ 2,964.08
5010 Volunteer Expenses, Miscellaneous	\$	200.00	\$	200.00	\$ 10.34

TOTALS

	\$	60,050.00	\$	52,809.54	\$ 50,763.29
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Office and Administration

5030 General Office Expenses	\$	8,000.00	\$	9,500.00	\$ 8,660.31
5031 Bank Fees and Interest	\$	1,000.00	\$	1,000.00	\$ 978.62
5032 Insurance	\$	19,500.00	\$	18,885.24	\$ 19,010.16
5033 Other Miscellaneous Office and Admin	\$	17,500.00	\$	9,000.00	\$ 7,748.01

TOTALS

	\$	46,000.00	\$	38,385.24	\$ 36,397.10
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Outreach Disbursements			
5012 Refugee Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	-\$ 37.75
5013 RDF Remittance	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -
5014 Outreach Disbursements, Other	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 876.45
TOTALS	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 838.70

Salaries and Benefits			
5020 Rector's Salary	\$ 54,577.00	\$ 52,287.00	\$ 52,287.00
5021 Housing Allowance	\$ 23,640.00	\$ 22,713.00	\$ 22,713.00
5022 Administrator	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 9,968.40
5023 Organist and Choirmaster	\$ 17,520.00	\$ 16,615.00	\$ 15,486.00
5024 Discovery Service Music Director	\$ 16,380.00	\$ 15,750.00	\$ 16,145.07
5025 CPP/EI/WSIB	\$ 8,750.00	\$ 8,400.00	\$ 339.50
5026 Pension & Benefits	\$ 23,000.00	\$ 21,200.00	\$ 22,623.32
5027 Employee Absence Coverage	\$ 1,700.00	\$ 1,700.00	\$ 479.99
5028 Professional Development	\$ 1,900.00	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 2,099.34
5029 Other Employment Expense	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 158.28
5035 CYFM Coordinator	\$ 11,700.00	\$ 11,200.00	\$ 12,597.36
TOTALS	\$ 172,667.00	\$ 165,165.00	\$ 154,897.26

Transfer to Investment Funds			
5050 Transfers to Endowment Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
5052 Transfers to Memorial Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9.00
5055 Transfers to Capital Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTALS	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9.00

TOTAL EXPENSES \$ 317,217.00 \$ 317,209.78 \$ 305,770.92

NET INCOME	-\$ 60,987.00	-\$ 19,316.66	-\$ 14,990.34
Other Income Prior Period (formerly CEWS)			\$ 9,672.94
Transfer to Capital Fund (3% of offerings)	-\$ 6,795.00		
TOTALS	-\$ 67,782.00	-\$ 19,316.66	-\$ 5,317.40

Notes for Budget 2025

Introduction

Figures for income and expenses in 2025 have been estimated based on actual figures in 2024 and reliable information such as giving pledges.

2024 giving trended upward, slowly rising over the course of the year. This is encouraging to see. Slow and sustainable growth in giving is highly desirable for churches. Our giving in 2024 did not reach our budgeted figures, though these were aspirational when set at the 2024 Annual Vestry Meeting. 2024 also saw a significant number of unexpected high-cost expenses. (Activity Centre dishwasher replacement; Activity Centre sump pump replacement; church furnace replacement; new rector moving costs.)

Budgeted figures for 2025 are more conservative than the previous year, based closely on actual results from 2024 and known income and expenses for 2025. The result is a significant projected deficit. St John’s has a recent record of excellent planning and management of known expenses. Generating income to cover those expenses is a consistent challenge.

Budgets are planning tools, not prophecies; tools, not masters. The expenses in this budget represent the financial cost of the ministries that St John’s has discerned it is meant to take on in 2025. The projected deficit is a possibility, not a result carved in stone. St John’s is an energetic, faithful, resourceful community which can, with God’s help, meet this need and more.

Investments

Interest on investments has been estimated at 5%.

Notes by Line

4002 PAG	Actual PAG commitments at the end of 2024.
4014 Rentals	St John’s has secured a rental over the summer worth \$7,000.
5005	Currently used as a holding account for the Christian Youth Formation and Mission Fund; should be segregated for clarity
5007 Worship Music Expense	Includes funding for a digital keyboard and orchestral musicians for Mozart <i>Solemn Vespers</i> .
5022 Administrator	In 2024 the budget for the Parish Administrator’s salary included a “cushion” beyond the 9 hours per week in the job description. Over the course of 2024, the Parish Administrator has taken on new responsibilities—assisting with bookkeeping and financial reporting in particular—that warranted an increase in hourly wage. The 2025 figure represents work at 10 hours per week at the new rate of pay.

5030 General Office Expense	Email and Microsoft Office subscriptions now provided for free through Microsoft charitable program.
5033 Other Office Admin	Includes \$9,500 for external financial review engagement.
5044 Regular Maintenance	Includes \$6,000 for Activity Centre deep cleaning.
5045 Capital Maintenance	The 2024 figure of \$20,000 is the estimated cost of replacing the Activity Centre sump pumps. This work has been completed and, we pray, will not be repeated in 2025.
5047 Furnishings or Equipment	The 2024 Actual is significantly higher than budgeted; this is the unexpected cost of furnace replacements in the church.

Significant New Expenses

Financial Review

\$9,500 has been budgeted for an external review engagement. This is a review of the parish finances conducted by a chartered accountant from a third-party firm. This work serves two primary purposes: first, it reassures us that our financial records and processes are up to date, accurate, and transparent; second, it can be shown to potential partners and granting organizations as proof that we are a financial responsible and trustworthy organization.

The first year for a review such as this includes extra costs as the reviewing firm must establish baselines for our records. If we were an established client, this review would cost about \$6,600.

The diocese recommends in the strongest terms that parishes with an income over \$100,000 undertake an external review engagement or audit. Parishes with income over \$250,000 are required to undertake a full audit.

Activity Centre Deep Clean

\$6,000 has been budgeted for a professional deep cleaning of the Activity Centre. This area has not had a deep clean since prior to 2020 sometime. The deep cleaning includes stripping and waxing of floors, washing floors and walls, dusting, and cleaning the entirety of the kitchen and washrooms. Keeping our facility clean makes it more attractive to renters and will be excellent preparation for the repairs and painting planned for 2025.

Narrative Budget 2025

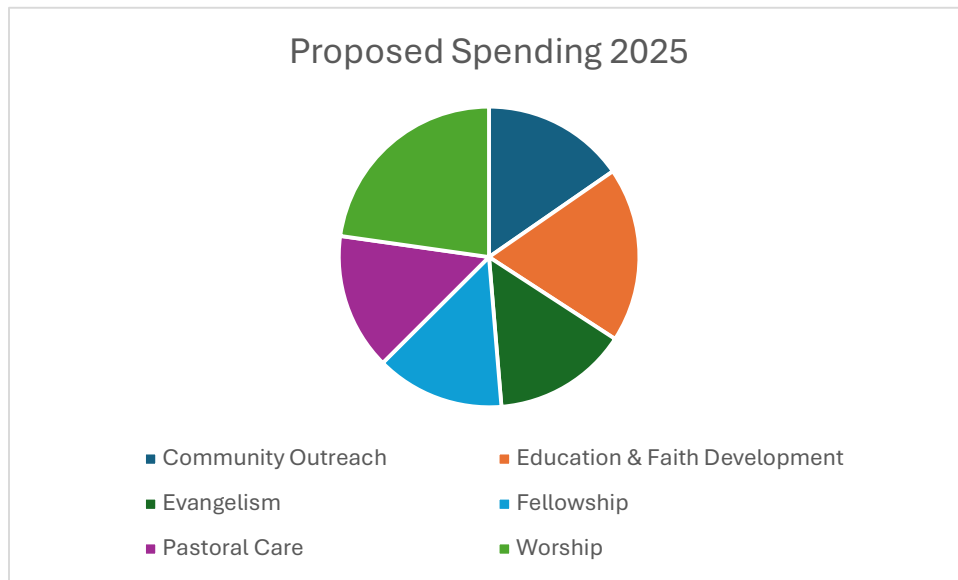
Introduction

A narrative budget is an attempt to put into words the projected spending of the church for the next year. Narrative budgets are subjective descriptions of hard data. This means there are many ways to structure such a document.

A few notes about the structure of this narrative budget:

- Structured around six key ministry areas
 - Community Outreach
 - Education & Faith Development
 - Evangelism
 - Fellowship
 - Pastoral Care
 - Worship
- Shared expenses, such as administration and facility maintenance, are spread across all six ministry areas
- Includes only financial data
 - No analysis of volunteer hours or other ways of measuring investment in ministries
- Compiled and presented by an individual
 - Would be better completed by a working group for 2026

Overall View



As the chart above shows, the spending at St John's between the six key ministry areas is generally balanced, with the most spent on worship and the least spent on fellowship. If we imagine the pie chart as a single dollar, the number of cents directed to each ministry area are:

Community Outreach	15¢
Education & Faith Development	19¢
Evangelism	15¢
Fellowship	14¢
Pastoral Care	15¢
Worship	23¢

Many activities at St John's straddle the lines between different key ministry areas. For example, the Junior Choir could be part of Community Outreach, Education & Faith Development, Evangelism, and Worship. An event like the Peace Vigil this past February could be part of Community Outreach, Education & Faith Development, Pastoral Care, and Worship. An effort has been made to spread expenses across all appropriate ministry areas in the above figures.

Relationship to Parish MAP Goals

The parish MAP goals prioritized for July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, were:

- adult faith formation
- reshaping parish culture by building a sense of cohesion within the congregation and making use of spiritual gifts
- developing a fullness of life in the neighbourhood through partnerships with neighbour churches and developing relationships with our neighbours, seeking ways to serve.

These goals continue to inform planning at St John's until our MAP 2.0 work, intended to be completed in the first half of 2025.

A surface-level analysis of our spending breakdown suggests that adult faith formation is well-resourced, financially, compared to some other activities. Community outreach and fellowship are less so. This is not an indication of failure or lack in these areas; it is possible that these activities require fewer financial resources than others or, given the overall breakdown of our ministry area expenses, that worship and education and faith development are areas that require more money.

Community Outreach

So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. *John 13:14-15*

At its heart, Community Outreach is about service among others. We look outward from ourselves and our immediate community to our neighbours, near and far. Like Jesus sending the disciples two-by-two to share good news, we keep our eyes, ears, and hearts open for opportunities to "seek and serve Christ in all people."

Education & Faith Development

Take my instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold; for wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her. *Proverbs 8:10-11*

Since Jesus began calling disciples, learning has been a core component of Christian life. Some things we learn through sharing stories, others by discussing facts, and others by doing and then reflecting on the experience. At St John's, learning takes many shapes: Bible and book studies; short courses on topics related to faith; community discussions like Hearts & Minds; preparation for sacraments; experiencing the artistic traditions of our faith; even our church building tells us the story of our lives with God.

Evangelism

And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. *Mark 16:15*

It is human nature at its best to want to share the gifts we receive. In Jesus Christ we have received the greatest gift of all: God who dwells with us, redeems us, and prepares an eternal place for us with God. We are called and compelled to share this good news with the world, in word and action. This can be as a conversation about our faith over coffee or inviting the neighbourhood to join us for our favourite festivals and celebrations. At our best, we show Christ at work in our lives with all that we say and do.

Fellowship

And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching. *Hebrews 10:24-25*

Christianity is a way of life that demands community. Even the desert hermits and isolated Carthusians gather for worship and companionship once in a while. Our fellowship with one another is the natural result of our being drawn together into life in Christ. It is where we find support, encouragement, refreshment, and challenges to take on the rest of our calling. Fellowship may seem like just another coffee or catch-up chat, but in truth it is where, with God’s gentle help, some of the strongest pillars of relationships are built and reinforced.

Pastoral Care

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ *Matthew 25:35-36*

God’s concern for those in need is abundantly clear in every part of the Bible and throughout Christian teaching. If we can order our loves such that those in greatest need are cared for, so will be the rest of us. It is no accident that Jesus is born and dies in circumstances that mark him as one of “the least” and not among the wealthy and powerful of the world. Each of us experiences trials in our lives and the support of our siblings in Christ is such a blessing in those times. Sometimes pastoral care is about an action to address a situation, like giving clothing to the naked. Often, pastoral care is not about solving a problem, but about being present, reminding the person that they are not suffering this trial alone, like visiting the prisoner.

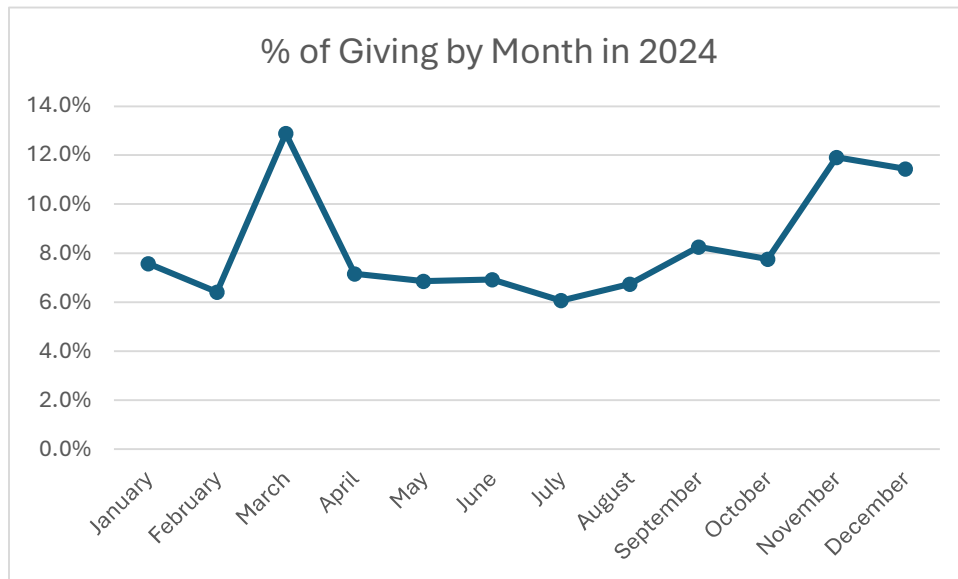
Worship

Day and night without ceasing they sing, “Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.” *Revelation 4:8b*

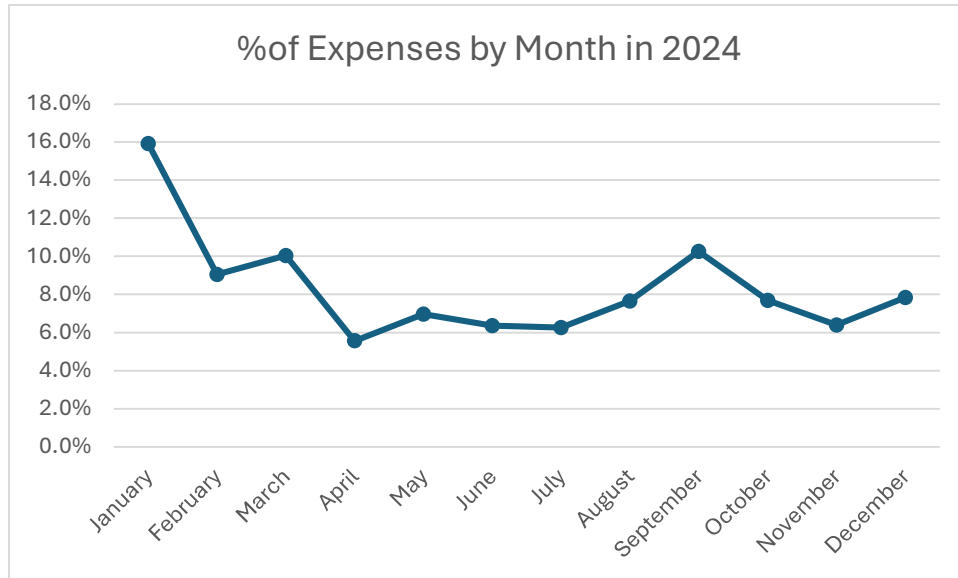
Offering praise and thanksgiving to God is our first response as Christians. After all, it is God who creates us, sustains our life, redeems us, and transfigures us. It is in God that we live, and move, and have our being. Worship can be a huge event, including the entire community, or a smaller affair, where two or three are gathered to glorify God in praise. Our response to God’s love is to pour our whole selves, heart, mind, body, and spirit, into our worship, anticipating that holy moment when we feel the blessed Spirit take a part, making our offering one meet and right for God to receive.

Giving and Spending Patterns in 2024

Church budgets are generally written one year at a time. Most often the expected income and expenses are broken evenly into 1/12 sections, one per month. (1/12 is about 8.3%) Then, each month, when the actual figures are known, a comparison is made. The comparison is analyzed to determine how closely the income and expenses are matching predictions. This information is then used to determine if changes in spending need to be made or changes in income need to be sought. Of course, income and expenses do not arrive in evenly distributed amounts across the year.



Giving in churches tends to be highest around important holidays like Easter and Christmas. In 2024, Easter fell on March 3. We can see on the graph above that March alone accounts for 13%, about 1/7, of the whole year’s giving, while November and December together account for another 23%, nearly 1/4, of giving. This pattern means the church cannot expect the majority of its income until the last days of the year.



In contrast to the giving patterns, we can see in this graph that in 2024 the church's expenses were highest in the first three months of the year. January alone accounted for 16%, about 1/6, of the expenses for the entire year. Nearly double what an even 1/12 portion would have been. November and December together account for only 14%, or 1/7, of expenses in 2024.

This difference in the patterns of giving and spending in church makes budgeting and money management a challenging task. Expenses are high early in the year and most of the giving does not arrive until the end of the year. This means that church budgets often feel like they are "chasing" the break-even point and won't learn until year's end what the true result is.

There is little that can be done to more evenly spread the expenses across the year. Many expenses, such as staff, are fixed amounts. Others, such as the replacement of furnaces in 2024, are unknown until they become necessary and are, often, urgent once known.

St John's has a high number of regular givers who use Pre-Authorized Giving (PAG). This is a significant help to the budgeting and money management processes because it provides a known, stable income each month. PAG is a good option for many, but not suitable for everyone. Regardless of the giving method, consistent, regular giving is a great help to maintaining stable church finances.