

St. John's Mission

St. John's Episcopal Church is an energetic, joyful, generous, mission-minded parish that is growing in diversity, depth of faith, and engagement with the world around us.

**Our mission
is to cultivate a life of faith
as we follow Jesus in the Way
of life-giving, liberating Love;
and inspire others to do the same.**

Values

As a community, St. John's strives to be:

Christ-centered.

To quote our Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry: "We are becoming a church that looks and acts like Jesus. We believe his cruciform Way of Love—his unselfish, sacrificial, self-offering love – is the way to authentic life."

Inclusive.

We are black, white, and bi-racial, LGBTQI+, gender-diverse, progressive and conservative, young and not-so-young. We seek to walk in love with everyone we meet – no exceptions.

Brave.

We aim to stay in loving relationship with one another despite the tensions that often accompany genuine diversity. We don't always do this perfectly, but we try. This requires a willingness to embrace truth-telling, active listening, and self-examination, even if it makes us uncomfortable.

Loving.

In our relationships with each other, and with the world around us, we seek to embody God's dream of "Beloved Community," a phrase coined by Martin Luther King, Jr. that envisions a community in which each person strives for the dignity and flourishing of all, and for all of God's Creation. We embrace the belief that all of God's children have the right to a livable future.

Three-Year Goals

Worship

By December, 2024, St. John's regular worship life will consist of three Sunday morning services with a minimum total average Sunday attendance (ASA) of 275. These Sunday services will have distinct formats and music to support an increasingly diverse parish. In addition, we will offer: 1) a Sunday evening PRAYground service (worship for all ages, outdoors when possible) at least 2x per month, 2) anointing and prayers for healing at each of our weekly Sunday morning services, and 3) a monthly contemplative worship service (or other worship style distinct from Sunday morning).

Music

By December, 2024, St. John's Music Program will have established musical ensemble(s) to support three Sunday morning services at St. John's, a monthly contemplative service (or other style distinct from Sunday morning), and a twice-monthly PRAYground service (worship for all ages, outdoors when possible.) This will include re-establishing a handbell choir and a program with children and/or families such as a Children's Choir and/or a Ukulele Program. As a part of our mission to build the Beloved Community, we will have completed planning for (if not also begun to operate) a youth music school. The school's mission will involve serving a diverse community in northern Wake County, including students who may not otherwise have access to regular musical training and experience.

Children & Family Ministries

By December, 2024, in addition to Sunday School and a children-and-family-focused music program, St. John's will offer targeted events for families with children on a monthly basis to foster faith development and spiritual community among parish families, and consistently offer resources to families for "faith at home" development. Family events may include activities such as Worship (e.g., PRAYground) with fellowship time before or after, regular group outreach activities, family "small groups" and/or intergenerational parish care connections between young people and elder members (e.g., children caroling at elder parishioners homes or delivering Easter baskets, or seniors teaching youth how to do wood-working).

Small Group Ministry

By December, 2024, St. John's will have 75% of parish family units with at least one individual involved in a small relational group. These groups will help newcomers build relationships within the parish community, strengthen our bonds as a loving community over time, and contribute to our parishioners' spiritual growth. There may be various types of small groups, such as spiritual formation groups (e.g. Sophia Sisters or Men's Bible Study), affinity groups primarily for fellowship (Soloists or families with young children), and/or age-related groups (SAGEs or EYC). In addition, our serving groups or committees (such as WF Community Table, Verger Guild, Stewardship Committee, etc.) will include relationship-building practices as part of their serving together (e.g., spiritual reflection, sharing prayer concerns within the group, and responding as a group to parish care needs).

Three-Year Goals

Empowering & Equipping Church Members for Ministry

By December, 2024, St. John's Equipping Ministries Team will have developed and fully implemented a process for inviting, empowering, and supporting volunteer lay ministers in their service, including the regular rotation of most volunteer leadership roles. Each ministry area will enjoy public acknowledgement of their service, celebration of their impact, the blessing of their labors, and the opportunity to publicly invite others into ministry at least once annually.

Community Outreach and Care of God's Creation

By December, 2024, St. John's aims to engage as many as 75% of our parishioners in at least one food security effort, 50% of parishioners in at least one affordable housing effort, and 50% of parishioners in at least one Creation Care effort each year. St. John's will annually lead or participate in 8-12 such efforts (some internal to St. John's and some with a community-wide reach). As a parish, we will prioritize activities that:

- i) grow our awareness of systems that perpetuate social injustice and the degradation of God's Creation;
- ii) engage us in concrete actions both within our parish life and in the wider community that improve the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of vulnerable neighbors and the well-being of Earth's creatures and ecosystems;
- iii) evaluate the environmental impact of our activities as a parish and our use of parish resources (buildings, grounds, technology, etc.), with the goal of reducing negative impacts and increasing positive impacts;
- iv) build enduring relationships with diverse neighbors, and;
- v) enable us to join forces with neighbors and other community organizations to advocate for social justice and the health of the environment/climate.

Parish Care (Caring for One Another)

By December, 2024, at least 50% of St. John's parishioners will actively care for one another through one or more coordinated ministries, organized into a Parish Care Network. Our Parish Care Network will include 10-12 distinct, coordinated ministries such as home visitation, help with errands or transportation, and helping seniors or disabled parishioners with household tasks like changing light bulbs or raking leaves. Our Parish Care Network will equip parishioners in sharing God's healing love with one another through at least two half-day mini-retreats per year on topics such as, "Praying with Others In Crisis" and "The Ministry of Active Listening."

Buildings & Facilities

By December, 2024, St. John's will have paid off its existing mortgage debt for the Education Building and will have begun (if not completed) a renovation or expansion of church buildings to better serve the fellowship, meeting, office, and storage needs of our expanding congregation. This project will involve planning (including an environmental impact study and a sustainability study), fundraising, and construction phases, and also will consider the feasibility of converting St. John's Preschool to a state-licensed facility offering full-time preschool and daycare opportunities.