



St. John's

EPISCOPAL CHURCH
COLD SPRING HARBOR



2023 Annual Meeting:
Growing in Grace
Sunday, April 14, 2024



St. John's

EPISCOPAL CHURCH
COLD SPRING HARBOR

Dear Members, friends, and supporters of St. John's,

The Easter season is a rich time to have an annual meeting. In this season we cannot forget that with God all things are possible- including resurrection. All things are possible- including the growth and transformation of our faith community. We know, because it is happening right in front of us.

Here are some more headlines:

Our youth and family programming is as strong as it has ever been. We have more people volunteering as Sunday School teachers, youth group leaders, Confirmation mentors and teacher, and nursery volunteers than we have ever seen. A Sunday does not pass without the Nursery staffed, or our Sunday school operational with a full complement of volunteers. This is all due to Mary Beth's commitment to building that program.

Here's another: Our BlueGreen Theology initiatives are about to experience a dramatic expansion. Not only have we won a grant to support a study of the health of our pond and waterway, but this spring our long-awaited meditation garden will open. Watch your emails for an invitation to that event once it is scheduled. This will be a significant moment in the life of that program, and we hope to grow our programming in that space in the future.

Another headline that cannot be overstated is that our Music Program is thriving and growing. If you have been to church lately, you will have seen that the choirs regularly fill and overflow the choir area behind the altar. I wonder if anyone can remember when this was last true. Not only that, but the choirs sound better than ever. Our youth and children's choirs are also excelling - just look back to our Lenten Musical which had record participation, or our service of Lessons and Carols. There are more kids involved than ever and they sound better than ever. Our bell choirs also are incredible and have expanded their repertoire and their skills dramatically. They regularly enhance our worship in moving ways. Our revitalized concerts program is the envy of many churches and artists are clamoring to be in our series. It is an unparalleled success. All of this is due to the relentless positive contributions of our Director of Music Bryce Westervelt and ably supported by the concerts committee and by Dr. Carol Weitner, our incredible organist.

Our Cemetery is preparing for its next chapter of life under new leadership with historic renovations of the cemetery garage and superintendent's house. We expect to hire a new superintendent soon. Our Rectory is finally getting the attention it needs to recover from the barn fire 3 years ago. There is much to be proud of.

Our programs are stronger than ever, but our base of financial support is not keeping pace with the costs of our excellent programs. We believe this can change. But we are living in a very real and tense moment in the life of our church: actively trying to build the church of the future in each moment of our life, and yet, without adequate financial support to witness courageously in this moment.

We have a long way to go. When you read our financial and stewardship reports you will see that we are working hard to correct our chronic underperformance in stewardship. There will be some changes to our stewardship practice in the coming year in the hopes of encouraging more people to become supporters of the church. There will also be some changes to encourage supporters to grow in their commitment of support to our church.

Our treasurer and finance committee have set a fiscally responsible budget for the church - but one that greatly reduces financial support for clergy staff in the coming year which will have impacts on our program. We currently do not have funding in our budget to fund a second clergy person, or curate, after June of this year. Without a curate many of the gains we have made in programming for youth, families and BlueGreen Theology will likely fall by the wayside.

This is a tense moment. It is a moment of decision. Like every moment, a lot hangs in the balance.

We have before us the opportunity to dare boldly, to support growth while we adapt to changing realities, or embrace a path of fiscal restraint which may hamper that same growth. Both are reasonable responses to the challenges of this moment.

We need your input and your support to navigate this moment. Please come to the meeting. Make your voice heard. Help us to discern our future and set our direction.

With every good wish and all my love, I remain,

Faithfully yours,



The Very Rev. Gideon L. K. Pollach
Rector

2023 Annual Meeting Agenda:

Opening Prayer	The Very Rev. Gideon L. K. Pollach, Rector
Call to Order/Ratify Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting	The Very Rev. Gideon L. K. Pollach, Rector
State of the Church Address	The Very Rev. Gideon L. K. Pollach, Rector
Program Update: BlueGreen Theology	The Rev. Mary Beth Mills-Curran, Curate
Program Update: Concerts by the Pond	Mr. Bryce Westervelt, Director of Music
Nominating Committee Report	TBD
Finance Committee Report	Mr. Jonathan Hatch, Treasurer
Stewardship Committee Report	Mr. Seamus Mitchell, Chair
Wardens' Report	Mr. Billy Wresch, Senior Warden
Hospitality Committee Report	Mr. Seamus Mitchell, Co-Chair
Adjournment	Mr. William Wresch, Senior Warden
Closing Prayer	The Very Rev. Gideon L. K. Pollach, Rector



THE RECTOR WARDENS AND VESTRY OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

Joe Bonventre, *Clerk*
Nancy Cashin
Sally Cynar
Kristin Dennehy

Scott Evans
James Hoover
Lindsay Kamdar
Matthew O'Connell

James Sanna
Mary Gay Townsend
Jack Weidinger

The Executive Committee:

The Very Rev. Gideon L. K. Pollach, *Rector*
William Wresch, *Warden*
Jeremy Bradford, *Warden*
Jon Hatch, *Treasurer*

THE CLERGY AND STAFF OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

The Very Rev. Gideon L. K. Pollach, *Rector*
The Rev. Mary Beth Mills-Curran, *Curate*
Claire Freas, *Nursery*
Danielle Holmes, *Financial Administrator*
Jaime Daggett, *Parish Administrator*
Viktoria Reres, *Children's Ministry*

Bryce Westervelt, *Director of Music*
Matteuzc Pelc, *Sexton*
Dr. Carol Weitner, *Organist*
The Rev. T. Carleton Lee, *Rector Emeritus*
Dr. Steven Finch, *Director of Music Emeritus*

PROGRAM MINISTRIES

BlueGreen Theology
Children Youth and Family
Music

The Rev. Mary Beth Mills-Curran
The Rev. Mary Beth Mills-Curran
Bryce Westervelt

COMMITTEES OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

Finance Committee

Jonathan Hatch, *Chair*
Jeremy Bradford
James Hoover
Gideon L. K. Pollach
William Wresch

Stewardship Committee

Seamus Mitchell, *Chair*
Joseph Bonventre
Trudy Calabrese
Sally Cynar
Kristin Dennehy
Lindsay Kamdar
William Wresch

Outreach Steering Committee

Laura Swiggett, *Chair*
Doug Arthur
Rebecca Bonventre
Nancy Cashin
Frank Gundersen
Ellen Hatch
Lindsay Kamdar
Gideon L.K. Pollach
Mary Gay Townsend

Cemetery Committee

James Sanna, *Chair*
Jeremy Bradford
Gideon L. K. Pollach
William Wresch

Buildings and Grounds

Scott Evans, *Chair*
William Wresch

Hospitality Committee

Winn Keaten, *Co-Chair*
Seamus Mitchell, *Co-Chair*

Nominating Committee

Anne Pace, *Chair*
Trudy Calabrese
William Wresch
Kristin Dennehy



Call to Order/Ratify Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting

Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting of St. John's Church, Cold Spring Harbor

The Annual Meeting for 2022 was held on Sunday, April 23, 2023. Sixty-one parishioners attended the in-person meeting in Bleeker Hall following a Morning Prayer service at 10am in the church.

Senior Warden Seamus Mitchell called the meeting to order at 10:56am and confirmed a quorum was present.

The Very Rev. Gideon L.K. Pollach, Rector led the assembly in an opening prayer.

Seamus Mitchell asked for a motion to ratify the Agenda for the meeting. Matt O'Connell moved and Warren Mazek seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Mitchell asked for any corrections to the minutes of the 2021 meeting held May 1, 2022. Hearing no corrections, he asked for a motion to ratify the minutes, moved by William Wresch, seconded by Mary Jo Balkind, The motion passed unanimously.

The State of the Church Address was given by The Very Rev. Gideon L. K. Pollach, Rector. (Summary, Thank yous, standing ovation for Seamus Mitchell)

The Nominating Committee Report was given by Anne Pace, committee chair.

Slate:

- William Wresch for a 2-year renewable term as Warden
- Lindsay Kamdar for a renewable 3-year vestry term
- Current vestry members Sally Cynar and Scott Evans for additional three-year terms

The committee's slate was presented as a motion seconded by Matt O'Connell. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

The delegates for the 2023 Diocesan Convention were announced: William Wresch, Anna Wresch, Joe Bonventre, and Danny Bonventre as Youth Delegate.

The Finance Report was given by Jon Hatch, Treasurer. Hal Crawford complimented the work of the parish Finance committee.

The Stewardship Report was given by Seamus Mitchell.

The Outreach Report was given by Laura Swiggett, Chair.

The Cemetery Report was given by James Sanna, Chair.

Remarks from Seamus Mitchell.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dan Barbiero, seconded by Trudy Calabrese.

The Very Rev. Gideon L. K. Pollach led the assembly in a Closing Prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 12:20pm.

Respectfully submitted by Susan Collins, *Respectfully submitted by Susan Collins, Clerk of the Vestry of St. John's Church*

State of the Church Report

The Very Rev. Gideon L. K. Pollach

Parish Register:

Baptisms

Emmett Henry Burt
Clement McConnell Lacroze
Dorothea Jane Lindsay
Robert Blaise Rahe Lindsay
Adelina Maria Rotellini
Lily Lane Schneider

Confirmations

Evan Christopher Amadori
Daniel Bonventre
Harold Adams Crawford
Jenna Sophie D'Elia
Emily Lynne Hotine
Julia Ruth Hotine
Logan MacPherson
Griffin MacPherson
Paige MacPherson
Taylor Peters
Callum Maher Steele
William Wresch

Memorial Services

Donald P. Allmann
Betty Bellato
Ann Van Arsdale Eberstadt Cannell
James Cleary
Diana M. Cinquemani-Fritze
Barbara Jean Kraft Comstock
Christian John Gutkowski
David Yost Hinshaw
Kara A. Lobdell
Robert Gordon Merrill
Judith McElwaine
John Papa
James William Schubauer
Emily Powers Swiggett

Weddings

Sarah Cullen and Robert Luthringer
Julia Dawber and Kevin Conklin

Nominating Committee Report

Mrs. Anne Pace, Chair

Consistent with St. John's Church By-Laws, the Nominating Committee has selected Junior Warden and Vestry candidates for terms beginning July 2024.

The Election of these candidates to the Vestry will be held at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, April 14, 2024. The Nominating Committee is led by Anne Pace and consists of parishioner Trudy Calabrese and Vestry Members William Wresch and Kristin Dennehy. After soliciting input from the Parish and prayerful deliberation these are our choices to stand in the election.

Please feel free to contact Anne Pace with any questions about the following nominees:

The Junior Warden serves a two-year term that is renewable once. The Vestry members serve a three-year term that is renewable once. The Candidate for Junior Warden is Lindsay Kamdar for an initial two-year renewable term. The Candidates for Vestry Member are Joseph Bonventre for his final, three-year term, Jonathan Hatch, for his final, three-year term, Kristin Dennehy for her final, three-year term, Todd Bertsch for a renewable three-year term, and Jacklyn Ryan for a renewable three-year term.

Brief biographies for Lindsay Kamdar, Todd Bertsch and Jacklyn Ryan appear below.

Lindsay Kamdar:

Lindsay was born and raised in Grosse Pointe, Michigan. She has two older sisters who live in Ohio and Massachusetts.



Her parents still live in Grosse Pointe. Lindsay and her husband, Dev, have three sons in the CSH School District. Owen (10) is in 5th grade, Anand (8) is in 2nd grade, and Kiran (5) is in Kindergarten. Before having children, Lindsay was a third grade teacher and a math interventionist in Chicago and Detroit. Today, Lindsay enjoys being involved in various committees in the community. She was President of the Executive Board at the Cold Spring Harbor Nursery School for two years, is on the Board at the North Shore Holiday House, and loves playing tennis, paddle, and skiing most weekends in the winter.

After moving to Lloyd Harbor in the summer of 2017, Lindsay began attending services at St. John's. She and her family became more active in the parish after that, officially joining the church in 2019. Lindsay is a member of the Outreach Committee at St. John's and she and her family have embraced the participation opportunities through Outreach, such as Community Solidarity.

Todd Bertsch:

Todd has been a steadfast resident of Long Island for the bulk of his life. Growing up in Manhasset and Oyster Bay, he moved to Cold Spring Harbor in the late 1990s. He has one older sister living in Austin and a brother in Locust Valley. His parents, accustomed to Florida's warmth, are planning a move to Huntington this summer, eager to become members of St. John's.



Since establishing himself in Cold Spring Harbor in the summer of 1998, Todd has been a consistent attendee at St. John's services. An enthusiast of the outdoors, he indulges in tennis, golf, and gardening. Todd is a father to three sons—Colin (23), Winn (20), and Beckett (13)—and a daughter, Merrill (12). Each of his children has journeyed through the CSH School District. Having had the rite of baptism at St. John's, Colin and Winn moved on to confirmation, while Beckett and Merrill are navigating that path currently. Their involvement extends to the annual Christmas Pageant at the church. Todd is keen to lend his aid to St. John's excellent leadership team, aiming to amplify the community's engagement through his role in the Vestry.

Jacklyn Ryan:



Jacklyn and her husband, Vlad, and their three children moved to Lloyd Harbor in 2021 and began attending St. John's that same year. Jacklyn is the Head of US Strategy for MetLife, where she is responsible for launching new businesses and transforming existing. Prior to MetLife, Jacklyn held leadership roles across American Express, spanning traditional payments within the commercial business to an innovative start-up focused on digital payments. Before entering the corporate world, Jacklyn was a management consultant, focused on financial services, working across the US and in Europe.

Jacklyn has a dual MBA in International Business from ENPC in Paris, France and Temple University, and a BA in Political Science from the University of Pennsylvania. She is actively involved in alumni and women's organizations. Jacklyn enjoys sailing and rowing, which she recently returned to after many years away from the sport.

Jaclyn and the children, Dylan (11), Luka (9), and Madelyn (7) regularly attend the 10am service and events throughout the year. From their first experience at St. John's, they have felt extremely welcomed. Jaclyn was honored to be considered for the vestry and looks forward to increased opportunities to connect with the St. John's community. Jaclyn enjoys being a Lector on Sunday mornings, hosting Breakfast Club with the children, and more recently participating in Caring Connection.

*Respectfully submitted by Anne Pace,
Chair of the Nominating Committee*

Finance Committee Report

Jonathan Hatch, *Treasurer*

During the year ended December 31, 2023, Total Operating Income (excluding draws from investments) of \$763,864 was lower than the budgeted amount of \$881,200. While Total Plate Collections of \$19,720 exceeded the budgeted amount of \$12,500, Total Contributions of \$561,408 was under the budgeted amount of \$776,000.

Total Expenses for 2023 were \$1,214,870, which was 4.7% higher than the budgeted amount. Expenses were reduced by about \$50,000 during the year and the line of credit was fully repaid in June. Fixed expenses continue to rise with inflation and the expansion of church programs come with increased expense.

The shortfall in Total Operating Income was made up through draws on the endowment fund and the preservation fund in the amount of \$400,000, which exceeded the budgeted amount by \$203,412. In 2023, these draws were \$75,000 more than the draws in 2022. For 2023 and 2022, the draws as a percentage of total cash and investments were 7.4% and 7.1%, respectively. We hope contributions will rise to exceed the expenses and allow us to replenish the endowment fund for the larger withdrawals in recent years.

Total cash and investments had an aggregate balance of \$5,757,855 as of December 31, 2023, which is a net increase of 6.7% year over year due to the improvement in the financial markets. As of March 31, 2024, total cash and investments had an aggregate balance of \$5,818,692. While our investment funds were up year-over-year and continue to perform with the market, the Vestry believes that the level of withdrawal from these funds in recent years is not sustainable. The Vestry initially acted to change this trend by increasing their pledges for 2024 and we hope their leadership will inspire others to do the same.

The 2024 year's budget continues to be mindful of the current inflationary environment while maintaining ministries and programs that make St. Johns a special community. Total Operating Expenses have been budgeted with a 2.9% increase versus last year's actual expenses, which is primarily due to increased fixed costs. On the Income side of the ledger, there is a \$527,695 shortfall, the majority of which we hope will be closed with increased contributions rather than from our investments.

*Respectfully submitted by Mr. Jon Hatch
Treasurer*

Figure A:	<u>2023</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Income			
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u>
<u>Income</u>			
Collection Plate	\$19,720	\$12,500	\$12,500
Contributions	\$581,558	\$776,000	\$602,200
Draw From Investments	\$400,000	\$279,451	\$527,695
<u>Other Income</u>	<u>\$162,586</u>	<u>\$92,700</u>	<u>\$107,469</u>
Total Operating Income	\$1,163,864	\$1,160,651	\$1,249,864

Figure B:	<u>2023</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Expenses			
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u>
<u>Expenses</u>			

Compensation / Benefits	\$648,307	\$642,785	\$680,962
Building & Grounds and Utilities	\$174,420	\$159,948	\$159,948
Fees/ Office/ Insurance	\$83,986	\$73,725	\$94,315
Programs/ Worship/ Fellowship	\$125,014	\$108,150	\$123,819
Outreach	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Diocesan Support	\$94, 978	\$94, 978	\$94, 978
Total Operation Expenses	\$1,214,870	\$1,160,651	\$1,249,864

Figure C: Account Balances	<u>12/31/23</u>	<u>12/31/22</u>	<u>12/31/21</u>
<u>Account Balances</u>			
St. John's Church General Fund	\$3,398,219	\$3,217,192	\$4,235,779
St. John's Church (Cash)	\$354,291	\$247,807	\$120,095
St. John's Preservation Fund	\$2,005,345	\$1,767,608	\$2,182,609
St. John's Church Line of Credit	\$—	\$(70,578)	\$(169,362)
Total Account Balances	\$5,757,855	\$5,323,402	\$6,369,121

Stewardship Committee Report

Seamus Mitchell, *Chair*

We are pleased to provide you with the 2023 Stewardship Update for St. John's Church as we gather for our annual meeting. This year, we are proud to report that St. John's received **\$588,317** in gifts to the General Fund from **278** families. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to support our church's ministries and outreach programs while maintaining and caring for our beautiful and historic buildings and grounds throughout the year.

In addition to these gifts, we are excited to announce that we have received **\$327,215** in total pledged commitments from **112** families for 2024. While these totals represent a significant commitment to St. John's, we would be remiss not to note that we continue to operate at a deficit, which has led to increased draws on our endowment which is not sustainable over the long term.

The ongoing financial support of St. John's is not merely beneficial—it is vital. It ensures the longevity and vitality of our beloved church, enabling us to fulfill our mission and vision. Our continued reliance on the generosity of our congregation is more important than ever as we strive to address the financial challenges before us.

Giving at St. John’s is also top-heavy, with more than 44% (\$260,662) of total annual giving coming from our 20 most generous families. This underscores the importance of broadening our base of support to ensure the financial health and sustainability of our church. In furtherance of this effort, we expect to publish giving levels of our contributors going forward. Contributors may request to remain anonymous.

We are profoundly grateful for your ongoing support and dedication to St. John's Church. Your financial gifts make a positive impact in our community enabling us to continue to spread God's message of love and hope.

Looking forward to 2024 and beyond, we aim for continued growth as a community of faith. The Stewardship Committee has set a goal to increase overall giving by \$150,000 to reduce our draw on investments to a more sustainable level. This effort requires the wholehearted support of each member of our congregation.

A subcommittee is planning a fundraising event for the evening of September 7, 2024. We hope this will be an annual event and help raise funds in a fun and festive way. A save the date will be sent in advance of invitations, but please hold the date.

We invite you to deepen your commitment to St. John’s in the coming year, joining us in these efforts to ensure a robust and thriving future for our church.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Seamus Mitchell, Chair

2023 Pledge Campaign	
Total amount pledged	\$281,937
Pledge amount fulfilled	\$277,922
Pledge fulfillment rate	98.6%
<i>Member & Non-member Contributions to the Annual Fund</i>	
Member contributions to the General Fund	\$604,458
Non-pledged contributions to the General Fund (Members & Non-Members)	\$326,536
<i>St. John’s Giving Compared to the National Average</i>	
Average annual pledge to St. John’s Church	\$2,921
Median annual pledge to St. John’s Church	\$1,500
Average yearly member contribution (not including members who do not contribute)	\$2,116
Median annual contribution	\$700
National average annual pledge to Episcopal churches	\$3,628
<i>Participation</i>	
Total households at St. John’s Church	[420
Total number of pledges to St. John’s Church	112
Member contributors to General Fund:	278
Pledge campaign participation rate	26%
Total stewardship participation rate	66%

Buildings and Grounds Committee Report

Mr. Scott Evans, *Chair*

Our Buildings and Grounds activity in 2023 was focused on maintenance and improvement of our historical and environmentally sensitive campus.

The re-engineering of the failing retaining wall at the northeast corner of the rectory property was completed with the installation of large concrete blocks. Landscaping of the area is being completed by Koran Landscaping. Unfortunately, the 2024 budget does not allow for the barn rebuild, which will be a future project if we are able to raise funds over the coming years.

Our meditation garden project is substantially complete. Planting is occurring, which is supported by a community effort, including the Boy Scouts under the leadership of Life Scout Griffin Macpherson, who hopes to use this project to achieve Eagle Scout status.

The extremely high volume of rain over the weekend of September 30, 2023-October 1, 2023 increased the pressure on our wooden weir dam at the north end of the pond. The weir dam is the wooden structure that holds back the pond water. The weir is installed in the concrete bulkhead that forms the spillway. The spillway creates the space in the earthen dam that allows the weir dam to moderate water flowing into the lower spillway and from there into the harbor. In addition, we plan to address the eroding pond edge as part of the repairs. We have engaged engineers to review the dam and provide a scope of work for repairs to the dam and pond edge, which we believe will cost in the range of \$400,000 to \$600,000.

Respectfully submitted by Scott Evans Buildings and Grounds

Outreach Steering Committee Report

Mrs. Laura Swiggett, *Chair*

2023 was a year marked by socio-political instability worldwide, including in Ukraine, Haiti, Israel and Gaza, with ripple effects felt broadly. An inflationary economy raised the cost of living for families on Long Island and beyond, adding to post-pandemic poverty, hunger and housing insecurity. St. John's Outreach looked for ways to use our parish's human and financial resources to respond faithfully and effectively, especially in underserved areas, focusing whenever possible on gaps unfilled by larger organizations.

2023 — Year in Review

In 2023 we distributed \$62,500 in financial grants to Outreach ministries, complemented by in-kind donations and hands-on volunteer support. When added to funds raised and distributed by the St. Matthias Committee and expenditures for the St. John's Day Camp (which now has its own budget line), **total 2023 distributions for St. John's Outreach programs were \$86,700. This is a powerful statement of our values as a congregation.**

The Outreach Steering Committee met monthly throughout the year to provide oversight for Outreach programs, consider opportunities, and approve financial grants. We were pleased to welcome a new committee member, Becky Bonventre, who has already made many valuable contributions.

One of the OSC's on-going objectives is to improve communication with the St. John's community, encourage parishioners to participate in Outreach work and offer educational opportunities to help us all better understand the challenges facing our community. This has been accomplished through regular announcements in "At St. John's", in-depth articles in our thrice yearly Outreach Newsletter, and open meetings and educational programs at Coffee Hour.

Here is a snapshot of some of the work St. John's supported in 2023:

— We provided funding and volunteers to Community Solidarity, a longtime partner that serves fresh, nutritious food to thousands of people each week across Long Island by repurposing food that would otherwise be wasted. We hosted monthly volunteer nights to offer parishioners a chance to work together in a group. Parishioners have responded enthusiastically and shared how meaningful the experience has been.

— We provided funding to Housing Help, another longtime partner doing tireless and proactive work addressing the housing crisis among low-income families in Huntington Station and beyond. Our funding helped support their Emergency Rental Assistance Program, which has served an overwhelming post-pandemic need, and also provided housing stipends for two low-income college students.

— We supported Gerald J. Ryan Outreach Center in Wyandanch with funding, clothing and food donations. Ryan Outreach experienced a significant increase in demand for social services and food pantry provisions this year. We are in dialogue about ways that we can be helpful in their on-going efforts to respond.

— Community Food Council, TriCYA, and St. George's Hempstead food pantries all faced increased demand for their services. We have supported the three organizations with funding, as well as food donations. CFC continues to be the recipient of our Blue Bag food collections, which are being well-sorted by the St. John's congregation.

— Eastern Farm Workers has been an important resource for farm workers on the east end of Long Island, many of whom live in camps or sub-par housing. Our financial support continues to be essential to their operation. This year we also helped sponsor a series of pro-bono legal aid seminars.

— Family Service League is one of our longtime partners. We provided annual grants for three of their core programs: Lockwood Preschool, Huntington Interfaith Housing Initiative (HIHI) and their new Family Center in Huntington Station (where Lockwood is now located). HIHI has continued to tweak its post-Covid program model, with mixed success. We are in conversation with FSL as they make adjustments, and continue to look for direct service opportunities for our parishioners.

— Youth and Family Counseling Agency of OB/EN is an anchor for disadvantaged families in the Oyster Bay/East Norwich community. Our funding helps support the Parent-Child Home Program, which offers early childhood enrichment and parenting training. Our congregation again supported YFCA's Christmas Adopt-a-Family Program this year, providing over 75 gifts from the wish lists of our five "adopted" families. Close to 50 parishioners participated.

— In its 53rd season, St. John's Day Camp had a successful summer at its new location at Southdown School. The camp, our longest standing Outreach ministry, is a partnership with the Town of Huntington and provides summer enrichment for young children from low-income families. More than 50 campers were served during the six week season, and almost 25 members of the St. John's congregation volunteered their talents and caring.

— Despite travel restrictions, the St. Matthias Fellowship has stayed in regular telephone and email contact with our partner school in Haiti, and continues to provide essential operational funding. Conditions in Haiti have deteriorated badly this year, due to rampant gang warfare and the collapse of government institutions. Thankfully Deslandes' rural location puts it out of range of the violence, which has been centered in Port au Prince and the surrounding suburbs. Haitians living in the countryside are, nevertheless, impacted by inflation, food and fuel shortages, supply chain and service disruptions, and restricted access to medical care. Within that context, it is almost miraculous that St. Matthias has been able to operate as usual, continuing to provide a primary education for the children and an oasis of stability for the families of Deslandes. This would not be possible without our steadfast support and accompaniment.

On May 7th, the SMF Committee hosted its annual fete fundraiser, with a new “Musicale” format. The event was uplifting and fun, and connected our parishioners more closely with this important ministry. The fete raised \$8,200. Augmented by a \$5,000 Outreach grant, St. John’s was able to send \$13,200 to St. Matthias in 2023, providing assistance with teacher salaries, food for the school lunch program, and the purchase of school supplies.

Looking ahead

As we look to 2024, we pray that we can find increasingly effective ways to serve as God’s heart and hands in a world very much in need of healing. We will continue to take a two-pronged approach, supporting our ministry partners with both direct service and financial grants.

The Outreach budget for 2024 is \$50,000, which we will be able to augment thanks to parishioner donations. When added to the St. John’s Day Camp budget and funds raised by the St. Matthias Fellowship, we anticipate that total Outreach expenditures for 2024 will again be close to \$90,000.

Our sincere appreciation to Gideon, Mary Beth, and, most of all, the St. John’s congregation, for your support, guidance and participation.

Respectfully submitted by Laura Swiggett St. John’s Outreach Chair

St. John’s Outreach—2023 Financial Summary	
American Friends of Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem	\$1,500
Camp DeWolfe	\$3,000
Community Food Council	\$3,000
Community Solidarity	\$7,000
Eastern Farm Workers	\$4,000
Family Service League	
HHI (Huntington Interfaith Homeless Initiative)	\$2,500
Lockwood Preschool	\$2,500
Family Center	\$2,000
Gerald J. Ryan Outreach Center	\$4,000
Housing Help	\$9,000
Save The Children	\$1,000
St. George’s Church Hempstead Food Pantry	\$3,000
St. Matthias Fellowship (Haiti)	\$5,000
Tanzanian Children’s Fund	\$1,000
Tri-Community Youth Agency	\$4,500
Upholding Humanity	\$6,000
Youth and Family Counseling Agency of Oyster Bay/East Norwich	\$3,000
OUTREACH GRANTS SUBTOTAL:	\$62,500
St. John’s Day Camp (separate budget)	\$16,000
St. Matthias Fellowship	\$8,500
2023 OUTREACH TOTAL	\$86,700

Cemetery Committee Report

Mr. James Sanna, *Chair*

2023 was a of difficult transition year for St. John’s Memorial cemetery. Our beloved Cemetery Superintendent, John Papa, suddenly passed away in an unfortunate motorcycle accident. Despite this shockingly, sad news, the cemetery

continued to move forward with over 57 burials in the past year. Additionally, many important projects were completed, mostly under John's leadership, including: new entrance signage, installation of a cemetery record keeping software system, design and approval of a new garage and work station for the crew, and the final touches on the new Terrarium. We are pleased to announce our new Terrarium has been nominated for design awards, and most importantly, has been proven to be a popular choice with our congregation with offer 15 families already reserving slots.

Fortunately, the Cemetery operations have moved forward smoothly behind the efforts of acting Superintendent, Andrew Brohel, and long-time office manager, Darlene Gubner. The Vestry Cemetery committee is well into the search for a new Cemetery Superintendent and we hope to have the position filled by summer.

Program Ministry Reports

BlueGreen Theology Ministry Report

The Rev. Mary Beth Mills-Curran

Our beautiful location compels us at St. John's Church to turn our attention to the natural world. Our community has been committed to caring for our campus and environment for many years. The year 2023 was no exception.

The Grow-to-Give Garden continues to be a source of great joy to the community. Our 2023 growing season produced as much as ever and engaged more youth. I am ever grateful to Warren Mazek and Seamus Mitchell for their leadership. The Spring season came early this year, and we will soon be launching our 2024 growing season. Our first year beekeeping was a big challenge. The sale of the honey raised more than \$800 and sold out within a week. I'm excited to share that our bees survived the winter and am looking forward to a second season of beekeeping.

After several years of planning this year also brought the construction of our Meditation Garden. With the help of Nelson Pope Voorhis and the Roxy Group the solid landscaping work is nearly complete. We are working with a boy scout to have the planting of the garden as his Eagle Scout project in the coming months.

This summer we also began deepening the spiritual foundations of our BlueGreen Theology work. A series of five Holy Walks, and a book group reading *Braiding Sweetgrass*, we talked, prayed and dreamed about the our spiritual connection with Creation and the responsibilities that it brings. This work deepened over the Holy Week with more Holy Walks and an outdoor stations of the Cross.

Last year, our participation in an initiative by the Long Island Sound Study to identify critical wetlands areas has led to us being preliminarily approved for a planning grant through New York SeaGrant to hire consultants. We are part of an RFP put out by SeaGrant this Spring. I am also working with Seatuck to apply for funding to produce a technical plan to shore up our dam and provide passage for migrating fish into the pond.

Respectfully submitted by the Rev. Mary Beth Mills-Curran, Curate

Children Youth and Family Ministry

The Rev. Mary Beth Mills-Curran

2023 has seen a major increase in the number of adults participating as leaders in our Children's programming. The Breakfast Club is now running with limited support from clergy. When it was launched in 2022 Gideon and I were leaders along with two mothers. I now have seven regular volunteer leaders and teach occasionally myself. In Children's Chapel Vikki is almost always accompanied by one of our six parent helpers. A major victory has also been the establishment of a Nursery Rota. There are eight people that support our paid worker on another rota. This gives us 21 regular volunteers. In 2019 when I started there were three volunteers who were interested in continuing their role.

Our collaborative Confirmation Class and Youth Group with Trinity, Northport and St. John's, continue smoothly.

Confirmation class has another 8 kids for Cold Spring Harbor. Our Youth Group is meeting on a more regular basis this year – every other week on Wednesday nights. We have fewer kids participating, but the group who comes is very committed and regular. I'm hopeful to continue to grow this ministry.

2023 was an off-year for First Communion, but we have just begun our 2024 cohort. We have twelve young people in second and third grade who are participating and will receive first communion on June 2nd.

Our Family Fridays ministry continued and with the the Spooky Walk, Advent Wreath building, Greening of the Church, the Candlemas Party in February, and a Good Friday Way of the Cross for kids and adults.

In 2023 Vacation Bible School grew from 18 to 25 kids. We had a much more ambitious program, and met for two whole weeks. Bryce also brought his A game as we worked on the incredibly catchy “Something’s Fishy.” Collaborating with St. John’s Huntington allowed us to have a more robust volunteer corps and support more kids in the program.

Respectfully submitted by the Rev. Mary Beth Mills-Curran Curate

Music Ministry Report

Mr. Bryce Westervelt

As 2022 was a year of transition and transformation for St. John’s music program, 2023 was a year of growth and new possibilities. Through our choirs, concert series, and musical outreach opportunities we continued to focus on building and expanding our community through music while supporting the week-to-week worship in our parish.

Celebrating her 30th year at St. John’s, **Dr. Carol Weitner** continues to bless our congregation. This program year has informally been dubbed the “Year of Carol” and included a 12th Night celebration in her honor.

Our **Chancel Choir** is the backbone of the music program at St. John’s. A dedicated core of volunteer members rehearse weekly on Thursday evenings and before services on Sunday mornings between Labor Day and Father’s Day. They prepare and present a wide variety of music in various liturgical styles.

Last Spring the Choir renewed the annual special music at Mother’s Day in the form of a Bach cantata. This autumn we had a 2nd annual in-house choir retreat (followed by our traditional welcome back barbecue hosted by Emeritus Director, Dr. Steven Finch). In November the choir presented the first of two Choral Evensong services scheduled for the program year. In December we welcomed singers from around the area to join us for a new tradition of a community Handel’s *Messiah* sing with chamber orchestra and soloist, with proceeds going to St. John’s outreach partners.

The choir also presented a beautiful Christmas Festival of Lessons and Carols in combination with our Junior Choir and Handbell Choir. Special music including a harpist at Christmas, brass quartet at Easter rounded out a robust year for the choir.

Our core Chancel Choir members were supported this year by four professional **Choral Associates** - Rebekah Strohmeyer, Cloe SanAntonio, Cloe's long-term substitute Elizabeth Sarian, and James Cottone. The choral associates are valued members of our music community, offering greater flexibility with repertoire as well as supporting other musical needs in the church. We continued our **High School Choral Scholars** program with two youth of our church, Sarah Murphy and Zara Ventura. Choral Scholars sing with the Chancel Choir and are offered scholarships and community service hours.

Our **Junior Choir**, open to singers of all abilities from grades 2-6, had a tremendous year. Highlights include our second Vacation Bible School/Summer Choir Camp which culminated in performances of a mini-musical, *Something's Fishy*, at both our church and St. John's Huntington. The choir joined the Chancel choir for the Annual Festival of Lessons and Carols, and presented another new Lenten Musical, *Called*, which included a special outreach offering, all while continuing the - *Voice for Life* music education program. Plans are underway for the 2024 VBS/Choir Camp musical - *Step Right Up!* - a circus themed sacred musical for kids.

In 2023 our **Handbell Choir** - performed a full schedule, with an average of 8-10 members. The choir consists of players of all abilities and ages, and truly is a wonderful, fun, and inter-generational ensemble. Last summer our bells were refurbished by Jeffers Handbell Company in South Carolina.

As a music program we are thrilled to continue our partnerships with the Oyster Bay Music Festival, local music studio StrumBowLLI, and local chapters of the American Guild of Organists.

Respectfully submitted by

Mr. Bryce Westervelt, Director of Music

To learn more, or to join the choirs, contact Bryce Westervelt (bryce@stics.h.org).

Caring Connection Ministry Report

Trudy Calabrese, Meg Floyd Jones,
and Gina Jacobsen

St John's Caring Connection Ministry was conceived in the 1980's by the late Helen McIntyre and carried forth by several parishioners to lend a helping hand to those who were going through a rough patch and needed a bit of support. A most important aspect of this ministry is the clergy pastoral support component.

A friendly call, a brief visit or a "Dutch treat" lunch are wonderful ways in which to make connections and to give people an opportunity to engage, share, listen well, empathize and care for one another. We are able to aid our parish family in other ways, such as an occasional ride to an appointment or deliver a lunch or dinner. The human connection is often just the tonic one needs to brighten a dreary or challenging day. We found this especially true during the two years of Covid isolation.

In the autumn we had a most successful "operation pumpkin bread". We delivered almost 40 loaves to our parish family, all baked by members of The Caring Connection Team. Shortly before Christmas, many of the CC team spent a morning with our "artist in residence" writing Christmas cards. In addition, each year one of our members makes and sends lovely homemade Valentines and treats. Every gesture is gratefully received.

We have been very fortunate to welcome several enthusiastic "newbies", who are happily helping round out the team. And, if I may say so, they bring our average age down by a few decades, thus ensuring the perpetuity of an important ministry.

Caring Connection is always relevant, especially during holiday and winter times, when people are more isolated. St John's

is a parish family and this ministry is a powerful demonstration of how small gestures can make a big difference.

When time permits, please join one of our “seasoned” team members and come along on a visit. Please join our team and stay in touch. Thank you for caring.

Respectfully submitted by Trudy Calabrese, Meg Floyd Jones and Gina Jacobsen For The Caring Connection Ministry

Related Organization Reports

St. Matthias Fellowship Report

Mr. Peter Charles and Mrs. Heather Spehr

St. Matthias Update 2024

Somehow, against great odds, St Matthias School is standing strong and thriving as a shining light in the mountains of central Haiti. It has been a long year; a lot has changed. Unfortunately, the change has been for the worse. The Haitian government has collapsed, and gangs are causing havoc throughout the nation. Pr. Michaud, the priest-in-charge at St. Mathias said people in Haiti see little hope due violence, inflation, and drought. At the same time, he is quick to offer a contrast in his little town of Deslandes. With the campus being in a remote and rural setting, St. Matthias is somewhat isolated from the greater malaise in the country. In Pr. Michaud’s own words, “in Delandes, we stand firm. Activities are going well. The school operates normally.”

While it is easier to focus on the negative, the reality is the children and the families of St. Matthias have a place to turn to in Deslandes. St. Matthias is a special place. The community is an oasis. The children get an education in a safe environment, as the families are united in providing a better future for their children. They do this under the umbrella of their Christian faith and in partnership with St. John’s. They have each other, and they have our caring relationship.

In the past 12 months we have sent \$18,000 to St. Matthias. They are quite appreciative. It is a portion of their budget and additional funding is needed. There remains significant infrastructure and upkeep work that needs to be completed on the campus. In the coming 12 months, our contributions to St. Matthias will be in the range of \$18,000 to \$20,000.

Even though we have not traveled to Haiti in recent years, the relationship between St. Matthias and St. John's remains strong. They continue to pray for St. John’s, as we continue to pray for St. Matthias. Our relationship is a support mechanism that goes beyond financial. They rely on our spiritual support. The leaders of St. Matthias are consistently expressing how grateful they and the children are for the critical support that St. John's has been able to provide. Every piece of communication from Pr. Michaud starts with an expression of gratitude.

Preparing for our annual Fete is one of the times that our St. Matthias Fellowship at St John's is especially aware of how grateful we are for the opportunity to share in this important relationship. Our Fete this year took place on March 3, with a theme of Family. We shared an evening worship service led by Gideon, updated our friends with news from St. Matthias, and then shared a festive family-style Haitian feast in Bleecker Hall. The complete financials are not in yet, but the fete was a fundraising success, as well as a resounding “friendraising” success.

We are thankful for the generosity and support from the congregation. It has been a long, tough road for St. Matthias. This is precisely the basis for our relationship. Our mission goes well beyond virtue. Our support is existential for our partners. Again, thank you for your support and please keep St. Matthias in your prayers.

Concerts by the Pond

Concerts by the Pond is currently in the midst of an exciting 2023-24 10th Anniversary Season - packed full of world-class, award-winning artists offering amazing performances and educational outreach opportunities for our church and community. Inspired by our intimate, historic, and scenic venue, CBTP provides diverse and innovative live performances of classical, contemporary, and liturgical music coupled with dynamic education programs that create a sense of discovery and community within our St. John's parish, citizens of Cold Spring Harbor, and our surrounding region.

Mr. Bryce Westervelt, Director of Music



Our audiences have welcomed an expanded range of programming this season featuring a special opening night gala performance by woodwind quintet Sylvan Winds followed by our own Dr. Weitner joined the Long Island Chamber Music Brass for a terrific holiday concert. The season includes 2023 Concert Artist Guild winners ArcoStrum, multi-instrument quartet Invoke, this afternoon's performance by award-winning crossover trio Empire Wild, and concludes next month with a performance by noted soprano, Mary Wilson.

Of particular value, Concert by the Pond's new Behind the Music educational program has been an important addition to our series for our community. Ms. Wilson's October vocal masterclass, ArcoStrum's string masterclass, Invoke's workshop on creativity and storytelling through music, and today's Empire Wild class on improvisation have been enriching to our participants and audiences alike.

Plans are well underway for an exciting 2024-25 season, and we are pleased to announce that we will host the noted brass quartet, The Westerlies, on December 14th for a special holiday concert coupled with an outreach workshop earlier in the day. Featured from Carnegie Hall to Coachella (and even in a Tiny Desk Concert) - the Westerlies are what *New York Times* describes as "an arty quartet...mixing ideas from jazz, new classical, and Appalachian folk."

We look forward to announcing the remaining series offerings and integrated educational opportunities in May as CBTP continues to support St. John's spiritual and musical presence in the greater community. (Bryce Westervelt)

For more information about Concerts by the Pond contact Bryce Westervelt (bryce@stjcsch.org)

2023 Use of St. John's Church Facilities

Church	Greater Community
Adult Formation	Alcoholics Anonymous
Aging in Place	Cold Spring Harbor Nursery School
Choirs	Concerts by the Pond
Coffee Hour	Huntington Environmental Festival
Confirmation	North Shore Busy Bees
Family Fridays (<i>1 x month</i>)	North Shore Deanery
Grow to Give Garden	NY Blood Bank Blood Drive
Haiti Fete	Oyster Bay Music Festival
Holy Smokes BBQ	<i>Seeing God In All Things</i> Photo Days
Finance Committee	StrumBowLI
Mardi Gras Supper	St. John's Day Camp
MicroDeanery Youth Group	Three Harbors Invitational Dancing School
Men's Group	Three Harbors Garden Club
Monday Bible Study	Whispering Spirit Culture Tours
Outreach Committee	Garden Club of America Show: "Thyme for Tea"
Parish Picnic	North Country Garden Club
St. John's Day Celebration	
St. Matthias Fellowship	
Sunday School	
Super Bowl Chilli Cook-off	
Summer Fishing Derby	
Youth Sunday	
Vacation Bible School	

