

**St. John's Episcopal Church  
2018 Annual Meeting  
3 February 2019**



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The Rev. Mary B. Gregorius, Rector**

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## 2018 Annual Meeting

### Agenda

Opening of Annual Meeting in the Sanctuary

Community is gathered for Worship and Holy Eucharist in the Sanctuary  
The Rev. Mary B. Gregorius, Rector

Opening of balloting

Wardens:	Cindy Sullivan, Class of 2021
Vestry members:	Class of 2021
	Class of 2022
Diocesan Convention Youth Delegate:	Class of 2021

Re-convening in Parish Hall

Blessing of the food and the gathered community (*from the Book of Common Prayer*):

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; Bless this food to our use, bless the hands that prepared it and bless us in the work you have given us to do; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Brunch

During brunch, please use the questions at your tables to share your thoughts and experiences.

Balloting is closed

Special Invitation: Drew McFadden

Vote to Accept Minutes of 2018 Annual Meeting

Reports of table discussions: Cindy Sullivan

Reports and discussion: facilitated by the Rector, The Rev. Mary B. Gregorius

All those who submitted reports are encouraged to speak to their report and field questions from the floor. If for some reason your report was not submitted, please stand and offer remarks.

2019 Budget is presented: Treasurer Ken Foley and Budget Committee

**Discussion of budget**  
**vote on budget**

Announcing and welcoming of new Warden, Vestry members, Diocesan Convention Youth Delegate

Recognition of outgoing vestry members:  
Garrick Hoadley and Elaina Vietz

The Rev. Mary B. Gregorius

Life Saver Awards:  
Special recognition of Thrift Shop Volunteers  
Remarks invited from the floor

The Rev. Mary B. Gregorius

Closing prayer:

Garrick Hoadley

Blessing:

The Rev. Mary B. Gregorius

Dismissal:

The Rev. Deacon Lynn Werdal

## 2017 Annual Meeting Minutes

St. John's Episcopal Church held its 2017 Annual Meeting on January 28, 2018. At this meeting, the elections for the Vestry and other positions took place. Representatives from St. John's committees provided summaries of the year's activities and accomplishments. They also spoke to future directions for the committee.

The meeting minutes from last year were approved. Garrick Hoadley motioned to accept the meeting minutes and Jeff Wood seconded the motion. None opposed.

**Pleasantville Community Garden:** David Juros provided the update. It was another great year for the Pleasantville Community Garden (PCG). Sixteen thousand pounds of food were donated. There were many volunteers including children. Several members of St. John's Episcopal Church are on PCG's board. PCG received a number of phone calls from other groups looking to start a garden and asking for guidance. PCG is considering creating a consulting committee to help others establish community gardens. PCG will let everyone know when there is an opportunity to help. Pleasantville High School worked with PCG to coordinate a food drive.

**Rector's Report:** Mother Mary spoke about the importance of outreach and invitations to join St. John's Episcopal Church. She mentioned that Leigh Bowens had brought three families to St. John's. St. John's needs to be more visible. Mother Mary said that an advertisement for Easter service would be placed. There has been a downward trend for attendance for Christmas and Easter. James Dirlam helps organize coffee hour. Church members will be asked to host coffee hour on a rotating basis and you will receive a notice from Liz Gillespie if you are on the schedule for that week. Coffee hour is a good place to go after the service to build community. Beth DeVito leads the hospitality committee. It is a great way to get to know everyone and get more involved. Jeff Wood and John McAndrew are coordinating Shrove Tuesday. There is a new property co-warden. There will need to more delegation of duties to the property committee. We will be interacting with Axial Theater separately. Jim Dirlam will help out in working with Axial. Beth DeVito will still work on negotiating the contract with Axial. Linda Spione agreed to join the Axial committee. There will be no confirmation class this year, but there will be one next year.

**Sunday School Report:** Laura Simpson submitted the Sunday school report and the everyone discussed possible ideas. One idea for a Sunday School activity would be to have Colette teach the children songs. Another idea would be to have teenagers help out with Sunday school as they all need service hours and this may be a good way for them to gain hours.

**Music Report:** St. John's is looking to have more collaborative events and also to build the choir. Perhaps, fund a soloist. It would also be good to have children in the choir.

**Altar Guild:** The Altar Guild is looking for members as there are very few now, only six members and one member will be leaving. It's not a difficult activity and the Saturday schedule is flexible. You could even do it on a Friday. It's a good way to get to know other members of the Church.

**Outreach:** Ten percent of the Thrift shop proceeds go to the outreach programs, such as the PCG, A-home, Midnight Run, Suicide Prevention.

**Thrift Shop:** The Thrift Shop is doing well, three new people have joined, but they are always

looking for volunteers. You can sign-up to volunteer on Sign-up Genius. The floor of the Thrift Shop was recently redone. The Thrift Shop is part of our mission and it's an outreach mission as well.

**Pleasantville Circle of Friends:** This is led by Jim Dirlam and there is music and round robin. It's a chance to visit. Sometimes donations are given. There are Facebook and Google pages for the Circle of Friends. They meet on the second Friday of the month.

**Stewardship:** The pledge drive was relatively successful. Pledges are up over last year. We have been conservative when adding the pledges into the budget. Pledges for this year's budget are listed at \$130,000. Another person tithed this year. Tithing is an important concept in the Church.

**Treasurer's Report:** The membership list was pared down to be more realistic. The capital campaign is separated from the operating costs. The Diocesan contribution did not go up. There was a \$6,500 deficit in 2017, but all bills have been paid. This deficit was closed to \$6,500 from a \$33,000 deficit projection. The question is how are we going to close the deficit this year. St. John's is 100 % self-supporting. There was an unexpected boiler expense this past year. A sixth of the cost came from the DIT funds and also borrowing from the organ insurance proceeds. Some fundraising activities were proposed. Ken Foley may host a BBQ and Linda Spione may host a dinner. Other suggestions included a Kids Night Out, opening the Thrift store for an extra hour, fall festival and an ice cream social. The 2018 budget was approved. Peter Russell made the motion to approve and Jim Dirlam seconded the motion. None opposed. There were two abstentions.

**Elections:** Linda Spione will be the new Property Warden. Michael Muñoz and Cindy Sullivan will be the new Vestry Members.

**Other Business:** Anne Seltzer was recognized for all of her efforts with St. John's over the years.

Mother Mary motioned to close the meeting and Jim Dirlam seconded the motion. None opposed.

Ken Citarella said the closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Simpson

## Section I: Clergy Reports

### **Report from Mother Mary+**

Where do we begin to describe the roller coaster journey of 2018? We have had extraordinary challenges and amazing successes. Average Sunday Attendance has been dropping since September, yet our core participation in events and programming is up. Also, of note is that while our pledge amounts are down, our number of pledges has risen. We have dealt with catastrophic water issues, dangerous tree damage and witnessed our pulling together to meet these challenges. We have dealt with financial deficits and remarkable generosity.

Difficulties all wrapped up in sacred giftedness. A water main break that did not need the extra added expense of excavation. Water leaks that were identified and seem to be addressed, though water will be an ongoing issue for us. Water damage repair thankfully covered by insurance. Trees damaged by wind, creating what those in the industry call “widow makers,” paid for by your generous contributions. Is it any wonder we feel just a tad weary?

You will read reports today of excitement about our new Sunday School program, the fun of the Progressive Dinner, and the joyful formation of a new Confirmation Class, with a new format. We continue to work to gather sufficient adult support of our fledgling Youth Group, but Adult forums have steadily become a part of our usual Sunday morning gatherings and the Wednesday morning Bible study group is small but dedicated.

The Outreach Committee will share with us the variety of ministries through which we participate in the lives of good people in our community, our nation and around the globe. Including a new event for the Pleasantville Emergency Food Pantry with Deacon Lynn’s coat drive and the Pleasantville Community Garden @ St. John’s Eagle Scout project of building a garden shed and painting the Rectory garage.

The Altar Guild is giddy over the new oil candles for the candelabras, no longer having to scrape wax from delicate brass. Thank you to all who contributed. This dedicated group would welcome your joining in their work for our parish.

You will hear of the wondrous value of our Thrift Shop to our community as well as its tremendous financial success. As a parish we need to recognize and acknowledge the importance of the Thrift Shop to our financial future, and that a significant portion of our Outreach is funded by Thrift Shop sales. We cannot sufficiently thank those who offer countless hours of work in the Shop, but we most certainly will try!

A new Poinsettia Fundraiser was organized, implemented and successfully completed in a matter of weeks, with the leadership of Philippa Seltzer-Muschko. Much needed work on the interior of our church, made possible by the bequest of one of our beloved members, Brenda Lawlor. This project will be accomplished in January 2019. Ever practical, ever welcoming, ever a lover of beauty, we are confident that Brenda would embrace the use of her bequest to both help with the oil bill and restore a portion of the interior of the Sanctuary.

You will not read a report from our Music Director as we have not had one for the last five months. The lack of musical accompaniment is a real detriment to our common worship, inhibiting our

joyful voices raised in praise of God. We must note and learn from the fact that the drop in our Average Sunday Attendance correlates directly to the departure of our organist. Our Christmas celebrations were greatly enhanced by the musical talents of our Parish Administrator, Christopher Fasulo. Chris is the Minister of Music at Trinity Episcopal Church in Ossining and agreed, in addition to playing his own 8pm Service to play for us at 4pm and 10:30pm. THANK YOU! I think all will agree that the re-introduction of the organ to our worship was inspiring and uplifting.

While the initial loss of our Music Director was not a financial decision, our inability to seek and secure a replacement in 2019 is directly related to our budget restrictions.

Your Vestry has worked diligently and tirelessly on your behalf. They have met in monthly meetings, separate committee meetings and in retreat settings. All have spent time learning the language of Servant Leadership and strategic thinking through Appreciative Inquiry techniques. The goals of the 2018 Strategic Plan have been a part of each decision. They are:

- Develop language to express our faith
- Strive to be relevant to our community, joyful & connected
- Supportive of this parish, physically & fiscally
- To be actively involved in Outreach Mission

In late October, Vestry member Cindy Sullivan agreed to accept the position of Administrative Warden, much to the delight and relief of Linda Spione and I. Cindy has made a profound difference not only in the day to day management of our parish, but in my ability to effectively exercise my cure as your Rector. Our present Vestry is an extraordinary combination of gifts and skills and it has been a pleasure and an honor to work with them. I am grateful to them and their service to you, God's people.

You will hear of the 2018 budget deficit wrestled into submission through two successful financial appeals. THANK YOU! We give thanks to God who provides you with means to offer greater support to our parish. Our 2019 budget contains several projected challenges, not the least of which will be our ability to hire a Music Director and accomplish much needed repair and maintenance on our property.

As I close, let me reiterate the humbling joy I feel in being your Rector. It is my privilege to visit with you when you are sick, to celebrate the milestones of your lives, to walk with you through difficult moments and to serve you in prayer and song. You are gracious in sharing your wonderful children, your aging parents, your worries and your thrills. We have shared prayer and conversation through all manner of life's transitions. Thank you.

The questions and concerns we face going forward are legion, but I invite you to remember the parable Jesus told in Mark 5:1-20 and Luke 8:26-39. A man tormented by many troubles and travails introduces himself to Jesus as Legion, because his woes and worries were many. Upon Jesus' command the tormenting legion of woes run off the cliff and into oblivion. Legion was restored to his community, proclaiming the power of Jesus Christ to calm our anxiety and strengthen us for service.



How will we meet the needs of our common worship, care for those in need, keep our property safe, raise our children in the glory of God and deepen our spiritual relationship with our Creator? The answer is within your grasp; We will, with God's help.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev Mary B. Gregorius

### **Parish Statistics**

	2017	2018
Number of Services:	69	74
Average Sunday Attendance:	53	46
Attendance at Christmas:	203	183
Ash Wednesday:	29	27
Attendance at Easter:	156	124
Marriages:	1	1
Baptisms:	0	4
Confirmations and Receptions:	7	2 Receptions
Home Communion:	8	10
Funerals:	8	9

## Report from Deacon Lynn

Assisted in all but five scheduled Sunday worship services, assisted in Lenten, Holy Week, Advent Services, two Funeral Services. Preached nine times.

Made eight home visits with Reserve Sacrament. Attended four Property Committee meetings.

Attended eight Clericus meetings, four local Clergy meetings.

Continue to serve on the Diocesan Commission on Ministry, attended six COM meetings and Two COM conferences. With one other COM member facilitated Listening Hearts Discernment Committee Training to four Parishes. With three other commission members researched discernment processes in 6 other states for those entering the ordination process for both the diaconate and priesthood. Developed and presented to the commission for its' approval Parish Discernment Guidelines, which was approved and is now available on the diocesan website.

With deacons in Region 2 of the Diocese planned Annual Deacons Conference held at Mariandale Retreat Center. Organized Deacon Forum held at STJ, for the purpose of providing information about the Order of Deacons and specifically for those who might be experiencing a call to this servant ministry.

Volunteered in Thrift Shop six times. Volunteered at Caritas Soup Kitchen, St. Peter's Port Chester, monthly. Volunteered at Interfaith Pantry five times. Staffed shift for STJ on Pleasantville Day.

Initiated collection of over 225 pairs of shoes to assist Trinity/St. Paul's Church, New Rochelle in fundraising to sponsor a student to attend Taize for one week. Initiated collection of coats and winter wear for clients at Interfaith Pantry and Midnight Run.

Painted classrooms with Cindy Sullivan and volunteer friend with funds provided by "Paint up-Fix Up donations.

Participated in weekly Bible Study, attended Diocesan Workshop "Grow Congregations", attended "Digital Ministries" offered by St. Mary's Mohegan Lake.

Storytelling with Godly Play twice, assisted Lay Leaders in Morning Prayer with R/S.

Attended several refugee related meetings both in Westchester County and Connecticut. Participated in activities to support the resettlement of refugees in Westchester County and Connecticut. This is an ongoing effort.

Weekly assist Chris in the preparation of worship bulletins by folding and stuffing. Pick up bathroom and kitchen supplies and restock as needed.

It has been my pleasure and honor to serve as your Deacon Emerita, I pray that with God's help and your support, I may continue to do so.

Faithfully in His Service,

The Rev. Deacon Lynn Werdal

## **Section II: Parish Life**

### **Administrative Warden's Report**

Cindy Sullivan became Administrative Warden in fall of 2018.

### **Coffee Hour Report**

Coffee Hour takes place weekly after the 9:30am service and is a tradition of gathering and catching up with our friends and family in this Community of Faith.

Hosting Coffee Hour is a simple and fun task that has historically been assigned for the year by the Parish Administrator. However, our new Parish Administrator, Christopher Fasulo has received push back by several parishioners using this method. Chris therefore decided moving forward to use a sign-up sheet hanging in the Parish Hall on the bulletin board next to the coffee makers. Parishioners are asked to sign-up to provide their time and talent a little early on the Sunday they select in the preparation of some nibbles, coffee, tea, juice and milk/cream. The preparation can be as simple or as elaborate as the preparer chooses; everything from donut holes to quiche ready to greet an always appreciative audience. A "how to" sheet is available from the office if you would like more detail.

Many folks take this as an opportunity to celebrate special family events with our parish family. Some just like an excuse to bake every now and then. Most of us are just glad for the chance to offer a little hospitality and laughter together.

A huge thank you to Jim Dirlam for frequently stepping in at the last minute to assist with Coffee Hour when no one is signed up.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Fasulo  
Parish Administrator

### **Parish Administrator's Report**

St. John's was without a Parish Administrator for an entire month between March/April 2018. I joined St. John's at the end of April 2018. I learned the responsibilities of this position as I went, having no training from my predecessor. The primary duties of the Parish Administrator are:

1. Design and print Sunday service bulletins, church mailings, annual meeting reports;
2. Assemble information for, and design This Week @ St. John's weekly newsletters, as well as any additional email blasts;
3. Website and social media management and design;
4. Maintain church Google calendars (internal and external), coordinate meetings and events;

5. Manage buildings and facilities—maintain thermostat schedules for daily occupancy needs, coordinate boiler maintenance, wash and install storm windows for winter months, schedule snow and ice removal with Alvarez;
3. Coordinate building rentals and space use by outside groups, including AA, Scouts, Axial, Pleasantville Community Garden, etc.;
4. Track overall church giving—update pledge contributions weekly, distribute giving statements, process credit card transactions, track e-pledges;
5. Standard administrative tasks, ie: answering phones, records management, ordering supplies, etc.
6. Provide IT support to Mother Mary, Deacon Lynn, & Jessica DeAlto;

My usual 16 hour work week is brimming with the activities above. I also take on frequent additional tasks and projects. In the summer of 2018, I created a brand new website for St. John's. I have optimized the office computers, updated our Parish membership records, reorganized the office files, and streamlined the processes for our monetary management.

I look forward to continuing help grow St. John's presence in our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Fasulo  
Parish Administrator

### **Remembering St. John's**

Please consider remembering St. John's Episcopal Church in your will.

St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church was admitted into union with the Episcopal Diocese of NY at the September 1853 Convention. Planted by The Rev W. Harris, D.D., Rector of Grace Church in White Plains. Fr. Harris reported that he had been travelling to and preaching regularly at Pleasantville, Armonk and Chappaqua.

The wooden clapboard church building at 219 Bedford Road, presently the Pleasantville Community Synagogue, was constructed in 1855, 2 years after the parish was established. This structure was consecrated by the Rt. Rev Horatio Potter, Bishop of New York. Bp. Potter is immortalized in a window in our Chapel. Before the completion of the wooden church, the congregation met in the School House.

The bell originally purchased for the 219 Bedford Road building "...proved of an inadequate size." This first bell was not used but was given to the School House for the convening of students. That "inadequate" bell now resides in the belfry of Our Lady of Pompei Roman Catholic Church on Saratoga Avenue here in Pleasantville.

In a December 5th, 1895 Journal News article, The Rev Holmes, Rector of St. John's in Pleasantville reported that "...an edifice of stone was soon to be erected by the congregation." "Soon" turned

out to be a wait of 15 years before all necessary arrangements could be made. The result is the beautiful church building we enjoy today.

Each stone, each window, each candelabra and cross, each paten and chalice, each Altar frontal was the outgrowth of someone's love of God and willingness to commit to proclaiming God's Word in this community. We are the beneficiaries of these bequests, what will we bequeath to the generation 100 years from now?

## Section 3: Property

### **Buildings and Grounds**

#### **Completed projects/works in progress:**

Undercroft has experienced a number of water issues this summer, fall and winter. Given the amount of rain we experienced the issues were from different sources, causes and in some cases needed daily attention.

#### **Completed work to address these issues:**

Flat roof above emergency exit basement stairs: Power washed, repaired and re-tarred cracked areas and painted the entire roof with silver coat. Completed successfully and is standing up to the rain. McCormack Construction: \$825.00

Secondary flooding issue after roof repair: Water flooding down the basement stairs during heavy rain. Leader rechecked, cleared: \$350.00

Leaders by front wall of undercroft cleaned, reinforced. Drains re-pitched.

Water main break that caused constant flooding and damage to the thrift shop resulting in many hours of clean up work. F.R.M. Mechanical completed the pipe repair with new pipe through from the thrift shop into the parish hall completing the job and avoiding excavation. Successfully completed. Cost: \$4,500.00

Water damage and to thrift shop walls, moldings, door jams, interior space from water main break being repaired by Kurt McKinney. Partial wall, removal and replacements, repair any rotted portions, mold treatment, paint. Apply Dry Lock to back staircase walls.

Sister up damaged ceiling joists and make sure all is stable using heavy-duty timber and joist hangers as needed.

Estimate for labor and materials: \$3,000.00. Work in progress.

Undercroft Floor Replacement Update: One section was left incomplete during after the first installation in preparation for beam work. It was determined that there was no need for the delay so the job was complete. Price included in the original installation.

Choir Loft and Basement thermostats replaced to help regulate heat more efficiently.

Basement thermostat wiring was shorted. Repaired by Northeast Radiant: \$265.00

Posts in the rear of the rectory have been repaired and secured.

Painting the apse complete: George Coffey. Cost: \$2,800.00

Emergency exit top of stairs from undercroft had cement trimmed for better exit access.

Major tree work, removal of a few massive, old and now diseased trees completed. Cost: \$6,050.00

Eagle Scout project: completed by Thomas Watts, Eagle Scout candidate. Small shed was built behind the rectory garage to be used for community garden tools and supplies. Thomas also painted the garage after George Coffey donated \$2,800.00 worth of services scraping and sanding the area.

### **Maintenance & Repair items**

Heating contract is secured with Robison Oil.

Cleaning and snow removal is with Alvarez Home Services.

Fall cleanup was completed by Saul Mogrovejo. Lawn services ongoing.

Emergency exit top of stairs from undercroft to be cement trimmed for better exit access.

### **Building and Grounds members:**

Linda Spione Warden/Chair

Beth DeVito Axial liaison

Jim Dirlam Axial liaison and projects

Kurt McKinney projects

John Muschko projects

Peter Russell projects and Robison liaison

Bob Rollmann projects

The Rev. Mary B. Gregorius ex officio

Thanks to the committee members for their wisdom, support and efforts to keep up with the many ongoing issues that we are faced with.

This report was submitted by Linda Spione and edited by Christopher Fasulo

## **Section IV: Christian Education**

### **Confirmation Class Report**

The Class of 2020 was convened in September of 2018 with seven members. Our Confirmation process is held over 2 years, with a cyclical curriculum that allows the Class of 2021 to join us in the fall of 2019.

Confirmation in the Episcopal Church is:

- a celebration of the continuing and maturing of our respective spiritual journey's.
- Help our young adults understand that reaffirming their relationship with God in Christ is something they will have to do repeatedly throughout their life. This is not a once-in-a-lifetime choice
- Recognition of the gift of the Holy Spirit to direct and inform our mission in the world. Helping the confirmands make connections between their learning and their lives.
- Increase familiarity with The Book of Common Prayer (BCP) and the Bible.

During this two-year process Confirmands will learn to:

- be responsible for their own spiritual formation
- develop a relationship with God through Jesus Christ
- re-affirm their commitment to the Christian life
- decide if they are ready to make an adult affirmation of their faith

Our class meets on the first Tuesday of each month from 5pm to 7pm. The format of the class begins with making a simple meal together while we talk through the events of their lives. Over dinner we address the evenings topic of discussion.

The topics were developed to familiarize the class with the great stories of Salvation History, the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and why that matters to them, what we believe as Episcopalians and how we celebrate and practice our faith in God.

John McAndrew and I are delighted to lead this program.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Mary B. Gregorius

### **Sunday School Report**

St. John's enhances children's learning of the Episcopal faith and their relationship with God through Sunday School. The Sunday School program utilizes the Sparkhouse lectionary materials, which connect Bible stories in Sunday School to worship in a three-year curriculum. We have recognized parent's and children's feedback about the format and timing of Sunday School. As a result, we have been offering Godly Play and a condensed lesson during part of the 9:30am service,



except on the second Sunday of every month when children attend the full church service with their families. We had hoped that this change would draw broader participation but have not yet seen that result. Teachers lead Sunday school in pairs for a six-week block per pair. The seven teachers are: Sarah Hoadley, Garrick Hoadley, Leigh Bowins, Elaina Vietz, Laura Simpson, Phillipa Seltzer-Muschko, and John Muschko. The class size varies from one to up to ten students. On average, the class size is about two students ages 6 – 8.

We have achieved many of our goals from the prior two years, namely:

1. Recruited parishioners, who are not parents of students, to teach Sunday School in order to provide diverse voices and perspectives to the children of St. John's
2. Developed lesson plans that are tailored to the time we allot for Sunday school, using the Sparkhouse lectionary materials as the basis and guide
3. Kept a clock in the room so the lessons can be paced more effectively
4. Used Sunday School rooms and lighter chairs for the children, which created a more inviting atmosphere for small children.

#### **Rewarding Aspects of Sunday School:**

- Getting to know and guiding the children in the congregation
- Building relationships with the other teachers
- Helping the children develop deeper connections to each other, the Church and God
- Ease of teaching the curriculum using Sparkhouse

#### **Successes of the New Format of Sunday School:**

- Hearing different voices from lay leaders and clergy in the two segments of Sunday School maintains students' interests
- Inviting the children to participate in Godly Play and then an arts and crafts activity promotes involvement and learning
- Reading from the Children's Bible and then doing a follow up activity enhances understanding of the lesson of the week

#### **Areas for Improvement:**

- Continue to invite more children to attend Sunday School
- Recruit more teachers to offer different perspectives and cover the entire year schedule

We invite you all to be a part of our children's spiritual guidance. It is rewarding and fun.

--Elaina Vietz, Vestry Liaison to Sunday School

## Youth Group Report

With the help of co-director John McAndrew, parent chaperone Jeff Wood and Mother Mary+ our Youth Group had a great trip to Frost Valley in January of 2018, on what was probably the coldest week-end of the year! Undeterred, the kids had a great time and really appreciated the huge fireplace in the Dining Hall. Karaoke Night was a big hit, with several of our kids taking the mic.

We had planned a trip to The Cliffs in Valhalla, but a storm took out much of the power in the area and we were unable to go. Hopefully in 2019.

The kids did have a great time at a Mystery Room Adventure over at the Palisades' Mall.

The Pleasantville Clergy Association worked to bring our kids together for a movie and game afternoon. They also got together for a cultural/religious exchange opportunity, which they seemed to really enjoy.

The Youth Group helped to sort and organize materials for the Mid-Night Run on numerous occasions, some volunteered as part of an Interfaith group at the Cottage School the weekend before Thanksgiving.

Going forward, we need adult volunteers to help to guide this fledgling group and help to build involvement. Please, consider volunteering, we have a great bunch of kids.

In peace,

The Rev. Mary B. Gregorius

## **Section V: Music and Worship**

### **Music Ministry Report**

As of September 2018, St. John's has been without a Music Director.

### **Acolyte Report**

The St. John's Acolyte Ministry offers a way that young people—our children—participate in the church by offering their time and talent in service to our faith community.

### **Goals of the Acolyte Ministry**

Young people represent the future of the Episcopal Church. Acolyting gives them a way that they can visibly and tangibly begin to serve the church; and service early in life nurtures the next generation of vestry members, lay readers, and committee chairs.

Acolyting provides an opportunity for youth to serve at the altar, assisting the priest, adding dignity to our worship, and gaining a greater understanding of Episcopal practices and theology.

### **How the Acolyte Program Works**

The acolyte ministry is open to all interested youth between ages of 8 and 18 and to all adults. Acolytes participate in the 9:30 am service.

Scheduling is done four times a year, roughly following the academic calendar: fall (September-to beginning of Advent), winter (Advent-Palm Sunday) spring (Palm Sunday-June), and summer (July-August). Acolytes serve once every four to six weeks.

Training occurs on a just-in-time basis.

### **2018 Acolytes**

Youth acolytes who served during 2018 include: Angela Berg, Charlotte Berg, Alex DeVito, Olivia DeVito, Ellen Ferranto, Ava Filancia-Weisbard, Julia Filancia-Weisbard, Elizabeth Hoadley, Nate Hoadley, Sophia Jones, Matt May, Tommy McPhee, Brian McPhee, Ella Muñoz, Caitlin Muñoz, Connor Murphy, Ella Simes, Grant Simes, Carly Vavolizza, Riley Vavolizza, Lily Wike and Nate Wood.

We welcomed a new acolyte this fall Ben Wike.

### **Thank You**

As one of the acolyte directors, I offer a special thanks to the parents who support the acolyte ministry by encouraging their children to participate and by faithfully getting their children to church on the days they are scheduled to serve. We would not have a youth acolyte ministry without your support.

We look forward to another successful year and I hope the acolytes know how much their contributions to the worship in our church is appreciated by the whole St. John's Family.

Faithfully,

Sarah Hoadley  
St. John's Co-Acolyte Director

### **Altar Guild Report**

The main mission of the Altar Guild Ministry is to prepare for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist that together we partake as a Church Family each Sunday.

Currently there are six members, who serve once a month to prepare the Communion Chalice, set up the Hymn Board, and arrange flowers for the Altar: Maria Ruvo, Laura Simpson, Roberta Darrigrand, Rhona Washburn, Carol White; and welcome to Pat Orlay, our new member. We are a harmonious team who interact and work well together.

I extend an appreciative Thank You to Robbin Levy, our Treasurer, who diligently manages our funds and expenses.

Our members send a heartfelt Thank You to everyone who generously donated to purchase the classic liquid candles for our Candelabra. They are always used for all our special service celebrations, and looked so beautiful on the Altar shelf this Christmas!

The Altar Guild welcomes new members and donations for the flowers from Parishioners who wish to commemorate a special occasion.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol White

## Section VI: Outreach

### **Outreach Activities Report**

St. John's supports the following organizations:

**A-Home** ([www.a-homehousing.org](http://www.a-homehousing.org)):

- Holiday Wish Lists – Many generous St. John's parishioners helped supply the items on the wish lists for the people living at the A-Home residence in Thornwood, where fellow parishioner Esmerilda Hastings lives.
- School Supplies – Six families contributed school supplies for two students who live in A-Home houses.

**Pleasantville Interfaith Food Pantry** ([www.pleasantvillefoodpantry.org](http://www.pleasantvillefoodpantry.org)): Each week food donations are taken to the Interfaith Food Pantry at the Methodist Church. Deacon Lynn suggests collection items and members of the congregation are reminded what to donate in the weekly bulletins and emails.

Outreach continued to receive 10% of the proceeds from the Thrift Shop and other fundraising activities. It contributed a total of \$4,500 to 9 different organizations; many of which it has supported in the past as well as some new ones.

**Midnight Run** ([www.midnightrun.org](http://www.midnightrun.org)) – John McAndrew spends funds for needed supplies such as socks, underwear and toiletries. Outreach gave \$600 to Midnight Run.

**A-Home** – Outreach gave \$800 to A-Home.

**El Hogar – Honduras** ([www.elhogar.org](http://www.elhogar.org)) - This organization was started in 1979 to help get orphaned boys off the street and now the facility has a grade school and high school, a separate junior and senior high school for girls, a technical school, and agricultural school. Outreach gave \$700 to El Hogar.

**Shelter Box** ([www.shelterboxusa.org](http://www.shelterboxusa.org)) – provides emergency shelter and tools for families robbed of their homes by disaster. Outreach gave \$1,000 for a third box. This box contains tools to rebuild and supplies needed for families while they are displaced from their homes. The two previous boxes that were purchased were sent to aid families in Syria.

Other organizations that received support:

Neighbors Link ([www.neighborslink.org](http://www.neighborslink.org))

Interfaith Food Pantry ([www.pleasantvillefoodpantry.org](http://www.pleasantvillefoodpantry.org))

Hope's Door ([www.hopesdoorny.org](http://www.hopesdoorny.org))

Episcopal Charities ([www.episcopalcharities-ny.org](http://www.episcopalcharities-ny.org))

YAI ([www.yai.org](http://www.yai.org))

The Outreach Committee encourages everyone take a look at the websites for the organizations we supported in 2018 and let the committee know if there is a particular organization you would like to see supported in 2019.

Submitted by:

Suzanne Cortese

## Thrift Shop Report

The shop continued on our regular schedule Saturday and Monday 10-2. We were closed for part of the month of August and reopened after Labor Day. Net proceeds can be found in the current budget report.

The Thrift shop continues to be an important part of St. John's with a steady group of about 25. Again we are pleased to welcome more volunteers including men into our volunteer pool and encourage more to join us. Our efforts have brought in about new volunteers due to our outreach and popularity. There are approximately 16 people who are the current regular rotation. They consist of parishioners and non-parishioners. We will continue our outreach for volunteers as part of our ongoing efforts. Our email list continues to grow and word spreads about our shop. Our volunteers continue building relationships with customers and donors alike.

We thank and cherish our volunteers. We would not be here without you!!

The Wednesday night crew led by Maronda McKinney and Joan Scire continue to do a fabulous job of merchandising, sorting, organizing and generally making our wonderful shop a place to admire. This group is a high-energy, talented crew and we are grateful for them. Elizabeth Guffey is still keeping up with the Sign-up Genius site and gently encourages volunteers on a regular basis. Elizabeth and Beth DeVito have also taken on special projects in the shop executing them well, in particular taking the lead on clothing donations, rotations and display. Beth DeVito continues to be a creative force with our Facebook page, advertising and general good will and snack fulfillment. The customers love their snacks. Linda Spione with assistance from Christopher Fasulo, our Parish Administrator, handles the email list updates, communication with customers and the congregation, sale flyers and announcements. Linda is the contact person for the shop. Melissa Murphy continues to source donations, and contributes to the planning and implementing of new ideas and projects.

As usual 10% of our revenue is contributed to the Outreach Committee allowing us to continue our support our causes with quarterly donations and material goods. All appropriate donations are set aside and donated to special causes. We work with underserved families refugee projects. Donations to the shop remain strong.

We continue to work with Community Based Services. The members of the organization; mentally and physically disabled adults continue to help with sorting and cleaning and washing donated items.

The ceiling beams and water damage repair from the floods and water main break are progressing nicely.

A special thank you to all who jump to help move items in and out of the shop on an as needed basis. And a special thank you to Dave Vitkevich, who does repairs, improvements and upgrades behind the scenes. Thank you also to Bob Rollman who is a new volunteer and takes on tasks of testing appliances and putting together items that come in. We greatly appreciate these efforts.

Our mission is one of love, charity, community and service.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Spione on behalf of the Executive Committee: Maronda McKinney, Joan Scire, Beth DeVito, Elizabeth Guffey, and Melissa Murphy

## Pleasantville Circle of Friends

### Open Mike and Folk Circle

History-

Early in 2001, with the encouragement of our rector, Phillip Carr-Harris, I agreed to host a gathering at St John's for sharing home made music. St James Episcopal in North Salem had provided a model for this gathering on the first Friday of each month, and we agreed not to conflict with them and scheduled ours for the second Friday of each month. This has persisted, and St James still hosts their own Folk Circle on the first Friday.

Soon after we began the people in the group adopted the name Pleasantville Circle of Friends and I wrote a simple mission statement: "Making space in the community for creating and sharing music." We built some platforms, bought lights and sound equipment and began an irregular series of Coffee House events in the Parish Hall.

Beginning in 2005, we regularized the schedule centered around one show per month, except as preempted by other activities. It has worked out very well. To date we have hosted over 200 Circles and 80 Coffee House events. We have contributed over ten thousand dollars to St John's.

Today-

Our mailings and social media reach thousands. People seem to enjoy the ambience. There are frequently professional recording artists sharing their original pieces with us. We are ecumenical, members attend nearby churches and their clergy have joined occasionally. Our performers range in age from fourteen to four score and more. Male, female, and those who struggle with gender identity are all welcome. The Episcopal Church is open and affirming, and welcoming to our neighbors.

The Vestry has affirmed our mission as a part of St John's larger mission to the world. I thank our Lord for guiding us in this endeavor and getting us to this place. Members of St John's are always invited free of charge. Bring a bulletin as proof!

This is our regular e-blast message:

#### *HOW TO GET THERE AND WHAT TO EXPECT*

**The Folk Circle** is always held on the second Friday of the month in St John's Parish Hall or the church sanctuary at 8 Sunnyside Avenue in Pleasantville.

We begin at 8PM, but you can come a little early to tune up or catch up with friends.

There is a \$5 donation requested to cover our free refreshment table.

People sit in a circle and share their songs and poetry until about 11. You may just come and listen.

**The Open Mike** is held on the day after the Folk Circle from September thru April, unless preempted by other activities.

We set up the stage and lights and sound and if you are brave, you sign up between 6:30 and 7:30 and you will be assigned a time slot for your performance. Newcomers get to choose their performance time!

Everyone gets 8 minutes of stage time for two songs (more or less).

Expect to pay \$10 at the door, performers and audience alike for the evening's entertainment and free food.

If you have questions, call Jim at (914) 282-2542.

Thanks to St John's for the use of this wonderful space. Please consider making clothing donations for Midnight Run, food for the Food Pantry and don't forget St John's Thrift Shop, open Mondays and Saturdays from 10am-2pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Dirlam

### **Pleasantville Community Garden at St. John's**

2018 was another great year for the Pleasantville Community Garden at St John's.

We donated a total of 15,700 pounds of fresh food this year from our gardens, collecting at the Farmers Market and through special collection events, bringing our total donation since 2014 to 61,452 pounds!

We continue to donate to the organizations we have been supporting – Hillside Food Outreach, Neighbor's Link in Mt Kisco and 2 A-Home Houses. We are currently considering adding a new organization for support during the heavy growing season.

We continue to work with many community organizations in the work that we do – boy scouts, girl scouts, brownies, PHS ASP program and the TicTacGo group (young adults with learning disabilities) and a number of youth groups from the area. We were able to also work with a number of kids who used our garden as a community service project to help earn program awards – 3 Girl Scouts earning their Silver Award, 2 Boy Scouts earning their Eagle Scout award and 4 youths achieving their Bar Mitzvah or Bat Mitzvah.

We have strong representation of St John's on our Board – with alongside the Juros family, Mother Mary, Deacon Lynn, Sarah Hoadley and Beth DeVito all helping to steer the organization. We would like to give Rosemary Carlough and her family a big thank you for helping to deliver the A-Home produce weekly during the growing season.

Thank you for 5+ years of support! Please email us at [info@pvillegarden.org](mailto:info@pvillegarden.org) if you would like to help out. We love volunteers of all ages and always need help gardening, collecting at the Farmers Market, drivers to deliver to the organizations we support as well as helping us organizationally.

Thank you!

Devin, David and Margot Juros



## **Section VII: Finance**

### **Stewardship Report**

The 2019 stewardship drive has concluded with 43 Confirmed Pledging Units and 6 anticipated Pledging Units. That total includes 3 new Pledging Units but is also net of 5 Pledgers that have moved away or left St. John's. However, there are approximately 6 Pledgers who have not returned their pledge cards to date.

To calculate the value of pledges for our 2019 Budget, I have analyzed 2 separate groups:

⇒ Confirmed 2019 Pledging Units—43

⇒ Anticipated 2019 Pledging Units—6

For the first group, the total value of the pledges stands at \$103,966, similar to 2018. The average pledge for this group is \$2,488 a decrease by about \$1,300.

In the second group, there are 6 anticipated Pledging Units that, from analysis of previous years, should pledge approximately \$4,400.

The total pledge amount, then, is estimated to be \$108,366. Please note, to enable accurate budgeting, it is imperative that those that have not returned a pledge card do so as soon as possible.

The 2019 pledge amount represents a significant decrease over 2018, which was estimated to be \$138,780. This decrease can be closely attributed to the 5 pledgers that have moved away. This group represents \$28,950 in lost pledge donations.

Respectfully submitted,

Christie Sturges

### **Diocesan Assessment**

The Episcopal Diocese determines a parish's assessment based upon an average of two years' income and based upon the diocese's budget.

In 2018, St. John's yearly assessment was \$17,484 and was paid in full by the end of 2018.

St. John's 2019 Calculated Apportioned Share is \$18,484.