

Moments of Worship, Ministry, and Outreach:
St. John's Episcopal Church, Arlington, VA
Minutes from Annual Meeting 2017

The St. John's community gathered to remember the moments of worship, ministry, outreach, and fellowship that made up 2016 and to plan for the future at the Annual Meeting on January 22, 2017.

An opening prayer by Rector Ann Barker was followed by congregational approval of the 2016 Annual Meeting minutes. Rev. Barker then presented highlights from 2016. "Our worship together inspires and renews us to do God's work in our daily lives," she noted. These moments of renewal included the Maundy Thursday loaves and fishes service and a joyous Easter celebration. Renewal also came through inspirational Advent and Christmas services. In other worship moments, St. John's welcomed Bishop Ted Gulick in June and once again offered Ashes to Go at the Ballston Metro Station on Ash Wednesday and held the Blessing of the Animals service in October at both the church and the Shirlington Dog Park. In 2017 St. John's will explore new ways to expand its worship, including using liturgy from *Enriching Our Worship* and the New Zealand Prayer Book. Also being considered is a new monthly service such as a healing or contemplative service. Budgeted funds to purchase a music license will allow the church to broaden its options for hymns and other music.

Family programs events included a Vision Board Party in which family members of all ages could create collages about their hopes and dreams for the new year, as well as the annual Christmas Pageant. Following the pageant, St. John's continued its tradition of taking up a special offering for the Heifer Project, which contributes animals and seeds to people in developing countries to help them achieve self-sustainability. Led by Valeria Antelo from Cristo Rey, a creative and lively Vacation Bible School in July drew more than 20 children and featured a beach theme and an array of activities ranging from storytelling and arts and crafts to outdoor play and science projects.

Whitney Coleman served as family programs minister until February and then a strong team of St. John's volunteers (Debbie Carter, Del Hunt, Peter Olivere, Lisa Pope, Faye Pritchard, Bill Thomson, and Barbara Wien) taught Sunday School until the end of the school year in June. Peggy Blount stepped forward to lead the Sunday School program starting in the fall. John Petrich continued to organize the monthly preparation of bagged lunches for the Bailey's Crossroads Shelter.

Outreach activities that continued in 2016 included bagging food at the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) every month, participating in the Salvation Army's Angel Tree project, and collecting school supplies for students at Campbell and Carlin Springs elementary schools. Outreach coordinator Faye Pritchard thanked all who participated in outreach activities, particularly the faithful AFAC volunteers, and noted that she hopes St. John's can find a new and energizing activity in 2017. St. John's also took part in the diocese's Stop Hunger Now event, where 10,000 meals were packaged in approximately two hours, and joined People of Faith for Equality in Virginia (POF-EV). This interfaith organization works to achieve a vision of inclusion, welcome, and equality for LGBTQ Virginians and their families.

Parish life activities continued to draw the St. John's community together in 2016. These included the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper in February, spaghetti supper in April, Mother's Day

weekend tea in May, and Thanksgiving potluck in November. The church once again offered hot dogs and beverages for sale on Glencarlynn Day in June. Parishioners and their guests also headed to Shrine Mont in October for a refreshing and relaxing weekend of experiencing God in nature.

The Sunday Seminar continued to offer diverse and stimulating sessions in 2016, including classes on "The God We Can Know," "Qualities of Discipleship," "Music in Revelation," the book *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*, and a Lenten study on "A Way Through the Wilderness."

Treasurer Bill Thomson presented the 2016 financial report. Although a budget deficit of \$32,967 was projected for 2016, the actual deficit was \$22,531. Between 2005 and 2016, the church experienced only a \$5,000 difference in available financial resources, with assets averaging between \$200,000 and \$250,000 a year. Finance Committee chair Dave Dunlap then presented the proposed 2017 budget, which includes a one percent salary increase for staff. "This is a budget that supports the church's vision, mission, and goals adopted in 2016," said Dunlap. For example, budgeted items include an expansion of adult education offerings and a new music copyright to support the goal of broadening St. John's musical offerings. The budget projects a deficit of \$37,107 in 2017.

The annual meeting briefly addressed the 2016 goal of welcoming. Rev. Barker noted that she had recently sent out a congregational letter asking for volunteers to serve as a welcoming group to greet and assist visitors and newcomers. All of those who are interested should speak to her. The St. John's community also discussed its relationship with Cristo Rey and opportunities for increased collaboration. Suggestions included holding joint services, asking Cristo Rey members to join the altar guild, and organizing more events such as Bingo Night or a dinner to get to know each other better.

Senior Warden Bill Thomson thanked vestry members Sandy Winger (Junior Warden), Jeff Aitken, Teresa Birmingham, Del Hunt, Lisa Pope, and John Restall for their service. He noted that the vestry operates using a consensus process and worked together in a very collegial fashion in 2016. Aitken, Hunt, Pope, and Restall will continue to serve in 2017. New vestry members Bryan Harbin and Diane Henderson were elected unanimously.

Rev. Barker recognized outgoing vestry members and 2016 vestry officers Bill Thomson and Sandy Winger for their service, as well as treasurer Bill Thomson, pledge clerk John Restall, stewardship chairs Lynn Christopher and Bill Schenck, altar guild chair Eileen Tallent and all altar guild members, sign coordinator Jeff Aitken, choir members, ushers, acolytes, and all those who volunteered to help with St. John's card ministry, community events, clean-up days, and nursery renovations. Also recognized were webmaster Peter Olivere; *Logos* editor Lisa Pope; organist Carol Dunlap, who retired after 18 years of service; and the dedicated St. John's staff: minister of music Lynn Robinson, organist Judith Marcinko, church programs director Jill McAfee, church administrator Virginia Pearson, sextons Juan Figueroa and Julio Sarto, and nursery attendant Kaitlyn Osteguín. The congregation also thanked Rev. Barker for another year of service. Volunteer needs for 2017 include helping with the Mother's Day weekend tea and the upcoming Valentine-Making event on February 12. The altar guild and choir would also welcome new members.

St. John's will focus on discipleship in 2017: following Jesus individually and as a church so that all can discover their passions, gifts, and what he would have them do. "We will keep reaching out to the community, using the strength of our greatest resource, the people of St. John's," said Rev. Barker.