



**2025**

## **Annual Report**

*We joyfully gather  
to pray, worship, learn and serve  
as we seek to follow Jesus,  
and invite all to join us  
on a sacred journey of hope and transformation.*

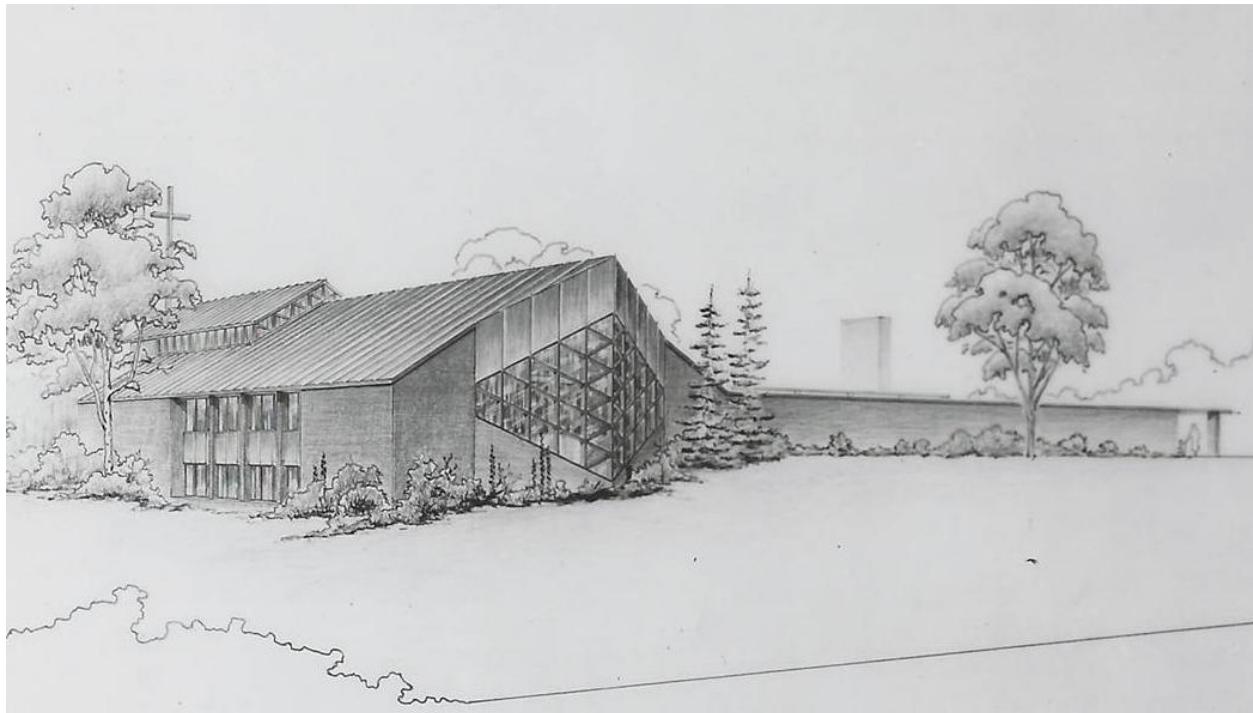
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*YOU ARE WELCOME HERE, REGARDLESS OF AGE, RACE, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY, DISABILITY, SEX, NATIONAL ORIGIN, MARITAL STATUS, FAMILY MAKEUP, SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, OR POLITICAL PERSUASION. ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH IS A COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE WHO GATHER TO ACKNOWLEDGE OUR NEED FOR DIVINE AND HUMAN LOVE, AND TO RESPECT OUR COMMON HUMANITY.*

*AT ST. JOHN'S, ALL ARE WELCOME.*





# St. John's Episcopal Church

## Annual Meeting

### Sunday, January 25, 2026

## Agenda

**Following a single, combined service at 9:00 am**  
**Williams Hall**

**A Continuing Parish in the Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes,  
A Diocese of the Episcopal Church**

Call to Order

Opening Prayer

Qualifications for Voting

INTRODUCTION OF NOMINEES FOR VESTRY

Election of 2 Vestry Members

- Nykko Lurie
- Mike Spencer

INTRODUCTION OF NOMINEES FOR DIOCESAN CONVENTION DELEGATES

Election of 3 Delegates and 1 alternate

- Charles Bash
- Eric Carlson
- Ellen McVey
- Katharine Rose

INTRODUCTION OF NOMINEES FOR ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

Election of 3 committee members

- Carole Adams
- Aaron Haefele
- Rachel Blackhurst Leonard

TABLE CONVERSATIONS

MINISTRY REPORTS

- Warden's Report
- Rector's Report

FINANCIAL REPORTS

- Final 2025 Financial Report
- Presentation of 2026 Budget

Announcements

Closing Prayer

Adjourn

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## 2025 Annual Meeting Minutes

Meeting held in Williams Hall

January 26, 2025

Notes taken by Hailey Fader

Alissa Anderson: *Welcome & Opening Prayer*

Alissa outlines basic rules for the meeting including voter qualifications. She opens elections to the vestry, with a note from Eric Carlson that the new bylaws require that nominations from floor be allowed. Alissa announces that the nominees for three year terms on the vestry are:

John Adams (*not present at meeting*)

Doug Germain

Ann Wright

*No additional nominations are made from the floor*

Alissa calls for a vote to confirm the vestry nominees. Ayes carry, None opposed.

**4:30**

Alissa opens the voting for the election of endowment committee members.

For a three-year term:

Liz Davis (*not present at meeting*)

Gordon Thompon (*not present at meeting*)

Bob Stoney

For a one-year term:

Eileen Germain

Alissa calls for a vote to confirm the endowment committee nominees. Ayes carry, None opposed.

Alissa opens the voting for the election of diocesan convention delegates noting that this we have three delegates an alternate due to the new diocese. Up for election are:

Eric Carlson

Angela Garcia

Kevin Maxim

And for election as an alternate:

Chris Lautner

Alissa calls for a vote to confirm the delegates and alternate. Ayes carry, None opposed.

Eric Carlson presents revisions in bylaws required by new diocesan canons. Changes include:

- General amendment of Diocese name
- Change to Article II: Voting Membership
- Changes to Article III: Meetings of the Congregation
- Changes to Article V: Vestry
- Changes to Article VII: Diocesan Convention Delegates
- Changes to Article VIII: Officers

Eric also explains the reason for the change in St John's allotted number of diocesan convention delegates. As a parish with an average attendance of more than 75 people St John's is allocated three and all parishes may select an alternate.

**15:30**

Toshia Albright requests Eric define "officer" and the roles it positions covers. Eric outlines that in our parish this includes vestry members (including treasurer and clerk) but not endowment committee members.

Allissa calls for a vote to ratify these bylaw changes. Ayes carry, None opposed.

**17:25**

Eric Carlson continues and outlines other bylaw revisions:

- Addition to Article I: Organization; Authority Acknowledged

Allissa calls for a vote to ratify this bylaw change. Ayes carry, None opposed.

- Addition to Article V: Vestry, 5.4 Meetings

Allissa calls for a vote to ratify this bylaw change. Ayes carry, None opposed.

- Revision of Article VI: Endowment Committee, 6.3 Duties

Betty asks for clarification on the value of a grant which the vestry would need to approve. Eric clarifies that the vestry must approve all grants above \$20,000.00.

Allissa calls for a vote to ratify this bylaw change. Ayes carry, None opposed.

- Add Article IX: Other Committees as below, and renumber subsequent Articles IX, X, and XI as Articles X, XI, XII

Toshia Albright asked if the new language should be edited to clarify if the vestry has the ability to create ad-hoc committees. Eric Carlson notes that it is his understanding that the absence of language would provide them this right. It is decided that over the coming year this will be reviewed further and changes made, if needed.

Allissa calls for a vote to ratify this bylaw change. Ayes carry, None opposed.

**27:20**

Alissa Ander presents and dedicates the new altar.

**33:00**

#### Rector's Report

Alissa reflects on the past year at St. John's, expressing gratitude for the community's energy, connection, and sense of purpose. She highlights how the parish cares for one another and the world, noting that this care is shown through worship, service, and welcoming newcomers. The rector also shares her own learning journey, emphasizing the importance of asking key questions about the parish's identity and purpose. Looking ahead, her goals include fostering spiritual growth, improving welcome and inclusion for new members, and ensuring sustainability in both ministry and community life. The rector expresses hope for the future and invites everyone to continue leaning into the work God is calling them to, trusting in God's grace and abundance.

**38:00**

#### Warden's Report

Eric Carlson: After being elected warden, he made a list of goals for the year, most of which were completed except for two long-term strategic planning goals. They found that it was too early for such planning, given the transition with new staff and leadership. The speaker's primary focus was on advising the new rector, Alissa, to ensure her success, working on finances to clarify past confusion, and revising the church's bylaws. One of his proudest achievements was organizing a successful ministry fair as part of the Second Sunday Sharing program. Reflecting on the year, Eric hopes they've helped improve the parish for the future, and personally, they express gratitude for the welcoming, open-minded spirit of the community, which made the role of warden a privilege.

Angela Garcia: This past year has been a significant learning experience for Angela, who had never been on vestry or served as a warden before. She expresses gratitude for the opportunity, particularly thanking her co-warden, Eric Carlson, for their collaborative work on transparency and communication. A major achievement was making the church budget more accessible, and after a crash course in finance, she joined the budget committee for 2024. The speaker also completed Dismantling Racism training and is excited to facilitate a February event on the topic. A key project was organizing the successful organ fundraiser, raising \$115,000 for the new organ. In addition, she has been involved in various church initiatives, including Sam's food pantry and the Learning Tree Preschool, and has developed a deeper appreciation for the church's work and community. Angela reflects on how being part of this beloved community has impacted her spiritual journey, including entering discernment. She looks forward to what the next year holds.

**47:40**

#### College for Congregational Development Report

Ellen McVey: The College for Congregational Development (CCD) is a training program sponsored by the diocese to help develop group facilitation skills and provide models for

collecting data to improve organizational activities. Ellen, along with Deb and Sara, participated in this two-year program, which included workshops and projects. One of their main projects involved exploring the concept of transformation within the congregation, conducting interviews and leading a Second Sunday Sharing to gather insights from the community. They were pleased with the participation, with over 40 people attending the Second Sunday Sharing. The results, which will inform future programming, highlighted the congregation's strong interest in transformation. The speaker emphasizes the importance of careful planning for group activities, noting that the CCD training improved their ability to lead focused and productive discussions. Finally, they encourage others to participate in the next CCD training session in July, which will be held at St. John's.

Alissa Anderson: Transformation is at the heart of St. John's mission, aiming to deepen our connection with God and live out our faith in everyday life. This transformation happens gradually through practices like prayer, worship, study, community, and action, which help renew and grow both individuals and the community. One key opportunity for growth identified is creating more intentional spaces for transformation. To facilitate this, the church is offering a Lenten program called *Regula: Intentional Practices for Transformative Living*, which focuses on creating a personal Rule of Life. A Rule of Life is a way of intentionally structuring daily life to align with God's love and purpose, supporting spiritual growth without rigid rules. This ancient Christian practice will help participants cultivate a rhythm of prayer, work, study, and rest, deepening their faith in everyday life. The Lenten program will include homilies, devotionals, and formation opportunities, guiding participants to craft their own Rule of Life by Easter. The goal is not to add more tasks but to create a life-giving rhythm that fosters spiritual connection and transformation. The church invites everyone to join in, whether new to this practice or experienced, to make Lent a season of growth and transformation.

## 58:50

Eric Carlson presents the 2025 budget. Key points include:

Projected Revenue: St. John's anticipates nearly \$250,000 in revenue from member and congregation contributions, with a notable increase in pledges. The endowment will contribute to church operations, outreach, and major projects, with a total of about \$116,000 in additional revenue, a slight increase from the previous year.

Endowment Allocations: The largest portion of the endowment funds (\$627,000) will go towards church operations, with \$131,000 allocated for outreach programs like the Samaritan Fund, and \$36,000 earmarked for capital improvement projects.

Expenses Breakdown: Staff salaries and benefits are reduced due to the retirement of a parish administrator and correction of an overpayment to the pension group. The Samaritan Fund saw significant demand, particularly for rent assistance, prompting an increase in budget allocation and endowment grants. This surge reflects the end of COVID-era eviction freezes. Office expenses, such as telephone and internet bills, have risen due to increased usage. Additionally,

facilities and miscellaneous operation costs are rising with inflation, but these costs are manageable given the overall growth in church activities and programs.

Final note: total expenses are down, even though we are expanding programming and expanding outreach, giving raises to staff.

**1:09:25**

Eric continues by outlining upcoming major projects:

1. Downstairs Bathroom: A new bathroom will be created from the current bell room, with half of the cost already paid. The project will be completed by the end of February.
2. Outdoor Brick Restoration: Restoration work on the cloister gardens' crumbling brick will begin this spring, with the project spread over two years and a budget of \$72,000, paid as work progresses.
3. Williams Hall Brick Cleaning: A project to clean and seal the brickwork at Williams Hall is estimated at \$16,500, though the cost could be lower depending on the work needed.
4. Cloister Garden Pathway Improvements: The current fieldstone paths will be replaced with safer pavers for \$30,000, aimed at improving accessibility for people with mobility challenges.
5. Williams Hall Floor: The second installment of \$13,000 will be paid for the new floor in Williams Hall, with an additional \$1,500 added for budget flexibility.

Overview of results: As of December 31st, the church has \$160,427 in its checking account and \$111,532 in savings, with projected revenue for the year of \$1,116,426. Total expenses are projected to exceed \$1 million, with a goal to maintain about \$100,000 in the checking account each month. The vestry has started a reserve fund to cover future expenses, such as replacing boilers and the Griswold Center roof, aiming for \$25,000 in the fund by year-end. Additionally, the goal is to reduce the endowment draw to ensure long-term sustainability and financial health. While revenue appears strong, unexpected expenses may arise, and careful stewardship is crucial to managing church funds effectively. Lastly, members are encouraged to check with the wardens or rector before making any unbudgeted purchases to ensure good financial management.

**1:19:55**

Lee Smith questions why a new reserve fund is being created when the rainy day fund already exists. Eric explains that new funds cannot be added to the current named fund.

Lee Smith asks a second question regarding the remaining funds needed to cover the purchase of the new organ. Eric and Angela Garcia explain that the remaining funds needed are being sought through grants, and if needed from emergency funds and the endowment.

Preston asks Eric who has been spending money without permission. Eric clarifies that in the past the vestry has not provided updated budget notes to department leaders so overspending was possible. New procedure will involve providing regular reports to those persons.

Gail asks about the timeline for grant funding for the organ. Hailey Fader notes that grants are being sought from multiple sources and that those deadlines range from February to April. Eric also explains that grant efforts have been underway and will continue to progress. Toshia asks about the timeline of delivery for the organ and delivery of the final payment. Travis Fader notes that final payment is due upon delivery.

**1:34:35**

Lowell Younquist presents 2024 financial report:

Lowell reflects on the smoother financial management of 2024 compared to the challenges faced in 2023, when emergency draws on accounts were necessary and cash levels were dangerously low. Lowell thanks key individuals, highlighting their discipline and cost management. A major change was a significant reduction in the outreach budget, from \$180,000 to \$60,000, to balance the budget, a tough decision that was not popular but necessary. The speaker also acknowledges the fundraising efforts for a new organ, which raised \$150,000 in pledges, with the church potentially contributing up to \$80,000.

Additionally, there has been a significant improvement in the church's financial management, with the new treasurer, bookkeeper, and minister working better together. The church now operates with a more stable cash flow, with funds remaining around \$100,000 compared to the volatile amounts in 2023. A new policy of limiting endowment draws to 6% was introduced, which has proven helpful for financial sustainability. The church's endowment was valued at \$13.1 million at the end of 2023, with a draw of \$1 million, exceeding the 6% limit. However, in 2024, the draw was reduced to \$750,000, a 5.5% draw, and the equity market performed well, yielding a 4.7% return after accounting for the draw. The speaker expresses gratitude for the church's improved financial health and invites questions from the audience.

Alissa concludes the meeting with a prayer from Thomas Merton

Alissa calls for a motion to close the meeting.

Jan Marcou makes motion, Paul Tolley seconds motion. Ayes carry. None opposed.

Meeting Adjourned.

**1:53:00**

## **Elected Lay Leadership Servants in 2025**

### **Vestry:**

<b>Through January 2026</b>	<b>Through January 2027</b>	<b>Through January 2028</b>
Deborah Blackhurst	Eric Heglin	John Adams
Gail Hoffman	Susan Rye	Doug Germain
Angela Garcia	Fred Schuster	Ann Wright

### **Endowment:**

<b>Through January 2026</b>	<b>Through January 2027</b>	<b>Through January 2028</b>
Basil Clark	Marnie Bash	Liz Davis
Roger Moll	Emily Garlinghouse	Gordon Thompson
Eileen Germain	Pat Rousch	Bob Stoney

### **Delegates to Diocesan Convention - 2025**

Eric Carlson	Angela Garcia	Kevin Maksym
Alternate: Chris Lauckner		

## 2025 Rector's Report

As I reflect on 2025, I am filled with gratitude for the faithful, steady work of this community. We've enjoyed a solid year and continued growth and I've witnessed deepening relationships, the strengthening of structures, and the continued unfolding of who we are called to be together as a parish.

### **Worship**

Worship remains at the heart of our common life at St. John's. This year, we've seen steadily growing attendance and a deepening sense of participation and vitality across our Sunday services. Our worship is enriched each week by a dedicated team of lay leaders: lectors, Eucharistic ministers, altar guild, musicians, greeters, and more whose faithful presence makes each service possible.

In addition to our regular Sunday and seasonal liturgies, we've also offered pastoral services for both members of our parish and others in the wider community, also a vital part of our call to be the Church in every season of life. We also hosted Bishop Skip's farewell service, a beautiful liturgy that brought together people from across the diocese to give thanks for Skip's ministry and mark the end of his (second) time among us. It was a joy and a privilege for St. John's to serve as the gathering place for this moment.

### **Formation**

2025 saw continued investment in formation and spiritual growth. Seasonal opportunities for learning and reflection have seen growing engagement and prompted wonderful discussion, and I look forward to offering even more in 2026.

I was also formed, along with a parish group, at the College for Congregational Development (CCD), hosted right here at St. John's, completing my second and final year of the program. We brought back our learning on "Episcopal Identity," a topic with great depth for even further exploration.

### **Pastoral Care and Eucharistic Visitation**

I continue to be available for pastoral conversations and visits, including sacramental visits, which typically include home communion, and may also include anointing and/or absolution. So far, I've been able to respond personally to requests for Eucharistic visitation—often with coordination support from members of our Pastoral Care Committee, whose behind-the-scenes ministry I'm especially grateful for.

Looking ahead, this is also a ministry that can be shared. In 2026, I hope to offer training for licensed Eucharistic Visitors, allowing lay leaders to be formally equipped and commissioned to bring communion to those who cannot attend worship in person. Expanding this ministry will help us respond more flexibly, faithfully, and abundantly to the needs of our community.

### **Diocesan Roles**

This year, I was invited to serve and appointed to a term as Dean of Mission Region 8, one of ten newly-formed mission regions in our diocese. With that appointment comes the title “The Very Reverend,” which you may have seen appear in bulletins and communications. While the title is formal, the work is grounded and relational: my role is to support the clergy and congregations in our region—which includes Gladwin, Midland, Bay City, Saginaw, Caseville, and Bad Axe—by helping to foster connection and shared ministry across our part of the diocese.

I also served as a member of the diocesan liturgy team helping to plan and execute worship services at Diocesan Convention.

### **Strengthening Staff and Systems**

This year, in response to evolving needs and increased activity, we created and—just over the turn into 2026—hired for a Director of Operations position. This new role will bring essential clarity and capacity to our day-to-day operations, supporting everything from facility scheduling to communications to financial oversight, and I am very optimistic about what this will bring in 2026.

As I reflect on the year, I see signs of God’s presence in small conversations, shared meals, Second Sunday discussions, quiet pastoral visits, and the reliable rhythm of worship each week. There is always more to do, more ways to stretch and serve and dream, but I remain deeply hopeful about where we are and where we’re going.

Thank you for the many ways you show up: with your time, your care, your questions, and your prayers. It continues to be a joy and a privilege to serve as your rector.

With gratitude,



Alissa+

## 2025 Diocesan Convention Report

The Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes gathered in Saginaw this October 24-25 for our second Diocesan Convention. The delegation from St. John's included Eric Carlson, Chris Lauckner, and Kevin Maksym, along with Mo. Alissa Anderson. It was a full and hopeful two days with new and old connections, joyful worship, discernment, and decision-making.

One of the joys of this Convention was the opportunity to be together as a still-new diocese. The halls and worship spaces were filled with people from across the region—this year even seated at mixed tables. Beyond business, it was especially heartening to see so many from St. John's present, whether helping with childcare, staffing exhibits, or simply doing their job.

We were honored to welcome the Most Rev. Sean Rowe, Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church, who preached and spoke powerfully about clarity, discipleship, and trusting God with the future. "Make the future God's problem," he told us. "Do Kingdom work today." Many of us left his keynote and his sermon feeling re-centered and encouraged.

An exciting initiative announced at this year's Convention was the launch of Holy Ground for Whole Communities, a three-year pilot program supported by the Lilly Endowment. The program invites congregations to discern how their buildings and land might more fully serve both God's creation and the surrounding community.

In its business sessions, Convention approved the 2026 diocesan budget, along with a shift to a new structure for diocesan assessments, the amount each parish gives to support the mission and ministry of the diocese. Under this model, churches with greater financial resources will contribute a larger share, while those with fewer resources will pay less. St. John's will see staggered but significant increases in our diocesan contribution over the coming years—part of our shared commitment to a sustainable and equitable common life.

We also passed a diocesan resolution affirming our commitment to immigrants and refugees. Originally introduced by the Rev. Jared Cramer of St. John's, Grand Haven, the resolution passed unanimously among those in the room, affirming our call to welcome the stranger and care for the vulnerable in line with the Gospel.

Our delegates attended a variety of workshops, with subjects ranging from prayer to parochial reports. A common thread of conversation throughout Convention focused on vitality, and especially the distinctive gifts and possibilities of smaller churches. While it was interesting to participate in these conversations from the outside (St. John's is among the largest parishes in the diocese), it was heartening to feel excitement and liveliness around possibilities.

We returned with gratitude for this shared ministry, and with a sense that God is still shaping something new among us.

Looking ahead, next year's Convention will take place October 23–24, 2026 in Muskegon, and at that Convention we will elect our first diocesan bishop, an historic event!

# Loving God . . . Worship

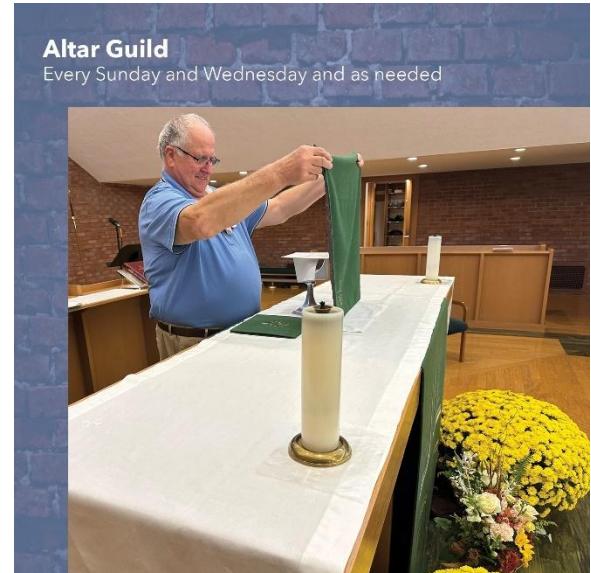
## Altar Guild

**Ministry Contact:** Marcy Kirksey (989-878-5118 / [doctorsixvet@aol.com](mailto:doctorsixvet@aol.com))

**Activity:** St. Johns Altar Guild bustles with activity NON STOP but is behind the scenes and is a contemplative, prayer filled ministry that is SO rewarding in many ways: the close connection, camaraderie of its dedicated members responsible for caring for altar, altar linens, vessels and vestments for weekly services as well as special, meaningful events such as : church holidays, funerals, baptisms and weddings.

Our happenings in 2025:

- ◆ We have successfully obtained a reliable source for gluten free wafers and individual non alcoholic communion juice, containing gluten free wafer for parishioners at their request.
- ◆ HJ Smith and Margo graciously continue to launder and iron/steam soiled altar linens! We are so grateful for their commitment!
- ◆ Jac Randolet continues to order communion wine, wafers, individual nonalcoholic communion juice/wafer, candles and supplies and diligently fills candles with oil as needed!
- ◆ Andrea Burditt continues to serve graciously in set up and take down for the Wednesday Noon Service in Elliot Chapel. We are so very blessed and grateful for her commitment to Altar Guild at St. Johns!
- ◆ Jenny Eastabrook is supremely generous in her time to order altar flowers for weekly services as well as special church holidays.
- ◆ Mona Cline continues to faithfully serve when she is in Midland! We truly value her service!
- ◆ Marcy continues to develop the twice yearly schedule and management of the altar guild budget.
- ◆ + Our ministry is an amazing Gift from God! We welcome new members!



Blessings,  
Marcy Kirksey, Margo Nielsen, HJ Smith, Judy Ellis, Andrea Burditt, Jac Randolet, Jenny Eastabrook and Mona Cline.

## Announcers

**Ministry Contact:** Pat Roush (989-631-4149 / [horusnod@charter.net](mailto:horusnod@charter.net))

**Activity:** Announcers greet the congregation at the beginning of the 10 AM service on Sunday. This includes welcoming any visitors, reviewing coming events published in the Sunday bulletin and communicating any other information provided by the Rector or other church members immediately before the service.

Many thanks to our Sunday announcers for their on-going faithful service. They are Toshia Albright, Marnie Bash, Pat Roush, Mike Spencer, Dave Whisler and Ann Wright. These are the first people that St. John's congregation encounters on Sunday morning. Their warm and inviting welcome is a constant reminder of the friendship and love that is part of our life at St. John's. The 10AM service continues to be broadcast live from the sanctuary (via YouTube) for those unable to attend in person.

## Broadcast Ministry

**Ministry Contact:** Bill Kent (989-941-7001 / [wwkiv@yahoo.com](mailto:wwkiv@yahoo.com))

**Activity:** The Broadcast Ministry is a group of trained, willing and technically able individuals that provide live streaming of worship services every Sunday morning at 10:00am.

The ministry started as a conscious effort and investment, post-Covid, to keep our streaming capability up to engage parishioners wherever they may be in the world. Through endowment fund monies, we purchased cameras, networking and computing equipment, along with the requisite software to provide a fairly professional looking livestream from our Sanctuary. We have regular viewers each Sunday from Midland, to the Detroit suburbs where they've moved away, to snow-birds in the warmer areas during the year, and even international visitors sometimes. While individual "streams" might only be in the 8-12 range, this can be anywhere from 10-20% of our average Sunday attendance. Personally, I joined the Christmas Eve service this year to hear the organ (we were with family in Connecticut).



Normal Sundays start at 9:30-9:45 with the broadcast tech for the day turning on all the equipment and setting up the streams through YouTube. Once the prelude starts, we're on the air! While trying to participate as much as possible, we're moving the focus of the cameras around to pre-programmed positions and capturing the celebrants, choir, musicians and

congregation as we worship. After the postlude has completed, we'll start the shutdown process and make it into Williams Hall for coffee hour just a few minutes after everyone else.

Besides our normal Sunday 10am broadcast, we also do a number of special services during the year (Good Friday, Christmas Eve, etc.) and have been available to do funerals if requested. All streams are stored locally as well, so for some funerals, I've given the family a copy as a memento.

We added another trained person during the year (YAY Isaac!!!), but can always use more. If you've ever watched a back-stage drama about producing a TV show, this would be like the pre-school version of it. We'd love to get you on-board and trained. Reach out to Bill Kent for a quick personal discussion and overview.

The Broadcast crew. (Bill, Eric H, Alicia, Charlie and Isaac)

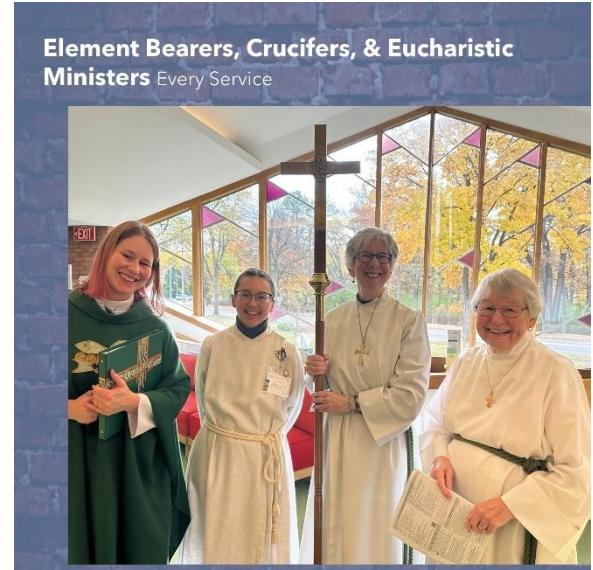
## **Worship Ministries**

**Ministry Contact:** Karen Newhouse (989-631-3418 / [kbnew40@yahoo.com](mailto:kbnew40@yahoo.com))

**Activity:** Greeters/Ushers, Element Bearers, Eucharistic Ministers, Intercessors, and Lectors at both the 8am and 10am Services (including special services such as Ash Wednesday, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day services).

I am the person you contact if you are interested in serving in one of the worship ministries listed above. When I receive a message or call from an individual interested in serving as one of the above ministries, we will discuss the ministry that you are interested in and learn a little about you and your interest in serving. I will then set up training for you as needed.

St. John's continues to welcome church members who accept roles in the Worship/Liturgical space. Your contribution of time and being part of a roster of individuals willing to serve our parish family is appreciated. Please contact me if you are interested in serving in one of the Worship Ministries.



# Loving God . . . Music

## Chancel Choir

**Ministry Contact:** Amon Eady, Director of Music (205-999-3128 / [amon@siec-midland.org](mailto:amon@siec-midland.org))

**Activity:** The Chancel Choir at St. John's rehearses every Sunday morning from 8:30 AM to 9:40 AM before the weekly service at 10:00 AM. Anyone wishing to lend their time and talent is welcome to join the choir, regardless of age, experience, or training. The choir plays an integral role in leading worship each Sunday, and performs a diverse repertoire throughout the entire year, including extra services at Christmas and Easter.

The music area at SJEC enjoyed a wonderful 2025 full of growth and beautiful music making! The chancel choir continues to grow with the addition of several new members from within the parish, and our choral scholars from CMU continue to grow as well. The music area collaborated with several exceptional guests from in and around the Mid-Michigan community. We welcomed Annie Brewer, French horn player in the Midland Symphony, Matheus Garcia Souza, violin professor at CMU, Benjamin Bernardes, violinist from CMU, Elena Zelinko, mezzo-soprano from Ann Arbor, and the graduate string quartet from CMU, among other guest artists. SJEC also hosted several wonderful concerts given by the Detroit Handbell Ensemble, Lux Women's Choir, and lecture recitals given by Dr. George Fee. We are thrilled to have our brand new Allen RLX-90a digital organ! It sounded amazing as it was unveiled for our Christmas Eve services!

All are welcome to join us in the chancel choir offer any talents you may have to our music ministry. If you are interested in doing so, please contact our music director., Amon Eady



## Organ / Piano

**Ministry Contact:** Travis Fader, Organist/Pianist (989-492-6378 / [travis@modernrealty.us](mailto:travis@modernrealty.us))



This year marked a major milestone in the life of St. John's with the installation of our new custom RLX-90 organ from Allen Organ Company. Through the generosity of our parish community and local support, the organ project was fully funded, with installation taking place in November. The instrument is already being heard in services, and ongoing voicing and adjustments continue to shape the organ specifically for our worship space. This work represents both a significant investment and a long-term commitment to music as a central part of

our liturgy. A concert series and formal dedication are being planned, offering an opportunity to celebrate and share this great instrument.

## Handbell Choir

**Ministry Contact:** Nykkoal Lurie (901-578-5865 / [nykkoalurie@gmail.com](mailto:nykkoalurie@gmail.com))

**Activity:** The Handbell Choir at St. John's celebrated a year of ringing the summer of 2025! It meets Sundays from 11:30-12:30, typically following the 10 AM service, with the exceptions of Second Sunday Sharing. The Handbell Choir meets in the Bell Zone downstairs. Anyone is welcome to join the Handbell Choir, as the rehearsals are structured around learning techniques and theory and applying them during practice. Currently the Handbell Choir is made up of a rotating selection of congregants. One's commitment to a rotation does not mean you are signing up to ring forever, and this structure allows for a schedule that works around ringers' needs! We have Spring, Summer, and Fall Rotations! The Spring rotation rings from January until May, the Summer rings late May until August, and the Fall rotation rings from August until December (depending on other musical offerings!)

The Handbell Choir has room for any and all who are interested in joining, and reflects the welcome spirit and diverse community that St. John's Episcopal strives to foster and support. People of differing ages and genders can and do ring with the Handbell Choir, and everyone is able to practice and polish musical offerings for our church community.

With the start of the Handbell Choir in the summer of 2024, we hit the ground running with lots of learning and fun times. In 2025, our ringers rang with the Detroit Handbell Ensemble, and some participated in an International Handbell Festival in Eaton Rapids, Michigan. The Handbell Choir was able to offer six musical selections last year and we are looking forward to ringing more regularly and at more events even outside of our church.



I would love to extend a warm invitation to anyone wanting to join the Handbell Choir, or even just come to a rehearsal and check it out!

# Loving God . . . Adult Formation

## Bible in the Basement

**Ministry Contact:** Alicia Watt (989-513-1213 / [aliciawatt@yahoo.com](mailto:aliciawatt@yahoo.com))

**Activity:** Bible In the Basement is an opportunity for adults to meet outside of worship services and connect. Meetings are scheduled for the first and third Sundays of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the St. John's Activity Room.

The group is currently watching The Chosen TV series on DVD. This Angel Studios production tells the story of Jesus and the 12 Disciples. In December we started the fourth season. Each meeting includes watching an hour-long episode and informal discussion.



Anyone interested is welcome to join us in the basement for conversation in a relaxed atmosphere. Please contact Alicia Watt with questions.

## Christian Meditation

**Ministry Contact:** Angela Garcia (989-763-8944 / [caradelmont26@gmail.com](mailto:caradelmont26@gmail.com))

**Activity:** Christian Meditation is a form of meditation practiced by the World Community for Christian Meditation, a community that began in 1977 and was founded on the practice of Benedictine monk Fr. John Main. It is open to any and all who seek simplicity, silence, and stillness. We meet every Wednesday at 6:30pm after Tai Chi and meditate for 20 minutes. During the colder months we meet in Williams Hall but after Memorial Day we meditate in the beautiful courtyard. You are encouraged to bring a comfortable chair during the outside season, but there is seating available. Before each meditation there is a short reading, usually something written by John Main himself.



In 2025, we repeatedly read from his book 'From Anxiety to Peace'. In 2026, we will begin with the daily readings found in 'Silence & Stillness in Every Season'. This practice is free to attend and you can begin at any time during the year.

## Pop-Up Bible Study

**Ministry Contact:** Deb Blackhurst (989-859-3214 / [dablockhurst@aol.com](mailto:dablockhurst@aol.com))

**Activity:** Formed in 2023, this bible study opportunity was created to cater to the needs of busy folk who wish to connect with scripture, the Episcopal Church, and our God. Each week we discuss the upcoming Sunday service readings (first lesson, psalm, and second lesson).

This is a group seeking to understand what it's all about! If you know nothing, this is the place for you. If you know some but wish to go deeper, this is the place for you. If you know quite a bit about Scripture but know very little about the Episcopal Church, you're still welcome. A place to find the readings is provided so you can read them ahead of time. We meet every Monday evening at 6:00 pm in the church library, which is located across the hall from the office. We end at 6:45 pm. See, told you it was for busy folk! We are an inclusive group – ALL ARE WELCOME!

## Wednesday Women's Bible Study

**Ministry Contact:** Karen Newhouse (989-631-3418 / [kbnew40@yahoo.com](mailto:kbnew40@yahoo.com))

**Activity:** Studying scripture together.

Our bible study is an opportunity to meet with other women to study the scriptures. We start our time together sharing our lives, thanksgivings, and prayer requests for both our group and for our church family. All women are invited to join us. We meet every Wednesday, year-round, in the McNab Room. If you are interested in joining us, please contact me, Karen Newhouse, or the church office or just come Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. and join us!

## Women Journeying Together



**Ministry Contact:** Marnie Bash (989-839-9364 / [mpbash@ameritech.net](mailto:mpbash@ameritech.net))

**Activity:** An opportunity for women of all ages to view and discuss a mutually chosen video presentation – generally augmented by a self-purchased book – or a book study, on a religious or biblically based topic. Members freely share in a wide-ranging discussion of the material. Three to five or six topics will be chosen during the year. Additionally, time is spent in sharing our lives and voicing prayer requests for friends, family, and ourselves, as needed.

*Women Journeying Together* meets Thursday afternoons through the school year, doing book studies – most often with a video component – of Biblical and/or religious subjects. This year tended to emphasize the study of various books of the New Testament.

We began in January with a study of Paul's letter to the Philippians, called *Philippians: Embracing Joy*; the video study was led by Mark Batterson, a pastor in the Washington DC area. During Lent we took a fascinating look at *The Lord's Prayer*, led by one of our favorite presenters, Adam Hamilton. It was a very intense look at this most familiar prayer. Our final study before our summer break was *Revelation: Extravagant Hope*, led by Margaret Feinberg. We ended the school year with a picnic by the garden.



In September we started again with the first half of a study of Luke/Acts, Luke's 2 volume work about the early history of the Christian church. Our study was *Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws* from Adam Hamilton. We used both Hamilton's book and *Journey through Luke* from Forward Movement as we learned about Jesus' life and teachings in the Gospel of Luke. We are finishing this two part study this January with a study of Acts. Our final study of the 2025 year was *Half Truths*, also from Adam Hamilton, a look at things people say as if they were in the Bible but are not.

This year we again welcomed and enjoyed new members in our gatherings. *Women Journeying Together* meets Thursday afternoons in the Activity Room (downstairs) from 1:00 to about 2:30PM. We study, share, laugh a lot, and pray for one another, and we usually include occasional luncheons in our schedule.

Financing as needed is under the Adult Christian Formation budget; members purchase their own books which allows use of e-books or audio books as well as print. Discussions each week are fairly independent of one another, so members can join a study at any time or miss a week or more as necessary and still easily join the conversations. Women are also welcome to join us for a particular study that attracts their attention – our schedule is found each month in the *Epistle*. Come and learn about *Women Journeying Together*!

## St. John's Library

**Ministry Contact:** Marnie Bash (989-839-9364 / [mpbash@ameritech.net](mailto:mpbash@ameritech.net))

In addition to the books, the St John's library also continues to support two magazine subscriptions, *Guideposts* and *Angels on Earth*, as well as several copies of the quarterly devotional, *Forward Day by Day*. The magazines are found in the rotating rack next to the

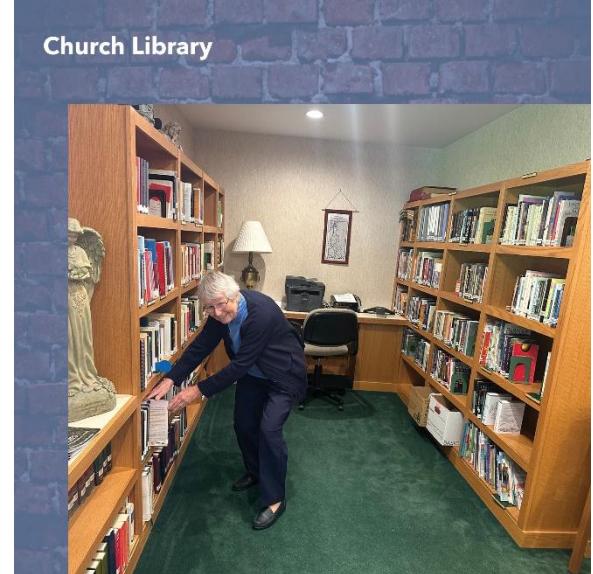
bookshelves in Williams Hall; they are nice to pick up if you're waiting for someone, between meetings, or just have a few free minutes in Williams Hall. *Forward Day by Day* can be found in the narthex (the entry to the church proper) and near the other entrances to the church building or in the office; each day's reflection is on small page and includes a scripture, a devotion, and suggestions for Biblical readings – a few minutes of peace in a busy day.

The library also has a number of DVD studies available for use. Many are great for individual or group Bible study. I recognize that many people like to get information from the internet and/or streaming, but these studies allow time for reflection on a topic and may go into thoughts or details not necessarily picked up in quicker glances at "tech". There are many Bible studies, some DVDs on spiritual topics, and extended discussions of living with and in our faith from N.T. Wright (*Surprised by Hope*) and Philip Yancey (*Prayer, Does It Make Any Difference*), and others. The Activity Room, downstairs from the office, has a good, working DVD set-up for any group that would like to use these DVD studies, or they may be signed out and taken for home use.

This year, our collection of historical material got a big boost from Eric Carlson, when he donated several books, primarily about the late Medieval Age and the Reformation. However, there's also a wonderful biography of St Paul by NT Wright, and a couple of books on the Book of Common Prayer. Check out the Classical Interest section for lots of interesting information about the church's history.

**NOTE:** There is now an updated "map" or diagram of the topics in the library itself on the wall to the left of the window. There is one posted on the wall and a few copies to take from the basket below. If you are interested in finding some topic or book, this may help you look in the right area.

**PARENTS:** ARE YOU AWARE that you can explore and check out the "picture" books in the Children's Section to read with/to your child? There are many fun books, all beautifully illustrated, right there in Williams Hall; there's books of music, poetry, and prayer, there are lots of stories worth reading and talking about with your children, there are biographies - not just of saints but of other people as well. For middle school children there is a separate shelf (Youth) which includes Madeleine L'Engle's "Wrinkle in Time" Series as well as the complete Narnia series by CS Lewis. Search through the children's library and enjoy some fun times reading to/with your children!



## Tai Chi

**Ministry Contact:** Laurie McGuire, Physical Therapy Center (989-839-9309 / [lauramc1@charter.net](mailto:lauramc1@charter.net))

**Activity:** Tai Chi is a form of exercise that involves mind, body, and spirit. It is the practice of slow controlled flowing movements. Everyone and anyone can participate in Tai Chi, and all are welcome to attend regardless of age or physical status. I would not recommend the class for very young children under the age of 8.

In 2025:

1. Class attendance included both church members and community members. The positive reaction I receive from the community members that they are invited lovingly into the church space is amazing. Attendance greatly varied from 5 to 16 people and averaged 8-10 people per class over the year .
2. Class was consistently every Wednesday at 5:30 pm with only occasional cancellations due to weather, holidays, illness, and vacations. As weather allowed in the summer months, we were outside on the concrete surrounding the memorial garden. Most of the time we used Williams Hall – Tai Chi requires a wide-open, empty area, free of obstacles.
3. The class format was the consistent practice of the progressing forms for approximately 4 months; I teach a total of 5 different routines at this time. I am always attempting to still engage current students while adding new students.



In 2026, I would like attract more students with a maximum of 25-30 per class. Most new class members join from 3 different sources – they see it on the outside electric sign, they see it posted at my workplace, or they bring a friend.

Tai Chi brings me joy, and I want to share it with people. It is not my primary source of income, so I charge only \$5.00 per class just to cover my costs. Currently an average exercise class in Midland costs \$15-30 per class. I strongly believe being able to teach at the church allows a more diverse population to attend.

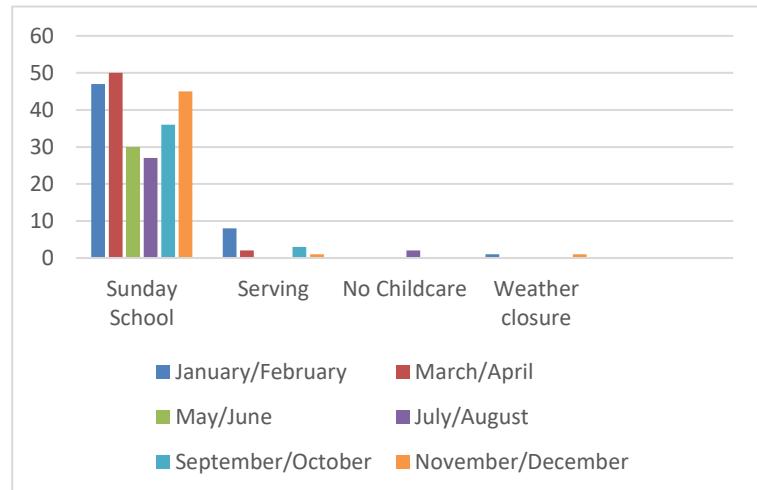
# Loving God . . . Children and Youth Formation

## Children and Youth Ministries

**Ministry Contact:** Linda Germain (989-631-2260 / [linda@sjec-midland.org](mailto:linda@sjec-midland.org))

This year welcomed some consistency and upward movement of our Children's programming. The nursery care staff, children's Sunday school volunteers, and youth group volunteers are wonderful groups to collaborate with. They all continued to embrace trying new things throughout 2025 and some things stayed with us while other things did not work or were adjusted to our needs of our children and youth participants. One of the biggest changes we have made over the last couple of years for our Children's Sunday school and nursery group was to split the children into two groups and adjust curriculum to appropriate education levels. The older children had more discussion with their lessons and loved the change because they felt they could learn more and were heard more. We have been including small skits for the older children to bring lessons full circle for understanding. This has been a creative and great tool that has allowed even the shyest children a chance to try something out of their comfort zone and succeed. The younger children appreciated the shorter lessons and more wiggle time. We will continue to grow and adjust with our children and youth. We are hoping to create a third group for nursery as our infant/toddler numbers seem to be increasing.

I am including a chart of our Sunday school attendance tracker. We are seeing great trends of children at Sunday school and slowly beginning to serve during services. We hope to see more growth next year and more serving as they get comfortable.



In January we started our year off at Kids Day at the Midland Mall. A few parishioners from St. John's joined in on the fun events of the day and hosted the church table. Many conversations were had with children, youth, and parents about our programming. At our annual meeting our nursery staff and a volunteer provided childcare downstairs so that parents could be involved with the meeting as they chose. During Sunday school we had Bible lessons for *Godly Play*, *Roar into 2025*, and a Martin Luther King Jr lesson. We find it important to highlight important figures and organizations as appropriate within our lessons.

January to May Linda Germain lead with Jess Hart assisting the Middle and High School Youth group on Sunday afternoons. The youth group was blessed to have Jess join us for her short time this year at St John's as she was working through seminary and was an intern. Jess gave extra support in being our second adult for the year, allowing youth to enjoy time without parent volunteers most weeks. We have found this is a big drive for our youth to actively participate freely without perceived judgement, so we tried to accommodate our youth wishes as they grew and learned to find their voices. The youth chose to begin and worked through half of the book on a study from *Storymakers* called *Identity*. Each chapter walks you through a part of the Lord's Prayer. This was a different Bible study tool the youth voted to try and has been a wonderful approach to group discussions and personal reflections.

We connected with Cub Scout Pack 3768 and Girl Scout Troop 50402 in our community by opening our Williams Hall up to their Pinewood Derby's on February 1<sup>st</sup>. This brought in many families from the community and was a very successful event. Both Scout groups were grateful for use of the space, it gave them plenty of room to run their derby cars. We continued to connect with our Scouts in the congregation with a Scout Sunday service on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Many Scouts from the community joined in during and after service activities, including a Pinewood Derby Track activity. Members of our congregation, Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts served in many ways during Scout Sunday. Some of the positions served were readers, acolytes, ushers, flag bearers, and element bearers. The Scouts hosted a Chili bar after service to thank St John's for their continued support of local Scouts. St John's continued hosting local Girl Scout troop 50402 for their meetings through May. In the fall due to unforeseen circumstances Girl Scout troop 50402 disbanded, but this produced a new Girl Scout troop 50593. They began meeting at St John's in the fall. Thank you to Tony and Linda Germain for your efforts in continuing the collaboration between Scouts and St John's. Thank you, St John's community, for continuing to support all our Scouts at St John's in their activities and fundraisers!



March brought some fun to the children. We began our Lent season with a *Godly Play, Books of the Bible* lesson and moved forward to learning about St Patrick and all his goodness he brought to the people. We also had a couple of free play and art days to just enjoy some simple time with the children.



In April, Palm Sunday both children and youth participated in the Palm processing at church and learning about what Palm Sunday is. On Easter Sunday we had two acolytes serve during the service and many attending service upstairs as a change from our normal Sunday school activities. We felt it was important for them to attend a service when they normally do not. We encourage our children's group to embrace going to service for regular and special services. Often we pop upstairs to listen to special

music or other things we learn about during services. Our live stream has allowed us to also broadcast downstairs in Sunday school. Several of our children started to ask to attend service but wanted to remain downstairs.



May we had a graduate blessing during the May 11<sup>th</sup> services for those graduating. It is wonderful to recognize the great accomplishments of all levels of graduation; we recognized three high schoolers that moved on from youth group. There were also two middle schoolers, four elementary schoolers, and four preschoolers' graduates. Lots of accomplishments and excitement to move to their next level of education. With the excitement of the end of the school year and moving

forward, we were also able to focus on independent lessons to continue our Sunday school mornings.

June brought many fun celebrations and wrap-ups for the year for our children and youth groups. We had an end of year celebration with our youth at an escape room at Codebreakers and ice cream at Cottage Creamery. They enjoyed solving an interesting puzzle, yummy ice cream, and some social time. We also recognized all our amazing staff and volunteers that helped throughout the school year. Without our volunteers and staff, I could not run the programs for the children and youth as I do. Thank you all for your help and support, even if you felt you didn't do much, every little bit helped! Every volunteer matters regardless of your frequency of help.

As we transition to summer, our Sunday school transitions to childcare to give staff and volunteers a break over the summer. If we have a leader for a lesson then we incorporate some fun lessons, crafts, and play in the summertime. If no leader is available for a lesson, then the staff just has social time with the children. We have several that love to play chess and on occasion we "field trip" down the hall to play ping pong in the youth room or outside to the playground.

Vacation Bible School held July 7-10 was a fun filled week with our Campers and Guides. Our theme was *True North*. Linda Germain, Mother Alissa Anderson, and Nykko Lurie collaborated to welcome children and youth for a week filled with Bible lessons, arts & crafts, activities, skits, music, and of course yummy snacks. Each day had a different lesson; we can wonder, feel alone, feel powerless, need hope, and need help but all came back to we can trust in Jesus. We learned a song, Lets Trust in Jesus, for the week that was performed at Sunday service at the end of the week. Our Thespians stepped it up in their camping humor filled skits. This year the Estabrook/Germain family created a wooded wonderland in a main hallway for VBS as well as a





camping scene for the Sanctuary. It was a transformation of space and really brought the *True North* to our event. We had four groups of kids ranging from Pre-K to middle school. Each group had fun bonding and enjoying the events of each day together. So many individuals came together to make these four wonderful days successful. Thank you to the many Guides and behind the scenes helpers who helped in every area of our VBS week.

September started our school year activities and groups. Youth group started to meet in September every other week, as well as our Sunday school groups on a weekly basis. Fall brought blessings...the Blessing of the Backpacks, the Blessing of the Animals, and the Blessing of the Trick or Treaters. These events and the people and animals involved were indeed a blessing. Our intergenerational events like these are always a great way to bridge the gap between generations. Pulling from many lessons we try to teach compassion and prayer for others. A project that the children helped with at the end of September was prayer/thinking of you cards. The children and adults spent their craft time creating cards for parishioners to hand out. They included drawings, art, words of comfort and happiness. During coffee hour, a few of the children distributed the cards to random church members to let them know someone was thinking about them.



In October our Youth group helped decide on a theme of witches, create decorations, and host a trunk at St John's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Trunk or Treat event. We had a number of cars hosting trunks



and a food truck to add to the excitement. Our church also sponsored a trick or treating table at the Midland Recyclers annual truck or treat event. For our Blessing of the Trick or Treaters event on October 26<sup>th</sup> we had food, activities, and fun for all ages. The children and adults paraded into the sanctuary in costume from Sunday school for a blessing. We wrapped up our fall programming with *Godly Play* and *Harvesting Gratitude* lessons. The *Harvesting Gratitude* lessons had the children recognizing, expressing, sharing, and how to have gratitude in all circumstances. These were great transitional lessons leading

to Advent and the Christmas season. To know your blessings and count them at a young age is hard, but important lessons to learn.

Advent this year we ventured into a new study option for our older Sunday school children. They learned about *Humble Beginnings*. Being humble is a very tough concept to understand for adults let alone children. They learned that even Jesus was humble. Our younger children enjoyed Alicia Watts and Chris Schusters' amazing *Godly Play Advent* storytelling as well. A highlight for all Sunday school children is lighting the Advent wreath each week. They all take

turns lighting and extinguishing the candles. This is our third year of doing this. Our youth group enjoyed some Christmas decorating fun while building gingerbread houses to be displayed in our fellowship hall for Advent and Christmas. It is a joy to learn how to be engineers with icing and cookies!

We had an intergenerational churchwide decorating party before Christmas. This allowed all generations to prepare the church for Christmas. As well as



enjoying lunch together in celebration of the season. Children and youth participated in the Christmas Eve evening services by serving in various roles. We had acolytes and a member of our children's choir sang with our Chancel choir. This year we tried something new and had the children play bingo while at either Christmas Eve service. By playing bingo, it encouraged them to listen for key words during service and to fully take in the service experience while having a little fun. We heard a couple of small "merry Christmas, bingos" called out as they were trying to remain quite while getting excited of their success.

May we continue to embrace and teach our children and youth to help them grow in their faith.



# Loving Neighbor . . . Outreach

## Hosted Ministries

Included in St. John's outreach efforts during 2025 was hosting and providing resources for the following groups:

- ACT Uganda
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- SVSU Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority
- Barbara DuRussel Piano Studio
- Boy Scouts
- Camerata
- College for Congregational Development (CCD)
- Dahlia Hill Society
- Daughters of the American Revolution
- Detroit Handbell Ensemble
- Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational
- EDGL Endowment Committee
- Forestridge Condo Association
- Fraternal Northwest Little League
- George Fee
- Girl Scouts
- Great Lakes' Gardeners
- Grove Music Festival
- Harcrest Woods Condo Association
- Heather DeGroot Studio
- Lakeside Condo Association
- Learning Tree Cooperative Preschool
- Lux Women's Choir
- Melanie Zimmer Piano Studio
- MHS Orchestra and Choir
- Michigan Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
- Midland County Food Assistance Network
- Midland Quilters Squared
- Midland Section of American Chemical Society
- Mid-Michigan Music Teachers Association
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Physical Therapy Center
- Rotary District 6310 Foundation
- Sono Centrum
- Tennille Coston Studio

## ACT Uganda – Agape Community Transformation

**Ministry Contact:** Lynn Pottenger (989-600-3543 / [11hpott@gmail.com](mailto:11hpott@gmail.com))

2025, our 22nd year of serving in Uganda, was another wonderful & challenging year for ACT Uganda. The incredible support from our volunteers, the hard work from our staff in Muko, and the generosity of our donors have made all the difference, so ACT can make a difference in Muko Sub-County, UG and beyond...perhaps some of our most exciting news is that in 2025 the Ugandan government asked ACT to extend our efforts into the Rubanda District, beginning with Bufundi Sub-County! So we begin 2026 with a revised mission statement:



*We work in partnership with ACT Uganda as they pursue their goals for community development within Rubanda District.*

Our vision statement remains unchanged, as it is still our target:

*The ACT Uganda and ACT US partnership is one of support and solidarity, with the Ugandan partners leading the generation of ideas, development and evaluation of programs, and generation of resources.*

**HANDS/Agriculture:** Permagarden training continued apace in 2025. This training was funded by the Midland Allen Foundation grant awarded in 2022 and we were blessed to be awarded a renewal of their support through 2027! The 2026 work will now include Bufundi Sub-County, one of the 9 Sub-Counties in Rubanda District. Follow-up monitoring visits to farmers who received iron-rich beans show that folks are implementing their training effectively and incorporating these new, highly nutritious foods into their regular diet. The pilot study to evaluate the presence of anemia in Muko Sub-County, and to compare rates of anemia in the permagardeners growing iron-rich beans to folks who are not trained permagardeners, will continue into 2026, augmented by purchase of 2 additional hemoglobin monitors, funded with the Allen Foundation grant. This is important because anemia is a significant health issue in Uganda. The HANDS team continues to work on the possibility of starting up a potato storage social business that would bring in funding to ACT Uganda, supporting our goal of sustainability. A feasibility study of this idea is underway.

**HEAL/Health Promotion:** The HEAL/Health Promotion Manager, Judith Tukahirwa—a university-trained midwife and an ACT-sponsored student who graduated from Muko High School—has had significant impact with her dual program in health education, addressing both female primary students on menstrual health issues (a significant contributor to girls missing school days), with almost 200 students participating in sessions in the past few months alone, and a Healthy Moms/Healthy Babies initiative to educate pregnant women about perinatal health issues. Judith prepared a proposal and obtained some outside funding from Rebirth (Chris & Nancy Mason) to cover the costs of purchasing Mama kits to hand out at her Healthy Moms/Healthy Babies sessions! Judith has held numerous sessions and encouraged many pregnant women to understand & carefully consider their options for safer childbirth. Indeed, there is at least one mother/baby pair whose lives she saved by convincing the young pregnant mother to give birth in a hospital—where she ended up with a life-saving C-section and a healthy newborn. That is truly making a difference!

**HONORS/Educational Scholarships:** The HONORS program remains an important contribution to the future of all Muko Sub-County residents by enabling students to stay in primary and secondary school. Currently we have 154 scholarship students and plan to maintain those numbers for 2026, but the need remains great. Some changes in 2025 included sending some students to a different high school, and a continued effort to maintain and build Chess for Success Clubs as an important enrichment opportunity. Along with HONORS, we have three

students supported for post-secondary studies (vocational & university), and three Maverick Scholars, with a fourth to be selected in 2026! It is all keeping Laura Ault very busy.

**MUSIC:** Karen Viele continues to lead this effort with regular zoom-based lessons with Christ Fortunate Ankankwasa, who has improved his violin skills considerably. The ACT MUSIC participants recently performed at a local festival, with both music—five strings players and a keyboardist-- and dancing. Their performances were very well received! Christ has been working with them to have carols for singing during the holidays and they plan to perform next year at the April 22 Founder's Day event in the Rubanda District. A MUSIC camp is planned for January, 2026. It is always a challenge to raise funds for the MUSIC program, so if you have a heart for MUSIC and students having the opportunity to learn to play instruments, please consider a donation!

**Uniquely Ugandan Handcrafts** – our first social business whose revenue goes back into supporting all the ACT programs has kept Jane Lacher, UUH Inventory Mgr, busy in 2025, and we happily welcomed the help of Mary Jane Hoshaw; together they do all the inventory prep before and after sales. We held a number of sales locally including two days at the Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes Convention. However, we are still in need of younger volunteers in order to conduct sales over a wider region. While we are blessed by all the volunteer sewists, capably led by Anne Moll, we are in need of someone to organize the sales opportunities and the volunteers to staff them. These sales are our main source of unallocated funds and a key part of our capability to fund new projects. Please let us know if this is something that you could do. This would mostly be needed during the late-Summer/Fall season – maybe 2-4 hours a week.

Our support teams (**Communications, Facilities, and Resource Development**) have worked hard to keep us all on track. Our monthly Team Updates were complemented by our monthly newsletter, *Ekisya Niki* (What's New), which began in late 2024! Our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/ACTUgandaUSA](https://www.facebook.com/ACTUgandaUSA)) and our website ([www.actuganda.org](http://www.actuganda.org)) help keep us in touch with folks and provides information regularly—managed so capably by Jen Eenigenberg. The **FUNDS** (Financial Ugandan Needs for Development & Sustainability) **Task Force**, including ACT Muko staff, continued its work to develop and vet ideas for sustainability, focused on social businesses. The addition of Ag Inputs to the ACT Hardware store is a continued success, with monthly profits. The idea of social businesses is targeted to help ACT become sustainable long-term with proceeds from the social businesses going back into ACT to support the programs. Mushroom cultivation has restarted in 2025, partially funded by the proceeds from the hardware store, and has had some successes. The social businesses being identified/vetted will need space to function from, so ACT purchased some land in 2025 with a long-term plan to build a building to house the Hardware store, and Ag Inputs, and eventually other ACT social businesses, near Muko Marketplace. The land was excavated and will soon have the necessary retaining walls & drainage to permit eventual construction. This is a wholly new effort for ACT and one which will require support from a wide range of talents & treasures. Our RD team has been hard at work developing the fund-raising campaign that will support this project and we look forward to rolling it out early in 2026—you will be hearing more about this from us soon!

Finally, the ACT US Board continues to be guided by our Mission and Vision statements with our efforts to more fully transition idea-generation and decisions to our Ugandan partners. Not only have the ACT staff proposed a budget for 2026 (second year in a row!), but they have prepared proposals for their projects, with hopes of broadening the sources of funding by submitting these to grant organizations. Indeed, HEAL managed to obtain support for the Healthy Moms/Healthy Babies project from an outside group (Rebirth) —another huge step towards self-sufficiency! The ACT Board is very grateful to Dave Molzahn's service as Treasurer for about 2 years, and very pleased he is only relinquishing that responsibility and not all his other many responsibilities! We happily welcomed a few new Board members: Kelly Busse, who has been a key participant of the FUNDS Task Force and is now also serving as our Treasurer; Jennifer Eenigenberg, who is trying to keep the rest of us looking young by managing our Facebook, Instagram, and website pages. We are also fortunate to have obtained Larry Larson's services, as our bookkeeper—he is meticulous & industrious at keeping us informed & on the right track, just what one hopes for in a bookkeeper.

Thank-you to all who have and continue to support us in so many ways. If you want more information, check out our website: [www.actuganda.org](http://www.actuganda.org). If you have questions or especially if you are interested in becoming involved in any of these efforts, please contact Lynn Pottenger ([11hpott@gmail.com](mailto:11hpott@gmail.com)) or Sue Waechter ([sue.waechter@actuganda.org](mailto:sue.waechter@actuganda.org)). We look forward to connecting with you!

## **Endowment Committee**

**Contact:** Liz Davis (989-859-7393 / [lisfdavis@gmail.com](mailto:lisfdavis@gmail.com))

Emily Garlinghouse (989-859-7700 / [emilygarlinghouse@yahoo.com](mailto:emilygarlinghouse@yahoo.com))

**Activity:** The Endowment Committee at St. John's reviews grant applications from groups that do good work to help people locally, nationally, and internationally. We receive these grants via an online form accessible through St Johns internet page. Once we make a grant award, we follow up on the money that the committee spent by reviewing a required report submitted by the organization.

## **Executive Summary**

The Endowment Committee granted \$70,000 this calendar year. Funding was provided to local, regional, and international causes. This report is organized as follows: a brief description of who served on the committee, an overview of the kinds of grants the committee made, and an appendix with a spread sheet detailing the exact amount of money given for each grant.

## **Committee Members**

For the Church year 2025, the members of the Endowment Committee were:

Liz Davis and Emily Garlinghouse (Co-chairs), Marnie Bash (Secretary), Pat Roush (Treasurer),

Gordon Thompson, Eileen Germain, Basil Clark, Bob Stoney, and Roger Moll. Eric Heglin was the Vestry representative for the Endowment Committee.

### **Summary of Activity**

The Endowment Committee received 18 grant applications via the St. John's website. Of these, 13 projects were approved for some or all of the requested funds. Please see the table, beginning on the next page, for a detailed overview of grants given this year.

The Committee met four times in 2025. The first meeting took place in March and was centered on inducting new members as well as electing officer positions. The committee decided to have June and November meetings to review grant applications. The committee met twice in November to be sure all applications had been reviewed, as the application window closed November 1.

Granted requests spanned many different project areas, including equipment such as refrigerators, a tractor, and a communication board for a playground. Other funds were provided to support a local Boy Scout troop project, teachers in South Sudan, podcasting start-up costs, and Episcopal campus ministry.

The Committee also asked for and received Vestry approval to provide funding to the Midland County Food Assistance Network, due to ongoing food insecurity and economic concerns.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Liz Davis and Emily Garlinghouse

MEETING DATE	ORGANIZATION/APPLICANT	LOCAL, REGIONAL, US, or INT'L	PURPOSE	DOLLARS GRANTED	DECLINING AVAILABLE BALANCE	COMMENTS
17-Mar-2025	none; orientation mtg only	-	-		\$ 70,000.00	<b>2025 Spending Starting Budget per Vestry</b>
7-Jun-2025	SJEC: SAMS Pantry	LOCAL	Replace the two aging and non-ergonomical freezers at SAMS Pantry	\$6,900.00	<b>\$ 63,100.00</b>	SAMS is a 40+ year established ministry at St. John's. This request falls within the guideline definition of a project.
7-Jun-2025	Scouting America: Cub Scout Pack 3768; Chestnut Hill PTO as custodian	REGIONAL	Scouting for Food request for three-year supply of 50,000 bags for Great Lakes Bay region	\$4,800.00	<b>\$ 58,300.00</b>	Scouting for Food is an annual service project of SA's Michigan Crossroads Council. Scouts drop off bags at local residences and collect them filled with non-perishable food items that are then delivered to a local food pantry. SJEC's SAMS has directly benifited from this event. This request falls within the guideline definition of a project.
7-Jun-2025	Breaking Bread Village	LOCAL	Requested \$3,000 to fund Heart of Leadership program	\$0.00	<b>\$ 58,300.00</b>	Denied due to lack of specifics...e.g. how many people, where taking place, how program is accessed etc. Invited applicant to resubmit.
				\$0.00	<b>\$ 58,300.00</b>	

MEETING DATE	ORGANIZATION/APPLICANT	LOCAL, REGIONAL, US, or INT'L	PURPOSE	DOLLARS GRANTED	DECLINING AVAILABLE BALANCE	COMMENTS
7-Jun-2025	EDGF	INTL	Requested \$15,000 to fund vocational education enhanced with seed capital trade tools for underprivileged children	\$0.00	\$ 58,300.00	Education. Does not meet guidelines for project but is becoming a periodic request. We funded this organization in 2017 (\$5000) and in 2020 (\$10,000) to provide business training for displaced women. In 2024 turned down \$9,000 grant for School Fee Support/Scholarships for Underprivileged, Internally Displaced Children
7-Jun-2025	Kepfa Mwangi	INTL	Requested \$10,000 funding for online graduate school degree at Felician University	\$0.00	\$ 58,300.00	Did not fit funding guidelines; is not a project
1-Nov-2025	Midland County Former Offenders Advocacy and Rehabilitation (MCFOAR)	LOCAL	Requesting \$10,000 to provide funding for 25 clients and their families to meet their yearly laundry needs	\$0.00	\$ 58,300.00	Gave \$5,000 in 2024 to purchase beds. Appears to be a yearly request. Investment in permanent laundry facility could be better option.
1-Nov-2025	Grass Root Initiative (GIN) US	INTL	Requesting \$10,000 to provide basic services and literacy education opportunities in underserved communities in rural Ulang County, South Sudan. Support 5 teachers, equip 200 students to achieve grade 3 proficiency in reading, writing, comprehension , provide educational kits, measure with literacy assessments and attendance tracking	\$10,000.00	\$ 48,300.00	Concern for unstable situation in Sudan offset by fact that contact lives in Midland and has reputation as capable individual. Also, the request appears to be addressing a targeted area in the country.

MEETING DATE	ORGANIZATION/APPLICANT	LOCAL, REGIONAL, US, or INT'L	PURPOSE	DOLLARS GRANTED	DECLINING AVAILABLE BALANCE	COMMENTS
1-Nov-2025	Enterprise Development & Governance Facility (EDGF)	INTL	Requesting \$12,000 to empower displaced women hawkers through self-help owner mini-business development in Bamenda, Cameroon	\$0.00	\$ 48,300.00	Turned down request earlier this year. This request is similar to request honored by us in 2020. At November 1 meeting, granted this request. At November 9 meeting reconsidered this request and turned it down, to be consistent with reason for denial at June 7 meeting.
1-Nov-2025	Diocese of Kitale	INTL	Requesting ca \$46,440 to purchase 2018 Toyota van	\$0.00	\$ 48,300.00	In 2024, donated \$4,375 to purchase four motorcycles.
1-Nov-2025	Phoenix Community Farm	LOCAL	Requesting \$15,000 to purchase a tractor.	\$15,000.00	\$ 33,300.00	Fit description of a project and is well-known local charity
1-Nov-2025	Adoption Option Inc. Child Welfare Organization (AOICWO)	LOCAL	Requesting \$25,000 toward capital campaign to purchase building they currently lease	\$0.00	\$ 33,300.00	In 2024, donated \$10,000 to purchase software (out of \$40,000 requested)
1-Nov-2025	Decatur Youth	REGIONAL	Requesting \$500 for children to create gifts for their parents/home	\$0.00	\$ 33,300.00	Did not fit guidelines. Minimum request is \$1500.
1-Nov-2025	St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Flint	REGIONAL	Requesting \$20,000 toward \$1.2 million capital campaign to strengthen church's historic foundation, enhance its facilities and sustain its growing outreach to the Flint and Genesee County community.	\$0.00	\$ 33,300.00	Concern for long-term viability of church presence in city of Flint
1-Nov-2025	Saginaw Intermediate School District	REGIONAL	Requesting \$14,000 to purchase electronic communication boards for three Head Start communities	\$5,000.00	\$ 28,300.00	One double sided board for currently improved/renovated playground
1-Nov-2025	Nabilala Community Development Program, Uganda	INTL	Requesting \$10,000 to purchase 10 heifers.	\$10,000.00	\$ 18,300.00	No earlier funding to them, so unknown to St. John's. They attached an extensive auditor's report to the request.

MEETING DATE	ORGANIZATION/APPLICANT	LOCAL, REGIONAL, US, or INT'L	PURPOSE	DOLLARS GRANTED	DECLINING AVAILABLE BALANCE	COMMENTS
1-Nov-2025	Scouting America: Cub Scout Pack 3768; Chestnut Hill PTO as custodian	REGIONAL	Requesting additional funding for project awarded in June for additional unexpected cost: Patches \$260 for 1 year; or \$1,000 for several years	\$1,000.00	<b>\$ 17,300.00</b>	Extension of earlier request.
1-Nov-2025	Midland County Food Assistance Network (MCFAN)	LOCAL	Address current demand for food resulting from delay of SNAP benefits program	\$5,300.00	<b>\$ 12,000.00</b>	Pending Vestry approval because MCFAN did not submit a request
9-Nov-2025	Province V Campus Ministry Development	REGIONAL	To create and launch a new Podcast that highlights stories of Episcopal Campus Ministry that demonstrate how the priorities of TEC (Liturgy, Contemplative Spirituality, Justice, Inclusion, etc.) are often most embodied in our campus ministries.	\$2,000.00	<b>\$ 10,000.00</b>	Re-allocation of EDGF grant from November 1 meeting
9-Nov-2025	St. John's Mt. Pleasant Campus Ministry	REGIONAL	Through this grant, St. John's Episcopal Church, Mt. Pleasant, is seeking to establish an Episcopal presence on the CMU campus to provide faith formation to students in an inclusive and welcoming environment.	\$10,000.00	\$ -	Re-allocation of EDGF grant from November 1 meeting

## Garden Boxes

**Ministry Contact:** Lee Smith (989-832-2440 / [optimalvalue@att.net](mailto:optimalvalue@att.net))

**Activity:** The Garden Box Project helps in the effort to be good stewards of God's bounty and seeks an outreach ministry to individuals in the St. John's neighborhood. Both stewardship and outreach are part of the St. John's mission statement, Linking Lives in the Love of Christ.

Begun in 2010, currently nine garden boxes are in the area adjacent to the playground on the northwest side of the church. Since then, fresh vegetables grown in these boxes have been provided to the SAMS Pantry and also enjoyed by Parish members and neighbors of St. John's who tend their own boxes. St. John's garden grew well in 2025, but we continue to look for the perfect kind of tomatoes and green beans to grow.

The food pantry received about thirty-five heads of romaine lettuce, potatoes, several bags of cherry tomatoes, and a few green beans. The quest to find the perfect kind of regular size tomato for the food pantry and the best variety of green beans continues. Helpers in the garden were Judy Ellis, Amy Dupuis, Eloise Dupuis, Adam Dupuis, Jacques Randolet, and Lee Smith. We intend to have an organization meeting to plan the 2026 garden in February of 2026. Please attend this meeting if the garden project is of interest to you. You can also join the garden effort by signing up in April for a box for your own use and / or by helping raise vegetables for the food pantry.

## Knitpickers

**Ministry Contact:** Anne Moll (512-636-9963 / [amquilts4kids@gmail.com](mailto:amquilts4kids@gmail.com))

**Activity:** We are an ecumenical group of knitters and crocheters who gather every Tuesday afternoon to create items to donate to locally. We create, we laugh, we share knowledge and we pray for others. We welcome anyone interested in joining, whether you know how to crochet or knit, want to learn or just want to hang out.

During 2025 we made and distributed 150 items including hats, scarves, mittens, blankets, sweaters, soap sacks and prayer cloths for 8 different charities in the Midland MI area. Including Windover School, Babies Clothed By Faith, Sam's Pantry, Visitors to St. John's, Covenant NICU, Pro-Medica home health care, North Midland Family Center and The Mothers' Day gift table. We also gave a prayer shawl to one member. All our supplies are donated.



## Learningtree Cooperative Preschool

**Contact:** Jenni Stoll, Program Administrator  
(989-941-6303 / [msjenniltcp@gmail.com](mailto:msjenniltcp@gmail.com))



In 2025, our preschool has embraced change, introducing new staff, revamping existing spaces, and focusing on a thriving future. We are dedicated to providing a nurturing environment for our students. We are committed to building a strong foundation for the future of all of our students.

- Jenni Stoll is the new Program Administrator (formerly known as director) and lead Prekindergarten teacher. I am a staff member in the Youth Services program and a member of St. John's Episcopal Church.
- The preschool is dedicated to working alongside the church in community involvement.
- Colleen McCarthy is the new Early Learners lead teacher. She was formerly an assistant teacher at the preschool.
- Kaelin Lajoice is our new assistant teacher.
- In the 2025/2026 school year, we have 13 students in the PreK and Early Learners classrooms. The Two's & You class has had 11 students.
- We have reorganized our preschool space and are continuing to organize our storage areas.
- The preschool has donated some items to the Youth Services program at St. John's.
- We have received the highest rating of "Demonstrating Quality" through Great Start to Quality. This means our program consistently meets high standards, and we are committed to continuous improvement.
- As a Great Start Collaborative member, we are able to provide two scholarships this year. This amount depends on state funding.
- We are continuously looking for ways to be involved in our community, and we look forward to teaming up with St. John's at future events, the next event being Kids' Day at the mall.

## Love Knots

**Ministry Contact:** Carole Adams (989-631-0662 / [tcadams2@yahoo.com](mailto:tcadams2@yahoo.com))

**Activity:** Love Knots is a group of ecumenical quilters who work at home as well as meeting the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month at 10am in Williams Hall. We welcome new members any time. The quilt tops are made at the quilters' homes and layered and finished at the church. All quilts have a flannel side to provide a cozy feel to the recipient. Much of the fabric for quilt tops is donated. If you have a donation of 100% cotton fabric it can be dropped off at the church office.

The cost of the quilt batting and flannel backing, close to \$1,000 in 2025, is covered by income from the Vestry. Our costs this year were considerably higher than previous years as we stocked up on flannel and batting when the JoAnn Fabric store closed.

Love Knots continued to make burp cloths for Babies Clothed by Faith as a way to use up scraps of the flannel fabric used in backing the quilts.

In 2025 we donated quilts to Babies Clothed by Faith, Heartland Hospice/ProMedica, North Midland Family Center and Adoption Option as well as children and adults in the community. There is great joy in knowing that 117 babies, kids and adults are cuddling up with a Love Knots quilt this year.



## Samaritan Fund

**Ministry Contact:** Mark McCartney (989-430-2303 / [mccrtny7544@gmail.com](mailto:mccrtny7544@gmail.com))

**Members:** Eric Carlson, Basil Clark, Chris Esquivel, Mark McCartney, Bob Stoney,

**Activity:** Supported by the Endowment Funds of St. John's, the Samaritan Fund provides assistance to Midland County residents in need. Fund volunteers meet with clients coming to St. John's for assistance. The volunteer listens, prays with the client, and determines if financial help is warranted. The vast majority of assistance requested and met is for utility and rent payments.

## The Parable of the Good Samaritan

**25** On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

**26** "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

**27** He answered: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'<sup>[c]</sup>; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

**28** "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

**29** But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

**30** In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. **31** A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. **32** So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. **33** But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and

when he saw him, he took pity on him. **34** He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. **35** The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

**36** "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

**37** The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

### **Samaritan Fund Vision**

St. John's Samaritan Fund Team purpose is to live out God's will and intent as described in the parable of The Good Samaritan. The team works to bring Glory to God by the merciful giving of gifts to the needy and hurting of Midland County. These include those barely making a living wage who hit difficult circumstances, the disabled, those with illnesses, the recently unemployed, and others. The gifts we offer include a chance to be heard with love, honor and respect as much loved children of God; practical advice and support; offered prayer; if qualified sharing a part of the financial abundance with which God has blessed St. John's; and a heartfelt invitation to worship and become part of our parish. We try with God's help to give hope to those who come seeking assistance.

The St. John's Samaritan Fund team seeks to act as good stewards of God's gifts by prayerfully discerning how God wants these gifts used and turning His direction into pragmatic actions and decisions on giving.

It is hoped that the team members will benefit in spiritual growth from the opportunity to serve the Samaritan Fund provides. We hope to share our experiences with others in the parish and community to give God glory and draw others into His love and desire to serve a hurting world.

### **Mission (How we will accomplish the Vision)**

The Samaritan Fund and Team will request and receive its budget from the St. John's Endowment committee.

We will personally meet those in need once a week at St. John's for one hour – typically with two to five applicants. We will also assist when requests are received from Home to Stay, Midland Community Former Offenders Advocacy and Rehabilitation, DHS, Salvation Army or other area agencies. Financially, we will primarily service needs that are basic, temporary, and capable to be shown as "fulfilled" with our donations. This includes:

- Home utilities (Heat, electricity)
- Rent

- Medical procedures and documented pharmaceutical needs
- Auto repair

Other needs will be considered with care and discernment.

Financial assistance will be limited to once every two years per individual and family.

We will work with the staff of St. John's to assure:

- Those seeking help are treated graciously and team members are primarily responsible for care and are easily reached for follow-up.
- Those seeking help have a comfortable and secure place to be at St. John's while also allowing other ministries at St. John's to carry on effectively.
- Appropriate paperwork for record keeping and follow-up is maintained by Team members

Team members will pray for God's help to enable them to be with those in need in a manner that:

- Shows honor, love, and respect
- Provides a safe and loving environment for hearing their needs
- Allows for God's guidance and discernment in how best to help
- Creates a feeling within those in need of God's grace and hope
- Opens hearts to God's love, embraces prayer, and an opening for invitation to be part of our Parish and worship

The Team will meet periodically to share how God is working through them and discuss new ideas and activities to fulfill our vision.

The Team will seek ways to share the experiences of service with others including parishioners at St. John's to bring glory to God's works and to encourage others to serve on the team.

### **Ministry Narrative**

The majority of our assistance begins with face-to-face interviews directly with those in need (our "clients") on Tuesday mornings. We also assist with online requests from agencies, this year most often from Midland Community Former Offenders Advocacy and Rehabilitation (MCFOAR). Eric Carlson, Basil Clark, Chris Esquivel, Mark McCartney, along with Bob Stoney as greeter served as members for this St. John's outreach ministry.

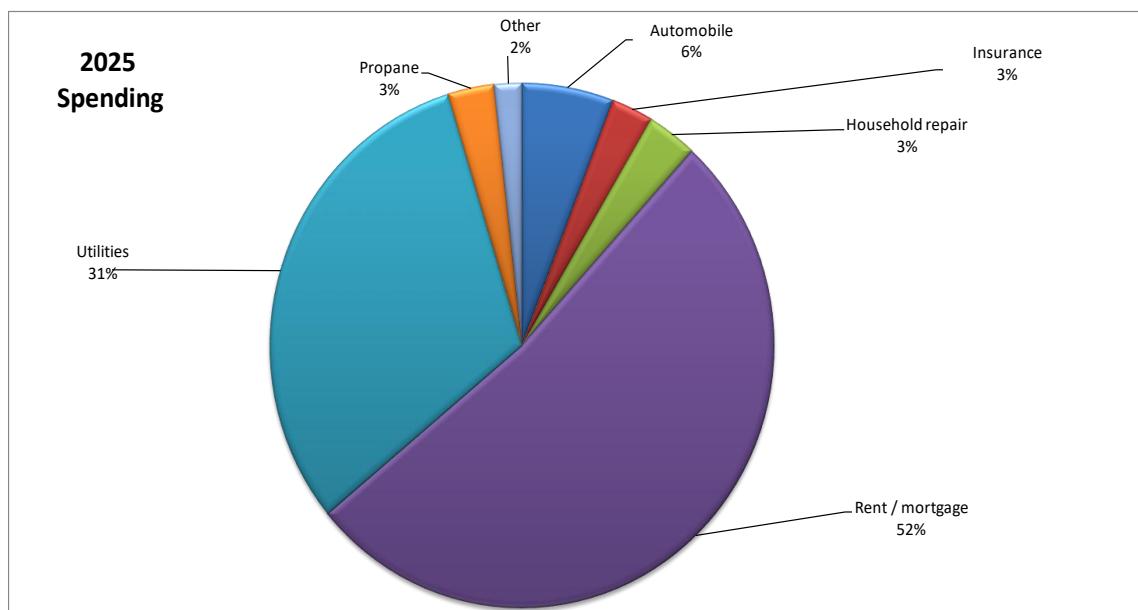
Total spending for 2025 (\$38,657) was slightly lower than 2024 (\$40,218). Clients assisted grew from 144 in 2024 to 158 in 2025. Average assistance per client dropped from \$279 in 2024 to \$245 in 2025. For your information, the year with peak spending over the past 12 years was 2019, when \$44,794 was disbursed for this ministry.

## Summary Statistics

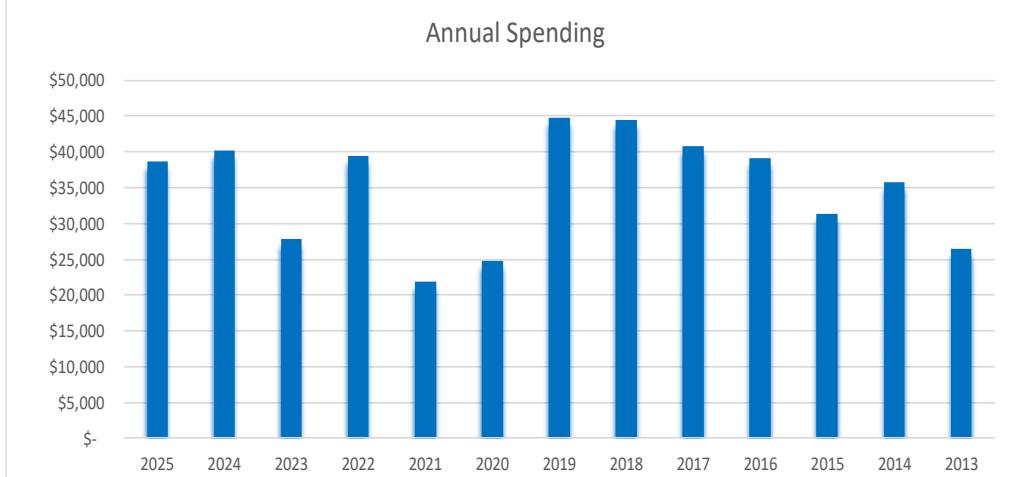
1. Total spending for 2025 was \$38,657, \$40,218 in 2024, \$27,835 in 2023; \$39,403 in 2022, \$21,944 in 2021; \$21,732 in 2020; and \$44,794 in 2019.
2. Approximately 83% of total spending in 2025 was for utilities and rent/housing assistance. These clients commonly face eviction or utilities shut off.
3. Of the \$38,657 spent in 2025, \$33,307 was from client interviews at the church. Requests from outside agencies for which we assisted totaled \$5,350, and consisted of:
  - o MCFOAR, 20 requests (all housing), \$4,850
  - o Midland Senior Services, 1 request, handicap ramp, \$250
  - o Midland Free Methodist, 1 request, \$250, home repair

## Samaritan Fund, 2025 Spending Statistics

2025 Spending	Thru December 31	2024	2023	2022	2021
Automobile	Automobile	\$ 2,024	\$ 1,113	\$ 1,520	\$ 600
Insurance	Household	921	718	682	268
Household repair	Medical & Dental	600	200	700	547
Rent / mortgage	Rent / mortgage	24,721	15,388	24,213	12,125
Utilities	Utilities	9,765	9,916	11,006	7,446
Propane	Insurance	883	200	558	674
Other	Other	1,304	300	724	284
Total	Total	\$ 40,218	\$ 27,835	\$ 39,403	\$ 21,944



Year	Average		
	Total Spent	Clients Assisted	Per Client Assisted
2025	\$ 38,657	158	\$ 244.66
2024	\$ 40,218	144	\$ 279.29
2023	\$ 27,835	110	\$ 253.05
2022	\$ 39,403	147	\$ 268.05
2021	\$ 21,944	82	\$ 267.61
2020	\$ 24,732	104	\$ 237.81
2019	\$ 44,794	178	\$ 251.65
2018	\$ 44,462	184	\$ 241.64
2017	\$ 40,799	199	\$ 205.02
2016	\$ 39,133	229	\$ 170.89
2015	\$ 31,271	214	\$ 146.13
2014	\$ 35,793	255	\$ 140.37
2013	\$ 26,511	224	\$ 118.35



## SAMS Pantry – Share A Meal Service Pantry

**Ministry Contact:** Dana Pressnall (989-859-3756 / [dpressnall53@gmail.com](mailto:dpressnall53@gmail.com))

**Activity:** St. John's SAMS Pantry is an important member of the Midland County Food Assistance Network (MCFAN). The MCFAN is a non-profit, tax-exempt charitable organization established in 1984 as a cooperative effort of area churches and other organizations to provide food and personal care supplies to people in Midland County. MCFAN provides food through eight member pantries and also through the Backpack Buddies Program, Community Outreach, Elderly Assistance, Emergency Boxes, Medical Assistance Program, Mobile Food Pantry, and Student Assistance Program. St. John's has two members serving on the MCFAN board.



MCFAN provides client screening and scheduling for the network pantries, including SAMS. MCFAN pays for the food SAMS orders from the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, provides many of the donated food items, and provides grocery gift certificates for clients. MCFAN shares donated Meijer Simply Give gift cards to help SAMS make local food purchases.

SAMS Is a faith-based organization. Our volunteers include St. John's members and volunteers from the local community. Volunteer activities include:

- Coordination of all SAMS pantry activities
- Assisting clients with selection of food and personal care items from the SAMS shelves, refrigerators, and freezers
- Providing spiritual care including hospitality, a compassionate listening presence, and support to clients receiving food.
- Re-stocking client shelves
- Maintaining inventory by ordering and receiving deliveries from the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, making local purchases, and handling donations. Donations come from MCFAN, churches, local stores, community organizations, and food drives



St. John's volunteers established the **Share A Meal Service (SAMS)** pantry in 1984 as a ministry of St. John's to provide food and personal care items to people in need in the Midland area. It is one of eight member pantries in the Midland County Food Assistance Network (MCFAN).

SAMS is currently open three days per week, Monday through Wednesday, and can serve up to eighteen families each week. SAMS serves about 35% of the total MCFAN pantry clients. MCFAN provides grocery gift certificates for clients based on family size so they can purchase items that SAMS does not have in stock.

**Giving Thanks To Our Many Helping Hands...** Approximately **20 people** share their time on behalf of the SAMS ministry. Just over half of this corps come from St. John's; the rest come from other churches and the Midland community. Volunteers manage the pantry operation, maintain inventories, and package and distribute food and personal care items to clients. Pantry client volunteers greet clients and provide a listening and caring ear while helping them

select items. Volunteers count, bag items and complete paperwork. Pantry restocking volunteers restock shelves from the SAMS and MCFAN warehouses prior to client appointments. Other volunteers assist with procuring and storing items in the SAMS warehouse.



**Staff Changes...** In September 2025 we said goodbye to our co-coordinator, Anthony Dizon, as he accepted a position as Client Coordinator for MCFAN. Our thanks go out to Anthony for his excellent leadership and improvements to SAMS pantry. St. John's is actively seeking a volunteer to fill the vacant SAMS Co-Coordinator position.

**Meijer Simply Give...** Meijer sponsors several campaigns each year to provide gift card donations to local food pantries. During each Simply Give campaign, customers are encouraged to purchase a \$10 Simply Give donation card upon checkout. Once purchased, the donation is converted into a Meijer Food-Only Gift Card and donated directly to the local food pantry selected by the store. Meijer makes a 100% matching contribution, and 200% on bonus days.



Meijer selected MCFAN during several campaigns in 2025. MCFAN makes the Meijer Food Only gift cards available to member pantries. SAMS used these cards to purchase \$3,500 in food items from Meijer during 2025.

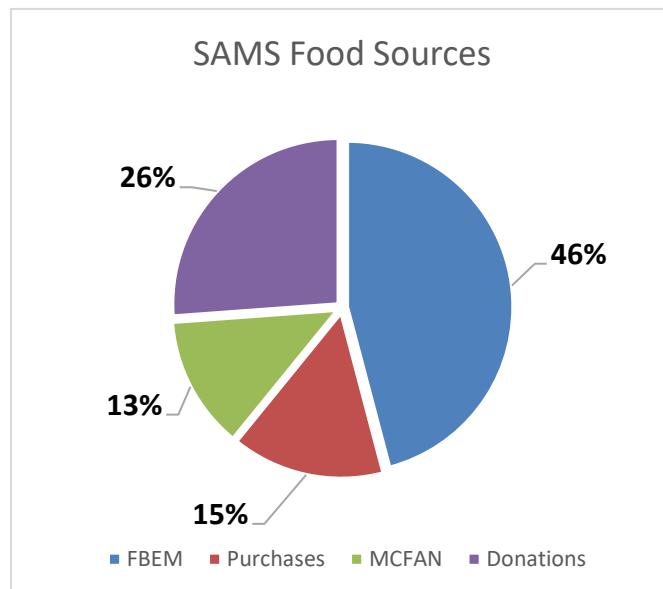
**U-Pick Operations...** SAMS continued to offer client appointments on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. A small but loyal group of volunteers made this happen. They are to be praised and thanked! Without their ingenuity and selfless service our neighbors in need would have gone hungry.

**New Freezers...** SAMS received grants from the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and the St. John's Endowment Committee to fund the purchase of two large commercial upright freezers to replace our aging chest freezers. This provides much more storage for frozen items as well as easier loading and unloading of the large, heavy frozen food boxes.

**Inventory...** In 2025, the pantry inventory was maintained using donations SAMS and MCFAN, items purchased from the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan (FBEM), items from local purchases, and donations from the Postal Workers and Scouting food drives.

SAMS incoming inventory item counts:

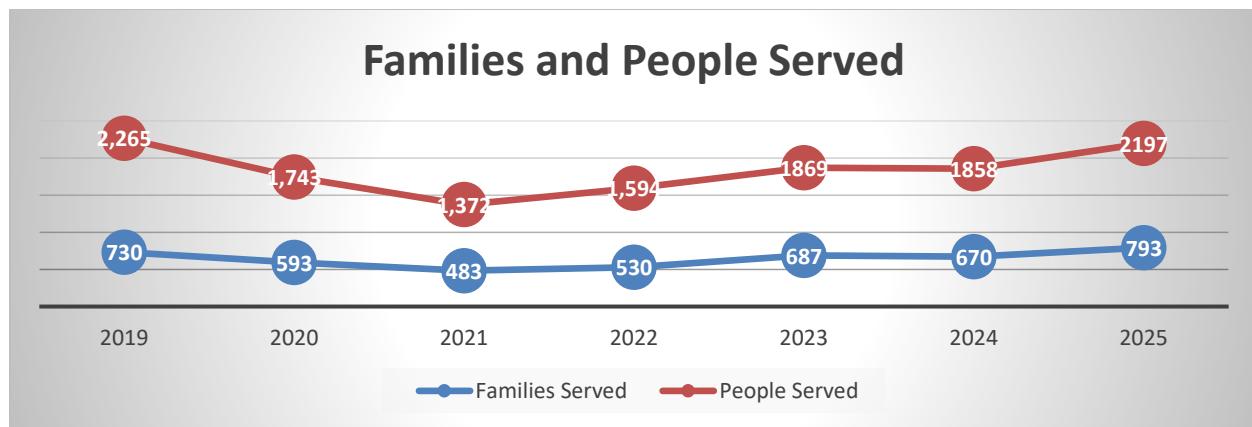
- FBEM = 25,499 (46%)
- Purchases = 8,290 (15%)
- MCFAN = 7,451 (13%)
- Donations = 14,662 (26%)
- TOTAL = 55,902 items



Note: Purchases include 2,489 items made using Meijer Simply Give cards

**2025 vs past six years.....** 2025 saw increases in the number of people and families served and items distributed.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Families Served</b>	730	593	483	530	687	670	793
<b>People Served</b>	2,265	1,743	1,372	1,594	1869	1858	2197
<b>Items Distributed</b>	55,836	46,940	44,380	39,709	47,870	47,543	54,653



Throughout Midland, individuals, groups, organizations, and corporations held food drives for MCFAN. Our neighbors are blessed by such generosity. The Letter Carriers Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive in May brought in 1,949 items. Scout troops and packs held a Midland area food drive in November. The troops, packs, and families helped to collect and sort over 5400 items for SAMS and several thousand more for HELP pantry. Thanks to Tony Germain for leading this generous and outstanding effort! It was great to see the youth and adults working together to help fight hunger.

We thank all volunteers and donors who help make SAMS a meaningful ministry. If you are interested in linking lives through Christ's love through any aspect of our food assistance ministry, please contact the Church Office at 631-2260.

#### 2025 SAMS PANTRY OPERATING STATISTICS

Families served: 670 Representing: 1,858 people		
<b>Cash Donations</b>	\$4,770	From churches, organizations, schools, individuals made directly to SAMS
<b>Endowment Fund</b>	\$11,900	For operations and new freezers
<b>Food Bank of Eastern Michigan</b>	\$4,856	Capacity grant for new freezers
<b>Meijer Simply Give Cards</b>	\$4,000	not fully spent
FBEM purchases	\$18,666	Funded by MCFAN
Gift certificates to clients	\$31,500	Funded by MCFAN
Local purchases	\$3,472	Funded by Meijer Simply Give cards
Local purchases	\$7,000	Funded from SAMS checking account
Commercial Freezers	\$5,877	Funded from FBEM and SJEC grants
Building electrical & light	\$374	Funded from FBEM and SJEC grants

## 2025 COSTS FOR 503 SOUTH SAGINAW ROAD BUILDING

Rent	\$7,200.00
Utilities and services	\$5,400
<b>2025 TOTAL BUILDING COSTS</b>	<b>\$12,600</b>

## Welcoming Committee

**Ministry Contact:** Denee Koonce (281-770-6608 / [deknee@me.com](mailto:deknee@me.com))

**Activity:** The Welcoming Committee's primary goals are twofold:

1. To make visitors feel welcome in our building and to follow up with visitors after their initial visits and
2. To promote St. John's out in the community

In 2025, The welcoming committee hosted tables at community events such as Pride Night at the Loons game in May, Great Lakes Bay Pride festival in June, and World Peace Day at Creative 360 in October.

We started monthly Community Game Nights in June targeting young adults in the community, though sincerely ALL are welcome. We've had a consistent turn out, especially as we moved into fall.

We also hosted our second annual community Trunk or Treat in October (rescheduled due to weather) and had well over 250 attendees with 10 decorated trunks in our parking lot and a food truck! We also hosted hot chocolate at SAMS Pantry for the Santa Parade in November. We have mugs with coffee/hot chocolate and information about our church for visitors in the narthex every Sunday.

As part of the welcoming committee, the St. John's social media Facebook and Instagram pages are being run by Denée Koonce. We grew our online presence in both locations and have numerous folks who watch our services online consistently. We have had visitors consistently throughout the year, and the Welcoming Committee is always looking for more volunteers to help us grow this ministry. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month in the library at 7 pm April through October.



# Loving Neighbor . . . Pastoral Care

## Funeral Reception Committee

**Ministry Contact:** Jan Marcou (989-835-3620 / [janmarcou50@gmail.com](mailto:janmarcou50@gmail.com))

**Activity:** The Funeral Reception Committee, made up of members from St. Martha's Guild and the congregation, serves St. John's when it comes time to have a reception/luncheon in Williams Hall following a traditional funeral, celebration of life, or memorial service at the church. The ladies work with the family and Rector to provide a warm and loving atmosphere, giving particular attention to the wishes of the family as to the type of reception desired. The committee is then responsible for providing food, set up, clean up, and any other such items as needed. Families usually donate to the funeral fund to offset the cost to St. John's. The Funeral Reception Committee is open to all members of St. John's whether a member of St. Martha's Guild or not.

This past year St. John's provided funeral services and receptions for four individuals in the Sanctuary and Williams Hall; Matthew Barnes, Linda Knight, Thomas Monto and Eric Wright. Over 300 attendees were welcomed to Williams Hall for a light luncheon provided by our church membership and the families.

Members of the church provide salads, fruits, desserts, chips, cheesy potatoes, drinks, and sandwiches. Some families choose to bring food special to the family.

The committee is fortunate to have over 20 volunteers help with the set-up, clean-up and serving.

If you would like to be part of this wonderful outreach for St. John's ministry, please contact Jan Marcou 989-430-2563 or [janmarcou50@gmail.com](mailto:janmarcou50@gmail.com)

## Pastoral Care Committee

**Ministry Contact:** Pat Roush (989-631-4149 / [horusnod@charter.net](mailto:horusnod@charter.net))

**Mission:** God is here with us. Pastoral Care representatives respond to a call of linking lives in the love of Christ through the ministry of caring. Individuals who are sick, lonely, depressed, anxious, or dying are visited by two pastoral care members. Visitations can take place at home or in facility. Pastoral Care representatives make visits and may offer holy communion and prayer, realizing the ministry of presence and being attentive to the patient and caregiver[s] are meaningful ways of connecting with God and each other.

**Monthly Meetings:** The Pastoral Care Committee meets in person on the third Monday of each month.

**Membership:** The Very Rev. Alissa Anderson, Chris Esquivel, Jan Marcou, Pat Roush, Dave Schafer, Chris Schuster, Fred Schuster and Michelle Spencer. This year, we welcomed new members Dave and Michelle and also extended our heartfelt thanks to outgoing members Charles Bash, Faye Ebach and Ronnie Rogers. The committee participated in St. John's parish ministry fair on September 14. This was an opportunity to educate other parishioners about the work of pastoral care and possibly recruit new members. For those interested in joining the group, a list of membership qualifications is available upon request.

**Activity:** In 2025 the Pastoral Care Committee continued its work of caring for other parishioners through Eucharistic visits, home visits, phone conversations and other means of personal contact (e.g. notes and cards, email, church fellowship events). A computer system is used by committee members to record confidential information about parishioners in need that might be useful to others providing them with pastoral care. The committee has continued to improve its pastoral care skills at each meeting through joint study of a pastoral care workbook prepared by the Diocese of California ("An Introduction to Pastoral Care-A Workbook for Training Eucharistic Visitors"). Further training plans for 2026 include:

- Inviting outside speakers on various pastoral care topics (e.g. depression, dementia) to speak to the group.
- The Very Rev. Alissa is preparing a Lay Ministry Training program for the parish that will "bring together spiritual formation, theological understanding and practical skills, the kind of integration that helps us show up more fully and faithfully in the ministries we've been called to."

Thanks to everyone for your faithful service! We look forward to continuing this important ministry in the coming year.

# Loving Neighbor . . . Fellowship

## Fellowship and Community Events

As Christians we are called to live in community with one another as the body of Christ. Celebrating our lives in community and welcoming others into our community keeps our church vibrant and keeps us meaningfully connected to each other.

**Below are St. John's events from 2025 with a fellowship focus or community component:**

### January

Annual Meeting  
Christian Meditation  
Farewell Eucharist & Reception for  
    Bishop Skip  
Fireside Chat  
Grove Music Festival  
Kids Day at Midland Mall  
St. John's Men's Breakfast  
Tai Chi

### April

Christian Meditation  
Easter Egg Hunt  
MMTA Event – Kevin Cole on George  
    Gershwin  
Prelude Music  
Sacred Rhythms  
St. John's Men's Breakfast  
Sunday Sharing  
Tai Chi

### February

Christian Meditation  
Pinewood Derby  
Prelude Music  
Scout Sunday  
St. John's Men's Breakfast  
Sunday Sharing  
Super Bowl of Caring  
Tai Chi

### May

Christian Meditation  
Detroit Handbell Ensemble Concert  
Lux Women's Choir Concert  
Pride Night at the Loons  
St. John's Men's Breakfast  
Sunday Sharing  
Tai Chi  
Taizé Service

### March

Christian Meditation  
Grove Music Festival  
Prelude Music  
Sacred Rhythms  
Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper  
St. John's Men's Breakfast  
Sunday Sharing  
Tai Chi

### June

Christian Meditation  
Community Game Night  
Great Lakes Bay Pride Festival  
Morning of Reflection  
St. John's Men's Breakfast  
Sunday Sharing  
Tai Chi in the Garden

## July

Christian Meditation  
Community Game Night  
St. John's Men's Breakfast  
Sunday Sharing  
Tai Chi in the Garden  
Vacation Bible School

## August

Christian Meditation  
Community Game Night  
St. John's Men's Breakfast  
Sunday Sharing  
Tai Chi in the Garden

## September

Blessing of the Animals  
Blessing of the Backpacks  
Christian Meditation  
Community Game Night  
Living the Covenant: Exploring Episcopal  
    Identity through Baptism  
Ministry Fair  
Sono Centrum Concert  
St. John's Men's Breakfast  
Tai Chi

## October

Christian Meditation  
Community Game Night  
Grove Music Festival

## October (cont'd)

Living the Covenant: Exploring Episcopal  
    Identity through Baptism  
St. John's Men's Breakfast  
Sunday Sharing  
Tai Chi  
Taizé Prayer Service  
Trunk or Treat  
World Peace Day

## November

ACT Uganda Handcrafts Sale  
Christian Meditation  
Community Game Night  
George Fee Piano Recital  
Ladies Prayer Breakfast  
Living the Covenant: Exploring Episcopal  
    Identity through Baptism  
New Organ Installed!  
Scouting for Food Collection  
St. John's Men's Breakfast  
Sunday Sharing  
Tai Chi

## December

Christian Meditation  
Community Game Night  
Lux Women's Choir Concert  
Santa Parade  
St. John's Men's Breakfast  
Sunday Sharing  
Tai Chi

## **Fellowship Hour**

**Ministry Contact:** Tony Germain (989-670-5210 / [germainaj@gmail.com](mailto:germainaj@gmail.com))

**Activity:** Following Sunday church services, parishioners are encouraged to gather in Williams Hall for treats and conversations. This time serves as a great opportunity to build personal relationships. Treats are graciously provided by groups or individuals who sign up to be fellowship hour hosts.

Fellowship hour gatherings held during 2025 featured a variety of foods and festivities including a special meal for our annual meeting, chili for Scout Sunday, and pulled pork for our annual

Christmas tree decorating. All parishioners are encouraged to consider signing up to host a fellowship hour.

## Loaves & Fishes

**Ministry Contact:** Bob Stoney (989-835-2494 / [rilstoney@hotmail.com](mailto:rilstoney@hotmail.com))

**Activity:** Loaves & Fishes is a fellowship opportunity for St. John's members to get to know one another in smaller groups, over a good meal. Groups of about 6-8 fellow parishioners are formed with an eye to shuffling participants as much as possible year to year, so you get to meet new folks. In a given year, each member or couple hosts a pot-luck dinner once for their group at their home or organizes a group dinner at a local restaurant.



## Men of St. John's

**Ministry Contact:** Lee Smith (989-832-2440 / [optimalvalue@att.net](mailto:optimalvalue@att.net))

**Activity:** The men of St. John's meet the first Monday of each month at 8:00 AM for breakfast at the Big Boy Restaurant on South Saginaw Road in Midland. The group has no officers, takes no minutes of its meetings, and has no strategic plan. Besides enjoying each other's company in discussion of whatever topic comes up at breakfast, the group does do stuff.

In 2025 we put on a pancake supper and assisted the woman of the church in their prayer breakfast.

## St. Martha's Ladies Guild

**Ministry Contacts:** Denée Koonce (281-770-6608 / [deknee@me.com](mailto:deknee@me.com))  
Tina Dasbach (989-430-7045 / [ptkcdas@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ptkcdas@sbcglobal.net))



St. Martha's is a multi-functional ladies group open to all members of St. John's that primarily focuses on giving back to the church and the community. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month September through June (in the future through May) in the basement activity room. Planning for the year begins in September. Our calendar for 2025 included:

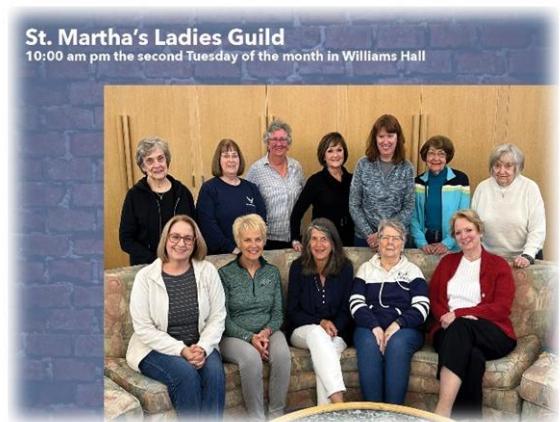
Collecting items for SAMS Pantry through our Souper Bowl of Caring, Lent fundraiser, baby shower in May to support several area organizations in celebration of Mother's day, flags to honor our military on Memorial Day, Ministry Fair, Prayer beads workshop, Trunk or Treat

vehicle, organized our first annual Ladies Prayer Breakfast which raised \$5,000 for River Jordan, Inc, provided snacks for coffee hour, Sharing tree, silent auction for Christmas gift baskets. Thanks to the generous donation of a special member, we enjoyed a holiday concert at the Midland Center for the Arts and ate afterwards at Grand Traverse Pie Company.

All Year we: collected clothing, personal care items, chef's hats for Windover Alternative High School, school supplies for disadvantaged students, mailed gift cards to the college students to provide a little cheer 3 times a year, provided food and workers for funeral luncheons, wrote notes to our church family, collected old towels and blankets for Midland's Animal Shelter, donated to Sam's Pantry

At the end of our year in June we donated \$300 each to River Jordan, Inc, The Legacy Center, and Midland Humane Society.

Although we coordinate various projects throughout the year, our success is because of the generous contributions from the congregation. We are grateful to all for the generous support we receive.



# With Everything We've Got . . . Parish Support

## Buildings and Grounds Committee

**Ministry Contact:** Jerry Nielsen (989-631-7027 / [jerrymargo@charter.net](mailto:jerrymargo@charter.net))

**Activity:** This committee oversees the maintenance of the church buildings and its property, including all gardens. Bids are obtained for maintenance and repairs, and recommendations of vendors to provide work at St. John's. Long-term projects are prioritized. We keep the safety and security of the church and those who work or use our building as a high priority. Our meetings are on the first Tuesday of each month at 9:00am in the McNab Room.

Here are a few Building and Grounds Projects from 2025.

- **Cloister Garden** – Removed walking paths and replaced walkways in the garden with brick pavers. This allows handicapped walking through the garden. We are working with the Wholesome Gardener who is keeping the garden in beautiful shape.
- **Brick Replacement** – Most of the exterior bricks have been replaced and we will be addressing the interior bricks that need replaced. This will be a slow process as the masons have replaced bricks on the Columbarium.
- **Park benches** have been installed in the backyard area, near the playground and the patio behind the McNab room.
- **The Dow Championship LPGA Golf Tournament** – We will be negotiating again with Dow to stage their equipment and supplies.
- **Preston and Betty Jones Cross Display** is scheduled to be implemented this year.
- **Lockers** are being built for the Choir robes etc. so they have a place for storing coats and robes.
- **The Organ** was played for the first time with our new speakers and a full packed church. It sent chills through your body.

We are thankful for the amazing building and families that worship here at St. John's.

## Office Support

**Ministry Contact:** Ellen Woodard (989-631-2260 / [office@sjec-midland.org](mailto:office@sjec-midland.org))

**Activity:** Morning and/or afternoon volunteers help in the parish office. Activities could include any of the following:

- Answering phones – routing phones calls; handling requests for financial assistance.

- Handling foot traffic into the office.
- Processing periodic mailings – folding, and labeling, stamping and stuffing envelopes
- Other miscellaneous office duties as directed by the Administrative Assistant.

Volunteers are welcome to assist and are especially needed and appreciated to cover the office so the Administrative Assistant can take some time off periodically throughout the year.

The amazing volunteer crew for 2025 included Denée Koonce, Bob Stoney, Jan Marcou, Christy Hopper, and Charles Bash. Special thanks to Angela Garcia, Carol Sullivan, Linda Germain and Colleen O'Dell who graciously joined the volunteer crew during times Ellen was on vacation.



## Vestry

**Ministry Contact:** The Very Rev. Alissa G. Anderson (989-631-2260 / [alissa@sjec-midland.org](mailto:alissa@sjec-midland.org))

**Activity:** The Vestry of St. John's Episcopal Church is entrusted with tending the mission, vision, and resources of our parish. This dedicated group of elected lay leaders works closely with the rector to guide the life of the parish, supporting our staff, stewarding our finances, maintaining our facilities, and listening prayerfully to the hopes and needs of our community.

Over the past year, the vestry's work has reflected our parish's values of thoughtful leadership, collaborative ministry, and long-term visioning. We give thanks for the time, insight, and faithfulness each member brings to this shared calling.



## 2025 Highlights

- Launched the Budget Committee to strengthen financial clarity and transparency. Meeting as needed, this group creates and maintains our parish budget, clarifying needs, communicating updates, and working with staff, parish leaders, the Vestry and Treasurer, and the Investment Committee.
- Formed a Personnel Committee, a vestry sub-group which helped lead a parish-wide review of staffing needs. This group played a key role in shaping a new staff structure that better reflects the scale and complexity of our ministry.

- Created the Director of Operations position, a new role that will support day-to-day operations and allow clergy to focus more fully on pastoral care, preaching, and strategic leadership. We are excited about the clarity and sustainability this new role brings—and excited to have filled the position.
- Affirmed the Investment Committee's research and recommendation to move our investment portfolio from BNY Mellon to the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF). This decision reflects a commitment to both strong financial stewardship and deeper alignment with the mission of The Episcopal Church. ECF offers lower fees and consistently solid returns, along with extensive experience serving Episcopal parishes and dioceses. Just as importantly, they bring a relational, educational approach, supporting congregations not only in managing funds, but in growing endowments, empowering lay leaders, and planning for future ministry.
- Tended ongoing relationships and infrastructure needs, including finalizing updates to a preschool lease and moving forward with critical building projects such as brick restoration and seeing the organ project through to completion.
- Began ongoing conversations around building safety and security.
- Continued strong parish engagement with our monthly Sunday Sharing gatherings. Topics ranged from Episcopal identity and pastoral care to building needs and spiritual life, with thoughtful participation and clear energy from the congregation.
- Spent time in study and learning and took turns leading Compline.

As we look toward 2026, the vestry remains committed to listening, learning, and leading with love. We are grateful for the prayers, feedback, and support of the entire St. John's community. Together, with God's help, we are stewarding a future rooted in hope, service, and joy.

## Stewardship Committee

**Ministry Contact:** The Very Rev. Alissa G. Anderson (989-631-2260 / [alissa@sjec-midland.org](mailto:alissa@sjec-midland.org))

**Activity** The Stewardship Committee is a group of leaders who guide our annual pledge campaign at St. John's. Together, we help our community reflect on how we can give back to God with joy and gratitude—through financial pledges, service, spiritual growth, and connection.

The 2025 Stewardship Committee was chaired by The Very Rev. Alissa G. Anderson and blessed by the work of Doug Germain (Vestry), Gail Hoffman (Vestry), Michelle Johnson, and Ann Wright.

We leaned into this year's theme: that every gift tells a story. Through this process we invited one another to consider what story we're telling with our giving. Not just about money, but about gratitude, hope, and the kind of future we believe God is calling us to. In all of this, we were reminded again that stewardship is not only a practice of generosity—it's a bold act of faith in what God is doing here and now.

While we got a slightly later and smaller start than planned, the generosity of the St. John's community more than made up for it. We are pleased to report about a 38% increase in the total amount pledged for 2026 compared to the previous year. Even with a slight dip in the total number of pledging households (63 pledges received), the financial response was enthusiastic and encouraging.

Thank you to each one of you who took time to reflect, discern, and pledge. Your giving supports worship, pastoral care, children and youth formation, outreach, music, and all the many ways we live out the Gospel in this place.

Stewardship isn't just about fundraising. It's about hope and possibility. It's about reminding one another who we are, what we value, and what kind of future we're building together, one pledge at a time.

## Investment Committee

**Ministry Contact:** Lowell Youngquist (989-941-9607 / [lorrimer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lorrimer@sbcglobal.net))

**Activity:** Formerly the Finance Committee, the Investment Committee is comprised of SJEC members with backgrounds in accounting, finance, investments, management, and/or insurance. Work includes participating in the annual budget setting process; developing recommendations for endowment draws; holding regular quarterly meetings with our investment firm representative, BNY Mellon Senior Wealth Manager, Jason Adams, to review quarterly and year to date performance against agreed upon benchmarks in the SJEC IPS.



### Members of the Committee

Charles Bash	Fred Schuster (Vestry Rep)
Eric Carlson	Barb Tazelaar
Gail Hoffman	Lowell Youngquist (Chair)

### Key Activities

- Manage the Relationship with Investment Firm handling SJEC Endowments
  - BNY Mellon Wealth Management in 2025 – Jason Adams and Suzanne Resse
  - Make sure Vestry Approved SJEC Investment Policy Statement is followed
  - Meet quarterly with BNY to review performance of of Endowments versus Benchmarks
  - Communicate monthly draw schedule + special draws to BNY for deposit in SJEC Horizon Checking Account plus Bookkeeper (Colleen)

- Communicate Monthly to Vestry via Liaison (Fred) and Treasurer (Lowell)
- Participate on the Budget Committee
- Request for Proposal (RFP) by Vestry to evaluate alternative Investment Firms

#### Endowment Investment Results

End of Year	Market Value \$ Million at year end	Total Draws \$ Million	% Draws of Endowmnts Vs \$13.5 M 12 Qtr. Av	Investment Strategy	Gross Return	Net Return After Draws
2023	13.1	1.0	7.7%	Value	11.5%	3.8%
2024	13.7	0.75	5.5%	Growth/Value	10.2%	4.7%
2025	14.5	0.87 (Organ .08)	6.4%	Growth/Value	12.6%	6.2%

#### Evaluated Alternative Investment Firms

- Led by Eric Carlson
- Reviewed RPS (Request for Proposal) authored by Eric and approved by Investment Committee and Vestry
- Sent out RPS to 5 Investment Firms (Including BNY – 10 years)
- Narrowed to BNY and ECF (Episcopal Church Foundation)
- Recommended ECF to Vestry who approved
- Started the transition from BNY to ECF in December

## Budget Committee

**Ministry Contact:** Eric Carlson (507-382-3459 / [ejcarlson55@gmail.com](mailto:ejcarlson55@gmail.com))

#### Members of the Committee

John Adams (Vestry Representative)	Dave Schafer
Eric Carlson (Chair)	Lowell Youngquist (Treasurer)
Michelle Johnson	The Very Rev. Alissa Anderson

#### Highlights of the 2026 Budget

- Starting year with **healthy cash balance**.
- Pledges **increased** to nearly **25%** of revenue.
- Endowment draw **reduced** to **5.75%**.
- New staff position funded.
- Diocesan assessment **up > \$13,000**.
- Commitment to SAMS Pantry **increased**.
- Saving **\$25,000 (or more)** towards upcoming major capital expenses.

## 2025 Year End Statement (Actuals vs Budget)



2025 Member Revenues (Budget) \$249,930 (Actual) \$275,418	2026 Budget: <b>\$302,156</b>
2025 Investment Draws (Budget) \$843,996 (Actual) \$781,191	2026 Budget: <b>\$778,721</b>
2025 Other Revenues (Budget) \$22,500 (Actual) \$20,561	2026 Budget: <b>\$22,500</b>
<b>TOTAL: \$1,077,170</b>	<b>TOTAL: \$1,103,377</b>



2025 Salaries/Benefits (Budget) \$505,639 (Actual) \$448,188	2026 Budget: <b>\$524,550</b>
2025 Outreach (Budget) \$176,026 (Actual) \$158,751	2026 Budget: <b>\$191,314</b>
2025 Major Projects (Budget) \$90,000 (Actual) \$67,254	2026 Budget: <b>\$85,000</b>
2025 Progr., Office, B&G (Budget) \$335,507 (Actual) \$250,308	2026 Budget: <b>\$292,616</b>
Contingency used: \$2,985	Contingency (max.) <b>\$10,000</b>
<b>TOTAL: \$927,486</b>	<b>TOTAL: \$1,103,480</b>

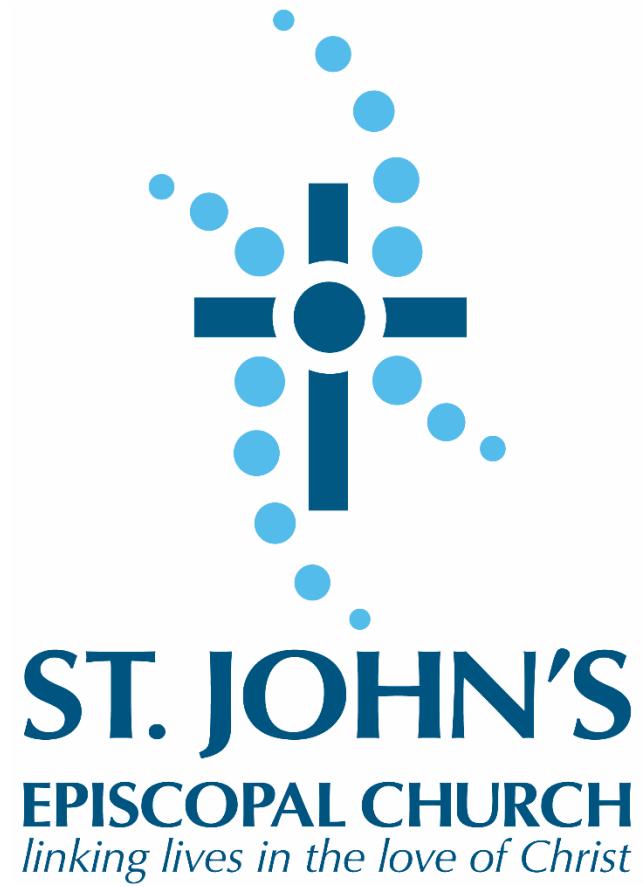
## 2026 Budget as Approved by the Vestry

St. John's Episcopal Church, Midland: 2025 final budget report and PROPOSED 2026 BUDGET			
REVENUE	2025 BUDGET	2025 Final (actual)	2026 PROPOSED
<b>OPERATING Member Revenues</b>			
1-400000 - Pledges ++	\$ 215,230.00	\$ 223,126.60	\$ 257,106.00
1-400030 - Non-Pledge Donations (Non-cash)	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 42,541.00	\$ 35,000.00
1-400040 - Open Plate Offering	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,266.20	\$ 3,000.00
1-400050 - Easter/Christmas Offering	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,581.00	\$ 1,250.00
1-400180 - Easter/Christmas Flowers	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,620.00	\$ 1,500.00
1-400190 - Youth Programs	\$ 500.00	\$ 420.00	\$ 500.00
1-420030 - Altar Flowers	\$ 700.00	\$ 927.00	\$ 1,100.00
<b>Total OPERATING Member Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 246,930.00</b>	<b>\$ 273,481.80</b>	<b>\$ 299,456.00</b>
<b>NON OPERATING Member Revenues</b>			
1-400090 - Memorials	\$ 300.00	\$ -	\$ 200.00
1-400110 - Lighthouse (Birthdays)	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,336.00	\$ 1,000.00
1-400135 - External Community Activities	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,000.00
1-400250 - Other	\$ 700.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 500.00
<b>Total NON OPERATING Member Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 3,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,936.00</b>	<b>\$ 2,700.00</b>
<b>OPERATING Endowment Revenues</b>			
1-410000 - General Charitable Contribution Fund	\$ 48,792.00	\$ 48,792.00	\$ 49,116.00
1-410005 - Thomas Griswold Fund: Operations	\$ 162,676.00	\$ 162,675.96	\$ 82,464.00
1-410015 - Youth and Young Adult Ministries Fund	\$ 4,044.00	\$ 4,044.00	\$ 11,474.00
1-410020 - Ruth Dow Doan Fund	\$ 105,180.00	\$ 105,180.00	\$ 102,456.00
1-410040 - Howard Ball & E.L. Williams Funds	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ 8,514.00
1-410050 - J & E Pardee Fund	\$ 212,484.00	\$ 212,484.00	\$ 203,424.00
1-410060 - Carl & Esther Gerstacker Fund	\$ 91,140.00	\$ 91,140.00	\$ 87,048.00
1-410070 - Josephine Ashmun Fund	\$ 7,680.00	\$ 7,680.00	\$ 5,508.00
<b>Total OPERATING Endowment Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 636,996.00</b>	<b>\$ 631,995.96</b>	<b>\$ 550,004.00</b>
<b>NON OPERATING Endowment Revenues</b>			
1-410010 - Thomas Griswold Fund: Outreach	\$ 121,000.00	\$ 131,000.04	\$ 190,896.00
1-410030 - Vera A Griswold Fund	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 18,194.90	\$ 25,821.00
1-410090 - Transfer from Savings	\$ 50,000.00	\$ -	\$ 12,000.00
<b>Total NON OPERATING Endowment Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 207,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 149,194.94</b>	<b>\$ 228,717.00</b>
<b>OPERATING Other Revenues</b>			
1-420000 - Interest Income	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 3,014.24	\$ 2,500.00
1-420010 - Columbarium Reservation Fee	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,400.00	\$ 5,000.00
1-420020 - Miscellaneous Income	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 1,000.00
1-422020 - Facilities Use	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 13,096.80	\$ 14,000.00
<b>Total OPERATING Other Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 22,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 20,561.04</b>	<b>\$ 22,500.00</b>
<b>Member Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 249,930.00</b>	<b>\$ 275,417.80</b>	<b>\$ 302,156.00</b>
<b>Endowment Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 843,996.00</b>	<b>\$ 781,190.90</b>	<b>\$ 778,721.00</b>
<b>All Other Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 22,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 20,561.04</b>	<b>\$ 22,500.00</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 1,116,426.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,077,169.74</b>	<b>\$ 1,103,377.00</b>

<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<b>OPERATING Staffing Expenses</b>				
<b>Salaries</b>				
1-500000 - Clergy	\$ 61,400.00	\$ 64,489.60	\$ 63,300.00	
1-500005 - Housing, Clergy	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 31,153.95	\$ 30,000.00	
1-500027 - Operations Director/Organist	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 82,000.00	
1-500035 - Youth and Children's Ministry Coordi	\$ 26,300.00	\$ 22,365.88	\$ 21,800.00	
1-500040 - Bookkeeper	\$ 34,100.00	\$ 35,442.11	\$ 35,150.00	
1-500050 - Administrative Assistant	\$ 38,800.00	\$ 40,394.88	\$ 40,000.00	
1-500060 - Sexton	\$ 50,100.00	\$ 51,988.80	\$ 51,600.00	
1-500070 - Hygiene Engineer	\$ 26,000.00	\$ 21,527.85	\$ 21,000.00	
1-500080 - Music Director	\$ 26,000.00	\$ 26,910.66	\$ 26,700.00	
1-500090 - Organist	\$ 34,100.00	\$ 35,383.26	\$ -	
1-500110 - Nursery Care	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 3,384.66	\$ 4,000.00	
1-500120 - Temp Staff	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	
1-500130 - Guest/Substitute Musicians	\$ 16,500.00	\$ 17,625.00	\$ 19,000.00	
1-500180 - Choir concert	\$ 300.00	\$ -	\$ -	
1-500190 - Supply Clergy	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 705.40	\$ 1,000.00	
<b>Total Salaries</b>	<b>\$ 350,600.00</b>	<b>\$ 351,372.05</b>	<b>\$ 395,550.00</b>	
<b>Staff Continuing Education</b>				
1-500312 - Rector Continuing Education	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,762.23	\$ 2,000.00	
1-500320 - Lay Staff Continuing Education	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,094.39	\$ 2,000.00	
<b>Total Staff Continuing Education</b>	<b>\$ 4,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 2,856.62</b>	<b>\$ 4,000.00</b>	
<b>Staff Benefits/Payroll Tax Expenses</b>				
1-500340 - Worker's Compensation	\$ 1,664.00	\$ 1,664.00	\$ 1,800.00	
1-500350 - FICA/Medicare - Employer Expense	\$ 22,800.00	\$ 25,638.71	\$ 24,700.00	
1-500360 - Life/Medical/Long Term Disability Ins	\$ 42,000.00	\$ 39,625.41	\$ 43,500.00	
1-500370 - Pension Contributions	\$ 34,575.00	\$ 27,031.20	\$ 30,000.00	
1-500390 - Tax on Staff Benefits owed	\$ 50,000.00	\$ -	\$ 25,000.00	
<b>Total Staff Benefits/Payroll Tax Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 151,039.00</b>	<b>\$ 93,959.32</b>	<b>\$ 125,000.00</b>	
<b>OPERATING Programming Expenses</b>				
1-510010 - Sheet Music	\$ 750.00	\$ 497.15	\$ 750.00	
1-510015 - Handbell Choir	\$ -	\$ (105.00)	\$ 300.00	
1-510020 - Altar Guild Supplies	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 1,123.78	\$ 2,500.00	
1-510030 - Altar Flowers	\$ 4,250.00	\$ 5,686.62	\$ 5,000.00	
1-510060 - Children's Formation	\$ 1,550.00	\$ 1,200.58	\$ 1,550.00	
1-510063 - Vacation Bible School	\$ 700.00	\$ 683.40	\$ 1,000.00	
1-510070 - Youth Formation	\$ 700.00	\$ 366.72	\$ 700.00	
1-510072 - Youth Service and Outreach	\$ 500.00	\$ 408.55	\$ 500.00	
1-510073 - Intergenerational Events	\$ 500.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 500.00	
1-510075 - Speakers and Consultants	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	\$ 3,000.00	
1-510080 - Adult Formation	\$ 2,500.00	\$ -	\$ 2,500.00	
1-510090 - Library Archive	\$ 300.00	\$ 298.41	\$ 300.00	
1-510115 - Instrument Maintenance and Tuning	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 690.78	\$ 2,250.00	

1-510116 - Music Membership Licensing	\$ 549.00	\$ 549.00	\$ 566.00
1-510130 - Fellowship Activities	\$ 4,250.00	\$ 3,170.74	\$ 3,750.00
1-510135 - External Community Events	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 2,222.68	\$ 3,000.00
1-510210 - Leadership Development	\$ 600.00	\$ 172.97	\$ 600.00
1-510220 - Miscellaneous	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 700.00	\$ 1,000.00
1-510221 - Stewardship	\$ 150.00	\$ -	\$ 150.00
1-510223 - Welcoming Ministry	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,087.51	\$ 1,200.00
1-510230 - Worship Resource	\$ 250.00	\$ -	\$ 250.00
1-510240 - Worship & Liturgical Special Projects	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,573.18	\$ 2,000.00
<b>Total OPERATING Programming Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 35,749.00</b>	<b>\$ 20,527.07</b>	<b>\$ 33,366.00</b>
<b>OPERATING Outreach Expenses</b>			
1-520060 - Diocesan Assessment	\$ 43,276.00	\$ 43,272.00	\$ 56,646.00
1-520070 - Diocesan Convention	\$ 500.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 1,000.00
1-520095 - Rector's Discretionary Fund	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 188.00	\$ 1,417.89
<b>Total OPERATING Outreach Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 44,776.00</b>	<b>\$ 43,860.00</b>	<b>\$ 59,063.89</b>
<b>NON OPERATING Outreach</b>			
1-520000 - SAMS Pantry	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 16,000.00
1-520010 - Samaritan Fund-Rent	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 20,180.00	\$ 35,000.00
1-520012 - Samaritan Fund-Energy	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 12,820.21	\$ 15,000.00
1-520014 - Samaritan Fund-Everything else	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,656.63	\$ 5,000.00
1-520040 - Congr Outreach Missions/Ministries	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,233.78	\$ 1,250.00
1-520050 - Endowment Committee grants	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
<b>Total NON OPERATING Outreach</b>	<b>\$ 131,250.00</b>	<b>\$ 114,890.62</b>	<b>\$ 132,250.00</b>
<b>OPERATING Office Expenses</b>			
1-530000 - Office Supplies	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 3,358.65	\$ 4,000.00
1-530010 - Office Equipment	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 5,106.22	\$ 5,000.00
1-530020 - Computer Hardware	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00
1-530030 - Computer Software, Training, and Su	\$ 19,000.00	\$ 15,864.30	\$ 18,000.00
1-530040 - External Printing & Copying	\$ 150.00	\$ -	\$ 150.00
1-530050 - Postage	\$ 800.00	\$ 929.40	\$ 800.00
1-530060 - Advertising & Promotion	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 2,636.96	\$ 5,500.00
1-530070 - Internet Service & Website Hosting	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 5,694.22	\$ 6,000.00
1-530080 - Business Expenses - Rector	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,999.45	\$ 2,000.00
1-530200 - Misc Expenses	\$ 250.00	\$ 11.98	\$ 500.00
<b>Total OPERATING Office Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 44,700.00</b>	<b>\$ 35,601.18</b>	<b>\$ 43,950.00</b>
<b>OPERATING Facility Expenses</b>			
1-540010 - Building Maintenance	\$ 48,000.00	\$ 33,129.26	\$ 40,000.00
1-540020 - Grounds Maintenance	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 28,796.79	\$ 35,000.00
1-540030 - Cleaning Supplies	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,982.26	\$ 5,500.00
1-540050 - Furniture & Equipment	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,861.53	\$ 4,000.00
1-540060 - Telephones	\$ 5,208.00	\$ 4,640.16	\$ 4,800.00
1-540070 - Utilities	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 60,921.19	\$ 65,000.00
<b>Total OPERATING Facility Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 168,208.00</b>	<b>\$ 137,331.19</b>	<b>\$ 154,300.00</b>
<b>OPERATING Other Expenses</b>			

1-550000 - Liability Insurance	\$ 27,850.00	\$ 21,587.50	\$ 29,500.00
1-550010 - Bank Fees	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,219.17	\$ 5,000.00
1-550020 - Accounting Audit Services	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 28,689.08	\$ 23,000.00
1-550030 - Contingency	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 2,985.19	\$ 10,000.00
<b>Total OPERATING Other Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 92,850.00</b>	<b>\$ 58,480.94</b>	<b>\$ 67,500.00</b>
<b>NON OPERATING Other Expenses</b>			
1-580000 - Major Improvements/Capital Expenses	\$ 90,000.00	\$ 67,253.92	\$ 85,000.00
1-580030 - Funds sent to other Organizations	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
1-580060 - Columbarium	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 352.92	\$ 2,500.00
<b>Total NON OPERATING Other Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 94,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 68,606.84</b>	<b>\$ 88,500.00</b>
<b>Salaries and Benefits</b>	<b>\$ 505,639.00</b>	<b>\$ 448,187.99</b>	<b>\$ 524,550.00</b>
<b>Operating and Non Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 335,507.00</b>	<b>\$ 250,308.11</b>	<b>\$ 292,616.00</b>
<b>Outreach Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 176,026.00</b>	<b>\$ 158,750.62</b>	<b>\$ 191,313.89</b>
<b>Building and Grounds Infrastructure Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 90,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 67,253.92</b>	<b>\$ 85,000.00</b>
<b>Contingency</b>	<b>\$ 10,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 2,985.19</b>	<b>\$ 10,000.00</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 1,117,172.00</b>	<b>\$ 927,485.83</b>	<b>\$ 1,103,479.89</b>



2024 Annual Meeting  
Sunday, January 26, 2025  
11:30 AM  
Williams Hall