



St. John's Episcopal Church  
74 Pleasant St.

Arlington, Massachusetts

Church Office phone: 781-648-4819

Church email: [admin@saintjohns-arlington.org](mailto:admin@saintjohns-arlington.org)

Web site: <http://www.saintjohns-arlington.org>

Annual Meeting  
January 24, 2021

Annual Reports For 2020

# Annual Parish Meeting

January 24, 2021

## AGENDA

Opening Prayer

Declaration of a Quorum

Necrology

Approval of Minutes from the 2020 Annual Meeting

Recognition of Vestry Members and Church Officers (retiring & continuing)

Presentation of Officers and Vestry Slate for 2021 Election

Presentation of Convention Delegate and Alewife Deanery Representatives for 2021 Election

Treasurer's Report for 2020 Financials and 2021 Budget

Acceptance and Discussion of 2020 Parish Reports

New Business

- Report Back of Mission Strategy Questions

Commissioning of Lay Leaders

Closing Prayer

**MINUTES**  
**St John's Episcopal Church, Arlington, MA**  
**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**January 26, 2020**

**Attendees** - Approximately 37 parishioners attended today's Annual Meeting.

**Opening Prayer** - led by Rev. Diane Wong

**Warden Report – Dorothy Mallam** Thanked all vestry members. She reminded the congregation that we are growing, that we all can get more involved in any way we can, that we have more outreach opportunities forthcoming, and that we all need each other so make our congregation strong.

Vestry members were all recognized:

|                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Dorothy Mallam, Warden | John Gibson, Treasurer |
| Cate Barr              | Mary Jo Larson         |
| Dorothy Commons        | Donna Sullivan         |
| Dawn Shearer (absent)  | Amy Meadows            |

Special thanks expressed to John Gibson for the wonderful contributions he has made over the years.

**2019 Annual Meeting Minutes:** 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes received, moved, second and voted yes.

**Nomination of new Vestry Members**

Candidates submitted a brief bio. Slate of new candidates was received, moved, seconded and voted yes.

Nomination motion was received, moved, seconded and voted yes.

Newly elected:

- co-warden: David Wilcox
- clerk: Dorothy Commons
- treasurer: Vern Brown
- vestry members: Amy Meadows, Julie Meadows, Donna Sullivan
- new deanery rep: Jackie Clermont
- new diocesan convention delegate: Christine Carney

Returning members: Warden: Dorothy Mallam, Members: Cate Barr, Dawn Shearer, Mary Jo Larson

**Treasurer's Report – Vern Brown – (Attachment)**

- Provided a high-level summary. Gave thanks for support – we are in excellent shape
- Presentation of the Summary of the 2019 finances
- Presentation of the 2020 Budget – amount per pledge has increased.

**Financial Report** including the 2020 budget was received, seconded, voted yes.

**Annual Report** was received, seconded and voted yes.

**New Business**

Christine Carney and Vern Brown gave a pitch to join the building committee. Rev. Wong gave a call for support and provided an overview of Youth Ministry. Rev. Wong also made a plea that ideas for Ministry do not have to come from leadership in the church. Anyone can suggest and do great things in collaboration.

**Commissioning** of wardens, vestry members, deanery representatives and diocesan convention delegates.

**Motion to Adjourn – moved, seconded and voted yes.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Dorothy Commons

## Rector's Report for 2020 - Reverend Diane Wong, Rector

“... and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” (*Romans 5:3-5*)

2020 was a turbulent and challenging year in many ways. The pandemic has affected the lives of every person worldwide, including us at St. John's. Even though we were not prepared for how it would affect our lives, looking back we seem to have adjusted pretty well. Since the end of March, we started moving into the Zoom world. My gratitude to all of you for your patience, support and commitment as we transition to the virtual way of being church. We were also fortunate that no one in our parish suffered from Covid-19 and no one experienced eviction or food insecurity. All of you were more than ready to share your blessings with those who needed support. Whether or not you were on the Vestry, you checked on one another regularly to see how they were doing. Thank you all for helping keep St. John's a caring community.

2020 was also the 145th anniversary of our parish. Bishop Carol Gallagher, Canon for the Central Region, celebrated the occasion with us by celebrating and preaching at our service on October 25th.

### **Governance:**

Many thanks to David Wilcox who graciously stepped forward to be co-warden with Dorothy Mallam. We welcomed Julie Meadows as our newest and youngest Vestry member. We continued our monthly Vestry meetings and the bi-weekly Wardens meeting with the Rector via Zoom. More than before, our Zoom coffee hour became an important venue for all of us to connect and share experiences. I like to thank the Vestry and the Wardens for helping the parish maintain a sense of community and cohesion. I am grateful that we could take advantage of this technology.

Many thanks to Jacquelyn Clermont who replaced Julie DiMilla to serve as our Alewife Deanery representative with Jennifer Butler. Christine Carney replaced Vicki Ford to serve as our Diocesan Convention Lay Delegate together with Joe Curro.

The Wardens and I attended all the Zoom meetings held by our diocese to provide us with safety and worship guidelines that support parishes and to keep us safe. Our diocese also established grants to help parishes meet challenges of the pandemic. St. John's applied for and received two grants - one in the amount of \$1,200 for upgrading our WiFi capability in the sanctuary and parish hall; another in the amount of \$3,000 for disinfecting the church before we regathered for in-person worship.

In late fall, our Vestry began a monthly book discussion on the book “Part-Time is Plenty: Thriving Without Full-Time Clergy” by G. Jeffrey MacDonald. The goal is to involve as many parishioners as possible in the life and ministries of the parish, to allow the gifts of the laity to flourish and to work collaboratively with the clergy and one another.

### **Parish Life:**

To sustain a sense of community during the pandemic,

- A Parish Retreat was held on the mornings of September 12th and 19th. The retreat was facilitated by the Rev. Anne Deneen and Suzanne Ehly, retreat leaders from Bethany House of Prayer.
- An online meditation group met every Friday in the fall, facilitated by Taposhi Biswas, Julie Meadows and Charlotte Pierce.
- A walking group also met every Friday afternoon from late fall to early winter.

**Stewardship:**

Out pledge campaign drive, which is one part of our year-round stewardship, was launched in November, 2020 by the Finance Committee and the Vestry. Jacquelyn Clermont and Joe Curro shared their experiences at St. John's as the pledge campaign witness. We were extremely grateful for the opportunities to serve those in our parish and beyond. For our vision, while continuing what we have started, we would particularly like to focus on the following for 2021:

- Continue to explore ways to maintain a sense of community virtually, connecting with members of our parish, and making sure that those who need a digital device will have one.
- Continue to be good stewards of God's creation by raising awareness about resource conservation, renewable energy, recycling as well as taking concrete steps in our community such as our church garden, community clean-ups, and learning more about conservation efforts.
- To begin plans to renovate the kitchen in the fall.
- Set priority to rent our parish hall to other non-profit organizations.

**Pastoral:**

Abbreviated funeral services were held for Madelyn Barton in May, and Dr. Patrick Seyon in October in respective funeral homes. Each was followed by a graveside service.

The wedding service for Mary Couch and Nate Armistead was postponed till 2021 due to Covid-19. They continued their pre-marital counseling sessions through 2020.

**Diocesan Life:**

- We hosted the Alewife Deanery Assembly in January.
- I was invited to be a member of the Racial Justice Commission in August.
- I was assigned to the Clergy Conference Planning Committee in September.

**Congratulations:**

Charles Nyamekye received his PhD from the University of Iowa in the summer and then moved back to MA.

I am confident that 2021 will be a brighter year for everyone and for the parish, and I look forward to the time when we can gather safely in person to worship, to meet, to socialize and carry out our ministries.

“Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.”  
(Ephesians 3:20-21)

Appreciatively,  
Diane+

## Co-Wardens' Report for 2020

This was a unique year to be a warden. I am so happy and proud that our Parish family has stayed together and supported each other through the pandemic, the closing of our church building and an upsetting political year. I am so grateful to Reverend Diane and the members of the Parish who have continued to reach out to support our community. One way in which we have moved forward has been a renewed effort and commitment to care of the environment and love of God's amazing Creation.

We looked for inspiration on how we might better support and care for God's Creation through our book discussion group which read Saying Yes to Life by Ruth Valerio. The group created an action plan of practical ways we could appreciate and improve the environment. Many of these items have already been accomplished. We held an outdoor service at Bethany House of Prayer in September and asked a speaker from our local Mothers Out Front organization to talk to us about what we can do locally, Emilia Blankson and Dorothy Mallam have joined this group so we can keep abreast of initiatives in our community and State. We would like to become advocates for legislation that will move a green agenda forward. Jan Ford, our gardener in chief, with the help of others figured out the best bush to plant in the front of the church and they have created a list of native plants that can be contributed on special occasions to plant in the church garden. David Wilcox, my fellow warden, has researched and made our church the receiver of 100% green energy. He has also informed us about the organization Tearfund which has a long history of addressing poverty and the care of our creation in an article for our Winter St. John's Newsletter. We hope to pursue our relationship with this organization in the future. Our Parish came up with a list of 13 Commandments to follow in our personal lives that will help our environment flourish more fully. We look forward to continuing to find ways to love and care for our environment in the coming year.

I am especially grateful for our active and supportive Vestry this year. As a group we have read and discussed the book Part-time is Plenty, Thriving without Full-time Clergy by G. Jeffrey MacDonald. Through these discussions we have become aware that Rev. Diane's part-time status is a permanent fact of life at St. John's. As part-time clergy with another profession as well, Rev. Diane cannot perform all the tasks expected of a full-time clergy. It is up to our Parishioners to use their talents and gifts to help St. John's thrive. We have come a long way since we almost closed our doors a few years back. Already we have seen growth in outreach to the community, financial commitment of the Parishioners, and new members have joined us. However, we want to do more to make sure we are a vital and thriving church in the future. The Vestry hopes to bring some lessons learned and ideas discussed to all church members in the future.

On a personal note, I want to say thank you to David Wilcox who stepped up to be my fellow Warden this year. I have learned that it is important that there be two Wardens at St. John's, so I have agreed to continue another year with David. I hope others will come forward to do this rewarding work next year.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dorothy Mallam, Co-Warden

## Co-Wardens' Report for 2020 (continued)

WOW what a year! The arrival of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and ensuing COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges to St. John's in 2020. On March 15, 2020 Governor Baker restricted gatherings to 25 people and the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts subsequently recommended halting in-person worship for public health reasons. St. John's held its last in-person worship on March 15th. In response to the pandemic appropriate cleaning and social distancing protocols were put in place allowing the church office to remain open for essential administrative purposes and Rev. Wong continued to use her office. All Sunday services switched to video, live-streaming services using a Zoom platform.

Beginning in June Diane, Dorothy and I began working closely with the Diocesan staff to begin the process of trying to safely re-gather for in-person services. A committee consisting of Cate Barr, Christine Carney, Dorothy Mallam, Donna Sullivan, David Wilcox, and Rev. Diane Wong met throughout the summer and fall developing a Diocesan-approved plan by which we could safely try to hold in-person services again. The committee met frequently and we so appreciate the time and energy they all put in coming up with a safe and realistic plan for us to gather in the Sanctuary again. As part of our plan, we contracted to have the Sanctuary thoroughly and professionally cleaned. We had planned this before the pandemic to help reduce the airborne dust and allergens in the Sanctuary and honestly the Sanctuary hadn't had a thorough deep cleaning in quite some time. We also called on Sharon Towle to work with the committee serving as a monitor to ensure appropriate social distancing and safety practices for all entering the Sanctuary for the in-person service.

Our first in-person, re-gathering service was held November 1, 2020 on All Saints' Day. This was a hybrid service that was live-streamed on Zoom and attended by a few parishioners in person. During in-person worship the Eucharist included only bread (individually wrapped wafers) as the administration of wine at the table posed too great a public health risk. Unfortunately, due to the rising number of infections throughout Massachusetts and the Boston-Metro region, we were required to close our in-person services following our service on November 22, 2020.

We continued to conduct live-streaming services on Zoom during Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. In-person worship will remain closed until the spread and incidence of COVID-19 in Massachusetts has been sufficiently reduced to allow for the safe gathering of parishioners in the Sanctuary.

Despite our having to resort to services on Zoom, we have had wonderful attendance for our services. John Gibson and Jackie Maurer have served as our technical consultants trying to figure out the technology for live streaming services from the Sanctuary. Kathleen McDougald-Lee has coordinated delightful arrangements of music during our live streaming and has included a number of delightful soloists, including John Gibson, Louis Steptoe, Todd Brunel, and Kendra Comstock. We have been blessed to gather together virtually and our lively streaming coffee hours on Zoom have been a welcome opportunity for people to stay connected in what has been a difficult time for everyone.

One very significant change at St. John's brought about by the pandemic was the use of our building space. Our numerous renters who routinely rented space from us could no longer safely meet in the building. St. John's derives significant income from renting our space and we wrestled with how to manage this impact on our finances. Fortunately, as the renters were prohibited from using our space, Arlington EATS Market required more space and were willing to pay for additional use of the Parish Hall. Since they were designated an essential service, they could continue to operate with appropriate safety precautions. They switched their service from pick-up to delivery and converted the Parish Hall into a full-time food distribution center. The need for Arlington EATS' service has grown tremendously during

the pandemic; they are distributing food to over 200 families in Arlington each week, and we are so pleased that St. John's could help them achieve their goals and serve the greater community.

Despite all the challenges of this year for St. John's there have also been so many small blessings along the way that have made the year quite special. Our book discussion on Zoom have been wonderful and have provided a way to get to know one another that may not have been the same had we been meeting in person on a weekly basis. I have also enjoyed working with my Co-Warden, Dorothy Mallam. We each bring different talents to our job and Dorothy's perspective and sensibilities have been so important as we've navigated the challenges we've encountered over the last year. I am overjoyed Dorothy has decided to stay on as Co-Warden for an extra year and I think all of us will benefit tremendously from her leadership and commitment to our St. John's community. Next year, as my term expires and Dorothy's additional year comes to a close, St. John's community will need to elect two new Wardens to take the helm.

Respectfully submitted,  
David Wilcox, Co-Warden



# NOMINATIONS OF OFFICERS FOR ST. JOHN'S FOR 2021

## Wardens

Dorothy Mallam: Dorothy's term has expired. She has agreed to serve until January 2022

David Wilcox David's term expires in January 2022

## Vestry Members

### New Members

Christine Stevens

Lauree Shampine

### Continuing Members

Mary Jo Larson

Amy Meadows

Julie Meadows

Donna Sullivan

### Retiring Members

Cate Barr

Dorothy Commons

Dawn Shearer

## Clerk

Dorothy Commons (Retiring)

Julie Meadows (New Clerk)

**Treasurer:** Vernon Brown (Continuing)

**Assistant Treasurer:** Sharon Towle (Continuing)

## Alewife Deanery Representative

### New Member

Cate Barr

### Continuing Member

Jacque Clemont

### Retiring Member

Jennifer Butler

## Diocesan Convention Delegates

### New Member

Mary Jo Larson

### Continuing Member

Christine Carney

### Retiring Member

Joe Curro

# Committee Annual Reports for 2020

## Finance Committee Annual Report for 2020

**\*\* Please See Attachments \*\***

## Christian Education 2020 Annual Report

### **Adult Christian Education:**

Two book discussion groups were held:

1. The spring book discussion group was held in May:
  - There were seven weekly discussion sessions on the book “Saying Yes to Life” by Ruth Valerio
  - We came up with 13 Commandments to protect the environment.
2. Fall book discussion group was held from October - mid December
  - There were ten weekly discussion sessions on the book “Reading the Bible Again for the First Time” by Marcus Borg

In addition, a 6-week Deanery Adult Forum was held in November on Saints and Holy Super Heroes:

- Reverend Diane presented the Rev. Florence Li, Tim-Oi at one of the sessions.

It was gratifying to have around 13 people participate in each of the discussion groups, and different participants led lively and rich discussions each week.

### **Youth Ministry:**

After much planning, our Youth Ministry was launched in February. The group met in person in February and March. In April, because of Covid-19, we tried having the teens meet virtually, and then we suspended the gathering until conditions change. An average of 7-8 teens participated, with three from St. John’s, and the others through the connections of Bethany Eisenberg.

Many thanks to Molly Blaauw Gillis, Adam Pachter, Cate Barr, Laura Manion, Julie Meadows and Bethany Eisenberg for their support and leadership.

### **Church School**

“Jesus called the children to him and said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.’” Luke 18:16 NIV

Starting September 2020, I was given the opportunity to teach two Sunday Schools on Zoom—for St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in Cambridge and St. John’s Episcopal Church in Arlington. There is a total of 8 students who attend regularly. I am pleased to share that the kids are very attentive and always engage with the class. This has also been a great way for the kids to get to know each other.

I have been conducting the class on Zoom at 10 AM and we have been following the lectionary page as well as the Living in the Goods News Curriculum. During our 30-40-minute Zoom class we usually go over the gospel and we have a discussion. After the discussion I show a short video based on the gospel reading (this is more so for the visual learners) to get a better understanding of the lesson. After the video we do a little activity, and the kids would show what they have drawn to the class. Lastly, if there is time, we usually do some singing and end with the Lord’s Prayer.

During the Advent season, we could not make the Advent wreaths in person at St. Peter’s. However, I was able to conduct an Advent Wreath Workshop with the St. Peter’s parishioners which was coordinated by Joe Kimmel. It was a great experience. For the Church School, the kids and I drew out our Advent wreaths and labeled each candle and spoke about the meaning of Advent and what each candle signifies. I

hope that once everything goes back to normal the students and I will be able to make our own Advent wreaths in person.

During the Christmas season, I wanted the kids to do something/ take part in the Christmas service. I thought it would be a nice idea to do a Zoom Christmas Pageant, which was something I have never done before. I was so happy with the outcome. The kids did an amazing job, and I could not have been prouder of them. The parents also really helped a lot by getting their costumes prepared and ready for the pageant, I am grateful for that.

Overall, I am happy that the kids are showing up consistently and it looks like they are enjoying it! I try to do something different each Sunday so they can look forward to the next class! This has certainly been a wonderful experience to work with the children, by sharing the word of God through our activities each Sunday. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Rev. Derrick, and Rev. Diane for their guidance and support. Hoping the year 2021 will be a better year for us all and looking forward to continuing to serve God through the Children Ministries at St. Peter's and St. John's.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chirusha de Mel, Church School Coordinator  
Reverend Diane Wong, Rector

### Liturgical Ministry 2020 Annual Report

I would like to thank all of you for your patience as we transitioned from in-person to on-line worship, and trying to resolve technical challenges and Zoom protocols to make the worship services as smooth as possible. From March - August, our service took place in the Memorial Room. When our Wifi capability in the sanctuary was upgraded, the service was moved to the church. For Communion, adhering to diocesan Communion guidelines, I chose the option of receiving the bread and wine on behalf of all of you.

We applied and received a grant of \$1,200 from the diocese to upgrade our wifi capability. After talking to four electricians, we had Carlos Marquez accomplish the task for us under the guidance of John Gibson. The project was completed in early September.

#### **Much appreciation to:**

- Many of you who made yourself available to be Lectors every Sunday,
- Sharon Towle who did the set-up and take-down for all our Sunday on-line services,
- David Glauner and Douglas McDougald, family of Kathleen McDougald-Lee; and John Gibson, who helped improve the quality of the sound of our music over Zoom.
- Kathleen McDougald-Lee for making sure we had good music and singing every Sunday.
- Todd Brunel, Louis Steptoe and John Gibson for offering their gifts of music.
- Jackie Maurer for her technical advice.
- Our diocesan staff for their pre-recorded sermons so clergy could have a break in preaching.
- Adam Pachter as our lay preacher.
- Our children who participated in the Zoom Christmas Pageant.

A special thank you to the Re-gathering Team who worked with a fine-tooth comb according to the diocesan guidelines and with the diocesan Re-gathering Shepherd, to make it possible for us to have in-person service which began on All Saints Sunday. For four Sundays, we had both in-person service and Zoom service at the same time. By late November, because of the surge in the number of infections, we went back to strictly online services again.

**Special services:**

- Two Dreamers in the DACA program, Gladys Martinez and Reina Guevara, shared their stories and experiences with us at our Sunday worship on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020.
- We held an outdoor service at the garden of St. Anne's Convent at the end of September to celebrate the season of Creation Care. Our speaker for that service was Ann Wright of Mothers Out Front. Jackie Maurer and Lauree Shampine made it possible for people to join the outdoor service via Zoom.
- Bishop Carol Gallagher was our preacher and celebrant on October 25<sup>th</sup> when we celebrated the 145<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. John's. David Birch and his family joined our service via Zoom from Scotland.
- Our Christmas Eve service was heart-warming even though it was on Zoom. The children of St. John's and St. Peter's made the Christmas Pageant possible. Chirusha de Mel put together the different pre-recorded parts and edited them into an adorable video. Four choir members sang their individual parts for the Christmas hymns and Todd Brunel put the different parts together to create a video for each hymn. Bishop Alan Gates provided a sermon for the diocese to use.

Respectfully submitted,  
Reverend Diane Wong, Rector

## **St. John's Music Program 2020 Annual Report**

This year has been different to say the least. By the middle of March the church shut down and we were on Zoom. It started out rough. I only had an iPad and that I found out didn't work very well with Zoom. Then David, my son-in-law, lent me his laptop with a really good microphone. So then I decided that we really needed singers or a singer. John Gibson has a really nice voice. He was willing to come to my place about once a month. There is Ajda Snyder and Kendra Comstock. We have been paying them to come once a month. Then last year I met Jessica Cooper. She is an excellent soprano and teaches voice at U. Mass Boston. She agreed to sing once a month in exchange for me teaching her daughter piano lessons. So our singers are John Gibson, Ajda Snyder, Kendra Comstock, and Jessica Cooper. We also have an excellent violinist in the congregation, Louis Steptoe -- a graduate of Eastman School of Music. He has played several times this year. I must not forget to mention Todd Brunel who is a professional clarinetist. He has also played several times this year and he is also technically savvy. On the Christmas Eve program Diane wanted a choir, so Louie and I played all the hymns -- violin and organ -- and Douglas, my son, recorded that. Todd sent the recording of Louie and me to the choir - Vernon Brown, John Gibson, Sarah Phillips and Jessica Cooper. They recorded themselves at their houses then sent their recordings to Todd and he put the whole thing together. Technology is great when you know what you are doing.

Going forward, probably until summer or fall, we will have one singer each Sunday, and when the occasion arises, violin with Louie or Ishmael or clarinet with Todd.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathleen McDougald-Lee, Organist and Choir Director

## Altar Guild 2020 Annual Report

Members: Cate Barr, Christine Carney, Jan Ford, Frank Foster, Jr., Carol Hoover, Mary Jo Larson, Dorothy Mallam and Sharon Towle

Before I begin the formal report, I want to thank Betty Butler who retired from the guild this year. She was tireless in her support of the altar guild. She never missed her week and her willingness to do the linens meant there were always impeccably cleaned and ironed towels, corporals and purificators. But even more than that she always shared kindness and care to all the members of the guild. Thank you, Betty.

This has been a most unique year for the altar guild. I could never have imagined that we would be Zooming services. Sharon Towle took on setting up for the services when we moved to the remote format as she was already in the building. The altar has been moved to a table at the front of the chancel where the eucharist is set for Diane, alone. For a very few weeks, the church was opened for socially distant services and individually wrapped wafers were available to parishioners although there was no sharing of the wine. Unfortunately, as the pandemic surged again, we needed to return to remote services. We have begun doing our regular rotations and are most grateful to Sharon for her support in the past several months. We look forward to the day when we can share in the weekly preparation of the altar and for the special services. In 2021, we will see very different Lenten and Easter seasons.

I am including a paragraph about the altar guild in a much more normal year in hopes that we will be back before this year ends. We would love to have new members joining us in this ministry.

The altar guild normally prepares the altar for weekly services as well as funerals, baptisms and the special services during Easter and Christmas. The members of the altar guild are focused entirely on maintaining the altar for services and caring for the sanctuary. We are a supportive group who willingly help each other out when needed. We work in teams of two members for each weekend and each team is able to work out the best arrangement for them to set up and clear the altar. This is a very small commitment of time once a month. All of us appreciate the opportunity to offer our time to serve the parish and often find the opportunity to set the altar as a quiet and contemplative period that we would never have otherwise. We always welcome new members and would arrange training around your schedule when it is safe to do so.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jan Ford, Coordinator

# Outreach

## Mission Tithe Program - Guatemala Aid Fund – 2020 Annual Report

St. John's is a partner with Guatemala Aid Fund (GAF), an Arlington non-profit organization that supports effective programs in Guatemala City and Solola district on education, environment, employment, and empowerment. An important project is completing construction of a new community center which will house medical services, education, and training programs in Solola. Last year GAF built a new parenting support center in Guatemala City. St. John's members have planned a mission trip to these programs with a grant from the Massachusetts Diocese, which had to be postponed because of the pandemic.

Read the 2019-2020 GAF report card by following this link:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/19O\\_ulC0atewfVTD5qsxx\\_wKDJNPun94Y/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/19O_ulC0atewfVTD5qsxx_wKDJNPun94Y/view?usp=sharing). Or if you prefer, visit the GAF website at <http://www.guatemalaaidfund.org/>. Please consider a donation to this program as you consider your holiday gift-giving. Thank you from the Guatemala Aid Fund Board.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Jo Larson, Parishioner

## St. John's Coffeehouse Concerts 2020 Annual Report

*"Music speaks what cannot be expressed, soothes the mind and gives it rest, heals the heart and makes it whole, flows from heaven to the soul." — Anonymous*

In 2020, we produced two live shows in January and February before the pandemic shutdown, and one online concert in June with 18 musicians which raised more than \$3,500 for FoodLink. These were recorded and continue to be hosted on the St. John's Coffeehouse YouTube channel, on our Facebook page, and on the ACMI.TV on-demand channel.

The concerts at St. John's Coffeehouse support St. John's core mission of evangelism, about which Rev. Wong often speaks. Not only does the music honor and nurture creativity by bringing live music to live audiences in our community, but the shows also benefit the community outreach missions of St. John's. Our benefit focus remains on Arlington and regional social-support organizations. We have delivered significant funds to Arlington EATS Market (formerly the Arlington Food Pantry), FoodLink, Housing Corporation of Arlington, (HCA), and NEAT Community Dinners. Other benefit relationships with community organizations are in development.

**Gratitude:** We give thanks to the 2020 Coffeehouse Crew: Charlotte Pierce, John Gibson, Christine Carney, Christine Stevens, Victoria Ford, Frank Foster, Adam Pachter, Mary Jo Larson, David Wilcox, Cate Barr, Dorothy Mallam, Joe Curro. Non-parishioner and professional musician Lori Diamond has provided key assistance with booking and publicity.

**Inreach:** Parishioners who are involved in producing the concerts are deeply moved by the music, and their work serves to deepen their connection to St. John's and to our core mission. Bringing the Coffeehouse in as part of St. John's outreach in 2019 provided a greater esprit de corps, and in 2020 we continued our work to assemble a crew not only to put out the word but also to broaden skills into live

streaming, video recording, editing, and broadcasting. This growth made it possible for us to record high quality videos of our performances for broadcast on Arlington Community Media, Inc. (ACMI),

Arlington's community access station. ACMI members collaborated to help us record and edit recordings before the pandemic shut down live shows. Then, when we launched online concerts, their assistance was critical in making the technology work and getting the word out.

Since the Coffeehouse Concerts started in 2012, we have used Google Drive, Groups, and Documents for tracking and communication, as do many other parishes and similar organizations. This has allowed for effective coordination, especially during the pandemic, by our busy crew and performers.

**Outreach:** The Coffeehouse Concerts have increased visibility for St. John's, and have been a significant catalyst for bringing in new people to services. Residents of Arlington and surrounding towns receive concert notices through our mailing list; our Twitter account @stjohns02476; Google Plus (Coffeehouse Concerts); and Facebook.com (stjohnsconcerts); and ArtsArlington.org, which is linked to ArtsBoston.org. We place digital and written announcements in the Arlington Advocate, and digital announcements on thebostoncalendar.com, Patch.com, and other sites. The Coffeehouse is also a managing partner of the Arlington Cultural District, and part of the St. John's booth on Town Day. We continue to invite the audience to suggest musicians, and to reach out to local businesses to become sponsors. We have a dedicated Gmail account, stjohns02476@gmail.com, and include the St. John's office phone on all flyers, emails, articles, and notices. We are listed on Google Maps, which directs a significant amount of internet traffic to our website.

We continue to reach out to the community to enlist volunteers, regardless of parish membership. We support musicians after the concert by sharing their news and concert information. As noted previously, non-member volunteers from ACMI were especially valuable in helping the crew to upgrade their skills and make quality video recordings of several performances. We continue to compare the performance of our digital and printed advertising efforts, which has led us to focus more on digital advertising and leverage free social media platforms.

**Sponsorship:** Our list of sponsors includes PiercePress.com & DayTripperBooks (which sponsors the ReverbNation subscription of \$10/month); Arlington Community Education, and Arlington Community Media, Inc. Due to the pandemic, we didn't progress as far as we planned on acquiring sponsors in 2020. The crew asks parishioners to reach out to more local businesses for sponsorships, item donations, and collaborations, which can include discounts for advance ticket holders.

**Schedule:** In 2020, St John's Coffeehouse Concerts marked our 8th year of operation. Until we can resume live concerts, we intend to continue to host virtual concerts. Our long-term schedule is embedded on the St. John's website, [saintjohns-arlington.org/coffeehouse-concerts](http://saintjohns-arlington.org/coffeehouse-concerts) and we refer to that website in messaging whenever possible

**Financials:** Ticket Prices: \$12/\$15 for students, vets, seniors, and disabled individuals, \$10 for parishioners & neighbors (1/2-mile radius) in advance; \$15/\$18 at door; See treasurer's report for cash flow.



**Outlook:** In 2021, the Coffeehouse will focus on several areas of activity:

1. Broaden engagement by the community to bolster overall awareness of St. John's missions and offerings.
2. Build partnerships with community and regional organizations to increase attendance at the concerts and attract financial sponsors.
3. Plan further in advance and list events sooner to maximize efforts spent on production and publicity.
4. Set up a Musician Relief Fund to support performers affected by the pandemic.
5. Look for grants to fund advertising and strengthen our crew's publicity skills.
6. We have begun discussions on hosting externally produced concert-type events at St. John's, probably in 2022 if we are beyond the pandemic.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charlotte Pierce

### **Modified City Reach – 2020 Annual Report**

Ministering to the unhoused is the focus of City Reach. Due to the pandemic, the usual sleepover program for teenagers to learn about homelessness was suspended for 2020. Instead, City Reach invited different parishes to give contributions of winter clothing items. There were two different dates for dropping off the items - December 9<sup>th</sup> and Jan. 19<sup>th</sup>. Because of your generosity of spirit and mindfulness of those in need, St. John's was able to drop off a good quantity of items on both dates.

Part of the contribution came from left-over contributions (\$425.00) for Holiday Help. Thank you to all of you, and especially to Cate Barr, Dorothy Commons and Donna Sullivan.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Reverend Diane Wong, Rector

### **Holiday Help 2020 Annual Report**

St. John's participated in the Town of Arlington's Holiday Help, an effort that is organized by the Town of Arlington, Arlington Youth Consultation Center, and Arlington Housing Authority that provides gifts and necessities to Arlington families in need. This year due to COVID-19 individual families were not assigned; instead, donations of gift cards were requested. Members of our parish were extremely generous and donated \$900 worth of gift cards to the Holiday Help program.

Here is a thank you from the Town's holiday help program organizers: "Your generosity this year for the gift certificates was just over the top! With your help, we raised close to \$50,000. So we were able to give each child a gift certificate for \$175!! We helped 229 children and 123 families. Please forward this thank you to all the givers in your community, so they know how much it is truly appreciated! THANKS AGAIN!!!" from Patsy Kraemer, Lori Talanian, and Janet Doyle, Holiday Help Program

Please note that all donations received by St. John's after the Holiday Help program's deadline were donated to the cathedral on the common's City Reach program.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christine C. Carney

## Neighbors Eating All Together (NEAT) 2020 Annual Report

Neighbors Eating All Together (NEAT) needed to pivot in 2020 to achieve our outreach mission of community-building over a seated free dinner, and helping food insecure residents. We as a team have met via zoom, brainstormed, collaborated and made progress which we will bring into 2021.

NEAT was able to serve two dinners in the beginning of 2020, but by March, we suspended our monthly dinners due to Covid-19. In trying to understand the pandemic, we met a few times during the spring and summer to see how we could contribute to the ever-rising need for food in Arlington. Through the help of local community services groups like Arlington Council on Aging, Arlington EATS, Food Link, and The Retired Men's Club, we were able to be part of an amazing collaboration to donate **150 Thanksgiving meals**. The food was prepared by Something Savory, a local minority-owned catering company with whom we've partnered for our seated dinners. We look forward to continued work with Something Savory in 2021.

Our Thanksgiving collaboration with Something Savory jump-started our new soup program! Something Savory works with Food Link directly to gather fresh ingredients for soup which is now prepared at High Rock Church's kitchen (they're donating their space and equipment for free!) and once the soup is prepared and cooled, we label containers and lids, freeze it at either High Rock or St. John's, and then Food Link distributes it to Arlington groups in need. Note, distribution to needy communities outside of Arlington is being considered for future frozen soup production.

We are actively updating our website, Facebook presence, and other communication to remind folks of our dinners and encourage them to come join us when it will be safe to gather again. We are working on fundraising and we've been awarded, again this year, grant money from the Diocese.

Further, NEAT is now a 501C-3 non-profit, which will allow us to fundraise more directly and grow our programming when our non-profit status is official in February 2021.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Manion, President & the NEAT Team

## St. John's Garden 2020 Annual Report

Many thanks go out to Vern Brown, Cate Barr and Jan Ford for the continuing commitment to caring for the garden and for mulching and weeding the side garden, the front foundation plantings, and the area around the stairs. Kudos as well to Cate, Vicki Ford and Charlotte Pierce who took on the watering duties during the heat of the summer and who carefully monitored rainfall before watering.

Both the lower and upper garden are beginning to "leap" and fill out. Unfortunately, our resident rabbits which appear to have a large extended family with voracious appetites, have eaten several plants to the ground. With some monetary and plant donations from parishioners, we have added different native plants that are less appetizing to the bunnies. We continue to use native plants for their importance in providing food for pollinators that in turn help to pollinate food crops along with our gardens. We have not used any pesticides as the plants (those that are not rabbit food) have been thriving and the birds have been taking care of bugs and larva.

Neighbors and passers-by may stop and sit or stop and admire, often commenting on how much they enjoy the garden.

We added a small rhododendron to the front yard near the signs and will be adding some native hollies that provide winter food for the birds and beauty to the property.

Donations for the garden are always welcome.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jan Ford

## **Property Committee 2020 Annual Report**

A number of projects were accomplished this year with leadership from Committee members and volunteers. In addition, many projects came in under budget. We estimate that the total expended on these projects was \$35,000. The most critical accomplishment of 2019 and 2020 was finishing the masonry repointing at the front of the church. This allowed the building to be significantly free from effects of weather and for us to go forward with other repairs and replacements for future generation users of our church property. The property committee, in spite of Covid-19, was able to meet regularly keeping social distancing, and was able to start to accomplish some significant planning for the future.

### **Accomplishments:**

1. Finished Masonry repointing at tower and church front facade
2. Gutter repair over office entrance.
3. Boiler condensate tank replacement, also determination that heat exchanger did not need replacement.
4. Contracted for asbestos abatement in boiler room.
5. Recharged all fire extinguishers for the next five-year period.

### **Property Committee Planning for 2021**

The Committee is seeking additional volunteers with interest and/or special expertise in property projects. Even if you do not have technical skills, the Committee welcomes volunteers who can help make appointments and arrangements with potential contractors or can conduct research to gather planning information. You can contribute to the research and planning for the Committee as we make plans for several new and ongoing projects, including:

1. Remodeling the kitchen -- this remodel will best be done in the fall of 2021
2. Replace sewer drain to the street
3. Re-slope sidewalk/pad at ADA tower door to meet ADA standard
4. Maintain/co-ordinate boiler, watering system, landscaping, snow removal
5. Co-ordinate church painting, signage, window maintenance
6. Plan for future organ maintenance and repairs
7. Plan for future additional elevator repairs and replacement
8. Plan for stained glass window maintenance and repair.
9. Long range planning for 3 to 5 year estimates to include in a future Capital Campaign

The Committee is thankful to the many volunteers who donated their time and labor to these projects (especially the beautiful garden) and to generous donors who made special gifts that helped offset the costs of some of these projects.

Respectfully submitted,  
Vernon Brown, for the Property Committee

## Alewife Deanery 2020 Annual Report

The Alewife Deanery began 2020 in wonderful style with the January 30<sup>th</sup> meeting hosted by none other than St. John's! The evening included check-ins on next steps for the Creation Pledge (environment); a presentation on the Global Mission in South Africa, Cuba, and Guatemala (Rev. Diane helped present!); a discussion of the Deanery grants; prayer; delicious food and wonderful company.

Then came March 2020 and COVID19. The Alewife Deanery cancelled the Alewife Deanery Assemblies on March 31<sup>st</sup> and May 6<sup>th</sup> and extended the Deanery grants deadline from March 31<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>. St. John's applied for a \$600 Sending Serving grant.

In the fall, Jacquie Clermont took over for Julie DiMilla as a St. John's Alewife Deanery representative. THANK YOU Julie for your Alewife Deanery work!

On September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, the Alewife Deanery gathered virtually to see one another, to complete our grants process for 2020, and to listen and pray together. One person from each congregation spoke about how their congregation had been keeping faith in this time – Laura Manion spoke about St. John's and the NEAT dinners. Discussions included the grant recommendations and extending the terms of the Deanery Co-Conveners (Cathy and Stephen), given the challenges a transition would present in this pandemic time. And Dave Olsen reminded parish delegates to prepare for the Diocesan Convention, November 7<sup>th</sup>, online.

We did not have a quorum at our September 3<sup>rd</sup> Zoom Alewife Deanery meeting, so we did a virtual/email vote:

- #1) We approved the Deanery Grant recommendations (St. John's was awarded a \$300 Sending Serving grant for the NEAT dinners);
- #2) We re-elected Stephen Steadman and Cathy Venkatesh as Deanery Co-Conveners.

October 2020 brought the "Alewife Saints and Holy Superheroes" online learning series on Thursday evenings from October 15<sup>th</sup> - November 19<sup>th</sup>. As Dave Olsen explained: "...clergy from churches in our Alewife Deanery will take turns offering a reflection on a saint or 'holy superhero' who inspires their own 'holy living' in chaotic times. Then there will be time for all those present to engage in small group discussion about the saint. The differing saints presented will come from many times throughout history and will include those of different races and genders." Our own Rev. Diane led the October 22<sup>nd</sup> session, speaking about The Rev. Dr. Florence Li Tim-Oi, the first woman to be ordained in the Anglican Communion in 1944.

Then Thanksgiving...and Advent...and Christmas...and Epiphany. Whoosh! That brings us to January, 2021. Happy New Year, everyone!

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer Haines Butler, St. John's Alewife Deanery Representative

## **Flower Fund 2020 Annual Report**

In 2020 few services were held in the Sanctuary due to the pandemic; therefore no flowers were on the altar for most of the year. However, those who were to be remembered with flowers had their names printed in each Sunday's bulletin.

Respectfully submitted,  
Miriam E. Davison, Flower Secretary

## **Parish Historian 2020 Annual Report**

"History is a pattern of timeless moments" is one of my favorite quotations. In 2020, we all experienced a wide variety of quite different kinds of moments.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we gathered on a Zoom platform each Sunday except for a few Sundays in November which were both in person and on Zoom. We gathered for book discussions and for exercise on Zoom. Despite all that we, our community, and our country experienced and endured in 2020, we are still connected to each other as members of St. John's Church, a very vibrant parish of the Diocese of Massachusetts and a part of the worldwide Anglican communion.

So, I give thanks now for all the good we did together as a Church in 2020: worship by Zoom and at St Anne's outside, group meetings by Zoom, book discussion groups "Saying Yes to Life" and "Reading the Bible Again for the First Time", 97 containers of soup frozen at St John's delivered through Food Link, and our 145<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration with Bishop Gayle Harris, to name just a few. I believe all of us to be faithful Christian people. Christian people who are faithful must always expect the Lord Jesus to act through them in new ways for good in the world and for the betterment of all people.

Respectfully submitted,  
Frank Foster, Jr. - Parish Historian