

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARISH

2025



REVIEWING 2025 &
LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026



ST. JOHN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH



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AGENDA

AGENDA for St. John's Annual Parish Meeting, Part I December 14, 2025.

- 1 The meeting is called to orderThe Rev. Stephanie Yancy, Interim Rector
- 2 Prayer is offeredThe Rev. Stephanie Yancy, Interim Rector
- 3 The Clerk of the meeting is appointed.....The Rev. Stephanie Yancy, Interim Rector
- 4 The Agenda is presentedThe Rev. Stephanie Yancy, Interim Rector
- 5 Thanksgivings for outgoing Vestry class of 2025.....Camille Stell, Sr. Warden
- 6 Nominees for Vestry class of 2028 are presented.....Camille Stell, Sr. Warden
*Four members will serve for three years.
*One member will serve for one year (to fill a vacancy in the class of 2026)
*Nominations from the floor are received (if any). Vote is taken.
*Every member of the congregation, aged sixteen (16) or older, who is an enrolled confirmed Communicant in good standing shall be eligible to vote.
- 7 The Senior Warden's Report.....Camille Stell, Jr. Warden
- 8 The Junior Warden's Report.....Joel Perez, Jr. Warden
- 9 The Treasurer's Report.....Al Sauer, Treasurer
- 10 The results of the Vestry election are announced.....Camille Stell, Sr. Warden
(or second ballot distributed, if needed)
- 12 The Assoc. Rector's ReportThe Rev. Mawethu Ncaca
- 13 Closing Prayer.....The Rev. Mawethu Ncaca
- 14 The Meeting is adjournedThe Rev. Stephanie Yancy, Interim Rector



ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES FOR 2024 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2024

St. John's annual parish meeting was held in the Sanctuary. One meeting will be held this year.

Candidate election for incoming vestry was held: Presented by Bill Van Cleave
Rebecca O'Donnell
Marito Rutko
David Stoller
Joel Perez
Kolin Murphy
Matthew Ribbens

Parishioners in good standing can vote in this election (must be confirmed and 16 yrs of age and attended mass at least 3 times in the las year).

Outgoing members:

Kenille Baumgardner
Roxanne Johnson (Sr. Warden) - Roxanne was absent due to a death in family
Bill Van Cleave (Jr. Warden)
Bill Kovacs

Rev. Mawethu opened the meeting with a prayer. The Clerk of the Vestry was presented: Pamela Ali
Bill Kovacs - in charge of Personnel hand book. This was an eventful year and Bill thanked the many parishioners who helped during the year by their talents and time and allowed the parish to thrive and be supported.

Bill Van Cleave- Jr. Warden Report and looked into expansion to the Parish.

Kenille Baumgardner - presented on several ministries

Roxanne Johnson - Sr. Warden Report

Rev. Sarah was very thankful for all that they gave and continue to give to our Parish.

A written annual report will be emailed to the Parish.

Treasurer's Report - Al Sauer

All present Parishioners were given a copy of the Estimated 2025 Budget

The 2024 was a deficit budget of \$33,000 but this was defeated by several fundraisers during the year, so we ended on an up note!

The proposed 2024 budget was : \$534,00

After fundraisers our income was: \$566,000 (surplus of \$1,716)

Stewardship:

139 pledges - \$496,507

34 remained the same as 2024

71 increased for total - \$61,000

12 decreased for total - \$12,00

22 new for total - \$49,310

(23 pledges are still not received)

The Parish has a balanced budget for 2025

4 fulltime staff income - \$335,00

There will be a 5% increase for full time staff in 2025

Loose Plate budget - \$52,000

Pledges - \$544,937

Operating donation- \$5,000

Investment income - \$5,500

Carry over income - (carry over from 2024 - \$18,688

We will assume the outstanding pledges owed are going to come later, so the budget will be tweaked again.



ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES FOR 2024 CONTINUED

Rector's Report - Rev. Sarah Phelps:

Rev. Sarah had a lot to report on for the year; 3 year goals and planning was very helpful to the vestry/ministries. There are mixed feelings as information is gathered on our Parish life; calculations and documentations are done on the finances for buildings and ministries and or mission but all of this is still not the full story of how we answer God's call to the community which is shaped by Christ, not culture. This is a Christ centered, inclusive and loving Parish and we want to be a community grounded by love, values of Christ and faith: Inclusivity - extends to everyone - All are Welcome! New group - discussing institutional racism/reparation, Bravery - this is hard but important for the Parish; showed unselfish love by showing up at the recent Pride Fest in Wake Forest. Loving - this is shown by our attitude and devotion to others by our actions in the community who are hungry, alone or scorned by others. This Parish does not just send funds, but are personally involved and do the necessary work by Habitat for Humanity volunteering, the Wake Forest Community Table volunteers and helping others in Parish with meals, social work. The annual report will have more information. These values show who we are in Christ. From 2016 to present, much work has been done as it was decided that this Parish did not just want to be givers only but doers of missionary work and show love to our community. The building debt has been paid off and we are able to employ full time staff. Newcomers are welcomed and integrated in our Parish/Ministries. The Stewardship team is hardworking and reaches out to new and also younger members and are fully engaged with others.

Coming ahead values:

Intergenerational relationships - there are many parishioners over the age of 60 years and so we have to address younger and older members moving from our church and building relationships in our Parish. There is a growing desire of our older parishioners who want to engage with the younger parishioners to builds bonds of community. There is a need to get more families involved and out of isolation in their lives. Balanced Parish - worship and growing in spiritual formation. How to grow faith together. Wrestling with hard times/faith and how to help new families get together across age boundaries. Space of buildings - expansion is a concern. Space is a priority. Tapestry grew out of a necessity for space. Parking is a concern also. There is a question of how to expand and the cost (very expensive). So what to do, we don't want to be static so what is a solution? Plans are to work with a consultant on how to meet the needs we currently have. The vestry will explore this issue and the Parish will have a chance to discuss these issues.

The election results: Bill Van Cleave

Kolin Murphy

Joel Perez

Matt Ribbens

David Stoller

A thank you to those nominees not chosen.

Closing prayer - Rev. Sarah

Meeting ended: 11:41 pm



SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Over the past year, St. John's has continued to be a faithful and resilient community. Even during this season without a full-time rector, the life of the church has remained active and strong because of the dedication of our lay leaders, volunteers, and staff. Worship continues to be the center of our common life, bringing us together each week for prayer, music, and fellowship. Our congregation continues to show a deep commitment to caring for one another through pastoral support, prayer, and acts of kindness within the community.

Youth Ministry (EYC)

One of the clearest signs of vitality at St. John's this year has been the growth and energy of our youth ministry, EYC. Each Sunday evening our youth gather for fellowship, service, and faith formation, building relationships with one another while learning what it means to live out their faith in the world.

In May, Mike Phelps departed as EYC leader, and the youth took a few months of break to enjoy summer. In August parishioners Stephanie and Cliff Rogers hosted EYC members and their families for a pool and pizza party. Soon after EYC enjoyed a Saturday carwash as a fundraiser. Throughout the year they have participated in service opportunities such as packing gift boxes for Joy of Christmas and visiting parishioner's homes for a meal and time of intergenerational visitation and learning.

Our young people are setting an example of generosity, service, and faith for the whole congregation. We are deeply grateful for the youth leaders and adult volunteers who support this ministry and for the ways our youth remind us that the future of the church is alive and active among us.

Stewardship and Financial Health

2025 was a challenging year financially. Our pledge campaign did not reach the level needed to fully support the budget. Several factors likely influenced this, including uncertainty during our rector transition, broader economic concerns, and questions from some members about the size and structure of the current staffing model compared with several years ago.

As a result, the vestry has closely reviewed our financial situation and considered several options to move toward a balanced budget. These discussions include evaluating expenses, reviewing staffing and program priorities, and exploring ways to strengthen stewardship and giving within the congregation. Our goal was to be transparent, responsible, and thoughtful as we made decisions that support both the mission of the church and long-term financial sustainability.

Leadership and Transition

St. John's continues to move through an important season of transition as we prepare to call our next rector. Transition periods are often times of reflection and discernment, helping congregations clarify who they are and where they feel called to go next.

We are deeply grateful for the leadership of our interim rectors, Rev. Canon Pat Grace and Rev. Stephanie Yancy. Rev. Yancy continues to guide us with wisdom, experience, and pastoral care. Her work is helping us reflect on our strengths, address challenges, and prepare well for the next chapter of leadership at St. John's.

The vestry has also played a vital role during this time, providing steady leadership and thoughtful decision-making. We are grateful to those who have served this past year and look forward to welcoming new vestry members who will help lead the parish in the coming year.

Preschool

Our preschool remains an important ministry of St. John's and a significant way we connect with families in the broader community. In 2025 we hired a new director, Maddie Fetzner. Church leadership and the preschool board have been working closely with the director to support her and the staff and to strengthen the relationship between parish and preschool. We remain committed to ensuring that the preschool continues to thrive as both a high-quality educational program and a vital outreach of St. John's.



SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT CONTINUED

Vision for the Coming Year

Looking ahead, our focus will be on strengthening our sense of community, preparing for new rector leadership, and continuing to live into the mission of St. John's.

First, we want to deepen connections within the congregation - helping people feel welcomed, valued, and engaged in the life of the church. Strong relationships are the foundation of a healthy parish community.

Second, we will continue the work of transition and discernment so that we are well prepared to welcome our next rector. This includes reflecting on our identity, our ministries, and our priorities as a parish.

Finally, we remain committed to our mission beyond the walls of the church. St. John's has long been a place of service, outreach, and compassion in the community. As we look toward the future, we will continue to seek ways to share God's love through worship, fellowship, and service to others.

Together, with faith and hope, we look forward to the next chapter in the life of St. John's.

Camille Stell, Sr. Warden

JUNIOR WARDEN/BUILDING AND GROUNDS REPORT

The buildings and grounds are in good shape. This year, both water heaters were replaced, AC systems were maintained and repaired, we had 2 successful grounds cleanups, the exterior of the sanctuary and fellowship hall was painted, regular pest control and appliances were maintained. There is an ongoing moisture problem downstairs in the education building.

Joel Perez
Jr. Warden



FINANCE REPORT

This has been a rollercoaster year financially. Overall, the parish continues to be financially sound. We started the year with an approved balanced budget that included \$18K of estimated carry over positive income from 2024. The church had good cash reserves that would allow us to estimate the income from outstanding pledges from 2024 and faith that there would be income growth during the year.

However, due to life circumstances, Mother Sarah needed to resign as rector in February. That also put a kink in our finances for both good and bad. The good part was that the salary cost for an interim rector was less than the salary + pension + medical that we were paying for Mo. Sarah and her family. The bad part was that we lost a few members of the congregation when she left as well as felt a reduction in plate giving.

The Diocese Cannons threw us the next curveball. Anytime a Rector changes, an outside audit of the finances is required. That added another \$16.5K of expense.

I am pleased to report that now that the dust has all settled, the budget still has a \$1K surplus. If expense hold at the current expenditure rate, we will have some positive income to carry over to next year.

We did have a few major expense surprises this year. The Vestry had approved expenditure of \$8K from the Contingency Fund to continue our door security improvements. The Fire Marshal thru us a curveball where we needed to modify some of the exit doors with crash bars which increased the costs. We did manage to avoid having to install and complete new security system for the Education Building and Pre-school. Our poor tired riding lawn mower finally waved the white flag and we are in process of purchasing a replacement. We had a couple of lightning strikes that took out our modem and router in our computer system. We also had to replace some of the office computers because of the discontinued support for Window 10.

The cashflow forecast was sufficiently good so that we were able to direct some additional cash into CD's that had a 3.75% yield to add to our income. We also received support from the Diocese to cover the cost of Mawethu's family health insurance for the first half of the year.

Next year will continue to be very challenging financially. We will have to be self-sufficient to cover our expenses next year and also to plan for continued inflation. We remain committed to support our community around us so that we can continue on the journey to which God has called us. We have adapted, overcome, and are moving on!!

THANKS AGAIN!!

Al Sauer
Treasurer



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY REPORT

The IT strategic/operational plan identified continued expansion of the security systems/controls as well as stabilizing the network. In support of this plan the following projects were completed in 2025.

- Seven doors in the preschool migrated to the new door security card readers
- Two cameras installed in the preschool hallway
- Advanced security control dashboards created for both preschool and church administrators
- Advanced cybersecurity firewall software installed
- Two UPS systems installed with remote monitoring
- All computers brought to current Windows 11 and security standards
- Six doors prewired and prepared for security card readers in church
- Converted MS license to free donated license

Walt Kwiatek
IT Leader



MINISTRY ENGAGEMENT TEAM REPORT

In 2025, the Ministry Engagement Team (MET) focused on two main areas:

First, Connecting with parishioners who completed the Ministry Survey, helping them discern their gifts and areas of time and talents in getting connected to a ministry.

Second, we support the Ministry Team Leaders, ensuring they have the resources and encouragement needed to guide their teams effectively.

Throughout the year, our team has met 10 times. We followed up with 20 parishioners to discuss their ministry survey results and submitted four articles to the weekly eNews encouraging others to participate in the Ministry Survey. In addition, we reached out to approximately 15 ministry team leaders—through direct phone calls, in person conversations or in follow-up conversations after the Quarterly Ministry Round Table Meetings—to offer guidance and support. For our team, it has been a productive and meaningful year, even as our parish is navigating a time of transition, working with our Interim Rectors and preparing for a new Rector, our parish ministries continue to remain strong.

If you currently serve in a ministry role at St. John's - Thank you!! I would also like to extend heartfelt thanks to the current MET Team members—Wally Jack, Kenille Baumgardner, Lois Sauer, and Beth Lyon—for their faithful service and dedication. We also welcome our newest members: Marilyn Adams and Susan Rainey. A special thank-you to Jane Alexander, who rotated off the team earlier this year, for her valuable contributions.

As we look to the year ahead, a few members of the MET Team will be rotating off, and we will be seeking parishioners who may feel called in helping others find their place in various church ministries. If the MET team sounds like a ministry that interests you, please reach out!

If you'd like to explore other ministries in using your gifts and talents, we encourage you to take the Ministry Survey—there's no commitment or obligation in taking the survey. It's simply a tool to help you discover how your time and talents might be best used to serve in a ministry community of St. John's that you love. Visit the St. John's "Serve" webpage at: <https://stjohnswf.org/serve/>. After you complete the survey, someone from the MET team will follow up within a few weeks to explore with you your ministry gifts.

May God bless St. John's, as we continue to grow ministry parishioners seeking to serve within St. John's and in the broader beloved community.

Ken Marsh
Ministry Engagement Team Leader



PRESCHOOL REPORT

St. John's Preschool is a ministry of St. John's Episcopal Church that serves families in Wake Forest and the neighboring communities. We are currently in our 24th year and provide a play-based, child-centered curriculum focused on the needs of the children in our care. This school year, we have 69 students enrolled, aging from 15 months to 5 years old. This school year's goals include moving our school forward with organization and professional development opportunities. We are also fully-staffed with one director, 13 classroom teachers, and two additional specials teachers. We continue to collaborate with the church through special events like Fall festival and our church buddies program. Looking ahead, we are celebrating the holidays with our Christmas program and in the spring, we have plans to celebrate literacy month, host our annual triathlon event, and continue our yearly tradition of holding summer camp.

Madison Fetzer
Preschool Director



STEWARDSHIP REPORT

The Stewardship Committee met throughout 2025 in preparation to lead the parish's annual stewardship campaign during the fall of 2025. The committee invited parishioners to reflect on generosity and the role that financial stewardship plays in sustaining the mission and ministries of St. John's.

As of January 31, 2026, total pledged giving was \$469,566. While we are deeply grateful to every member who made a financial commitment to the church, the campaign did not reach our goal of \$600,000. This shortfall required the Vestry to carefully evaluate the parish budget and make difficult decisions about staffing and expenses.

With Father Mawethu's leadership and encouragement, the stewardship committee worked to expand our stewardship efforts to include education about the church financial needs, along with a year-round approach to raising awareness and education about our budget commitment.

We are grateful to everyone who pledged and who continues to support the life and ministry of St. John's through faithful giving. The Stewardship Committee remains committed to encouraging year-round stewardship as a spiritual practice and to helping our parish build a strong and sustainable financial foundation for the future.

Members of St. John's Stewardship Committee:

Jennifer Amyx

Norm Bell

Dana Crawford

Pattie Jack

Sam Siaw

Carol Smith

Camille Stell

Father Mawethu Ncaca, Associate Rector

Camille Stell, Stewardship Chair



SPIRITUAL FORMATION REPORT

Adult Spiritual Formation Vision

The vision for Adult Spiritual Formation at St. John's is to cultivate a sustainable network of trained lay facilitator teams, supported by clergy, that strengthens the spiritual disciplines of every parishioner. We aim to create regular, accessible rhythms of prayer and formation that help people grow in prayerful practice, theological grounding, and mutual support. We are committed to offering dedicated spaces for Centering Prayer, the Morning Office, and seasonal spiritual retreats. The Morning Office meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 7:30 AM, providing a consistent opportunity to learn and deepen a daily practice rooted in the Book of Common Prayer. Annual Men's and Women's Retreats offer restorative time away and foster lasting spiritual friendships within our community.

Our approach centers on equipping lay facilitators with training and clergy mentorship so groups are theologically grounded, pastorally safe, and accessible across life stages. These practices—regular prayer, small group formation, and retreat—are intended to form disciples who are spiritually resilient, connected to one another, and engaged in the life and mission of the parish.

Spiritual Studies Team Annual Report

Over this past year, our Spiritual Studies Team has offered some truly meaningful programs. We reflected on deeper prayer during our Lenten book study, supported this year's New Believers course, and explored Christ's teachings through our fall Beatitudes study. For Advent, we're currently offering two programs to help prepare our hearts and minds.

Looking forward to next year, we're excited to bring back our Wednesday night Bible studies for a continued and fresh exploration of faith. We'll also introduce a once-a-month spiritual formation class that takes a deeper dive into the foundations of our faith.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our team and volunteers. A heartfelt thanks to Father Mawethu, Reverend Stephanie, and Reverend Pat for their guidance. A special thanks as well to our lay team members—Heather Rischel, David Stoller, and myself, Marita Rutko.

We'd also like to extend a special thank you to Beth McCulley, whose knowledge and feedback were instrumental in our early program development. And of course, we couldn't have made it through this first year without all our wonderful volunteers who served as discussion group leaders.

Marita Rutko
Spiritual Studies Team Leader

Sophia Sisters (St. John's Women's Spiritual Formation Group)

The Sophia Sisters met monthly through the year, except for the summer months, to read and inspire spiritual growth. For the first part of the year they continued discussions of the book "Wisdom Distilled from the Daily" by Sister Joan Chittister. The group also supplied monthly snacks to the church preschool teachers and assistants for support and outreach. A Christmas lunch was also provided. The annual weekend women's retreat was held in October at the St. Francis Springs conference center with 31 women attending. The theme focused on Spirituality in Nature led by Betty Bland and Lois Sauer. The new book "A Year of Biblical Womanhood" by Rachel Held Evans was begun in November.

Donna Morse
Sophia Sisters Co-Leader



CHILDREN & INTERGENERATIONAL MINISTRY

EYC (Episcopal Youth Community)

Season Highlights:

Kickoff and summer fellowship: The fall program officially launched on September 14 after a spirited summer pool party hosted by Stephanie and Cliff Rogers. The casual summer gathering set a warm tone for the year and welcomed new and returning youth into community life.

Instructed Eucharist: We had a Acolyte training led by Dave Roberts and we had a commentary and questions about each portion of Eucharist service.

Curriculum and formation: This year's lessons, led by Joanna Siaw and the associate rector, began with a multiweek exploration of Episcopal identity—what it means to be Episcopalian at St. John's and how faith shapes daily life and service.

Service and space renewal: Youth led a successful repainting of the EYC lounge, completing the project in one evening and creating a refreshed space for meetings and fellowship. The project demonstrated youth initiative and strong adult support, including a paint donation from Robert Lewis and leadership from Father Mawethu.

Voices from the Community: Joanna Siaw - co-leader

As we approach the halfway mark of the 2025 Advent season, the themes of wonder, hope, peace and joy are embodied within the youth of St. John's. Over the past few months that I have served with St. John's EYC, I have witnessed the amount of growth that has occurred and hope for even more growth to take place in 2026.

We began the 2025 -2026 EYC establishing what it means to be an Episcopalian, what does E.Y.C (Episcopalian Youth Community) represent and ways in which the youth of St. John's can have an impact in our church community and beyond. We then delve into the meaning of Baptism and Confirmation, it's significance to our spiritual growth and the support of our church family on this spiritual journey. Each Sunday at 5 PM, I am encouraged by the youth that show up to participate in EYC. They provide valuable insights on discussion topics and show a level of depth and discernment beyond their years. This is a fun and welcoming group to hang out with! From playing mafia, to zombies, 4- square, 9-square I have an expanded toolbox of games to play at any given time.

I am equally encouraged by continual support that we receive from both parents of our EYC members as well as the St. John's member in the hot meals that they provided each Sunday for EYC. As we began the 2025-2026 EYC year, it was my belief that it truly takes a village to contribute to the growth, grounding and encouragement of our youth, and each Sunday at 5 PM, I am reassured that our St. John's 'village' continues to show up for our youth.

Henry Roberts, age 16

"EYC has been critical to my faith journey. As participant and leader, I've found belonging, support, and opportunities to help others find their voice in Christ. Community is where faith prospers—through support, belonging, and shared experience."

Rebecca O'Donnell, age 17

"As project leader for the lounge repaint, I loved the teamwork and fellowship. We finished in three hours, and the refreshed room marks a new era for our youth program. Thanks to everyone who joined and supported the effort."

Dave Mitnaul, parent

"Shared meals, hymns of hope, and the discipline of a faith community leave lasting marks on young lives. The foundation EYC builds matters. Parents and volunteers who share their gifts help youth navigate the endurance race of a life of faith."

Intergenerational Formation: Home visit hosted by Alice and David Both

On October 19, several youth gathered in a parishioner home for pizza, conversation, and a guided discussion on baptism led by Father Mawethu. The evening fostered mutual encouragement, intergenerational learning, and deeper relationships between youth and longtime members of the parish.

Impact and Themes:

- Leadership development — Youth are given meaningful roles in planning, leading projects, and mentoring peers.
- Community and belonging — EYC continues to be a place where young people feel welcomed and supported.



CHILDREN AND INTERGENERATIONAL MINISTRY CONTINUED

Impact and Themes Continued:

- Service and stewardship — Hands on projects and service opportunities connect faith to action and renew parish spaces.
- Intergenerational connection — Home visits and shared meals strengthen ties between generations and enrich spiritual formation

Gratitude and Invitation:

We are grateful to the many volunteers, parents, and parishioners who donated time, resources, and hospitality this season. Your involvement sustains EYC and models faithful service for our youth. Ways to support EYC: Volunteer to lead or assist at weekly gatherings. Share a meal, host a home visit, or offer a skill for a project. Donate materials for space improvements or service events.

For more information or to get involved, contact the EYC leadership team or the parish office. EYC at St. John's remains committed to forming young people in faith, service, and community—creating joyful, faithful leaders for the church and the world.

Tapestry Intergenerational Worship Service

Twenty twenty-five commenced with the unexpected departure by our Rector Sarah Phelps and one of the plethora of questions immediately arising was: “What will happen to the future of TAPESTRY?”

An amazingly awesome worship service needed to continue, and within hours of Mother Sarah's announcement, a volunteer was found to weave the multiplicity of elements into place for each Sunday's TAPESTRY worship.

Participation through intentional interactive activities expanded to invite worship service leadership from St. John's families and Godly Play leaders (Yes! TAPESTRY offers Godly Play at worship on the last Sunday of each month.)

Energetic engagement evolved into multi-sensory worship. How? Through skits, readings, Bible studies, storytelling, themed-Sundays (a.k.a. Minecraft and Star Wars), props, Wonder questions and poignant discussions, the launch and ever-developing additions to the Creators Table Gallery, and processions/parades; just a small look into what is emerging at TAPESTRY weekly.

Service to others, following Christ's directive, was introduced through diverse projects thematically woven into the worship morning: Good Samaritan “You are Loved” Care Bags (distributed throughout Wake Forest and the surrounding community), Intergenerationally-tied new fleece blankets (donated to Myra's Angels Foundation—an organization providing essentials to homeless and foster children in Wake Forest), and artistically decorating over 200 gift tags (to be used for St. John's “Joy of Christmas” project).

Thematic weekly worship throughout the Liturgical Year. Each element of TAPESTRY worship derives from the RCL (Revised Common Lectionary) appointed for that Sunday: from the Gospel, the Message, Prayers of the People, the Creators Table Project, the visuals (have you checked out the TAPESTRY worship space?); everything weaves together to form a cohesive worship experience.

Relevant, creative, imaginative, nurturing, dynamic, inviting, genuine, Spiritual, inspiring, welcoming: adjectives shared following TAPESTRY worship over the past 11 months.

You...Your Family...Your Friends...Your Neighbors...All are welcome! St. John's gives thanks to God for 2+ years of this alternative worship opportunity+++

Karole Badgley
Director of St. John's Music Ministry



HOME TEAM REPORT (FORMERLY CREATION CARE TEAM)

Creation Care adopted a new name in 2025! It is now called HOME (Helping Our Mother Earth) 2025 and welcomed several NEW team members!

Activities and events in 2025 with congregation:

- Celebrated all efforts to recycle and compost at church events
- Earth Day Garden Blessing
- Shared mosquito "Bucket of Doom" kits
- Participated in Great SE Pollinator Count
- Butterfly house shared by Jennifer Amyx
- Hosted coffee hour during Creation Season
- Emily Larsen provided many great articles for e-news

Activities with youth:

- Provided books about Earth Day and God's natural world to preschool
- Presented at Tapestry during Earth Week and Creation Season, with help from several young people
- Gave workshop for preschool kids
- Jennifer Amyx shared her butterfly houses with preschool

Pollinator Garden:

- Thanks to Cathy Brittingham and several dedicated volunteers, the garden thrived during 2025
- Native plants shared with parishioners and preschool

Plans for 2026:

- Planning an event with EYC
- Earth Day event on Saturday, April 18
- Sharing recycling, composting, planting of native plants information at coffee hour
- Information about recycling old computers
- Sharing what Wake Forest will recycle
- Learn how to compost at Wake Forest's new composting sites
- Workshop with preschool

Julie Arthur
HOME Team Leader



FELLOWSHIP REPORT

Fellowship is an integral part of our church family. We have developed many options to form relationships and get to know better those with whom we share our faith. Here are some reflections from our group leaders:

Men's Group

The St. John's Men's group is a gathering open to all men of St. Johns Episcopal Church. The group meets regularly on the first Saturday of the month and as of 2025, added some additional "social gatherings" outside of the regularly scheduled meetings. In 2025 discussion topics included: Braver Angels, Ending Racism in our Diocese, Being a Care Giver, Movie: A Case for Love .

Kevin O'Donnell, Men's Group Team Leader

St. John's Hikers

St. John's hikers enjoyed another year of exploring diverse soft trails in our area. In the fall, we rambled along several sections of the Mountains to the Sea Trail, the Wake Forest Reservoir, and Blue Jay Point park. Springtime, with its bountiful offering of ephemeral flowers, led us to Durant Park, Wilkerson Nature Preserve, BW Wells, and the Honeycutt Creek trail. Our walks, mostly averaging about 3 miles each, provide a wonderful opportunity to enjoy God's wondrous creation in mutual fellowship. Youngsters, oldsters, midway-sters, and well-behaved dogs are all welcomed!

Helen Holt, Hiking Group Team Leader

Book Club

Our book club meets once a month on the first Monday at 6 pm in the Parish Hall. We have a membership of 18 active members. Each member chooses a book from any genre and leads the discussion at the next meeting, bringing a dessert to share along with personal experiences relating to the topic of the book. We have warm, intimate and lively discussions each meeting.

Pamela Ali, Book Club Team Leader

Special Events

The Special Events Ministry Proudly did the following: Pancake Supper, Bishop's Visit /Coffee and Lunch, Sarah's Farewell Party, Deacon Ordination Reception, Father's Day Beer and Brats, Awesome Arts Adventure.

Suzanne Griffin, Special Events Leader

Coffee Hour/Fellowship

Many of us enjoy coffee hour each week. It is a great time to meet and talk with others members of our church. Being in charge of this special weekly event, has been such a blessing. Thank you to all the many people in our church that help make this event possible.

Durbin Goodwin, Kitchen Team Leader

Hot Dog Sunday

This year has been another success, thanks to an amazing team and the opportunity to bring our congregation together in fellowship. We've successfully navigated staff turnover and welcomed new members without any glitches, and we're grateful for the strength and support of this community. As we look ahead, we're excited for all that 2026 will bring. Thank you for your continued support!

Ted Alexander, Hot Dog Sunday Team Leader



FELLOWSHIP REPORT CONTINUED

Library Team

New books have been added to the library, the most recent additions being several children's books requested by Karole Badgely. Assuring the Tapestry children and adults that God is present in every aspect of their lives, these books are enchanting and insightful. In the past year, Jessica Mitnaul, Jane Alexander and Deb Smith have joined the Library Team replacing Elizabeth Lyon, Roxanne Johnson and Louisa Avery.

Sara Vetter, Roxanne Johnson, Elizabeth Lyon, Louisa Avery, Library Team

Fiber Arts Group

St. John's Fiber Group gathers twice a month on the first and third Monday between 1:00-3:00 for fellowship, sharing, and teaching. This ministry is for those who enjoy working with their hands; knitting, crocheting, felting, needle point and punching and many others. During this time together we share our projects and are available to teach others as well. This past year our group made prayer squares and prayer shawls to be given to people in our church and community. Many beautiful things were made to give to people attending the Gay Pride Festival this past October. people can be seen knitting, crocheting, quilting, felting, needle punching, carding, paper making, weaving and often teaching others their craft. Presently we are working on crafts to be handed out at The Pride Festival in October. Everyone is welcome to join us whether they already have a skill, want to learn a new skill, or just want to hang out with other creative people.

Kenille Baumgardner, Fiber Arts Leader

The Soloists

St John's Soloists welcomes all older women who are alone to join in fellowship with other women in similar situations. We share life events, laughter and sometimes tears. We have continued to meet on the 3rd Saturday of each month in 2025 gathering in the afternoon from 3-5 pm on the lower level of St. John's Education Bldg.

Mary Jo DeLaere, The Soloists Team Leader



INVITE WELCOME CONNECT REPORT

Our Invite, Welcome, and Connect ministry is grounded in the centuries-old practice of welcoming all who come to us as if we are welcoming Christ himself.

We seek to find specific ways to INVITE others to ‘dip their toes’ in St. John’s and, perhaps, experience a faith community that feels right for them. Invite efforts don’t just come from our team. This year’s efforts have included the A/V team streaming our services, Sophia Sisters establishing a supportive partnership with the preschool, inviting the broader community to Blessing of the Animals, hosting coffee and cookies at the preschool Bike-a-thon, offering information at the preschool Trunk or Treat, participation in the Wake Forest Pride Festival, and Sara Perez expanding our presence on social media platforms.

We are constantly on the lookout for ways to be more WELCOMING to those whom God draws into our midst. We are adding new removeable ‘yard’ signs to help people more easily find the main church entrance from the lower parking lot. New large ‘feather flags’ have been added to help people find the Tapestry service. Quarterly Newcomer Meetups regularly alternate between mornings after church and weekday evenings. The Welcome Desk in the narthex (staffed by a faithful cadre of weekly volunteers) is our visible touch point for newcomers.

Our CONNECT team regularly reaches out to newcomers who are ready to become involved...offering ideas for potential ‘fits’ in social groups and encouraging them to take the Ministry Match survey to help find a ministry that is life-giving and energizing for them.

We are proud and gratified that so many of you take the time every week to notice who is new and offer a warm welcome. THANK YOU!!!

Lois Sauer
Invite, Welcome, and Connect Team Leader



MUSIC MINISTRIES REPORT

Imagination and innovation—God has blessed the congregation of St. John’s Episcopal Church with incredible individuals enthusiastically giving of their time and talents to prepare and offer music at innumerable worship services and “extras” throughout the Liturgical Year. Sundays at weekly 9:30 and 11:15 a.m. worship services, the word “exceptional” could describe the diverse selections of congregational song and hymnody—ranging from Traditional standards to hand-clapping Gospel and Spirituals, service music, choral anthems, handbell and chime music, instrumental solo/ensemble selections, and organ/keyboard voluntaries selected and offered in synchronization with the appointed Lectionary for the day. Throughout 2025, St. John’s three major ensembles—the BELLS OF ST. JOHN’s, CANTATE, and the JUBILATION WINDS—expanded their repertoire stylistically and creatively. The handbell/choir chime choir took a bold step ringing a Sequence Anthem for the Pentecost Gospel, recreating the sound of a “Rushing, Mighty Wind;” and even more recently, preparing an Advent Wreath Candle Lighting hymn introduction incorporating not 1, but 2 bell trees.

Instruments of multiple shapes and sizes augmented music during the past year. With St. John’s own JUBILATION woodwind ensemble featuring flutes and clarinets, additional instrument families of brass (trumpet and tubas X4); strings (violin, ukulele, guitar); percussion (claves, djembe, hand drum, shakers, tambourine) offered solo/ensemble/and-or collaborative music; rounding out with a few eclectic sorts (the shruti box and an Irish tin whistle). At St. John’s—all people and all (nearly) instruments are welcomed.

Vocally, the CANTATE choir serves as musical worship leaders at nearly every 9:30 a.m. service throughout the season of singing. A wide array of anthems from traditional sacred literature to music offering poetic themes of social justice and peace have been part of the repertoire. With large anthems at liturgical festival services, this fall, the choir even took a unique approach offering a powerful “sung” necrology on the Sunday celebrating All Saints and All Souls.

And... there is yet more to share about the 2025 Music Ministry at St. John’s: multiple TAIZE services focusing on Prayer and Peace; Ukulele gatherings (with donuts and coffee, of course); the 4th Annual Awesome Arts Adventures Camp which featured a phenomenal group of campers and assistants culminating in the production of “Oh, Jonah!”; and, the upcoming Annual Advent Lessons & Carols; the upcoming Cookies & Carols; and finally, Christmas Lessons & Carols.

Giving great thanks to our Creator for the outstanding gift of music and for all the individuals who offer themselves and their gifts making music to the glory of God.

Karole Badgley
Director of Music Ministry
Soli Deo Gloria!



OUTREACH REPORT

St. John's Outreach is committed to tackling Hunger and Housing in Wake Forest while supporting global efforts to end food insecurity through participation in the CROP Walk. Thank you to everyone who gave financially, volunteered time, and shared gifts and skills. As Associate Rector, I am blessed to hear testimonies from neighbors who receive our care; one community member said, "St. John's Episcopal Church shows up for our community." Your generosity makes a difference locally and around the world.

Tapestry, New Members, and Volunteer Pathways

MaryBeth and Al Giglio describe Tapestry and Outreach as "hand in glove." They moved to Wake Forest in November 2024 seeking a faith family and found a welcoming, interactive worship experience that includes children and adults. Tapestry's spirit—an intertwining of lives and stories—led them to serve with the Wake Forest Community Table and the Community Garden. Their story highlights how worship and outreach together create natural volunteer pathways: worship draws people in, and outreach gives them concrete ways to serve.

Hunger: Wake Forest Community Table and Joy of Christmas (Submitted by Ann Van Cleave)

Wake Forest Community Table (WFCT) has seen steady growth this year:

- Meals served year to date: 5,845 on Monday nights and 5,180 on Wednesday nights.
- Volunteer engagement: A growing cadre of volunteers from St. John's supports meal service, pickups, and desserts.

St. John's continues to support WFCT through the Joy of Christmas program. This year, we aim to supply 50 families with household-item bags, freeing up holiday funds for other needs. Tapestry helped decorate bag tags, and our EYC is packing bags—making this an actual churchwide effort. We also participate in CROP Walk, extending our impact to global food security efforts.

Housing: Wake Forest Meaningful Housing (Submitted by Ken Marsh)

St. John's has a long history of commitment to housing, including a 40 year partnership with Habitat for Humanity. This year, the parish was recognized as a faith leader partner, and Kenille Baumgardner was honored for long standing service. Key milestones this year:

- May 2024: Hosted an Adult Formation panel on affordable housing with diocesan representatives, the Mayor of Wake Forest, and the SECU Foundation Executive Director.
- A St. John's working group began monthly meetings to study housing models and engage community leaders.
- Outreach partners—Olive Branch Baptist Church, Hope House, Wake Forest Baptist Church, and parish members—joined the conversation.
- May 2025: Olive Branch hosted a community meeting with the North East Community Coalition, Town Planning staff, and housing advocates from the Jackson Center. Thirteen North East community members and multiple faith partners are committed to continuing the work.

Next steps: drafting a mission, vision, and values statement for 2026, planning a visit to the Jackson Center, and building a coalition focused on sustainable, inclusive housing. If you have expertise in housing or community partnership building, please contact Ken Marsh or Father Mawethu.

Partnerships, Church Net, and Community Collaboration

- St. John's continues to strengthen partnerships that multiply our impact: Church Net: A collaboration of Wake Forest churches that assists neighbors with utility bills.
- MLK scholarship fund with Friendship Baptist Church and Juneteenth with North East Community Coalition.
- Wake Forest Pride Event on October 11, St. John's attended and gave free giveaways with the help of Fiber Arts collaboration.
- Local nonprofits and faith partners: Coordinated efforts with community gardens, pantries, and health providers help us meet needs without duplicating services.
- Habitat for Humanity: Four decades of partnership, with parish recognition this year.
- St. John's Leadership Academy (South Africa) is a ministry that trains young leaders through contextual theologies of praxis.

These partnerships allow St. John's to serve as "a church outside the wall," meeting neighbors where they are and building a community of care in the North East of Wake Forest.



OUTREACH REPORT CONTINUED

Volunteers, Gratitude, and How to Help

We are deeply grateful to the many volunteers who make our work possible—those who serve weekly at WFCT, tend the community garden, pack Joy of Christmas bags, and participate in housing conversations. Volunteer hours and participation increased this year, enabling expanded service days and more consistent casework.

Ways to get involved:

- Serve at Wake Forest Community Table (Monday or Wednesday nights).
- Help pack Joy of Christmas bags.
- Weekly opportunity to donate Food to the Tri-Area Food Pantry Ministry in the cart found in the Narthex
- Join the Wake Forest Meaningful Housing coalition or offer housing expertise.
- Support Church Net with donations

Closing and Contact

St. John's Outreach remains a practical expression of parish compassion—meeting immediate needs while building relationships that promote dignity and stability. For more information or to join a ministry team, contact Ken Marsh or Father Mawethu.

Acknowledgments:

Thank you to all donors, volunteers, partner churches, and community organizations who walked alongside us this year. Your gifts—time, talent, and treasure—are changing lives in Wake Forest and beyond. Team Members: Pam Ali, Bill & Ann Van Cleave, Mynn Paige, Kenille Baumgardner, Darden Baker, and added members - Patrick Newton, Gloria Siaw, Eleas Ottley, Marybeth, and Al Giglio.

Outreach Team Members



PARISH CARE REPORT

Parish Care continues to support our congregation with 45 lead volunteers who generously give their time, their energy, and their generous spirit. Many others in the congregation participate when the need arises. We are part of a very caring and giving congregation!

Lay Eucharist Visitors, Lay Call and Visitation, Prayer Team, Cards and Notes, Meal Train, Defibrillator Care and Training, Funeral Receptions, and Fixit Brigade are the areas where these wonderful people are modelling Christlike behavior.

We send out birthday greetings and notes of concern and support. We have helped with moving, painting, driving to appointments, providing meals, serving the Eucharist, visiting fellow congregants who cannot make it to church events, praying for those in need, preparing funeral receptions and assisting congregants where and as we can whatever the life situation.

This year Parish Care presented a series of programs focusing on options for senior living and continuous care, and legal options and concerns. Attendees were pleased with the shared information when surveyed.

We also provide resources for needs beyond the scope of our church. This year we composed a list of resources including everything from food to housing to health. Please contact Suzi Hetzel or the Office if you would like a copy.

New people are always welcome to assist in our many tasks whatever your background. For more information or if you would like to participate in these wonderful missions of love, please contact the office or myself.

Suzi Hetzel
Parish Care Leader



WORSHIP REPORT

Worship services at St. John's are supported by organized lay guilds and groups with numerous members who prepare the nave, participate in services, and/or facilitate cleaning the church after services. Known collectively as Worship Ministries, the individual guilds are:

Acolytes

Altar Guild

Chalice Bearers (Lay Eucharistic Ministers)

Flower Guild

Lay Readers Verger Guild

Ushers

We are grateful to the members of all of our guilds who execute their respective responsibilities every week behind the scenes and in front of the congregation to create meaningful worship services for all of us.

We continue to welcome and incorporate new members into all of our teams. There is continuous change in the membership of our various guilds as new members join and experienced members take a break or explore other opportunities for service. Serving in these groups kindles friendships and affirms our relationship with St. John's while offering our talents to the glory of God. If you would like to join one or more of the above groups, contact the office or Elizabeth McDuffie evmcduffie@gmail.com.

Elizabeth McDuffie
Worship Team Leader