



**St. John's
Episcopal Church
2008 Annual Report**

**Annual Parish Meeting
January 25, 2009**

101 Chapel Street
Portsmouth, New Hampshire

**Annual Parish Meeting
January 15, 2008 Meeting Minutes
St. John's Episcopal Church
101 Chapel Street, Portsmouth NH**

Motion was made to approve minutes as written from the 2007 Annual Meeting. 2007 Minutes were approved by voice vote.

Announcement of Slate for Candidates to Vestry

- There are 9 elected vestry positions to 3-year terms
- Each year 3 people complete their terms
- This year there are 3 candidates
- Nominations are open to the parish
- 2008-2011 nominations closed last Sunday, January 07, 2008 at 8:00 AM

Nominations for Vestry Term 2008-2011

- Jane Holway
- Dick Davidson
- Andy Bangs

Wardens will remain: Chris Sieve (Senior) and Gerry Simpkins (Junior)

Delegates to convention 2008

- Thomas Hourihan
- Sarah Todd

Comments from the Rector

Mike Dailey will be stepping down as treasurer. St. John's has had 4 treasurers in the past 4 years. This has been due to an unacceptable time investment on the part of a volunteer. The finance committee will be defining the treasurer's role so that the next treasurer will have some assurance of time manageability as well as a specific description of the job.

Finances-Mike Dailey, Treasurer

2007 projected 89K deficit and we made up 40K of that carried on the back of receipts higher than expected. Pledges were a little higher and collections during services were higher. Expenses were made up primarily on the back of mission. A church's mission is to have its ministry be outreach. This will give vestry pause for thought for 2008.

In 2008 we have a new finance chair, Sandra Pagel. Many finance subcommittees were formed. St. John's has grown to a point that the way we reach out comes to about 75K in outreach ministries.

- 700 people membership
- Size isn't about numbers its about what you do.
- 350-400 each Sunday
- 120 avg. number of people that attend Common Tale each week
- 80 children and teens attended VBS
- 65 children, grades K-6 attending Sunday School
- 38 children sing in the children's choir

- Pastoral Care
- 13 Teens went through Rite 13
- 13 people went on Mission Possible
- 5 Concerts on the Hill

These are numbers outside the budget that make the budget a reality

For every 100 attendees on Sunday there should be one full-time staff person working on ministry. St. John's has approximately 350-400 people attending every Sunday meaning that we need 4 people supporting 400. In business terms that lets us maintain what we have, not what we need to grow.

What does growth mean?

- It means the number of people coming through the door. It also means depth.
- The 2007 budget shows about 39K that we need to make up. This is a little better than 2007, but the reality is that on the receipts side we have additional receipts that we need to achieve if we just want to maintain.
- How many Christians does it take to make a difference? If you have already pledged, thank you and if you pledged last year ask yourself if you can pledge more. If everyone pledged 20% more than they are currently we would be experiencing much better financial health. If you have any financial questions, we welcome them.

Rector's Comments

The work of creating a budget is not what most people think. Our personal checkbooks are theological documents. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with a treasurer and a vestry who see our finances in this way. The money supports the mission of God in this place. It puts the burden of where we are going ON US .I say that intentionally. Mike is exactly right: It only takes one to make a difference. Thank you very much, Mike.

Comments from Chris Sieve, Senior Warden

I am delighted that Mike spoke about the immense hard work via all the different committees on the finance team. At a recent forum a couple of parishioners said that they need to hear from leadership what the needs of St. John's are at this time. We have had many conversations with an anxious worried tenor and we need to focus on what we can do so that we don't start to feel hopeless. I have talked to people who have seen this happening for decades. I want to convey to you that our executive team and finance committee is far from hopeless. We feel positive and hopeful. We hear clearly from all of the data gathered this year that 2008 will be a year in which we focus on stewardship.

We have planned Lenten home gatherings organized to facilitate better communication about what people think needs to change at St. John's. It will require hearing everyone's voice to bring us to a place of excellence in our finances, mission and outreach to the world. It is hoped that we will come to see how we are all leaders. We want parishioners to talk to each other about St. John's, both positive and negative. Ted Fuller will facilitate these conversations. He wants people to talk to each other about what is important to them. Please pay attention in your bulletin to the dates when they come out. I think that if we feel a sense of community there is no way that we won't accomplish our goals here. I am excited about his year and invite everyone to participate in the gatherings. It will be a year of stewardship and it will be exciting. I welcome you to be a part of it.

Comments from Gerry Simpkins, Junior Warden

I want to echo what Chris said and have you come and listen to each other so that we can communicate about St. John's. Listening will help us learn from each other. Report on Pledging: We are behind where we were last year in both the number of pledges and the dollar amount pledged. Please talk to us if you have questions about the pledging process, or if you can no longer pledge. The new entrance is completed. The only thing that isn't completed are the plantings. Thank you for being patient with this process and I hope everybody enjoys it.

Questions/Comments from the floor:

Additional program revenue-can we have your vision of what you see there? What additional possibilities do you see in St. John's programs? How will they happen?

Things that have succeeded: Springtime white elephant sale.

Renting busses and seeing Episcopal cathedrals (and shop)

Also need to talk about what it would look like to people to use St. John's as a center for people to gather in the community

Creative uses of our building
If we have an idea, share it.

How you will lead so we won't have a deficit next year?

During the next month we are going to be calling folks to increase 08 stewardship (pledges). We will call people who pledged 07 but did not in 08. Lenten gatherings have been proposed. The vestry and others will make phone calls to look for more giving. In the event that we fall short of that, we will be having a hard meeting in April 08. We don't want to continue a tradition of a deficit budget, but we also don't want to stop doing what we are already doing in terms of programs and ministries. Part of the reason we have needed to backfill is because St John's has experienced a period of tremendous growth, and we have not caught up with it. We are recognizing that stewardship has to take on a new spirit. We will be making a stewardship push in the next couple of months.

Comments from Sandra Pagel, Finance Committee

The FC is dedicated to making this church healthy from an operational standpoint in the next 3 years. This year we will start to wrestle with some of the implementation. Our goal is to have a balanced budget within three years.

Comments from the Rector, Rob Stevens

We are an extremely large parish for NH. The diocese tends to spend its energy paying attention to the majority, which are the small parishes. We compare similarly with Nashua and Exeter. Chris said that the growth here has been amazing. We have a financial lag and we need to catch up. It's real and it's necessary

Are the numbers of pledges down significantly?

- It is time for us to make phone calls. We plan to take information gathered from these phone calls and respond with action that can help revitalize the parish. We are not exactly sure what will come of the phone calls. We will sit down with the diocesan stewardship coordinator and decide what to do. We expect most of them will come through. A lot of people don't pledge at all. We need to call people who have pledged in the past but haven't this year, and we also need to look at the people who don't pledge at all. The plan is twofold. All of this means a lot of work and a lot of people will need to be involved. My hope is that more people will participate at that level. Maybe some people aren't pledging because they are feeling left out. That's the purpose of the small groups and we hope this will help as well.
- The answers are not here. Our job as leadership is to provide a forum and structure the opportunity to have these conversations. We have not had enough opportunities to talk about it. We have a finance committee with fabulous leadership, which is really exciting. It's been over 30 years since we have done an every member canvas at St. John's. It's not about the money, it's about connections, relationships and hearing where people are frustrated and where they are feeling hopeful.

Can we make people go to these meetings?

- No, but Jesus couldn't make people go either. We hope to invite everyone into the conversation and that out of this more people will get involved.

Comments on House Forums from the floor

Has it occurred to you to pinpoint the people and connect them ahead of time? If I'm new or scared I might not go to someone's house.

- We are addressing this by organizing the forums by town and hoping people who already know each other will extend invitations as well as phone invitations. Reaching out to people and hooking people up ahead of time is a good idea. The people who host will be calling so that it will be a personal invitation.

Comments from Assistant Priest, Dick Siener

Would it be helpful to get a sense of what other people think of us?

- Charles Lafonde told us this was the most exciting parish he has seen in the diocese. This parish has been singled out as a place to send young clergy. We need to focus on the positive. We have the gospel that is about reaching out in our relationships on a day-to-day basis.

Has anybody thought about giving the \$ from the government kickback to the church? And it would also be a tax deduction.

Thank You!

Bob Menk

Bob has been giving time to ensure that our computer systems are working properly. Bob has been a tremendous gift to this community. If you see Bob, thank him.

Sandra Pagel has tremendous knowledge of financial systems and a passion for the gospel. She has been a tremendous gift to the community.

It's hard to find a healthy youth group. Teens have the gift of unvarnished truth. This wouldn't have happened without leadership. This is one area where you ask for help and you know that you are throwing people to the wolves: Cathy Dailey, Jennifer Stevens, Robert Mood. You are giving a gift to the community. You have welcomed them into the community in a way that has been transformative for us. I encourage you all to speak with them. They are done at the end of this year. Every two years we change the leadership. Ask them what it was like.

Outgoing Vestry

- Al Edwards
- Elias Thomas
- Cynthia Van Zandt
- Wendy Blood
- Jack Meffen
- Mike Dailey

Why do people give their time: because they love God, St. John's and relationships they have here. While Vestry meetings can be tedious, it's worth it. Thank you for giving yourselves.

Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Henricks, Clerk
January 21, 2009

RECTOR'S REPORT

Dear St. John's,

I more aware than ever that what we preach and teach at church do not harmonize with the message of our world. I turn on the news and hear nothing but doom and gloom and then come to church and hear nothing but the Gospel (literally translated "good news"). We have much to be grateful for in our community of faith. We have life abundant, people of all ages, diversity of thought and opinion and an overwhelming mutual concern for the Gospel of Christ and for one another.

In a year that saw the foundation of our culture rocked if not broken our community was able to be good stewards and to be a light in the darkness for many. We continued to participate in the mission of God and we for the first time in many years lived within our means. That would be cause for joy in prosperous times, but it is nothing short of miraculous in these times of challenge. It is a direct result of this community living into the reality that indeed we do have "enough," that God gives us more than we could possibly ask for or imagine.

Yet, this knowledge that we have the ability to live abundantly takes practice for us. We tend to struggle to even believe God loves us and if we do remembering is a full time job. In the letter to the Philippians St. Paul writes, "Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." Paul's advice is sound and my question to us is, what are we doing to "think about these things?" What are we doing to remember that God loves us and that life is, although challenging, very, very good? This is the work of the people of God. We have the opportunity to be a light to the world, but only if we remember where the light comes from and that we are children of the light.

As we move forward into this New Year I wonder...

- Are we providing enough opportunities for worship?
- How can we empower another community to start their own "Common Table?"
- Is it time to expand our outreach opportunities off "Church Hill" and into the world even to other nations?
- How do we as a community identify ourselves? Who do *you* say that St. John's is?

I am one that often wonders if the grass is greener on the other side of the fence. A gift I have received lately is the clarity that the pastures of St. John's are some of the most lush and fertile in the kingdom. I thank God for the opportunity that we have to be about God's work and to do it well with joyful and grateful hearts. My prayers remain with you daily and I ask for yours as we continue on the adventure of life following God.

Faithfully, your rector,

The Rev. Robert E. Stevens, Jr.

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Since my first newsletter as Senior Warden, I have been writing about the budget at St. John's. Serving has been an ongoing lesson in the connection between spiritual and financial health, and this year is no exception. The 2008 fiscal reality looked as though it could result in a year-end deficit of upwards of \$80,000. Careful scrutiny of our expenses, from insurance to cleaning products, coupled with staffing changes and robust stewardship, collectively worked to help us end our year in the black, with a modest surplus. In the current economic climate, this is nothing short of miraculous. Jennifer Baird was hired to address our need for a paid staff person who understood the financial workings of the church as well as our unpaid parishioner/treasurer did. She has used church software to help make financial information more accessible, and we are now in a position to speak knowledgeably about our bottom line, and how our economic goals can help us meet our spiritual goals.

Our financial health depends in part on the fact that we are staffed for maintenance at St. John's. The Alban Institute, a church think-tank, generates statistics to quantify the number of full-time staff members per parishioner needed in a church in order to maintain current programs. We are staffed for maintenance right now. This would be fine if our music, children and youth programs, and preaching were not at a level of excellence to draw growth. But they are. We have grown and will continue to grow. This is a wonderful reality, which will quickly create tension for our staff members, who are working to capacity. Conducting a Christian Education program with the number of children we have without a director of formation is virtually unheard of, and is only possible because of the formation skills of our Director of Music Abbey and Curate Jeff. This will be an issue that we will need to address in 2009.

Our goal to achieve a balanced budget has been accomplished by the faithful people of this parish who have made the gospel message personal, and turned its meaning into reality through giving generously of time, skills and funds. I thank you all and encourage you to thank each other. Thank the staff for creating beautiful worship and running the place well, our treasurer who gives more time to this place (and effort to balancing the budget) than you can imagine, our vestry members, who have made hard decisions well, our clergy who preach the Gospel, the faithful folks who eat lunch here on Thursdays and make mission meaningful. Thank anyone who will listen. Well done everybody! 2009 will be a time for discernment as we live into our uniqueness as a Christian community. Who are we? Who are we becoming?

Blessings,
Chris

CURATE

I began working at St. John's on June 1, 2008, just a few weeks after graduating from seminary. It has amazed me just how well I have gotten to know the staff, the parishioners, and the youth of St. John's in seven short months. It has been a challenging, enriching, exciting, and wonderful year. I was ordained to the diaconate on June 3, 2008, and to the priesthood on December 12, 2008.

St. John's Youth Group has seen a transition in leadership from Jennifer Stevens, Cathy Dailey, and Robert Mood, its former mentors. There is now a Rite 13 group of youth (lead by Randy Care and Lela Niemi), and an older Journey to Adulthood group (lead by Landya McCafferty, Patrick McCafferty, Gavin Barbour, and Annelise Fisher). Amy Dutton has come on in a coordinating role with myself. The former mentors left a vibrant and energetic youth program that is being taken to the next level. In addition to Sunday formation, the youth group has had a fall kickoff barbeque (in doors due to weather), gone to Zach's Corn Maze, had a Lock-In, and Christmas Party. We look forward to many new events and more opportunities to grow into our faith in God with these wonderful young adults.

In the absence of a formation director, the tasks of coordinating Sunday School has fallen to Rob, Abbey and me. This year we made the decision to have St. John's staff teach all of the children, together, in Thaxter Hall one Sunday per month. This has simultaneously given the clergy more time with the children, and given the Sunday School teachers one Sunday per month when they do not need to teach. I assisted Abbey in coordinating the Christmas Pageant, and have already begun work on Vacation Bible School, set for June 22-26, 2009.

In addition to Youth Group and Sunday School duties, I have participated in the many the pastoral and administrative clerical tasks of St. John's. I have attended each Finance and Vestry Committee Meetings, as well as joined the Welcoming Committee, chaired by Mike Dailey. I have made pastoral visits to shut-ins, the sick, and the hospitalized. Regular Sunday and Thursday morning duties include preaching and celebrating, as well as teaching adult forums. I have come on as the coordinator of the acolytes, which have included scheduling and training. In August, I held an "Acolyte Olympics" to attract and train acolytes, with over 20 youth attending.

I look forward to a new and exciting 2009 at St. John's Episcopal Church.

- The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thornberg, Curate

SEXTON

"There's always *something* happening at St. John's!" It's amazing how dynamic and busy this parish is, and that we continue to grow. We've been able to keep up with the events, building security, and basic cleaning by hiring our night Sexton, Jim Drelick. His hard work is appreciated!

During my first year as your full time Sexton, I've been struck by the eagerness of parishioners to volunteer time and effort in accomplishing major projects. I sincerely thank each of you. As the old saying goes, "It takes a community."

The following is a list of what we accomplished to update the buildings and grounds:

PARISH HALL

- New vinyl flooring installed on lower level (made from recycled material)
- Hallways repainted
- Music Director's Office - repainted, bookshelves and window blinds installed
- Administrator's Office - new desk and work station installed
- Kitchen - new dishwasher installed, hot water booster fixed

- Choir Room - added stationery and supply closet, new doors installed
- In progress - Lower level Ladies and Men's Rooms to be repainted, new ceiling to be installed in Ladies Room.

CHURCH

- Old pipe insulation removed and replaced under Church
- Utility sink installed
- Sacristy repainted

GROUNDS

- New retaining wall built in lower parking lot
- Damaged brick wall removed, new barriers installed
- Parking lots repaired, parking spaces repainted

100 CHAPEL ST

- Interior updated – old wallpaper removed, walls, ceilings, and woodwork repainted, bedroom carpets cleaned or replaced, new closet doors installed, upstairs electrical wiring updated.
- Deck and front steps repainted
- In progress – Attic to be reinsulated

To all, thanks for your kindness and support,

Dave Lajoie

ALTAR GUILD

This year has been a busy year for the Altar Guild. Our Directress of 35 years, Barbara Widen retired in May. A celebration of her service was held and she was thanked for her many years of devotion to the Guild. An engraved sterling silver host box was given to St. John's in Barbara's honor.

With many thanks to St. John's Men's Group, the sacristy was completely redone. We sincerely thank all who helped to brighten our work space.

A new service we now provide is that of Wedding Consultants, Wendy Cote and Sandra Pagel. A wedding booklet has been written and we hope this will be of help to clergy, staff and future brides.

Other events this year were the visit of The Rte. Rev. Gene Robinson and the ordination of The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thornberg.

We welcomed two new members, Sarah Todd and Judy Perley, bringing our total to 22 members. Bob and Donna Bacon and Ann Ringling are no longer members and we thank them for their years of service.

We also enjoyed an annual luncheon at Women's City Club in August, giving members the opportunity to meet in a more social atmosphere.

The Altar Guild's task continues to be the care and preparation of the altar for all services. Anyone interested in our work, may call Bertha Rocray at 207-363-4803. Those wishing to donate flowers for the altar are asked to call Ginny Edwards at 207-439-2219.

Respectfully submitted

Bertha H. Rocray, Directress

Ginny Edwards, Secretary & Treasurer

COMMON TABLE

“Life’s a Trip” was the theme for this year’s Uncommon Table. And the whole year has been just that, a life of fellowship and fun. Our mission is to provide a free lunch for a diverse group of people from the seacoast community. Thanks to our chefs, volunteers, parishioners, staff and clergy, you all honored our diners and made them feel welcome. Close to 140 people come each week and we expect the numbers to grow due to these hard economic times.

Common Table is self supporting due to large and small donations from many folks who often like to honor a loved one or provide funds in memory of a loved one. Our other large financial support comes from the popular Uncommon Table held each year in June. This past year we raised close to \$16,000! Everyone, from diners to volunteers helped to make this a success. We welcome your donations of services, artwork, trips and more for this year’s event, and especially your presence.

May we all continue the Lord’s work and “Feed His Sheep” by offering sustenance in a nourishing atmosphere.

- Judy Roberts, Margaret Sofio, and Suzi Raeside

COOKING FOR CROSSROADS

Our Crossroads House cooking team prepared hearty, healthy meals for approximately 80 folks every month during 2008, to the appreciation and satisfaction of the residents and staff of the homeless shelter. Our team, some of whom are from outside the St. John's family, works together efficiently, and with wonderful humor and purposefulness.

- Lacey and Andy Bangs

ECONOMY SHOP

The recycling of items through your Economy Shop has resulted in the ability to contribute a total of \$8,000.00 to the general fund.

Your generosity of the quantity and quality of items donated has been once again outstanding allowing us to offer good desirable items to our customers at reasonable prices. All this could not be accomplished without the dedication of the folks that work each week the hours required sorting, cleaning when required, pricing and displaying on racks and shelves to be on sale each Wednesday. The people that do all of this are; Barbara Knight, Al and Ginny Edwards, Myrt Moore, Art and Karen Parrott and Judy Roberts.

Bob and I would like to thank those people for their time and talent helping make Saint John's Economy Shop (THE HOUSE OF JOHN) a very special place for people to meet and enjoy this ministry.

- Joan and Bob Alessi co-chairpersons.

FINANCE & TREASURE

2008 in particular marked a pivotal and landmark year in the financial life of St. John’s. Our financial records have been centralized, the finance committee has never been stronger, and our program year produced a positive operating balance. At a time when many areas of life are producing uncertainty, the Parish is gifted with great stewardship, meaningful worship, and a community that comes together to share time and talent for the mission of St. John’s.

Our Parish Administrator, Jennifer Baird, is the point person for finances and has completed the consolidation and centralization of all financial records on ACS, the Church

accounting software system. This development enables timely reports for all facets of the Parish's operation and allows us to manage income, expenses, capital allocation, and cash position more effectively as well as produce reports on stewardship and other Parish activities. Also during 2008, the year 2006 Parish audit was completed. Audits for years, 2007 and 2008 will be undertaken and completed in 2009.

While the Vestry has responsibility as stewards of all the resources of the Parish, the Finance Committee shares this responsibility by bringing its knowledge and experience through suggestions and recommendations on financial matters. In 2008, after considerable discussion and detailed examination of alternatives by its Investment subcommittee, the Finance Committee recommended that the management of the investments in the Parish's Endowment accounts be handled in-house. The Vestry voted to accept this recommendation at its February meeting.

The management of the Endowment portfolios is guided by a policy adopted by the Vestry in 2007. The investment objective is "to preserve and enhance the purchasing power of the principal of the funds without taking unusual risks, and thereby provide real long term support to the Church's mission". The portfolios are: (a) to employ a balance investment approach, (b) to be invested in managed accounts such as mutual funds or Exchange Traded Funds (ETF'S), and (c) to be diversified with a significant commitment to both stocks and fixed income securities. The policy requires that two members of the Finance/Investment Committee have investment management experience. At present, the restricted and unrestricted accounts are invested in ten funds that provide broad market diversification. Although both portfolios have experienced the vagaries of recent market performance, declines have been significantly less than the general market. A report on the portfolio performance and any need for position rebalancing is presented to the Vestry monthly.

We continue to improve communication and financial transparency. Initiatives include: dialogues at two Sunday Adult Forums; financial reporting in "Money Matters" articles as a regular feature in the Parish's monthly newsletter, and a by-annual budget report in narrative form sent to Parishioners. In addition to monthly operating statements, and budget and investment reports, the Vestry receives balance sheets, accounts of capital spending, stewardship summaries, and proposals for new expenditures.

With a clearer understanding of the financial needs of St. John's, we will continue to streamline and systematize all policies and business practices necessary to insure financial health in the years ahead. Many thanks to fellow members of the Finance Committee (Dick Davidson, Ted Fuller, Robert Mennel, Mike Dailey, Leslie Latimer, Ann Ringling, Lew Roberts, Anna Schultz, Bill Jones, Gerry Simpkins, Chris Sieve, Hope Martin, Laura Montville, Rev. Rob Stevens and Rev. Jeff Thornberg) and our adroit leader, John Hebert. Chair for the dedication, humor, patience and many, many hours of hard work to assure St. John's financial health.

Respectfully,
Sandra Pagel, Treasurer

ST. JOHN'S GUILD AUXILIARY

The Guild Auxiliary is an organization of women from St. John's Church. Our meetings are held on the third Tuesday of March, April, May, October and November. In June and December we meet for a dutch-treat luncheon. We also take poinsettias to shut-ins at Christmastime.

Our funds are received from the interest from "The Elwyn Trust Fund." Spring and fall donations are given to charitable organizations in the name of St. John's Church. A list of the charities follows in the Treasurer's Report.

Information about the Guild Auxiliary may be obtained by calling Ginny Edwards, Guild president, at 207-439-2119; Barbara Knight, Vice President, at 207-439-4841, Joan Kulickowski, Treasurer, at 207-439-0299; or Mary Turner, Secretary, at 603-436-7543.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Turner, Guild Auxiliary Secretary

St. John's Guild Auxiliary Financial Report 2008

Balance on hand 1/1/2008 \$1379.11
Deposits
Receipt from Elwyn Trust \$1200 1200.00
Total Disbursement 1662.00
Balance on hand 12/31/08 \$917.11

Disbursements

4/15/08 St. John's for Meg von de Heydt	50.00
5/20/08 Camp Waban	100.00
5/20/08 Cross Roads House	50.00
5/20/08 Salvation Army Summer Camp	200.00
5/20/08 Smile Train	50.00
5/20/08 Christian Appalachian Project	100.00
5/20/08 Seacoast Family Food Pantry	50.00
5/20/08 Soup Kitchen (Nancy Fessenden)	100.00
5/20/08 Seacoast Hospice	50.00
5/20/08 Tender Loving Care 15 pairs of shoes	120.00
10/21/08 Salvation Army Thanksgiving & Christmas	200.00
11/18/08 St Francis Academy	50.00
11/18/08 A Safe Place	50.00
11/18.08 Operation Blessings	50.00
11/18/08 Footprints Food Pantry	100.00
11/18/08 Tender Loving Care	50.00
11/18/08 Soup Kitchen (Nancy Fessenden)	100.00
11/18/08 River Run Books Store gift for Jeff	100.00
11/18/08 Stamps for Marie Smith (Sunshine)	42.00
11/18/08 USO	50.00
Total	1662.00

Respectfully submitted
Joan Kulickowski
Guild Auxiliary Treasurer

Holly Hill Fair			
2008 Summary	Income	Expenses	Total
50/50 Raffle	\$ 234	\$ (118)	\$ 116
Adm Donation	\$ 405		\$ 405
Amer. Girl Doll Raffle	\$ 186		\$ 186
Animal Gifts	\$ 169		\$ 169
Baskets	\$ 503		\$ 503
Country Store	\$ 1,695	\$ (253)	\$ 1,442
Creches	\$ 970		\$ 970
Gifts	\$ 515		\$ 515
Greens	\$ 3,668	\$ (1,682)	\$ 1,986
Holy Smokes	\$ 144		\$ 144
Jewelry	\$ 772		\$ 772
Knitting	\$ 382		\$ 382
Luncheon	\$ 485	\$ (239)	\$ 246
Nancy Raffle	\$ 225		\$ 225
Ornaments/Glasses	\$ 639	\$ (1,700)	\$ (1,061)
Painted Bulbs	\$ 245		\$ 245
Scott Osgood Woodwork	\$ 305		\$ 305
Sewing	\$ 970		\$ 970
Silent Auction	\$ 2,295		\$ 2,295
Sporting Goods	\$ 345		\$ 345
Steward Earth	\$ 334		\$ 334
Tea Room	\$ 251		\$ 251
White Elephant	\$ 1,545		\$ 1,545
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	\$ 1213	\$ (902)	\$ 311
TOTAL	\$ 18,494	\$ (4,894)	\$ 13,600

KNITTING MINISTRY

We are a small group of ladies who meet from 1:00-3:00pm the first and third Friday of each month. We keep busy knitting prayer shawls which are then given to those who are sick or in the hospital. It a reminder to them that they are remembers by St. John's. Everyone is invited to join the knitting ministry whether or not you know how to knit. We can teach you! Knitting is a nice hobby and a very relaxing activity. Please join us.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Turner

MUSIC MINISTRY

“St. John’s is a musical church – not just where music is performed, but a place where music and worship are woven together. Music at St. John’s reflects the energy, enthusiasm and commitment of a congregation and choirs dedicated to worship in the best of the Anglican tradition.” -from *Music on the Hill* brochure

Sunday Morning Liturgy

Liturgy has the power to help us reflect, anticipate, and celebrate. Our common heritage in the Episcopal Church roots us in expressive liturgical practice tied to the ever-changing themes of the liturgical year. The tools we are given as Episcopalians: the lectionary, multiple beautiful Mass settings, glorious hymnody, Anglican chant, different Rites of the Holy Eucharist, help us experience written words of scripture.

During 2008, St. John’s has continued to evolve as a church that practices beautiful liturgy that embraces fully the traditions and evolutions of the Episcopal Church. Highlights of 2008 include our beautiful liturgies during Holy Week, including the Easter Vigil, and our joyous Christmas celebration. Our continued corporate education and understanding of liturgical seasons is underscored through the changing of our musical propers (Kyrie/Gloria, Presentation Hymn, Sanctus, Fraction Anthem). The congregation has done a great job of learning new pieces of music that expand our musical repertoire, and therefore, our ability to more fully express and feel the seasons of our liturgical calendar!

The Choirs of St. John’s

St. John’s Choirs have been practicing heartily during 2008. The Children’s and Junior Choirs and Jr/Sr High Ensemble have continued to grow steadily. Highlights of 2008 for our Youth Choirs include the performance of “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat,” Lessons and Carols, and the best Christmas Pageant ever! We are truly blessed with talented and committed children at St. John’s – their musical ability and willingness to try anything and participate in everything are a joy to behold. These children are also learning what it means to be an Episcopalian and lead and love liturgy. We all should be proud of them!

The Parish Choir also continues to thrive. The music these dedicated parishioners provide for our services is stunning. Highlights from 2008 were the lovely Lessons and Carols and the 10 PM Christmas Eve service. These services were stunning and showed off the beauty and talent of our Parish Choir combined with harp. We are blessed with the finest music at St. John’s!

- Dr. Abbey Hallberg Siegfried, Music Director

OUTREACH

The goal of the Outreach Committee this year was to utilize the Adult Formation Forums to educate all of us about community needs. Presentations were made by Crossroads, Salvation Army, Interfaith Hospitality Network, Habitat for Humanity, Rockingham Community Action, The Housing Partnership, the Mississippi Mission trip, Footprints and the New Hampshire Food Bank. We were able to donate \$14,000. of the church's resources to these organizations.

The Common Table and the Fall Tour programs are major outreach efforts and donations of time and talent by many of St. John's parishioners to these events is extensive.

Our goals for 2009 include efforts to support community, regional and international needs. One or more mission trips, donations to the New Hampshire Food Bank, fuel assistance money to the clergy's discretionary fund with a Soup Cookoff fundraiser and continuation of the Christmas Day dinner are being proposed.

- Lew Roberts, Chair

PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral Care continues to be at the heart of our church in celebrating new life and caring for the elderly, infirmed or dying. I believe it is a true privilege to share this time with other parishioners. They teach me all the time. My hope is that parishioners who have generously cared for others with a ride, meal or visit feel that privilege as well. I thank you to those who have have been a part of this. You are invaluable. There were also several parishioners who were safe church trained this year. In December, we delivered wreaths that put smiles on many faces. There were dinners that connected parishioners who both received and provided pastoral care services. I would love to see this connection made more often. It is all about relationships. Right Rob?

I would especially like to thank Tina Trevino, Suzanne Cook, Annie Rainboth, Cindy Hebert, Sallie Mackie, Fran Meffen, Linda Walsh, and Jane Nold for serving as neighborhood leaders. The gift of caring for another human is so nurishing it truely feeds the spirit. Making a meal, providing a ride or visiting a shut-in can make a tremendous difference in someone's life. Please be part of this honor and be a part of Pastoral Care. All are invited.

Respectfully submitted,
Anna Shultz

PRAYER CHAIN

The Prayer Chain continues its quiet ministry. We have had over 100 persons on our prayer list this year. We pray for any problem that lies heavy on the heart—

for healing of body, mind, and spirit,
for the conception and health of babies,
for those who are in some sense trapped and can't see the way to freedom,
for those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan,
for those who have lost jobs to find wonderful new ones,
for grace to enter and surround the lives of those we pray for.

Most requests have been called in, but sometimes we just know when someone needs help and add them to the list. We might even be praying for you. Thank you to Prayer Chain members Helen Gettelman, Karen Parrott, Kathi Hardy, Jan Sabeau, Sarah Todd, Mary Turner, and Barbara Widen.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Mennel

SALVATION ARMY

St. John's Portsmouth Salvation Army Soup Kitchen volunteers provide a hot dinner for approximately 50 people on the second Friday of each month 3:30pm to 6:30pm. If you would like to join our team of volunteers contact: Nancy Fessenden, St. Johns' Salvation Army Soup Kitchen Co-ordinator, at 436-4904.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Fessenden

STEWARDSHIP OF THE EARTH

Mission Statement: In accordance with the Covenants of The Book of Common Prayer, this committee seeks to encourage and enable all parishioners of St. John's Episcopal Church to be aware of God's whole creation, be faithful stewards of this fragile earth and take action, within the parish and community to preserve the environment for present and future generations.

For the year 2008 we have implemented our mission in two ways:

1. Parish - through events (Bike to Church; Christmas Fair), our green table at coffee hour; selling CFL's, canvas bags, water bottles, LED Christmas lights and also weekly information with "green tips" in the bulletin. We also have quite a bit of literature on recycling information as well as general information on how to be more sustainable. In the fall Judy Sabin and I spoke to Rob about a parish wide program which we will present to the Vestry shortly. We will also encourage more involvement with sermons, music and prayers in the liturgy.
2. Community – Our "Down to Earth" Friday night forums which we have had throughout the year have been well received by the seacoast communities. Topics have been, "Go Green this Spring" (energy efficiency inside and outside the home); "Renewal" – stories from America's religious environmental movement. As a result of this forum, Renewal will be shown this month (Jan) at the Unitarian Church) and then during Earth Week in April at the Portsmouth Library. Scott Votey at Seacoast Academy and Jennifer Wilhelm (sustainability director at PEA) have also gotten copies to use at their schools. Along with the Interfaith Sustainability Team – Piscataqua Region (Carole is a member) we participated in Portsmouth first Sustainability Fair and will be doing it again this year.

Respectfully submitted,
Carole H. Renselaer

USHERS

St. John's is fortunate to have about 50 people who usher at various services. These services include Sunday services except for 8:00, funerals, and other special services. I want to thank the ushers for their response to my emails and also for showing up when scheduled. The email list has over 40 addresses, which has made it great for me. I especially want to thank Brad Lown, Bob Mennel, Arthur Parrott, John Rice, Bud Whitmyer, Mike Dailey and others who have been head ushers for me. We are always looking for new ushers and head ushers. Ushering is a great way to serve the church and meet and greet people. I schedule people by their availability as I know that a monthly commitment is difficult for most.

Respectfully submitted,
Al Edwards

WEB SITE AND OFFICE NETWORKS

In the spring of 2008 Lela Niemi took over responsibility for most of the web site with a view to incorporating it as a part of her ongoing duties. In addition to the work the Lela has taken on, we added a subsidiary web site devoted to the needs of the parish tour program which went off with great success in October.

In support of the new office telephone system, which is dependent on Internet connectivity, we upgraded the office router and networking configuration. We've moved to a mainly portable configuration for most staff, with laptop computers providing the flexibility required by a staff who work in multiple locations. Consequently, we've seen a reduction in the number of desktop pc's required in the church office itself. While remote access to the church network would provide a much desired expansion of services, it has not proven possible, despite a great deal of experimentation, given the limitations of the current network.

Finally, after 12 years, I've hung up my e-cleats and turned responsibility for the church's networks over to a successor. It has been a privilege to have served the parish in this capacity for so long. Thank you.

Type of Work	Hours	Vale of Donation
Routine Maintenance	47	3506
Network & Web	98	8798
Totals	145	\$12,304

Respectfully submitted,
Bobb Menk, Network administrator and webmaster

YOUNG ORGANIST COLLABORATIVE

Mission Statement: "To encourage and support young people in learning to play the pipe organ."

This mission is accomplished by:

1. Providing subsidized introductory instruction.
2. Providing a means of studying diverse repertoire available to the organ, to include classical, sacred, jazz, theater, and contemporary music.
3. Providing exposure to the great organs in the region; and
4. Providing a resource database to include teachers, instruments, rehearsal space, performance venues, and job opportunities.

YOC is an ecumenical outreach program which provides subsidized organ lessons to youth aged 11 – 16 in the Seacoast area and beyond. YOC income comes from donations made by some members of St. John's as well as outside individuals, parents of students, churches and businesses. Over one half of the donations in YOC annual fund drive in June 2008 came from outside of St. John's. We are grateful for donations from all sources. An additional fundraising campaign took place in December 2008 to cover scholarships for continuing students.

YOC operates from July to June, and the approximate expense breakdown for the 08/09 season is: New Scholarships - \$ 7,500; Continuing Scholarships: \$1,000 Postage/ mailing - \$500; Master Classes - \$400; Misc - \$200.

After the June 2008 audition, YOC selected ten new students for its 08/09 program: Scott Bergendahl of Londonderry, Amanda Finnell of Hampton, Hannah and Katherine Fritter of Barrington, Alexander Larson of Newmarket, Sarah Leathe of Eliot, Tess Limoggio of Eliot (St. John's parishioner), Meghna Nandi of Somersworth, Sianna Niedzolkowski of Rollinsford and Seth Waters of Dover. These students are currently studying with various organ instructors at the following churches: Jim Bullock at Community Church of Durham, David Wold of Rye Congregational Church (at St. John's Methodist/Dover); Sarah Brink at Trinity Church, Hampton (also at St. Theresa's/Rye), Bruce Adami at Christ Church/Exeter and Bev Caldon at Exeter Congregational Church. Abbey Hallberg Siegfried of St. John's/Portsmouth is on leave this year, and thus no current YOC students are studying at St. John's, although Tess Limoggio practices at St. John's.

In February 2009, YOC welcomes **Daniel Sullivan**, an instructor in the Organ Department at the Juilliard School in NYC, to conduct a new student masterclass at St. John's.

YOC has a 10-member committee looking for new members (we currently have 4 non-parishioner members). Larry Yerdon of Strawberry Banke and Max Smith of St. John's recently joined the board. Helpful skills or interests for board members include: ministry to youth and their parents, fundraising, long range planning, publicity, grantsmanship, computers/graphics and accounting.

YOC's year end recital is on May 9, 2009 at 3:00 pm at St. John's. All are welcome to come and appreciate the accomplishments of new and continuing organ students.

- Kathryn Mulhearn, YOC Chair

Clergy, Wardens & Staff

The Rev. Robert E. Stevens, Jr., *Rector*
The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thornberg, *Curate*
The Rev. G. Richard Siener, DD, *Assisting Priest*
Dr. Abbey Hallberg Siegfried, *Director of Music*
Jennifer Baird, *Parish Administrator*
David Lajoie & James Drelick, *Sexton*
Lela Niemi, *Newsletter Editor*
Jennifer McPherson, *Organ Scholar*
Chris Sieve, *Senior Warden*
Gerry Simpkins, *Junior Warden*

Office Information

Telephone(603) 436-8283
Fax (603) 433-2714
Website www.stjohnsnh.org
Email administrator@stjohnsnh.org

The Parish Office is open from 9am to 5pm

Worship Schedule

Thursdays: 9:30am Holy Eucharist and Healing Service

Sundays: 8:00am Holy Eucharist Rite I
 9:15am Children and Adult Formation
 10:30am Sung Holy Eucharist Rite II with Parish Choirs
 11:30 Coffee Hour

Welcome!

If you are a newcomer or a visitor, please fill out an information card located in the pews, and place it in an offering plate or give it to an Usher. We're so glad to have you with us!