



LOGOS

The Newsletter for St. John's Episcopal Church, Arlington

"The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it" John 1:5

April 2023

St. John's Annual Meeting 2023: Joy, Change, and Renewal

St. John's celebrated a momentous past year while looking at the opportunities and challenges ahead at its Annual Meeting on March 26, 2023. Following an opening prayer by Rector Julie Bryant, Sandy Winger presented the Senior Warden Report. As Sandy noted, 2022 was a year to remember for St. John's and one made possible only with the help of many hands. The congregation is thankful that Rev. Larry Packard continued to serve as the church's long-term supply clergy for eight months and provided invaluable counsel in support of St. John's many activities and efforts during that time. Highlights of the year include:

COVID 19 – St. John's began the year continuing to exercise considerable caution to limit the exposure of its members to COVID-19. Although worship services were held in-person, they also continued to be live-streamed on Zoom for those unable to attend. During the year, we were able to relax some of the precautions, including making masks optional and moving from Holy Eucharist with only the host to adding intinction of the host. However, we were not able to resume many of the activities and events that St. John's had conducted prior to the pandemic.

Search Committee – In 2022 the St. John's and St. Patrick's joint search committee completed its work as the vestries of the two parishes called The Rev. Julie D. Bryant to be their new rector. Over the course of a two-year process of first creating a church profile and then conducting the rector search, the committee considered 12 candidates for the position before choosing Rev. Julie. The search committee was made up of two representatives from each parish. Dave Dunlap from St. John's and Kathy Oliver from St. Patrick's served as co-chairs, with Sandy Winger from St. John's and Nhung Dang from St. Patrick's filling out the membership. While the multiple cycles of accepting names and interviewing candidates was time-consuming, the search committee feels that the selection of Rev. Julie as the new rector was worth the effort.

Clergy - Rev. Julie began her service as our rector on December 1. We welcomed her on December 4, when she conducted her first service at St. John's. She began immediately reaching out to the neighborhood by having St. John's participate in the Glencarlyn luminaria

event and host a community caroling evening at the church, bringing in many who had never been to St. John's before.

Members - Our membership went up and down during the year. St. John's mourned the passing of longtime congregants Anne Stenger and Don Hess, while also celebrating new member Christine Williams being received as an Episcopalian in September.

Vestry - St. John's Vestry was composed of Cassandra Winger as Senior Warden, Bryan Harbin as Junior Warden, Peter Olivere as treasurer, Jeff Aitken as recorder, Dave Dunlap, Lisa Pope, and Diane Henderson. They met monthly to oversee the operations of St. John's. This included working with St. Patrick's to set up the framework for a shared rector and voting in September to call, along with St. Patrick's, Rev. Julie as the new shared rector. The Vestry also approved the replacement of the 20-year-old air conditioning unit in the undercroft. St. John's thanks Jeff for his years of service on the Vestry as he now steps down because of other commitments. The remaining six members will continue their service during 2023. The Vestry will be electing a new Junior Warden.

Other Congregations - We continued to provide a home for other Christian groups at St. John's, including the addition in March of a congregation of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. The Seventh Day Adventist congregation, which has been with us for several years, continues to hold regular services on Saturdays. The funds from the use of the facility provide an important supplement to our tithes and offerings. Sadly, after being a part of St. John's for more than 30 years, the Spanish language Episcopalian congregation Cristo Rey relocated to Springfield, Virginia, in November.

Thank You to Volunteers - Much of what happens at St. John's is accomplished by our dedicated volunteers. Thank you to everyone who has served in the church's many ministries over the past year.

Treasurer Peter Olivere presented the 2022 financial report and discussed the 2023 budget. St. John's ended 2022 with a surplus of \$57,885, primarily due to realizing as income the forgiveness of the \$21,196 Federal Payroll Protection Plan loan from 2021. In addition, clergy costs were extremely low, as Rev. Packard continued to serve as long-term supply clergy for the first portion of the year. The 2023 budget initially developed in August 2022 projected a deficit of \$3,000, with the expectation that this deficit would disappear as St. John's grew and revenue increased. However, there have been changes since the August projection that have altered the financial picture. Pledges for 2023 are down 11 percent compared to 2022 and amount to \$13,000 less than the 2022 pledge contributions actually received. Another major loss of revenue is a projected drop of facilities revenue by \$8,370. This is due to losing the Cristo Rey congregation in November as well as the Ethiopian Orthodox congregation reducing the number of their scheduled services from October until April. At the same time, facilities operations expenses and clerical costs have increased. The projected deficit is now \$21,000. This amount is unsustainable in the long term as St. John's does not want to use its investment funds to cover annual operating costs, as happened in the past.

Plans for addressing the deficit include increasing facilities revenue through such means as finding a new congregation as a tenant, increasing pledge and plate income, and increasing other contributions, including legacy gifts. As St. John's confronts these financial challenges, it will be reestablishing its Finance Committee.

Rev. Julie presented the Rector's report. She noted it is a joy to be at St. John's. While her ability to report on 2022 is limited, as her tenure only began in the last month of the year, she spoke of the future life of both St. John's and St. Patrick's. Each congregation has some gems of ministry as well as some areas that need resetting. Both churches working in concert with each other have the ability to reinvigorate the purpose and effectiveness of their service to their immediate and far-flung communities and to accomplish together some things that are not possible as single congregations. It is important to fine-tune the process of sharing a single rector as well as to build up lay leaders to help oversee various aspects of congregational life. These and other more complicated matters must be managed with mutual respect and concern. Rev. Julie noted that the Annual Meeting this year does not include Vestry elections, as both St. John's and St. Patrick's have agreed not to hold elections at this time, so as to have the opportunity to build up lay leaders through discipleship work. St. John's current Vestry members will continue to serve during 2023, with the exception of Jeff Aitken, who is stepping down.

As this year progresses, St. John's and St. Patrick's will have the opportunity to learn from each other and to reach for success together. Sometimes success looks like failure, as we gain experience and wisdom, but we are on this road together. Looking ahead, Rev. Julie hopes to explore opportunities to host neighborhood musicians at St. John's. St. John's members will also have the opportunity to attend concerts and services at St. Patrick's. Just as St. John's recently assisted St. Patrick's as it hosted the unhoused in the area for dinners, she hopes that St. Patrick's will start to participate in St. John's monthly volunteer efforts at the Arlington Food Assistance Center. In closing, she spoke of the importance of reminding ourselves that we are here for God's glory and thanked the congregation for welcoming her to St. John's.

Bishop's Visit on April 23

Bishop Dabney Smith will visit St. John's and St. Patrick's on Sunday, April 23. The day will begin with worship at St. John's at 9 a.m., with the congregation of St. Patrick's joining the service. Following the Peace, the two congregations will journey to St. Patrick's for the completion of the service, which will include at least one Confirmation. If you would like to be Confirmed, Received into the Episcopal Church, or to Reaffirm your Baptismal vows at this service, please let Rev. Julie know. And plan now to come join this special day in the life of St. John's and St. Patrick's!

Words on Hymns: Sing!

The following is an excerpt from *The Reformation and Lutheran Confessionalism to 1620* by Christopher Boyd Brown. It is an interesting history of the development of hymn singing by congregations.

In the ears of contemporary observers, the outpouring of vernacular song accompanying the spread of the Reformation heralded a seismic shift in western Christendom...While building on rich connections to earlier tradition, the Lutheran embrace of music in the service of the Gospel constituted a new epoch in the song of the Church, with the development of a theology and culture of music for the church, school, and home that set Lutherans apart not only from the medieval Church but also from their sixteenth-century contemporaries of other confessions.

Martin Luther affirmed music in its many forms as a gift of God—instrumental music as well as vocal, congregational unison singing as well as choral polyphony. Although the good employment of music, in Luther's judgment, was not confined to narrowly religious purposes, its highest use was to be joined with God's Word for "preaching in song." Luther's new understanding of the singing of the Church—not as distraction or mere ornament, nor simply as praise due to God, but as proclamation of the Gospel—was the foundation of Lutheran hymnody. Following Colossians 3:16, Luther identified the hymns as bearers of the Word of God, a conception that shaped and defined the Lutheran use of hymnody in all contexts.

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In 1523, Luther began writing German hymns and called upon others to join him "so that the Word of God may abide among the people through song...."

These first hymns were written in a range of styles, including ballads—the songs that served as the newswire of early modern Europe—as well as metrical psalms in rhymed stanzas, Luther's own influential innovation. But for Luther, the essential characteristic of Christian hymnody was not a literal reproduction of biblical texts, but the faithful articulation and application of scriptural teaching. His hymn *Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice*, with its uncompromising depiction of humanity's bondage to sin and its joyous proclamation of Jesus' coming as deliverer, conveys not only the outlines of biblical doctrine as Law and Gospel but the affective response of faith moving from despair to joy.... Like many early Lutheran hymns (and many of the psalms themselves), it is addressed to the congregation rather than to God.

...

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One of my Top 10 favorite hymns, *When In Our Music God Is Glorified*, expresses it well:

1. When in our music God is glorified, and adoration leaves no room for pride, it is as though the whole creation cried, Hallelujah!

2. How often, making music, we have found a new dimension in the world of sound, as worship moved us to a more profound Hallelujah!

3. So has the church, in liturgy and song, in faith and love, through centuries of wrong, borne witness to the truth in every tongue: Hallelujah!

4. And did not Jesus sing a Psalm that night when utmost evil strove against the Light? Then let us sing, for whom he won the fight: Hallelujah!

5. Let every instrument be tuned for praise! Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise! And may God give us faith to sing always: Hallelujah!

Don't just stand there—sing!

Carol Dunlap



St. John's Staff and Leadership

Staff

Rector: The Rev. Julie D. Bryant
Minister of Music: Lynn Robinson
Organist: Judith Marcinko
Parish Administrator: Virginia Pearson
Sexton: Julio Sorto

Parish Leaders

Peter Olivere, Treasurer
Eileen Tallent, Chair, Altar Guild

Vestry

Sandy Winger, Senior Warden	Diane Henderson
Dave Dunlap	Peter Olivere
Bryan Harbin	Lisa Pope

Parish News

Upcoming Events:

➤ Join the fun of St. John's virtual Bingo night the second Saturday of each month at 7 p.m. To request Bingo cards, contact Sandy Winger at bingo@stjohnsarlingtonva.org or 571-268-7555 no later than mid-day the Friday before the game. For details on the Zoom link, see the Calendar section of the St. John's home page at <http://stjohnsarlingtonva.org>.

➤ The St. John's Book Club will meet on **Tuesday, May 2**, at 7:30 p.m. in the undercroft to discuss *Who Is Vera Kelly?* by Rosalie Knecht. This riveting spy novel introduces a modern and memorable heroine who is recruited by the CIA. All are welcome!

Thank You to:

- Jeff Aitken for his many years of vestry service.
- Peter Olivere for preparing budget and other materials for the Annual Meeting and posting them on the St. John's website.
- Carol Dunlap for serving as guest organist.

We celebrate with all who have birthdays in April:

Gerard Baynham, Carol Dunlap, Diane Henderson, Bob Tallent, Jackson Tallent, Sharon Tallent, Linda Trochim, Valerie Wilson, and Sandy Winger.

We celebrate with those observing anniversaries in April:

Bill and Faye Pritchard.

LOGOS

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Lisa Pope, LOGOS Editor

Email articles to logos@stjohnsarlingtonva.org. The deadline for the May issue is April 24.

St. John's Vision Statement

St. John's Episcopal Church is an inclusive congregation that nurtures Christian spiritual growth and community through worship, education, outreach, mutual care, and fellowship.

St. John's Mission Statement

St. John's mission is building a strong spiritual community in Christ; welcoming all who enter our doors, including believers, seekers, and doubters; and reaching out to those in need both within our congregation and around us.