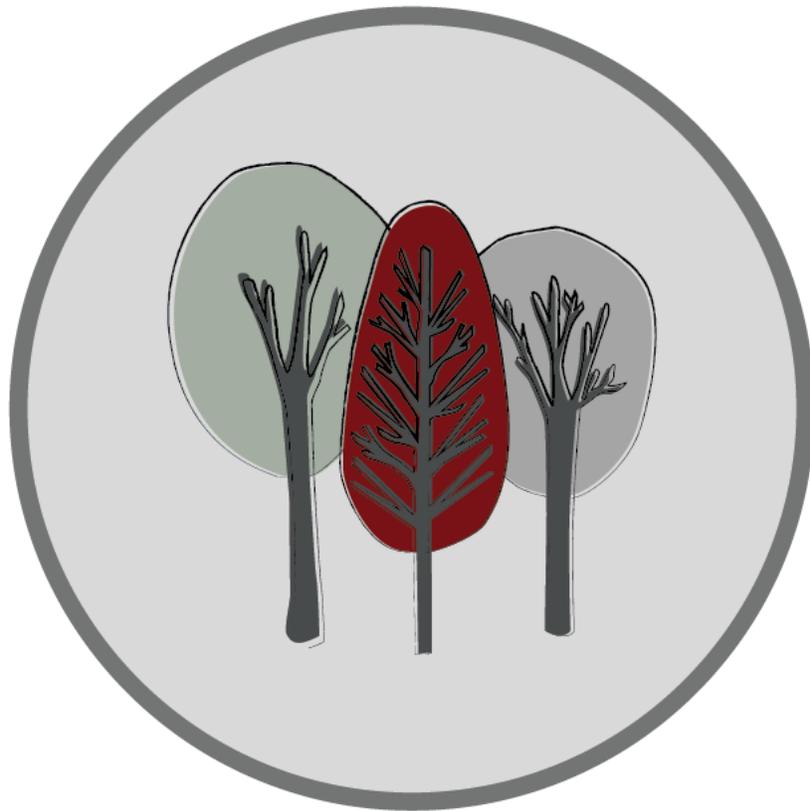


The Parish Church of St. John in the Wilderness



2021 Annual Report

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Parish Contact Information

Rector: The Rev. Arthur Hancock, <rector@stjohnwilderness.org>

Curate: The Rev. Kate Maxwell, <curate@stjohnwilderness.org>

Deacon: The Rev. Rick Todd, <deacon@stjohnwilderness.org>

Deacon: The Rev. Margaret Thor, <deacon01@stjohnwilderness.org>

Director of Administration and Finance: Maureen Vruno,
<administration@stjohnwilderness.org>

Director of Children's Christian Formation: Rona Pasch,
<children@stjohnwilderness.org>

Director of Communications & Digital Ministries: Carrie Thomas,
<communications@stjohnwilderness.org>

Director of Music Ministries: Michael Ferguson, <music@stjohnwilderness.org>

Sexton: Jake Malark

Lead Child Care Provider: Ms. Lorna Cessna

Vestry Members

(terms expire at Annual Meeting on year indicated)

Karen Herrera, Senior Warden 2022

Brent Torgerson, Junior Warden 2022

Andrew McClaren, Treasurer 2022

Jeanne Thoemke, Clerk of Vestry 2022

Dick Halbert 2022

Jennifer Tantt 2022

Avis Watkins 2022

Jim Petersen 2023

John Allen 2023

Liz Dobson 2023

Will McBride 2024

Julie Jaeger 2024

Janet Waller 2024

Agenda

Annual Parish Meeting

2022

Prayer and Call to Order

Logistics

Review and acceptance of the 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes

Election of Secretary for the Annual Meeting

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- Rector's Report and Address
- Questions

Elections

- Review of voter qualifications
- Explanation of Nomination Process
- Call for Nominations from the floor
- Closing of Nominations
- Appointment of Election Judges (if necessary)
- Voting (in person & Google Meets Poll)
- Announcement of Elections

Treasurer's Report

- Review of 2021 Financial Plan
- Presentation of 2022 Financial Plan
- Questions regarding Treasurer's Report

Presentation of the Outstanding Service Award

Prayer and Adjournment

Minutes

Annual Meeting

2021

Annual Meeting Minutes: virtual meeting via Google Meet

January 17, 2021 12:00 p.m.

I. Prayer and Call to Order

Father Art opened the meeting in prayer and called the Annual Meeting to order.

II. Logistics regarding the Virtual Annual Meeting

Megan Jahnke and Carrie Thomas explained the logistics of conducting the Annual Meeting Virtually.

III. Election of Secretary for the Annual Meeting

Art Hancock nominated Jeanne Thoemke to serve as Secretary for this Annual Meeting.

Motion Seconded by Maureen Vruno

Thirded by Michael Schweisguth

Discussion - None

Motion Carried (vote held)

Motion made by Emily Waymire to approve the January 19, 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes as written.

Motion Seconded by Gretchen Brunner

Discussion – None

Motion Carried

IV. Rector's Presentation

a. Rector's Report and Address

Art Hancock presented the Rector's Report (included in Annual Report Booklet).

b. Questions

Art Hancock answered questions from parishioners in attendance.

V. Elections

a. Review of voter qualifications

Art H. reviewed voter qualifications

b. Explanation of Nomination Process

Art. H. explained the Nomination Process

c. Nominations from the floor and Closing of Nominations

No nominations from the floor.

d. Appointment of Election Judges

Art Hancock appointed Election Judges

e. Voting (by Google Meet Poll)

Art H asked for additional nominations for Vestry, there were none.

Art H. presented the slate of incoming vestry members: Julie Jaeger, Will McBride, and Janet Waller.

Motion made by Cindy Kallstrom to elect the slate presented of incoming vestry members. Motion seconded by George Gorbatenko

Discussion None

Motion Carried (vote held)

Art H. asked for additional nominations to be presented for Junior Warden, there were none.

Art H made the motion to elect Mike Schweisguth as Junior Warden

Seconded by David Monyak

Discussion None

Motion Carried (vote held)

f. Announcement of Elections

Incoming Vestry members: Julie Jaeger, Will McBride, and Janet Waller.

Junior Warden Mike Schweisguth.

VI. Wardens' and Treasurer's Report

a. Wardens' Report

Linda Carpenter spoke of the difficult decisions made in 2020: closing doors to public worship and activities and reduction in staffing.

Karen Herrera spoke on her journey and involvement in St. John in the Wilderness.

b. Treasurer's Report was presented by Andrew McClaren.

i. Review of 2020 Financial Plan

ii. Presentation of 2021 Financial Plan

c. Andrew answered questions regarding Wardens' or Treasurer's Report

VII .Presentation of Website

Megan Jahnke showed how to navigate St. John in the Wilderness' Website and information available on the website.

VIII. Presentation of Christmas Pageant Video

Megan Jahnke shared a recording of St. John in the Wilderness Virtual Christmas Pageant Video

IX .Presentation of the Service Award

Art Hancock presented Angie Gordon with the annual Outstanding Service Award.

X.Prayer and Adjournment

Kate Maxwell said a closing prayer

Art Hancock declared meeting adjourned (2:04 p.m.)

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeanne Thoemke

Secretary

Rector's Address

February 6, 2022

Grace and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ. It is with a profound sense of pride and joy that I stand before you today to report that the Parish Church of St. John in the Wilderness has faithfully proclaimed by word and example the good news of Christ Jesus in 2021 and is well positioned to engage God's call to us for 2022.

It has not been easy, however, and I would be less than honest if I were to assert that I and many others are not tired. Being faithful to our baptismal promises in the midst of a persistent pandemic remains difficult. So much of what it means to be and do "church" is done in person, and to a large extent, Covid has prevented us from this in person contact. Further, with the ebbs and flows of the pandemic and the often changing guidelines from the diocese and CDC, It has been challenging to keep the parish ship sailing in a straight line. I am immensely grateful to my clergy colleagues, staff, lay leaders, and parishioners for your patience and willingness to adapt.

Despite the challenges, we have stayed connected. Implementing a variety of new methods and technologies. When the pandemic was fiercest, we were able to conduct our business and offer Daily Prayer using Google Meet. We moved all of our worship services online. Our Sunday morning liturgies as well as special liturgies such as weddings and funerals have been broadcast using the new livestream equipment that so many of you gave graciously toward. As the pandemic lightened somewhat, we moved to in-person outside services and even to in-person inside services, albeit with appropriate safety measures in place. Because the vast majority of our parishioners are vaccinated and these vaccines are so effective, I do not anticipate having to take our services completely online in the coming year.

I have been inspired by the way in which you have been reaching out to one another through these difficult times. While there were a number of deaths this year of people whom we dearly loved, there were also baptisms and weddings. Death and life intermingled in a powerful way this year in a manner I cannot recall experiencing in my lifetime. While the clergy of St. John's recognize and accept our responsibility to provide pastoral care to the parish, all of us need to understand that we are connected through the love of God and be proactive in reaching out to one another. This, indeed, has been happening organically, but in this coming year, we will be raising up and training a number of laity as we become more intentional in our pastoral care to one another.

As 2021 began and because of the uncertainty of the times, I fully anticipated that the financial support that you were able to supply the parish would diminish. I, however, was surprised and delighted to discover, however, that almost all of you remained faithful to your pledges, and as the Treasurer will report, we ended the year in a strong position. Our fall stewardship campaign was strong, and we have

substantial resources to continue the work with which God has entrusted us.

As we move forward in 2022, we will be adopting the priorities identified and established by the Episcopal Church in Minnesota and exploring ways to live out these priorities at St. John's. The ECMN priorities are:

- Discipleship: Daily practices that help us follow Jesus
- Faithful Innovation: Exploring new ways to proclaim and live out the gospel.
- Justice: Becoming the Beloved Community
- Congregational Vitality: Becoming a thriving faith community

In particular, we will be focusing on (1) excellent Sunday worship experiences, (2) active and expanding outreach programs to our community, and (3) small group experiences of all sorts.

I am immensely grateful to my clergy colleagues, to our faithful and dedicated staff, to the 2021 Vestry, Wardens, Clerk and Treasurer, and to all of you who stepped up to do God's work in circumstances that have not been easy. You continue to inspire me and count myself as the luckiest priest to work with such exemplary and loving people. I have every confidence that 2022 will be a year in which, led by the Spirit of Christ, we experience and share the love of God as we pray and grow and serve together. May the peace and love and mercy and grace of God in Christ fill your hearts and awaken hope for the year to come.

Faithfully in Christ Jesus,

Art+

Arthur B. Hancock
Rector

Bishop's Homily

January 29, 2022

Sermon for the Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany
Preached at St. John in the Wilderness, White Bear Lake January 29, 2022
The Right Reverend Craig Loya

William Temple, who was the Archbishop of Canterbury in the 1940's, once famously said that "the church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members." He wrote that in a letter, so no one had a chance to talk back quickly. But if he had said it in a sermon, or in a conversation, I bet he'd have gotten some pushback. In my experience, every kind of institution, not just churches, spends a lot of time trying to figure out how to benefit or appease its own members. We've all been conditioned to engage our lives as a set of choices about what to purchase or consume or join, and naturally we're only going to spend our time or money on the things that benefit us. It really cuts against the grain to imagine a society that is primarily about benefiting those who are not members, existing for those who aren't paying customers.

That's basically what is going on in today's gospel lesson. Jesus is just wrapping up his debut sermon, announcing that he is in the business of bringing good news to the poor and recovery of sight to the blind, setting the oppressed free. Great stuff, and people just love it. "All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth." But then he pulls a William Temple on them. "You're going to ask," Jesus says, "what do we get out of it? Can you do some of those cool miracles we've heard about here?" But this isn't for the hometown crowd, this is about going out, like the Old Testament prophets before him, to those who are outsiders, those who don't belong, those who don't seem worthy. Jesus is joining God's project of expanding the circle of blessing and love. The crowd is asking: what do we get out of this? But Jesus is challenging them to ask: how do we join God in giving ourselves away for others? He should have followed William Temple and put that in a letter, because they are filled with rage, and they go to chase him off a cliff.

This is where the rubber meets the road for Jesus, and for all of us who would follow him. Jesus reveals God's preference for those who are on the outside, those who are forgotten, those who, in the words of the great African American theologian Howard Thurman, "have their backs against the wall." God is always in the business of expanding the circle of blessing and love. As I once heard someone say: whenever we draw a line, there's a good chance God is on the other side.

That is what Paul is talking about in that great poem about the power of love from 1 Corinthians. If you've ever attended a wedding, you know it well. And while it is a great reading for a wedding, romantic love is not at all what Paul is describing here.

He's writing a letter to a congregation that is basically at war with itself, where people are boasting of their superior faith, or insisting on their own preferences, or demanding they get their way (I know that has never happened here, but shockingly, it does happen sometimes in churches). And Paul, in what is one of the most passionate appeals in all of us his writing, says, "we aren't going to play that game." We are not about getting it right, or being right, we are about joining God's work of expanding the circle of love." We, Paul is saying, don't look at a situation and ask "what do I want," but rather "what does love ask of me." If we are to follow the way of Jesus, if we are to join God's project of expanding the circle of love, then we are always for the other, whether that other is in the pew next to us or on the other side of the world.

The love Paul is describing here is an action, not a feeling. In fact, in Greek he's using verbs, not adjectives. So it's not so much that love is patient, as it is love acts patiently. It's not love is kind but love acts kindly toward another. Paul is inviting us to spend our lives acting out of love, acting always for the good of the other.

In a world that is so often turned inward—insisting on its own way, getting what it can for itself, we are called always to turn ourselves outward in love, asking in every situation, how can I act for the good of others? Imagine what that world would look like. Imagine how your life, how our church, how our communities and schools and offices would be different if we asked not what we can get out of something or someone, but what do we have to give. The great French Jesuit once said that "if humanity ever harnesses the energy of love, it will be the second time we have discovered fire." Just as fire fuels so much of the world, love could fuel the healing we so desperately long for.

And here's the best thing. When we join God in being for the other, when we live our lives acting in love, we find that we are filled more than we ever imagined we could be when we were trying to get what we wanted. The great mystery of our faith is that we are fed by giving. In the economy of God, the more you give, the more you have.

This is not about being a martyr. This is not about letting ourselves get walked all over by great evils, or just by mean people. We can only live out of this love when we have soaked in it ourselves. Jesus commanded us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and in my experience, that is descriptive, not prescriptive. I can only love my neighbor to the extent that I love myself. I can only care for others to the extent that I know how to care for myself.

We can only love when we first allow God to love us. That's why we do this thing together. That's the point of having some daily practice of prayer. When we allow ourselves to know and feel that God loves us, and nothing can change that, in our very bones, then we are set free to expand the circle of God's love with every moment we have life.

So two questions: how can you feast on God's love this week? And, how can you expand the circle of blessing and love in your life this week? How can you together expand the circle of love here at St. John's? How can all of us who are disciples of Jesus together continue to expand the circle of love, until our whole cold world is set on fire with the power of love, drawing together all the beautiful diversity of creation into one warm embrace of healing love, on earth as it is in heaven? Amen.

Nominations

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee is appointed and approved by the Vestry. This year's Nominations Committee consisted of Karen Herrera, Art Hancock, Will MacBride, and Megan Jahnke. The Vestry shall consist of the Rector, two Wardens and nine (9) elected Vestry members. Each member of the Vestry shall be an Adult Communicant in Good Standing. It is preferred that nominations be received at least two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting so that all nominations may be printed in the Annual Report. Nominations, including self-nominations from the floor of Annual Meeting, however, are allowed.

Nominees to the 2022 Vestry

- Harvey Caldwell, Warden (for a two year term)
- Melissa Sturges (for a three year term)
- Marschall Smith (for a three year term)
- Emily Brunner (for a three year term)

Parish Vital Statistics

Because of the extenuating circumstances brought about by COVID-19, our Vital Statics regarding membership and attendance have been very difficult to record. In our parish records, 2021 shall have a proverbial asterisk attached to them to indicate the extraordinary year we have experienced together. As we move into 2022, we hope to be able to better track those who are participating in our services online so that we have a clearer picture of our parish health. We do, however, have a record of the number of services offered this year. Those numbers are found below:

- **Saturday Fresh Expressions Recorded Services: 12**
- **Sunday Morning Prayer Services: 12**
- **Weekday Daily Office Services: 208**
- **Sunday Holy Eucharist Services: 80**
- **Weekday Holy Eucharist Services: 5**
- **Baptisms: 3**
- **Celebrations of Holy Matrimony: 2**
- **Burial of the Dead Services: 9**

Reports

Parish Life Report

While we do many things at St. John's, almost everything that we do may be described through the use of four verbs: **Pray, Grow, Serve. Resource.**

Pray: At the heart of our life of prayer is our Sunday morning worship. For the late winter and spring of 2021, our services were primarily Morning Prayer, led by a small core worship team of both clergy and laity. These services were entirely online with empty pews, and for those leading, it was quite strange and challenging. While Morning Prayer tends not to be the preferred form of common worship for most parishioners, it does have a central place in the Episcopal tradition. It was nurturing to spend the season reacquainting ourselves with Morning Prayer.

As the temperatures became more warm, we moved our services to in-person/outside. These services were fairly well received, and had the additional benefit of being visible to our neighbors. We continued to offer livestream worship services inside for those parishioners who chose to worship in that form. As the fall approached, we decided that the covid numbers were sufficiently acceptable that we could move inside once again with our services. Our choir began to rehearse and then lead us in worship throughout the fall. Two other innovations that we began in the fall were the "Prayground" in the church that allowed children and their families to get a front row seat to our Sunday worship and the Children's Chapel in which children were offered the opportunity to experience the Liturgy of the Word in language to which they are more accustomed.

With all the changes and chances of the last year, the Altar Guild were so patient, accommodating, and helpful. Led by Judy Caldwell and Shelley Page, these faithful folk just did not miss a beat. The commitment of the Altar Guild through these difficult days has been exceptional.

In addition to our Sunday morning services, daily prayer was held every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday with a faithful crew of clergy and laity leading and participating. These services were entirely only using Google Meet, and continue to be an important staple of a small group of our people. We encourage all to join us using the links on the website.

Margaret Thor led a special Facebook Live version of Morning Prayer in both Lent and Advent, and again, there was a faithful core of people who participated every single day.

Finally, there is an unsung, but so critical and loving group of laity who have committed their lives to praying for our parish, our community and the world. The prayer list is maintained by this faithful group, and most of us may be surprised to know that we have been the recipients of their intercessory prayer. The humble

and quiet way in which these faithful folk engage this ministry is a clear example of the sort of ministry to which Christ calls us.

Grow: As we seek to grow in our faith, we engage in the study of our faith. Rona Pasch, our Director of Family Ministries, has joyfully persevered in offering Christian programming to our families throughout the pandemic. Because children were among the last to be offered the vaccine, most of this programming was online, but on special occasions, the children were able to gather in person (mostly outside), and to contribute to parish life through their own liturgical contributions. I am grateful to Rona and her team of teachers for their faithful work, and to all of the parents who have continued to keep their children engaged.

Mike Lovett and Maggie DeSmet worked with the youth of the church throughout the year, offering a variety of spiritual experiences and opportunities for service. Mike has written his own report of the many activities in which St. John's students were involved.

Finally, Adult Christian Formation continued to meet online throughout the year. Throughout the Spring, our Sunday evening Topics Unlimited track was taught by David Monyak, Sylvia Lovett and Kathy Smith. The Wednesday evening Transformed by the Word Bible Study was taught by Sylvia Lovett, Kathy Smith and Mark Sears. Each of these tracks has attracted a faithful small group of parishioners who learn and support each other. We are indebted to the diligence and steadfastness of our teachers.

Serve: The ministry of Jesus was characterized by sacrificial servanthood to others. Likewise, an important part of our ministry at St. John's is service as well. Through the leadership of Margaret Thor, one of our deacons, we have become very involved in a large number of ministries. I am particularly thankful for all those who participated in the food, clothing, blanket, diaper drives throughout the year. So many of you have given your time, money and other resources to these efforts. The American Red Cross is now regularly using our Parish Hall for blood drives, and a faithful core of parishioners staff each of these drives. The Gathering, a ministry to people with dementia, Alzheimer's, and other cognitive diseases now meets every single week in our Parish Hall. There are any number of other initiatives that Margaret names in her Deacon's report that point to the fact that St. John's has become a place where we take our service to the world seriously.

Resource: Finally, there is the ministry of *Resource* at St. John's. These are all the people who work behind the scenes to make sure that the other ministries of Pray, Grow and Serve have the money and other resources they need to do the work that God has called them to do. The Vestry has met both online and in person almost every month and has had to create solutions for some rather challenging issues. The Vestry has also been very good stewards of the money this year, ending the year in the black when we were expected to end the year in the red. The Heritage Society has, for the most part, needed to be on hiatus during this time of covid, but as the pandemic releases its grip, we fully intend for the Heritage Society to become

active again as it seeks new members to help sustain St. John's for many years to come. Other groups such as the Personnel Committee, the Finance Committee, the Property Committee, the Cemetery Committee, the Gifts and Memorials Committee, and the Stewardship Committee are a part of the Resource ministry that happens, for the most part in the background. We are indebted to the many who serve on these committees for their hard work.

Curate's Report

I came to St. John's in 2020 as a transitional deacon and was ordained a priest on June 19, 2021. I've been delighted to serve as curate (a church term for a new priest) since then.

Sharing liturgical and preaching responsibilities is a basic aspect of my work here. I also serve as a liaison to the Altar Guild and as a member of the Liturgy and Worship team. Recently I have begun to serve as staff liaison for Adult Formation. I share the responsibility for presiding at a eucharist monthly at Cerenity as well. This past year, I've worked on the installation and implementation of Ministry Scheduler Pro, a software product that simplifies the liturgical ministry scheduling process. With the rector, I share pastoral ministry visitation. I have recently begun to work on Sunday bulletin production.

Over the next few months, I will begin to work with an Adult Formation Visioning Team to consider how we can better support continuing offerings and initiate new small groups and other experiences for adults at St. John's. The focus of all this work is supporting the growth of members at St. John's in Christian discipleship.

The Rev. Kate Maxwell, OSB
Curate

Deacon's Report

January 2022

Greetings! It has been a busy year with lots of changes. In September, I noted that I have been with you as a deacon for a year. Now I feel like I know most of your names and many of your faces (and can even recognize you with your masks on). It is a real pleasure serving side by side with you for the glory of God!

My primary emphasis is proclaiming the gospel which says again and again that we are called to serve the poor, feed the hungry, clothe the naked. My vocation as a deacon is to encourage you to be disciples in the world and follow Christ's call to us. One way I do that is through the Outreach team. Through their work and passion along with a small advisory team, we continue to be Jesus's hands and feet in the

world. Through your generous donations we provided diapers and wipes for the Latino families served by St. Nicholas Episcopal Church in Richfield. We had a gathering of various foods for the White Bear Area Food Shelf. We shared our gifts of school supplies with a local elementary school. A small group is in the process of putting together a Little Pantry for those who are experiencing hunger and are not able to get to the food shelf during open hours. During Advent, you gave generously to the Minnesota Council of Churches in support of the Afghan refugees. We are active in Kids Hope and participated in a Habitat for Humanity build. Oh, and let us not forget, our every other month blood drives where many of you donate your time. (I did a poor job of keeping track of what we did this past year, but you supported us in whatever call we made.) Finally, we gave generously of our funds to support local, national, and world churches and non-profits including Solid Ground, Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light, The Gathering, Episcopal Migration Ministry, Kids Hope, Christ Episcopal Church in KY for tornado relief, St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Liberia, Solace Orphanage in Nigeria, Giving Gardens, and the White Bear Area Food Shelf.

This summer, the staff suggested that we spend some time discussing social justice issues. We hosted a series called Speaking Freely on a variety of topics including perspectives on policing, immigration, micro-aggressions, Sacred Ground, affirming LGBTQ in the Episcopal church, and climate change. We had terrific discussions that engaged us and left wanting to do more.

Whew! I am also on the Commission on Ministry and worked with the School for Formation in aligning the benchmarks for those in diaconal formation to the Canons. I read portfolios with deacon postulants (that is those who are in formation to be a deacon). I am a member of the deputation for the 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church which occurs this summer (fingers crossed) and meetings have started to familiarize ourselves with some of the resolutions that are already up for consideration. I was on an advisory team to the Bishop regarding Rural Congregations/Team Ministry. Along with 3 other deacons, I'm mentoring a deacon postulant. We initially met weekly for several months and now meet monthly. I am a member of the SJW Finance Committee. I'm also knitting (poorly I might add) and read lots of mysteries. My husband and I would love to travel more but Covid gets in our way although we did take a trip down along the Mississippi to New Orleans.

If you have any questions or ideas or thoughts to share, please feel to connect with me. You may reach me via email at deacon01@stjohnwilderness.org or my cell phone number of 651-324-1086.

Faithfully,

The Rev. Margaret Thor, Deacon

Director of Music Ministry Report

This year past was, like most of the year previous, unprecedented in its challenges, due to a pandemic that still has not ended. Our music program continued in reduced form, with the Chancel Choir and the contemporary ensemble on hiatus. I continued to serve as parish organist/accompanist playing for the livestream services, and for the outdoor services in the summer, with the occasional solo singer or instrumentalist joining in. My thanks especially to Stephanie Sulentic, Lynn Maiers-Paulson, and Carrie Thomas for generously offering their musical talents, which counted greatly for variety, and brought the sheer joy of hearing singing voices again. We resumed indoor worship in August. Then in September I became Music Minister again, and the choir resumed rehearsing after 18 long months of interruption. After some weeks of rediscovering vocal and choral sound, the choir began singing again in November for the Sunday 10:30 service, and on December 12th they presented a splendid Lessons & Carols. I will forever hold in my heart the deep spiritual joy I sensed that day, joy that only ever emanates from choral and congregational singing, offered in worship. As a choir member said, just before Christmas, "Church music is a powerful thing." To which I added, "And we still do not understand all the good that it does." Though some choir members may now and again have felt a little shaky or unconfident, we successfully got the choir back on its feet. As I told the choir in September, "You are now the founders of the St. John's choir that is to be." While it was a disappointment that the Christmas services had to be canceled, on January 7th the parish celebrated an Epiphany service, with festive Christmas music, featuring the contemporary ensemble along with the choir.

Michael Ferguson

Director of Children and Family Ministries Report

2021 continued from 2020 with alternating in-person events and virtual Sunday school. From sledding at Tamarack to adventuring at Franconia Sculpture Park, we managed to stay connected in person as much as we felt safe doing so. Virtual Sunday school wasn't the same as meeting together in person, but we made the best of it and enjoyed our times on Google Meet. Once the weather started to warm up, we met outside more often!

During the summer months we met monthly on Sunday mornings using the Compassion Camp VBS curriculum, and closed out the summer with a weekend with our "first annual" camping trip at William O'Brien.

This fall we had a festive Rally Day, complete with a dunk tank that kids of all ages enjoyed. We started meeting in person on Sunday mornings again as one class, using the Holy Troublemakers and Unconventional Saints curriculum. Children are very used to wearing masks, so that doesn't hold us back from learning and gathering together. We were able to have a COVID safe Halloween party on the front lawn, and our annual Christmas pageant, which was enjoyed during the

Sunday morning service. While attendance has not reached pre-COVID numbers, I hope that as the virus starts to lessen, and our littlest members are able to be vaccinated, that we will start to see more of our members that have been greatly missed back at church.

Director of Communications & Digital Ministries Report

I will start my report with the same statement I started with last year. "As the year started, I had no idea how my job would be changing...." Part way through the year our beloved Director of Communications Megan Jahnke went from being part of staff to back to "just" being a beloved parishioner, and I slid over and took on Communications, with much trepidation to keep up the excellence, keeping Digital Ministries, and handing off Rising Generations/Youth Group to the capable hands of Fr. Art, Michael Lovett, and Maggie Desmet.

First, our Digital Ministries! We have a fantastic team, Will McBride, Maxine Kobinski, John Pasch, and more in the wings planning to join us. We have streamed Sunday morning worship every Sunday morning, unfortunately multiple funerals, joyfully one wedding, and more! We had 69 total Broadcasts, with 610 **unique** viewers on Boxcast alone, not counting Youtube and Facebook. On Boxcast we had viewers from 30 states and 3 countries! In the last 3 months we have had 304 unique viewers on Youtube, with new people discovering us every week. Facebook is harder to get numbers from, but on average we reach between 50-100 people with our livestream posts, and have people all over the world connecting and following us.

We are reaching people in this world with our message of God's love.

The other change this year was we moved to a new e-news provider, Constant Contact, and refreshed our weekly communications! We have just under 300 people who receive our email news and announcements. And over a 50% open rate, which gives us an AA+ rating for open rate! If you are not signed up, or have not opened one up and checked out all the news, Come & See!

We shared our stories. People joined us, in-person and on-line. We gathered, on-line and in-person. People were transformed, on-line and in-person. But when you dig down and peel away the layers, my job is getting those stories out to you, the St. John's community, for you to share in your lives. And it starts with you sharing the stories with me. So, thank you. I pray we can continue to gather, in-person and on-line, and transform each other, and the world, and share the stories of all we do and are here at St. John's

In hope, In Prayer, Carrie Thomas.

Altar Guild Report

Members: Co Directresses Shelley Page and Judy Caldwell,
Secretary: Jackie Danda,
Supplies: Cyndi Domin,
Weddings: Emily Waymire,
Devotions Kelly DeSmet,
Flowers: Pris Campbell and Shelley Page,
Sunshine: Anne Johnson, Pris Campbell and Judy Caldwell,
Other valued members: Al Bradley, Pam Hove, Jane Kyle, and Pat Pickering. (12)
June Hochbrunn, Retired.

Our mentors are Curate Kate and Fr. Art Hancock
This year we have had virtual and in-house meetings due to Covid guidelines and changing Covid protocols.

We have had simple and small weddings and funerals and baptisms.
Curate Kate has instituted a new scheduling system for us.
Our duties are Saturday cleaning of the altar area, setting up the altar,
for each Sunday service and preparing for the mid-week and special services as
needed.

We change the hangings, etc. according to the various church seasons with the
appropriate colors, washing the linens and vessels, and proper care of the chasubles
and stoles.

We have purchased 5 new stoles thanks to gifts in memory of Geri Letourneau.

Many thanks for the dedication and service of our members during this difficult
time.

Many thanks to our Sacristians, Steve Johnson, Mark Hosfield and
Harvey Caldwell.

Many thanks to our previous directress, Val Koutek for her service.

If anyone would like to be a member of the altar guild or a sacristian please let us
know as more people are always needed and welcome.

Respectfully submitted Shelley Page and Judy Caldwell

SJW Youth Report

Our team included Maggie DeSmet and Mike Lovett as volunteers, and clergy Deacon Rick and Father Art. Carrie Thomas led the team during the first half of 2021 until changes in her job responsibilities.

Communication with students and families

Every Friday or Saturday, Mike sent an email message to the 15 high school students on our list, and to those parents for whom we have emails, as well as to Father Art and Deacon Rick. Late in 2021, one family moved out of state, and another high school student is attending boarding school outside of the metropolitan area. As a result of their participation in the Christmas Pageant, we have two additional 9th graders on our list. We also invite neighborhood children to participate in our outdoor activities.

We try to stay connected with students via email, text, phone calls to parents, personal notes, and when possible, attend their games, plays, concerts, and activities; serve as references when asked (e.g., job applications, scouting recognitions, NHS, college) and listen and guide.

We also try to stay connected with students from high school graduating classes of 2019 (2), 2020 (5), and 2021 (5), mostly by occasional written notes or emails, or asking parents and younger siblings for updates.

January through March 2021

During January through March, we tried a range of Sunday activities via Zoom, including:

- sessions on understanding the roots of racism led by Carrie and Maggie; creative and engaging “game days” led by Carrie and Maggie; and lessons on our faith led by Mike.

In what may have been our most ambitious project, for Valentine's Day Maggie made a valentine for each student, and we sent materials for each student to make another valentine and send the valentine with a note to one of the elders in our church community. With important help from Helen Gehrenbeck, we had names and addresses for elders, and could tell each student a little about their person to help them know to whom they were writing. Helen received some touching messages from some who were deeply appreciative of the valentines they received.

April through June 2021

- An early spring walk along Lake Avenue for viewing the ice-out, animals and birds was our first in-person connection of the year; we stopped at Grandma's bakery on the way back to church.
- A well-attended hike to Tamarack Nature Center, where we talked, viewed nature, and took photos.

- Raking and preparing the church lawns and gardens for summer; several adults, family members, and neighborhood children helped. One of the high school students helped water the flower garden during the summer.
- An in-person celebration of our 5 graduating seniors. 4 of the 5 attended the in-person outside reception after Sunday service; in the church electronic newsletter we published photos and bios of each graduate.

August through December, 2021

During the fall we had in-person connections at church with 11 high school students, plus some middle school students. Following pandemic protocols, we focused on outdoor activities where we had a purposeful activity, and students could comfortably participate with masks. Our first re-connection with parents and students was the picnic and canoeing around Manitou Island. Other activities:

- An hour-long walk along Lake Ave in WBL with a stop at Kowalski's bakery on the way back to church; this gave us an opportunity for in-person conversations, and felt more safe for students (and parents) concerned about inside activities or conversations.
- Conversations sitting outside on a bench in the garden area.
- Maggie coordinated one Sunday morning hosting the coffee hour between the services, where students helped serve, and we offered home-made or store- fresh treats.
- Raking and preparing the church lawns and gardens for winter. Several adults, family members, and neighborhood children helped.
- On December 19, the students performed a Christmas Pageant during the 10:30 service. All total, the cast included 19 children and youth participants, including two preschoolers and one young adult graduate. Maggie, Deacon Rick, Rona, and Lynn from choir were key helpers.

How members of the Vestry can help and support us.

1. Show interest in our youth by getting to know them and their families; realize that most of the high school students do not have independent transportation so can only come if their parents (or whole families) are attending. We are missing some families who engaged in the past who have younger children as well as high school students, but have not returned to in-person church or activities.
2. Stop and look at photos and bios of our students and our activities on the bulletin board outside the high school room.
3. Consider ways for the youth to be involved in every aspect of church life, especially in ways that adults can encourage and mentor them in the students' areas of interest.
4. Pray for our students, their parents and leaders.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Lovett

Award for Outstanding Service

There are any number of ministries in the parish that are highly visible, and to the unaware, one may come to think that the clergy do the majority of the work of God at St. John's. There are so many, however, that are actively engaged in vital, life giving ministries in the church that few know about. They go about their work quietly and humbly, oftentimes even the clergy don't know all that they are doing. This year's Award for Outstanding Service goes to such a person.

Prayer and personal connection are among the most important things that we may do for one another. Keeping others in prayer and checking in with them as they experience difficulties in their life are critical to all of our lives. It helps to assure us that we are not alone, that God loves us, and that others have not forgotten us. This is quiet, behind-the-scenes, servant ministry.

In addition to being faithful in worship and many aspects of parish life, she has faithfully and persistently called to check in with our most vulnerable brothers and sisters. She has been a voice of comfort and healing to many and has inspired many others to become involved in ministry to the weakest among us. Her life serves as a model to us of what a Christian is.

This year's Award for Outstanding Service goes to Helen Gehrenbeck.

St. John in the Wilderness
2022 Financial Plan

St John in the Wilderness Episcopal Church								
Financial Plan 2022 - Preliminary								
	2022		2021		2020		2019	
	Plan	Actual 30 Nov	Plan	Actual 31 Dec	Plan	Actual 31 Dec	Plan	
Income								
Offerings								
Pledges	336,000	320,873	300,000	325,653	300,000	282,083.72	360,000	
Other Pledge	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Plate Cash	2,500	1,561	5,000	2,057	10,000	11,812.84	10,000	
Non-Pledge Income	20,000	20,729	40,000	46,371	35,000	74,077.80	-	
Holy Days	2,000	1,495	2,000	2,331	10,000	2,437.00	10,000	
Prior Year pledges	-	1,955	-	4,115	-	370.00	-	
	360,500	346,613	347,000	380,527	355,000	370,781.36	380,000	
Special Income								
Unrestricted Gifts to Church	-	839	-	16,366	-	8,210.89	35,000	
Church Use	4,200	5,618	3,000	2,135	7,500	5,395.25	7,500	
	4,200	6,456	3,000	18,501	7,500	13,606.14	42,500	
Other Income								
Endowment Earnings	50,000	48,306	48,000	48,336	48,000	47,808.31	45,000	
Interest Income	5,220	36	250	232	400	562.56	400	
Child/Youth Endowment Earning	6,000	5,955	5,800	5,882	5,800	5,782.58	5,000	
	61,220	54,296	54,050	54,449	54,200	54,153.45	50,400	
Total Income	425,920	407,366	404,050	453,477	416,700	438,540.95	472,900	
Expenses								
Faith Formation								
Youth Ministry Programs	2,000	2,867	2,000	3,030	4,400	2,122.41	2,200	
Children's Ministry	1,500	1,538	1,000	1,042	2,250	1,760.57	2,250	
Adult Programs	400	168	400	98	600	-	600	
	3,900	4,573	3,400	4,171	7,250	3,882.98	5,050	
Office Related								
Office expense	250	434	250	230	600	251.08	600	
Telephone & Internet	4,800	4,317	6,000	4,350	4,000	3,582.14	3,400	
Postage	800	371	800	620	700	468.60	700	
Legal and Accounting	250	-	250	-	500	225.29	1,000	
Office Equip & Computing	6,000	9,043	7,000	6,943	7,000	5,407.09	5,000	
General Church Expense	2,500	1,991	3,000	2,523	1,500	2,097.21	1,500	
Convention Expense	2,000	-	1,000	-	1,000	500.00	2,000	
	16,600	16,156	18,300	14,666	15,300	12,531.41	14,200	
Payroll and Related								
Rector Salary, Hsg	80,000	81,693	80,000	-	80,000	-	80,000	
Rector SE, Auto	9,120	-	9,120	89,120	9,120	89,119.92	9,120	
Staff Salaries	148,965	127,158	135,000	144,558	173,880	152,882.75	151,740	
Rector's Benefits	48,820	43,637	49,324	45,888	47,776	45,521.17	38,266	
Staff Benefits	4,680	4,345	4,700	5,292	5,217	6,694.42	8,465	
Continuing Education	1,000	-	3,000	-	-	-	-	
Auto Reimbursement (Staff?)	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Payroll service fee	2,000	1,736	2,000	1,816	2,000	1,819.85	2,000	
FICA - Employer's Share	11,396	9,223	10,500	11,006	13,302	10,885.94	11,608	
	306,981	267,792	293,644	297,680	331,295	306,924.05	301,199	
Building and Property								
Building Maintenance	20,000	12,681	15,000	14,631	15,000	16,606.70	20,000	
Natural Gas	9,750	4,456	6,500	5,162	8,600	7,005.89	7,500	
Electricity	5,500	4,690	5,000	4,760	6,500	6,245.67	5,500	
Water & Sewer	700	514	700	675	600	675.46	600	
Sanitation/Disposal Services	3,000	1,712	3,000	3,284	3,600	3,746.19	2,800	

St. John in the Wilderness
2022 Financial Plan

	2022	2021		2020		2019	
	Plan	Actual 30 Nov	Plan	Actual 31 Dec	Plan	Actual 31 Dec	Plan
Insurance	20,000	17,986	17,000	16,658	16,000	15,551.00	14,000
	58,950	42,039	47,200	45,170	50,300	49,830.91	50,400
Growth & Retention							
Communications						-	10,000
Church Growth & Advertising	11,330	7,971	11,000	7,321	10,000	7,949.37	4,000
Stewardship	1,000	625	1,000	727	1,000	741.75	1,000
Heritage Society-Planned giving	500	298	500	-	1,000	61.63	750
Hospitality	1,500	1,256	2,500	2,614	5,000	6,887.56	5,000
Welcoming Ministry	250	41	250	1,530	820	992.47	500
Child Care Supplies	50	-	50	-	100	16.87	100
	14,630	10,192	15,300	12,192	17,920	16,649.65	21,350
Liturgy & Music							
Clergy Honoraria	500	666	800	199	1,040	-	-
Music Scholars and Special Mus	1,000		2,000	4,830	16,800	17,090.38	8,000
Music/Choir Supplies	1,800	1,268	2,500	1,190	2,500	2,153.25	2,500
Altar Guild	600	702	600	572	1,000	1,070.84	1,900
Worship Supplies	600	798	600	1,000	1,440	1,711.41	1,440
Organ Service & Piano Tuning	1,000	520	1,000	20	1,000	980.50	2,000
	5,500	3,954	7,500	7,811	23,780	23,006.38	15,840
Outreach							
Outreach - Miscellaneous	7,000	750	4,000	6,800	2,200	1,250.00	1,300
New Initiatives		-	2,500	-	4,600	-	-
Theological Education	500	7	500	-	500	-	500
Mission & Ministry Support	58,956	52,261	57,010	57,672	57,679	57,162.72	62,965.11
	66,456.00	53,018	64,010	64,472	64,979	58,413	64,765
Total Expenses	473,017	397,725	449,354	446,162	510,824	471,238.10	472,804
Total Income	425,920	407,366	404,050	453,477	416,700	438,541	472,900
Total Expenses	473,017	397,725	449,354	446,162	510,824	471,238.10	472,804
otal Income less Total Expense	(47,096.70)	9,641	(45,304)	7,315	(94,124)	(32,697)	96