



**St. John's  
Episcopal Church**  
2009 Annual Report

Annual Parish Meeting  
January 24, 2010

101 Chapel Street  
Portsmouth, New Hampshire

**Minutes from the Annual Meeting of St. John's Episcopal Church,  
January 25, 2009**

Opening Prayer

Rob Stevens, Rector, SJC

2008 Annual Reports will be posted on the website. 50 were printed in keeping with the customary attendance at this meeting. If you would like a copy, please let the front office (Jen Baird) know and we will print you one.

Rob Stevens, Rector requested a motion to approve 08 Annual Meeting minutes. Motion was made and seconded. Ayes prevailed.

Senior Warden's Report

Chris Sieve

On Vestry Membership:

We strive to have people on the vestry with different professional skills and backgrounds. Currently we have people on the vestry who have been long-term members. Long-term members provide us with history. Right now the vestry is comprised of people with children, choir members, and approximately five people are retired. It is helpful for the operation of the church to have diverse skills and gifts.

Leaving Vestry:

Leslie Latimer (Welcoming Committee)

Buddy Whitmyer (Usher and employed by public works in the city. Robert's Rules of Order expert)

Anna Schultz (Pastoral Care)

Incoming Vestry:

**Kathy Flygare:** Lives in Exeter, and works in human resources at Exeter Hospital. She is an artist and sold glass ornaments at the Holly Hill Fair

**Robert Mood:** Has children in the Sunday School and spent two years mentoring the youth group. He works professionally in IT at Liberty Mutual and is helping us discern our technology needs. He lives in Greenland

**Anna Kay Vorsteg:** Executive Director of the American Youth Foundation, a non-profit organization. Her children are in Sunday school and she has helped out the past two years with children's chapel.

We are committed to having people on vestry who help out with every aspect of church.

Delegates to Convention

Susan Fockler

Thomas Hourihan

Jane Holway (alternate)

Philip Drake (alternate)

Rector's Comments on the Vestry Election Process:

There are as many people rotating on to the vestry as there are rotating off. Nominations for Vestry closed last week. Know that this is an open process and that anybody can be nominated.

It was moved to accept the nominations as slated. The motion was seconded and approved.

## Treasurer's Report

Sandra Pagel

Sandra presented a summary of the 09 Budget. A byline, line item budget is available in the office for both 08 and 09. If interested, contact Jen Baird, the parish administrator. 2008 was a pivotal year in the operating statements at SJC. We came in with an 80K deficit. If we had run with this 80K operating deficit in addition to the 80K we draw, St John's would have had a 160K deficit without capital improvements. During 08 we were asked to participate and share in the message of abundance from the pulpit. The Stewardship Committee came up with an innovative fundraising idea, the raffle. Even though the raffle was not well received by everyone, it netted 11K and raised consciousness regarding the fact that the church needed more money. The Un-Common Table and Holly Hill Fair were other fundraisers. All revenues increased due to participation and increased giving.

On the expense side, we came in with only two clergy. Meg, our beloved formation director, left the position vacant, and instead of hiring another formation director to replace her, Rob, Jeff and Abbey absorbed her work. Buildings and Grounds organized work crews and we refurbished 100 Chapel Street ourselves. A few weeks ago a group of 10 people came in and cleaned the kitchen. The men's group will also be painting the kitchen. Even our little gardens, are kept by parishioners Karen Parrott, Suzi Raeside, and Gladys Butterworth.

This year we have been able, for the first time, to return money to the endowment instead of having to draw from it after so many years. This is a first step and hopefully a pattern that will continue for many years. We should rejoice, but as we do, we need to turn our attention to 09. Again we are looking at a deficit of \$45,000. We will once again forgo hiring a formation director. Over and above that, our staff is working very hard. On the expense side we will look at all expenditures to determine how we can save expenses and also do some outside fundraising. We are all asked to share our bounty. The pledge goal is \$435,000. At the present time we have pledges of \$362,000. Please join us in pledging.

We are looking at innovative ways to raise revenue.

We will continue to raise revenue as a community and use ourselves with talent, time and treasure.

Over and above, the vestry approved, at the recommendation of the Finance Committee, the investment portfolio to be brought in-house. It is managed on a balance basis in 10 different portfolios. We are down 20% but the national decline is at about 42%. We are in fixed income securities, which have been performing better at this time in the market. The FC is a group of 20 individuals. It is a very fun and vocal group.

I moved to the Seacoast in 2006. I only knew two people: my daughter Erika and son-in-law. I had lived in the same community for 40 years and had been active in church, town, and school activities. I also had an exciting career. At the end of 06 Rob asked me to attend a Finance Committee meeting. And bit-by-bit, I got to know parishioners. I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve in this area and find a spiritual home. Now I can say, I am an outsider no more.

## **From the Floor**

### **Why haven't we hired a formation director and why isn't it a priority?**

Christian Formation is a priority. But we don't have the money. I invite you to come to the Finance Committee meetings so that you can see line-by-line on why we don't have a formation director at this time.

### **Where does it show us where the bequests are and who gave them?**

We generally do not notify the names of people who give bequests. Where bequests show up is in the unrestricted or restricted endowment. Last year we received 51K from an estate. There

is a policy in place that if we receive an unrestricted bequest that it goes into the endowment. Jackie George gave 51K last year. Some people don't mind if we announce the bequests. Others prefer to have bequests anonymous and we need to respect that.

With the pledges being the largest part of income, and the current pledging. Where did we stand last year at this time?

Last year \$440,000 pledges were received, and we had pledges in hand of \$388,000. We ran largely at the rate of \$405,000 throughout the year. Normally we receive 3-5% over what is written on the pledge card. We had some very special gifts across the year. What happened is that we received incremental giving. All pledges were met and people increased their pledges accordingly. This year we continue to ask for pledge increases. There is not an amount that is too small, or any that is too large.

Suzi Raeside

I'm going to make a plea for the Fall Tour 09. Let's celebrate St. John's and this wonderful area. We didn't have a huge financial success in 08, but we are going to try to do 30 guests this year. We need people to open up their homes in this area.

**How controllable are the increases?**

**There are two line items are up: Outreach, and Worship are up. How controllable are those two items?**

The expenses are on a functional basis. If you pick up the line item for 09 and 08 you will see that. The issue is for compensation, particularly the clergy compensation area. What we must do is raise the income to cover that, rather than cut the expenses.

**What is Worship?**

It is not cheap to keep this place open. How much does it cost to keep this place open so we can worship.

Last year we had a lot of things that were up in the air on the expense side. This year we need to get in to supporting what we do in this place. The reality is that we have a lot of work to do in this place. There was not one pledge over 10K when Rob started here. Now we have two. We are all in this together. We don't have a family that we can go to and ask for a check. Our endowment is 1.3M. It's not that large. At the end of the year I thought it might be one check that would put it over, but it wasn't, it was everybody increasing pledges incrementally. We are not a rich church; we just have a lot of people that make us rich.

**THANK YOU**

Rob Stevens

Vestry

Finance Committee, John Hebert Chair

Sandra Pagel, Treasurer (She was forewarned, and is now an insider)

Mike Daley, Treasurer during the interim period.

Cathy Daley and Ted Fuller have taken on the least desired position in the church. What has been encouraging is that they have shown us it can be done with joy.

Outgoing Vestry Members

To Buddy, Anna, and Leslie: Thank-you. When I got here I asked Buddy and Leslie to stay on for another term so they have been on for six years. I have a prayer book/hymnal for the outgoing members of the vestry.

Every Monday AM I show up and I see this group of women sitting in the Philbrick Room, and I am very happy because they are counting money. Is Dorothy Polando here? She has been doing this for a long time and will continue to count. Marie Smith is one of those great people with a gift. She sends birthday cards. She gives my children the number they are in dollars. Please, if you see Marie, say thank you.

Bob Menk

Bob is the ultimate behind the scenes minister. I have been in the main office at night, 9-10. I thought the place was haunted. The computer was clicking and doing all these things. It was Bob fixing the computers from his house. Nobody on our staff has this skill. It's a great resource because we are saving a lot of money because Bob has been donating his time in this way. Thank you!

Even with a new rector, the Wardens are still in charge. I remember when I met Gerry Simpkins and watched what he did in the course of the week, and I thought, thank god we don't have to pay him because he lives here. Gerry has this way about him that is disarming. He's quick with a kind word. He's not going to say a whole lot, but when he does, people listen. He loves God and he loves St. John's. When you ask him what he is passionate about he gets quiet because that love is right there on the surface.

Art Parrot has agreed to be the new Junior Warden. If you see Art, say, Hey, Bode!

Lastly, I would like to thank the staff. I cannot tell you how grateful I am for the people I get to work with every day.

-Jennifer Baird has about four jobs. Dave is the true heart and soul of this parish. I love you and I am glad you are with us. You teach me a lot every day.

-Lela Neimi has been doing the communications, including the bulletin every Sunday. She is quick with a kind word and works with grace.

-Dick Seiner has tried to keep me out of trouble since I have been here. He understands parish life.

-Abbey Siegfried is called choir director but that is so inadequate. Everyone on our staff is a minister. It is in the way that she loves our children but also the adults. She is quick to clarify things and tell me when I am wrong, frequently.

-Then there's Jeff, woohooo! I will tell you that this is the first time in my professional career that I am not the youngest. ☺ The search committee wanted to find the best person possible, and we did.

Rob Stevens (Chris Sieve) The health of this community through the work of all the people Rob just mentioned would not be happening without the love that Rob pours into this place every day. Rob Stevens really knows how to take care of himself. He works really hard to live a balanced life. He loves this place and works really hard here. It's my job to protect the incredible gift we have in him.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectively submitted by Barbara Henricks, clerk

January 24, 2010

## RECTOR'S REPORT

Dear St. John's,

At the dawn of this new decade we have an opportunity. We have the opportunity to define who we are and what we are about as a community of faith. Jesus' asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am." They answered this question easily because they simple parroted what other people had said. Then Jesus got personal. He asked, "Who do **you** say that I am?" This question was finally answered by Peter who took a deep breath and exclaimed that Jesus was "the Messiah, the Christ." This exchange between Jesus and his friends is a timely example for St. John's. We have activities of all kinds serving all sorts and conditions of human beings. We are doing the work God has given us to do from caring for our elders to feeding (literally) hundreds of people a week to preparing our children for the adventure of adulthood. Great things are indeed happening, but our connections could be made more complete.

When was the last time that this community engaged in a process to determine its identity and purpose? I asked this at a vestry meeting and a long-time member responded that in 25 years he knows of no time when we actually went to each person and asked the important questions of who we are and what we are about. The time is now for this process.

All of us have been invited to complete a survey that begins to address these important questions. The survey is out and as of today more that 180 people have responded. This is incredible! That is over 50% of the worshipping adults of this parish. This is a positive indication that people care and our engaged.

At the Annual Meeting we will report very preliminary findings and will invite the parish to attend one of six focus groups that will meet over the next two months. This conversation will then lead to a parish wide gathering in late April or early May that shares what we have learned and what initiatives might be appropriate to implement.

All of this leads to a fall stewardship program that is clear, direct, and informed by the survey and conversations that follow. This campaign will seek pledges, yes, but more than that will seek to reflect who we say that we are and what we say we are about. It is clarity of vision and purpose that is our goal.

I do not pretend to know precisely what the outcome will be, but I can with the utmost confidence and faith tell you that I believe I know the process by which we will discover the heart and soul of this parish for this time and place. I am fully committed to God and to this community of faith that we are so blessed to call our spiritual home.

The key for our wholeness and health as a community of faith is to honor and commit to the process of asking who we are and what we are about. Good work abounds in this parish and it is beginning to be connected, but that does not happen by chance. Just like the disciples we need to be asked the important question...and we need to take courage like Peter to answer.

Who do we say that St. John's is? And what are we about? What is our answer?

Faithfully, your rector and friend,



## CURATE

The past year was challenging, successful, and rewarding for the life and ministry of St. John's in general, and the role of the curate in particular.

I participated, lead, preached, and celebrated (as assigned by the rector) at all Sundays and major feasts of the Christian year, save for vacation days. Being that this year I was fully ordained as a priest, I was the sole celebrant and preacher in the summer on Sundays when the rector was away on vacation. Additionally, I assisted the planning and leading of several funerals with the rector and music director, in addition to being the sole point for two funerals while Rob was away. I officiated at two weddings, and one baptism. I continue to celebrate and preach at the Thursday morning Eucharist about twice a month.

This year saw new liturgical roles on Sunday mornings, through expansion of the acolyte program at St. John's. In coordination with the rector, I recruited and trained 4 "Priors" to serve during worship. These Priors are young men and women that have showed excellent leadership, both in liturgy and in the life of the parish. Their role is to assist and lead the younger acolytes, thus enabling the adult acolyte leaders to serve a more widespread role in organization, training, and leadership. The acolyte program at St. John's continues to be a life giving icon of the importance we put on our children, with many new recruits, with enthusiasm and liveliness. I would like to thank the heartfelt work of Cathy Dailey and Ted Blood for cultivating such an amazing program.

The youth group at St. John's has been active, growing, and incredibly life giving to everyone involved. We have continued to provide excellent program for our teenagers on Sunday mornings, in addition to monthly social and mission events. We have traveled two times to Dorchester, MA for urban mission work, traveled with the high school kids to New York City last May, and traveled to the North Country of New Hampshire for rural ministry work. This past summer, we held "Movie Nights" each Wednesday, which helped to solidify and deepen the relationships in the group. We celebrated two Rite 13 ceremonies, one in May, and one in November. We held two Lock-Ins: one for the middle school, and one for the high school. We are now in the midst of fundraising for the high school youth group's pilgrimage to Ireland. I am incredibly thankful for the amazing work of our mentors Gavin Barbour, Landya and Patrick McCafferty, Jennifer Stevens, Randy Carey, and Lela Niemi. Most especially, it has been so very wonderful to welcome our Amy Dutton as Education Director and teammate in this undertaking.

Thanks to the work of Maura Constantine and Becca Horton, I assisted in the implementation of Vacation Bible School this past summer. Its theme was "Studio Go," and by all accounts it was a success. While Amy Dutton has expertly taken over the Sunday School program, I continue to assist with it and with Children's Chapel, as is helpful to her. We are blessed to have excellent program for our young people.

This year I taught a number of Adult Formation Classes, Inquirer's Classes, and Book groups, as assigned by the rector and coordinated with the staff. In Lent, I recruited, supported, and organized the creation of a Lenten Meditation Booklet, which contained reflections for each day of Lent that could be read as a spiritual practice during the contemplative season. I will be creating another such book for Lent in 2010.

I found myself the clergy support for several events that helped to better the life, fellowship, and ministry of St. John's. I helped to facilitate the Annual Parish Picnic this summer, as well as our Ministry Fair on Kickoff Sunday, with the help of Katie Schindler. This past Lent, I helped to organize the reading of the Passion for Palm Sunday, and this Fall I coordinated Millennium Development Goal Sunday with the help of Susan Lassen, Lew Roberts, and the Outreach Committee.

With the work of my wife Anne Thornberg, who began as the "Curate-Intern" at Christ Church, Exeter, I created a "Seacoast Young Adult Group," a network of young adults affiliated with St. John's, Christ Church, and other Seacoast Churches. We meet roughly once per month for social events and service projects. In addition, I have held "ad hoc" ministries for young adults, such as coffee house office hours, and theological discussions at local establishments.

I continue to fulfill an administrative role at St. John's. Each month, I write a Newsletter article, which at times I used for theological education, and at other times programming education. Each week, I write the Prayers of the People for the 10:30 service. Additionally, I work with the rector, music director, and parish administrative in order to oversee execute the creation, proofing, and printing of the bulletin and inserts.

As the curate at St. John's, I fill a role that is both didactic for me (as a newly ordained priest in training), and supportive for the leadership of the parish. Each month, I attend both the Finance Committee Meetings, and the Vestry Meetings. In this role, I serve both as a liaison between the lay leadership of St. John's and the staff, and continue to glean knowledge from my experience. I am grateful for that opportunity.

As a priest of the Episcopal Church, my congregational affiliation is to that of the Diocese of New Hampshire. As such, I fulfill a Diocesan role. This has entailed monthly attendance of "Fresh Start," a program of newly ordained priests. Additionally, I attend Convention each year, and monthly Convocation Meetings, as coordinated with the rector. I completed my tenure this year on the Credentials Committee of Convention. Lastly, I have been working with the Youth and Young Adult Commission of the Diocese, organizing, advertising, and executing a weekend long retreat for Diocesan youth set for January.

As curate, I have been assigned the role as that of a generalist: working in all aspects of the parish life, with a specific leadership role with youth and young adults. I have found St. John's to be a busy, vibrant, challenging and loving community. I am honored to be here, and look forward to 2010.

The Rev. Jeffrey D. S. Thornberg

## **ALTAR GUILD**

The work of the Altar Guild is the care and preparation of the altar for all services, including weddings, funerals and any special events. Our present membership totals twenty-five women and men. We welcomed four new members this year-Vicki Boyd, Pat Dorowm Joann Warren and Martha Waterman and one returning member, Ann Ringling. Wendy Blood, also a new member does all needed repairs on vestments and altar hangings. We also wanted to thank Jane Hourihan and Lori Johnson for their years of service.

The flower chart in the narthex is also maintained by the Altar Guild. Anyone wishing to donate flowers in memory-of or in honor-of is asked to sign the chart and call Ginny Edwards @439-2219.

Two home communion sets and linen have been purchased for use in our church community. Once again we enjoyed our annual luncheon at Women's City Club, giving members an opportunity to socialize.

If you are interested in this quiet and rewarding ministry, please call Bertha Rocray @ 1-207-363-4803 or Ginny Edwards @439-2219

Respectfully submitted,  
Bertha H. Rocray, Directress  
Ginny Edwards, Secretart-Treasurer

## **COMMON TABLE**

Because of the difficult economic times, volunteers at Common Table anticipated an increase in people needing food and joining us for Thursday lunch. We now plan on serving as many as 160 people each week and little is left over. One Thursday people were holding plates of food, sitting on the stairs.

What we did not anticipate, with the increase in need, was that we would have more volunteers, more donations and more people wanting to help in some manner. Some are parishioners, but a number have no connection with St. John's, except they want to help. Another group of St. John's volunteers, the Dessert Brigade, brings in freshly baked cookies, brownies and cakes every week.

In addition to lunch, we have been able to distribute some fresh vegetables and fruits, donated by the Village Farmstand in Rye. We provided a Christmas dinner, donated and prepared by Scott and Michelle Masada from the Dolphin Striker. Additional volunteers, some from Massachusetts, came to help serve and clean up.

In spite of the hard times, Uncommon Table, the annual fundraiser to cover the food and supplies needed for our weekly lunch, had its second most successful year. The money raised from Uncommon Table, plus a stream of donations, allowed us to cover all direct costs and to contribute some to the Church's indirect costs.

We have also contacted other churches in Portsmouth to see if any would be able to host a second, weekly lunch. We are hopeful we will have some success in 2010.

Although the need is great, it is a blessing to see the even greater generosity that pours out in support of this mission.

Judy Roberts, Suzanne Raeside, Margaret Sofio

## **COOKING FOR CROSSROADS**

On the first Wednesday of each month our team gathers in the kitchen in Thaxter Hall to prepare the evening meal for the residents of Crossroads House, a homeless shelter and transitional residence. We peel, chop, slice, sauté, boil, steam, chat, laugh and assemble a hearty and healthy dinner for 70-90 people. Our congenial team is not limited to St. John's parishioners but we all believe in the opportunity to share our resources with those less fortunate.

Respectfully submitted. Lacey and Andy Bangs

## **FINANCE & TREASURE**

The financial life of St. John's in 2009 was filled with opportunities, challenges and grace. At a time when many areas of life are characterized by uncertainty, the Parish is gifted with faithful stewardship, meaningful worship, and a community that comes together to share time and talent for the mission of St. John's.

A major change that took place in 2009 was the creation of a separate financial administrator position. Heretofore, our parish administrator had performed both the office management and financial roles. Our financial records are maintained through the ACS system, an accounting software system that enables us to more effectively report and manage reports for all facets of the Parish's operation including: stewardship pledges; Parish activities and programs; income and expenses; capital allocation; and, cash position. Much of our focus in 2009 was directed toward expense savings that accompanied the restructuring of staff positions and the savings possible in other operating areas such as printing and building and grounds. One area of great challenge remains cash management and the need to smooth some of our seasonal variations. During 2009, the year 2007 Parish audit was completed. Audits for years, 2008 and 2009, are expected to be completed in 2010.

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 February, 2008, the Vestry approved the recommendation of the Finance Committee that the management of investments in the Parish's Endowment accounts be handled in-house. Investment in the endowment portfolios is guided by a policy adopted by the Vestry in 2007; a policy that seeks "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 management of the portfolios uses a balanced investment approach that incorporates the use of managed accounts such as mutual funds or Exchange Traded Funds (ETF'S), and is diversified with a significant commitment to both stocks and fixed income securities. 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, and the recovery in 2009 was at least in line with the general market. A report on the portfolio performance and any need for position rebalancing is presented to the Vestry monthly.

We continue to seek to improve communication and financial transparency. Initiatives include dialogues through periodic Sunday Adult Forums and talks to the congregation along with financial reporting in "Money Matters" articles in the monthly newsletter. In addition to

monthly operating statements, and budget and investment reports, the Vestry receives 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 the members of the Finance Committee (Dick Davidson, Ted Fuller, Robert Mennel, Lew Roberts, Bill Jones, Gerry Simpkins, Chris Sieve, Hope Martin, Sandra Pagel, Peter Tarlton, The Rev. Rob Stevens and The 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,

Peter Tarlton, Treasurer & Sandra Pagel, Financial Administrator

St. John's Church  
 Financial Comparison, 2006 - 2009  
 All #'s, 000's, except Pledges, (# & Average)

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
<b>Pledges, #</b>	237	295	255	238
\$ Average	\$ 1,456	\$ 1,411	\$ 1,566	\$ 1,504
<b><u>Income</u></b>				
Pledge Total	\$ 345	\$ 416	\$ 368	\$ 358
+/-	12	(30)	63	39
Plate	48	65	43	43
	<u>405</u>	<u>451</u>	<u>474</u>	<u>440</u>
Building/Parking	26	25	24	26
Volunteer-Program Contributions				
<u>net</u> of donations	13	37	26	36
Other	111	10	14	18
Investment Income/Endowment	42	46	70	121
Total Income*	<u>597</u>	<u>569</u>	<u>608</u>	<u>641</u>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>				
Compensation - Salary	272	325	265	305
Other	113	127	116	124
Personnel Subtotal	<u>385</u>	<u>452</u>	<u>381</u>	<u>429</u>
Buildings/Grounds	71	73	61	69
Admin, Insurance	41	51	54	42
Worship, Church Programs	25	27	20	24
Other	15	66	36	14
Diocese (Incl. Bishop Discretionary)	73	81	79	78
Total Expense	<u>610</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>631</u>	<u>656</u>
Net Difference	\$ (13)	\$ (181)	\$ (23)	\$ (15)
*Excludes Unrealized Gains/Loss	\$ 104	\$ 60	\$ (272)	TBD

## ECONOMY SHOP

The recycling of donated items through your Economy Shop has resulted in the ability to contribute a total of \$9,000.00 to the church general fund.

Your generosity of the quantity and quality of items donated has been once again outstanding allowing us to off 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, Judy Roberts, Barbara Widen, and Stephen Carrigan.

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.

Submitted by Joan and Bob Alessi co-chairpersons.

Balance on hand 12/31/08	\$363.38
Sales and Interest	\$ 8862.41
Disbursements to St. John's Gen'l Fund	June 09 \$ 4500.00
	Dec 09 \$ 4500.00
Disbursement to Sexton David Lajoie	\$ 100.00
Balance on Hand 12/31/09	\$ 125.79

## 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. At Christmastime this year each member donated money to be added to the donation to Footprints Food Pantry.

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 Guild Auxiliary. 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	\$917.11
Deposits	
Receipt from Elwyn Trust \$1200	1200.00
Donation from members	36.00
Total Disbursement	1386.00
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Balance on hand 12/31/08	\$767.11

### Disbursements

5/23/09 Camp Waban	100.00
5/23/09 Cross Roads House	50.00
4/23/09 Salvation Army Summer Camp	200.00
5/23/09 Smile Train	50.00
5/23/09 Christian Appalachian Project	100.00
5/23/09 Seacoast Family Food Pantry	50.00
5/23/09 Soup Kitchen (Nancy Fessenden)	100.00
5/23/09 Seacoast Hospice	50.00
5/23/09 Tender Loving Care 15 pairs of shoes	120.00
Bank maintenance fee (for two months @15.00)	30.00
10/21/09 Salvation Army Thanksgiving & Christmas	200.00
11/17/09 St Francis Academy	25.00
11/17/09A Safe Place	25.00
11/17.09 Operation Blessings	25.00
12/14/09 Footprints Food Pantry	111.00
11/17/09 Soup Kitchen (Nancy Fessenden)	100.00
11/17/08 USO	50.00
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Total	1386.00

Respectfully submitted  
 Joan Kulickowski, Guild Auxiliary Treasurer

## HOLLY HILL FAIR

### Holly Hill Fair

December 4 - 6, 2009

	<u>Total</u> <u>Receipts/Sales</u>	<u>Net Sales</u>
Raffle - Wine	\$ 2,571.00	\$ 2,571.00
Raffle - Quilt	\$ 307.00	\$ 307.00
Animal Gifts	\$ 179.00	\$ 179.00
Carnival for Kids	\$ 132.08	\$ 49.64
Country Store	\$ 2,283.51	\$ 1,656.47
Crafts/Pottery	\$ 229.75	\$ 229.75
Gift Baskets	\$ 614.00	\$ 614.00
Greens	\$ 3,907.00	\$ 2,719.88
Jewelry	\$ 895.82	\$ 895.82
Knitting	\$ 376.25	\$ 376.25
Seafood Grill	\$ 1,052.00	\$ 601.19
Sewing	\$ 1,242.19	\$ 1,060.00
Silent Auction	\$ 3,474.00	\$ 3,474.00
Sports Equipment	\$ 259.50	\$ 259.50
Stewardship of Earth	\$ 350.00	\$ 350.00
Tea Room	\$ 427.25	\$ 427.25
White Elephant	\$ 939.63	\$ 939.63
Woodworking/Roberts	\$ 1,548.50	\$ 1,548.50
General Expenses	\$ -	\$ (1,490.52)
Total	\$ 20,788.48	\$ 16,768.36

## **Christian Education**

First and foremost, I'd like to extend my appreciation for everyone's support in this position! It means a great deal to me know that the Vestry, Staff and Parishioners alike consider Christian Education at St. John's to be a valuable investment.

Volunteers are an essential part of the successful programming at St. John's. Children greatly need to see positive role-models and be exposed to wisdom. I sincerely thank those of you who have spent your time, talents and energy with Sunday School, Youth Group Events, Wednesday Formations and Special Events. Know that this is a precious investment in the future. If you are interested in volunteering or have any ideas for our programs, please contact me!

Communication is a lifeline not only for parents but also for a parish! With the creation of a website linked through the St. John's webpage, all Christian Education information can be found there for your reference. Increased email communication has also been a priority. Please let me know if you would like to be added. Additionally, bulletin boards have been put together and are on display in Thaxter Hall so that you can see what the children and Youth of St. John's have been doing.

It is very important that parents have the time and space to receive God. Church is just the place. So I urge parents to utilize the nursery! It is a welcome respite for children under 3 (we have amazing nursery workers!) For your older children (ages 4- 5th grade), Children's Chapel will provide a brief lesson & prayers during the sermon. Books & art supplies are located in the back of the church, feel free to use these during the service to help your little ones worship with joy.

We have added Children's Offering Envelopes with the hope of teaching children the joy of giving. They are available from Sunday School teachers or in the entry of the church. Children cannot do this alone. We ask parents for their support in this valuable lesson. Remember... it is not the amount that they give, it is the act of giving!

Christian Ed. Highlights are: Kick-off Sunday, Wednesday Formations (wow, has that been lively, meaningful and fun), Children's Chapel (one of our most important ministries that few see), MDG Sunday, All Hallows Eve Service, Rite 13 & J2A Lock-ins & really fun events!, the Rite 13 ceremony, The Holly Hill Fair, J2A Pilgrimage Planning, Children's Carnival and The Christmas Pageant. All this is just the first few months! Where are we going? Well, I dream big for St. John's Christian Education!

First and foremost, I hope to form a Christian Education Committee. Forming leadership at St. John's is a very valuable investment in our church! The Christian Education Committee will help in the operating of special events, providing thought leadership, and the development of community within St. John's.

Most people will admit that we are all unique individuals who have a lot to offer when fed properly. It is my goal to bring womens groups to St. John's. I am hopeful that this will take form in book groups, bible studies, Lexio Divina and small interest groups. Women are very good at giving to others selflessly but often we forget how important it is to feed ourselves so that we may further develop our spiritual strength (and – let's face it - therefore have even more to give). We are products of a community and it is

my prayer that St. John's becomes an even more essential part of your life. I have a personal passion for Mission! It is my goal to bring mission into every meaningful event that we have here at St. John's. Not because we feel obligated, but because we can! From the very young to the very wise, we are all extremely capable of coming together and helping or receiving. They are both gifts that God teaches us! Christian Education provides the opportunity to increase connectivity through the generations at St. John's. From expanding programs, creating defined Rite of Passage ceremonies for all ages and intentionally addressing the needs and desires of this parish we are creating a community of faith for all.

Amy Dutton, Director of Christian Education

## **MEN'S GROUP**

St John's Men's Group is alive and well despite rumors to the contrary. To qualify that, one of our members asked a fellow parishioner if he was coming to the men's group meeting and was told that the men's group was for the 'Eight O'Clockers' and didn't feel he was invited.

Lets set the record straight. The St John's Men's Group dates back some fifty to seventy five years and was active until a few years ago. It became active again about two years ago and has been active since and yes, we are comprised mostly of the men from the eight o'clock service but we welcome men from the 'late service' and for that matter men from the community that would like to become involved. There is no membership requirements to the men's group, there are no dues, just come and enjoy a morning of conversation and fellowship and help us solve the world's problems.

We meet the first Saturday of the month at 8:30am in the morning. There is always fresh coffee and stimulating conversation, however we do have rules.

1. We do not discuss politics, local or national.
2. We do not discuss religion, ours or anyone else's.
3. We try to sit so no one has his back to the other and each has his turn to speak within the guidelines I have listed above, and I might add with no interruptions.

To list some of the things we have accomplished, we have painted the sacristy, which the Altar Guild is still thanking us for, and we also painted the Parish Hall Kitchen which was relatively easy after the girls finally agreed on the colors. We started cleaning up the trash under the church and in the tunnel but that needs to be completed. We have plans to paint the under side of the church balcony, the floor in the church and reset some of the grave markers in the church cemetery.

We recently had Rodney Robinson, the historian from St. John's Masonic Temple, give us a talk on the close relationship between the church and the Masonic lodge. We have plans to have people from the Air Force, the Navy and the Coast Guard come speak to us about their individual history and their connection with St John's. The invitation is out, come join us.

Dick Davidson

## 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 2009, 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 2009 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! We even sang hymns from Africa and South America on Millennium Development Goal Sunday and did a rousing job on the African-American National Anthem “Lift Every Voice and Sing” this past Sunday (the weekend the U.S. celebrates Martin Luther King, Jr.).

### **The Choirs of St. John’s**

St. John’s Choirs have been practicing heartily during 2009. The Children’s and Junior Choirs and Jr/Sr High Ensemble have continued to grow steadily. Highlights of 2009 for our Youth Choirs include the performance of “Seussical – the St. John’s version,” 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 and has grown tremendously in 2009. We began a new rehearsal format in 2009: the Parish Choir rehearses on the “First Thursday” of each month and Sunday mornings. It was my hope that this rehearsal structure would attract new members – it has done that and then some! The Parish Choir’s membership now truly reflects the membership of St. John’s: we have members with very small children, members with teenagers, who enjoy being able to rehearse while their children are in Sunday School, members with busy professional careers, members who are retired who call the Seacoast their full-time home, and members who are retired who spend part of the year in Europe, Asia, etc. The music these dedicated parishioners provide for our services is stunning. Highlights from 2009 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!

I look forward to 2010 and all of the possibilities – musical and more – that St. John’s has in front of it. I feel blessed to be a part of the St. John’s staff and to enter my 7th year here!

Respectfully submitted,

Abbey Hallberg Siegfried, Director of Music

## **OUTREACH**

Outreach continues to be a primary ministry of our church. The Outreach Committee's role is to support with time, talent and fiscal support the local, regional and global outreach projects of our church community. These projects include but are not limited to Interfaith Hospitality Network, Salvation Army, Seacoast Habitat for Humanity, Common Table, Christmas Day dinners, the Fall Tour, food pantries and Crossroads House.

Of note this year, we are beginning a three year long financial support of two international projects related to the Millennium Development Goal of reducing extreme global poverty and hunger. One program is for an agricultural and animal husbandry project in a village in Malawi, South Africa. The second project is for the development of a farming cooperative at an orphanage in Cambodia. One thousand, five hundred dollars has been contributed to each project.

Additional goals planned for 2010 include monthly information articles highlighting each outreach project, a possible international mission trip, a program to gather food contributions for a local food pantry and hopefully, additional time, talent and financial support for those in need.

Respectfully submitted,

Lew Roberts

## **PRAYER CHAIN**

This is the tenth anniversary of the Prayer Chain Ministry. We don't keep count, but we have certainly prayed for more than a thousand people who are "in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity," as the Prayer Book has it. There are many kinds of adversity and all of our prayers are for healing, protection, guidance, abundance, and blessing of body, mind, soul, and spirit.

We've learned things over the years. One is that when you ask God to bless others, through prayer, or any other way, you get blessed back tenfold.

Another, very touching to me, is the way Prayer Chain members pay attention to our parishioners, noticing that someone looks like they could use some extra prayer for awhile, and we add them to our list.

We might even be praying for you as you read this. And, in the sense that we always pray for the people of St. John's, even if your name is not there, you're definitely on the list.

Thank you to Prayer Chain members Helen Gettelman, Kathi Hardy, Myrtle Moore, Karen Parrott, and Sarah Todd, and Barbara Widen.

## **SALVATION ARMY**

Every second Friday of the month a dozen St. Johns volunteers cook, serve and clean up after a hearty meal of meat, potato, vegetables, fruit, and milk provided by St. Johns church budget for about 50 needy people at the Portsmouth Salvation Army. If you would like to join our volunteers or donate funds to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables please contact the volunteer co-ordinator Nancy Fessenden at 603-436-4904.

## **SEWING CRAFT**

I have not received the final figures for the Sewing Craft Committee net income for the year 2009 but, in addition to the earlier report, we have turned in \$55.00 so our net should be approximately \$1,061.50, the largest amount we have earned in the many years we have been in existence. What the magic formula is I do not know but I would love to better our thousand dollar mark as long as we are able to do so.

We have had the great good fortune to have Joan Alessi, Gloria Berry, Myrtle Moore, all creative and talented seamstresses. I have just been informed that Gretchen Blamire, our “sequin and bead queen” who has been so very generous and so dedicated to our group, has put her house on the market and will be leaving Portsmouth some time in the near future. I could not imagine anyone who will be so sadly missed at St. John’s, not only for her dedication to our Fair, but as a delightful, creative lady whom we cherish very much.

The Sewing Craft Committee will welcome anyone who would like to join our ranks. We enjoy working together and planning for our Fair in December. Come and share tea and 3PM on any of the Thursdays we meet. It is a creative and congenial group and hungry for new and exciting ideas.

I have a few new ideas and will bring them to our first meeting for 2010.

Dates for 2010 – Thursdays at 1PM in Thaxter Hall on the stage

February 18	September 16
March 18	October 21
April 15	November 18
May 20	December 3, 12 Noon

FAIR December 4, 2010

Most sincerely,

Dorothy B. Polando, Chairman

## 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 2009 we have implemented our mission in two ways:

1. Parish - Bike/Walk/Carpool to Church; Christmas Fair; our green table at coffee hour selling CFL's, canvas bags, water bottles and also weekly information with "green tips" in the bulletin. We also shared quite a bit of literature on recycling as well as general information on how to be more sustainable. There is always up-to-date information on sustainability on our SOE Bulletin Board, too. We have also encouraged more involvement with sermons, music and prayers in the liturgy.
2. Community – Our "Down to Earth" forum this year was the movie, "Black Diamonds" about mountaintop removal and the fight for coalfield justice. We also did an Adult Forum on the documentary, "Renewal". The committee also participated in Portsmouth's 2nd Annual Sustainability Fair and "The Sustainability at Home Tour". On Nov. 7th the SOE participated in the "Seacoast Sustainability Summit: Greening Our Communities" – we were part of a panel on: "Educating and Promoting Sustainability in Faith communities"

## **Clergy, Staff & Wardens**

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, *Music Director*

Dave Lajoie, *Facilities Director*

Sandra Pagel, *Financial Administrator*

Joanne Ferguson, *Office Administrator*

Amy Dutton, *Christian Education Director*

Steve Estes, *Night Sexton*

Chris Sieve, *Senior Warden*

Peter Tarlton, *Treasurer*

Art Parrott, *Junior Warden*

*Vestry: Andy Bangs, Dick Davidson, Kathy Flygare, Carl Eric Johnson, Jane Holway,  
Robert Mood, Lew Roberts, Sarah Todd, Anna Kay Vorsteg*



## **Office Information**

*The Parish Office is open Mon-Thurs, from 9 AM to 3 PM*

Telephone (603) 436.8283

Fax (603) 433.2714

Website [www.stjohnsnh.org](http://www.stjohnsnh.org)

Email [administrator@stjohnsnh.org](mailto:administrator@stjohnsnh.org)



## **Worship Schedule**

### **Thursdays**

9:30 AM Holy Eucharist & Healing Service

### **Sundays**

8 AM Holy Eucharist Rite I

9:15 AM Children and Adult Christian Education

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist Rite II with Parish Choirs

11:30 AM Coffee Hour