



## A Note on Sound

People often notice that sound carries in a particular way in church buildings, and this is true. Historically, liturgy and church music have been influenced by the architectural design of church buildings. While the soaring arches of the gothic style point one's gaze toward the heavens, they also lead to a high level of reverberation. The chant styles used by priests and other ministers and musical compositions intended for use in worship are often intentionally adapted to the physical proportions of church buildings. In many cases, these musical compositions can only achieve their intended effect when played in churches (or buildings with similar acoustics).

More recently, an emphasis in the opposite direction has begun to influence both architectural choices concerning church buildings and choices about how the interior space is used. A desire for the people to be able to understand and participate in the worship service has made the intelligibility of what is said and sung a priority. This move toward intelligibility and participation can be seen at St. John's in the architecture itself, in the decision to move the altar into the nave and closer to the main body of worshippers, and in the use of modern technology.

by the Rev. Alexandra Stone



Alie, Lee and May singing at Holly Tea, Dec 3, 2022

### References

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