



# St. John's West Toronto Vestry Meeting

2023

Sunday, March 5 2023, 1 pm

via zoom

This package contains the reports, agenda, and minutes to help prepare for annual vestry meeting of St. John's West Toronto. Preparing this package has brought home how eventful the life of the parish has been this year, and the size of the vestry package, as well as the extent of the minutes, reflects this. I ask for everyone's patience in reading and considering the information contained here. It reflects the work we have done together and the challenges we have faced.

Respectfully submitted,  
 John Spragge,  
 Vestry clerk

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## **2023 Vestry Agenda**

- 1) Opening Prayers
- 2) Welcome
- 3) Election of Vestry Clerk
- 4) Approval of Agenda
- 5) Approval of Vestry Minutes February 20, 2022
- 6) Acceptance of the Report of the Priest-in-Charge
- 7) Acceptance of the Wardens' Report
- 8) Acceptance of the Auditor's Report
- 9) Presentation, Discussion and Motion of the 2023 Budget
- 10) Appointment of Auditor for 2023
- 11) Review of Growth Benchmarks
- 12) Elections and Appointments
- 13) Acceptance of Ministry Reports (Parish Council)
- 14) Presentation and Motion from Social Justice and Advocacy: It's Time to Raise the Rates!
- 15) Other Business
- 16) Expressions of Thanks
- 17) Adjournment & Closing Prayer

# **Minutes of Annual Vestry of 2022**

Present: Mtr. Alexandra Stone, Bob Shantz, Margaret Rodrigues, Evelyn Butler, Philip Conliffe, Cheryl Atkins, Greg Los, Andrea Ruty, John Spragge, Chris Ruty, May Webster, John Webster, Chris Saunders, Melani Tandon, Alison Smiley, Stephanie Christakos, Brad Christakos, Michael Taylor, Peter Pearce, Sue Ferguson, Susan Rynasko, Jennifer Jenkins, Carrie Cardwell, Joy Kennedy, Lisa Rumble, Mabel-Anne Waters, Bill Dunford, John Stephenson, Allison MacDuffee, Alie Ruty, Sheila Crummey, Jim Crummey

## ***Opening Prayers***

### **Welcome**

The participants were welcomed; qualifications for membership were reviewed, and notice of recording for minuting purposes was given.

### **Election of Vestry Clerk**

John Spragge was acclaimed by unanimous consent.

### **Approval of Agenda**

The addition appointment of the auditor to the acceptance of the auditor's report and the closing prayer was adopted by consent. Moved Lisa, second May Webster, carried.

### **Approval of Vestry Minutes February 21, 2021**

Minutes corrected, moved Alison Smiley, second Alie Ruty, carried.

### **Acceptance of the Priest-in-Charge Reports (Mtr. Alexandra, Fr. David)**

Mtr. Alexandra introduced the reports, giving thanks for the work all members have put in. She mentioned it has been an exciting five months. She went over the attendance figures and mentioned the figures paint a picture of a steady attendance. She also mentioned we have shown a slight decline since we went on line. We may have experienced the same decline when we went online last time, although online attendance figures were not kept for 2020. Givings are in decline, but Mtr. Alexandra thanked everyone who contributes to the church. She added a special thanks to Cheryl and Andrea, who will be leaving the management team. A question about the departure of Margaret Rodrigues and Genesis was raised, and will be discussed in the course of the meeting. The congregation thanked Mtr. Alexandra for her work. The report was accepted by consent.

## **Acceptance of the Wardens' Report**

Cheryl and Andrea, outgoing wardens, spoke to the warden's report. We have had a challenging year. Givings have declined, and while many long standing members have stayed with the church, we have not attracted new members. We were challenged to make a thoughtful decision when we choose our road in the near future. The warden's report was accepted by consensus.

## **Acceptance of the Auditor's Report and appointment of Auditor**

Philip Conliffe, the parish administrator, took us through the auditor's report, and directed the attention of vestry to the financial position of the church, and mentioned the operating fund is in a deficit position. The capital fund is at \$164,000 in the rectory fund. The income and expense statement was examined next, and the roles of giving, income from rentals, government support, and diocesan grants. Philip also mentioned the role of the insurance settlement in the process of paying for a major unexpected failure in the boiler. We then examined expenses, with a note that salaries had been lower than usual due to the departure of our former priest and her transition to long term disability. Some clarifications on the budget were requested and supplied. Gratitude for the role Philip played was expressed. The auditor's report was accepted by consent. Philip moved appointment of Maureen Perry as auditor, seconded by John Spragge, carried.

## **Presentation, Discussion and Motion of the 2022 Budget**

Philip presented the budget. We approached the budget process with a significant shortfall between income and revenue. The main way we have closed our budget gap has been to eliminate the youth minister position. This has been a difficult decision, but one with unanimous support from the management team. We have provided working notice to Genesis; we will continue to provide compensation until the position ends at the end of April. As the church opens, we hope to increase our fundraising activities over the coming year. We also hope to increase our other rentals. Philip describes the other income and expenses in the budget, including music, building, repairs and maintenance. The large building expenses are a concern. Insurance is expensive; we have a 'hard' insurance market.

This is a balanced budget. We have made every effort to arrive at a realistic budget, with the possible exception of some slight optimism about fundraising. Some clarifications about the fund income were requested, and regret over the elimination of youth and family ministry was expressed. The work of Genesis was acknowledged, and the importance of family ministry was affirmed. Questions about big ticket repairs were raised. Philip mentioned we can't afford a major repair this year; the property committee mentioned two major repairs outstanding: the boiler, in the last half of this decade, and the waterproofing of the front steps should be done sooner rather than later. The possibility of short term rentals and the need for a capital

campaign was raised. Acceptance of the budget was moved by Jim Crummey and seconded by Greg Los, and carried unanimous consent.

## **Formation of Stewardship Committee**

Mtr. Alexandra spoke of the process of forming the stewardship committee. The process and nature of stewardship in the church: stewardship of the space we worship in and of Earth, as well as the stewardship of our financial position. The process of the committee formation was discussed, and the volunteers were thanked.

Stewardship Committee Chair:	Andrea Rutty
Fundraising co-chair (campaigns):	Jim Crummey
Fundraising chair (events):	Andrea Rutty
Partnership co-chair:	volunteer needed
Hospitality co-chair:	Sheila Crummey
Environmental co-chair	Rev. Evelyn Butler

### Elections and Appointments

#### Priest's Appointments

Rector's Warden:	Greg Los
Deputy Rector's Warden:	Sheila Crummey
Head of Altar Guild:	May Webster
Social Justice Chair:	Rev. Evelyn Butler
Tech Committee Chair:	Alan Harnum

#### Wardens' Appointments

Property Chair:	Alison Smiley
Communications Chair:	Susan Rynasko
Screening Coordinator:	John Spragge
Stewardship Committee Chair:	Andrea Rutty
Parish Council Member at Large:	Julia Marrocco
Parish Council Member at Large:	
Nominees for Elections	
People's Warden:	John Spragge

Deputy People's Warden:	Lisa Rumble
Lay Delegate to Synod:	Sue Ferguson
Alternate Lay Delegate to Synod:	Cheryl Atkins
Youth Delegate to Synod:	Julia Marrocco
Alternate Youth Delegate to Synod:	Alie Ruty

John Spragge was elected people's warden. Lisa Rumble was elected deputy people's warden. Sue Ferguson was elected as lay delegate to synod. Cheryl Atkins was elected alternate lay delegate to synod. Julia Marrocco was elected youth delegate to synod, with Alie Ruty elected as alternate.

Mtr. Alexandra conveyed her thanks to Cheryl Atkins and Andrea Ruty, and Deacon Evelyn conveyed our thanks to our parish administrator Philip Conliffe. Since we cannot present gifts in an online meeting, the gifts will be available at the church.

### **Acceptance of Ministry Reports (Parish Council)**

The administrator and clergy team were invited to speak to their reports. Margaret Rodrigues announced her resignation from St. John's effective at the end of March, and indicated her hope to remain connected to the parish as a friend, neighbour, and supporter. A question about a farewell was raised, and we were assured there will be an appropriate celebration.

Dr. Alison Smiley spoke to the property report. She mentioned our maintenance budget does not come up to the minimum estimated by the engineering report.

Questions about the ministry reports were solicited. Chris Ruty moved acceptance of the reports and Greg Los seconded. Acceptance was carried unanimously.

Presentation and Motion from Social Justice and Advocacy: Justice for Workers

John Spragge spoke to the motion, and Lisa Rumble seconded it; it was carried unanimously.

### **Hybrid Worship Services & Reopening**

Mtr. Alexandra spoke to questions of reopening. The diocese has given permission for the churches to open. St. John's has opted to stay online until we could have hybrid services in a fully interactive mode, with people able to participate remotely. The tech team having accomplished the needed setup, we are opting to open as of Ash Wednesday. This year, the diocese will permit the imposition of ashes. The measures to permit remote access were praised, and some discussion of the technology and the process of working out bugs ensued. The possibility of the church expanding its digital offerings as a matter of outreach was raised. The vestry discussed the accommodations we can make for Marina Chan, who does not have digital access and has had difficulty in coming to church. Michael asked if Marina is able to access the service in real time over the phone. We discussed the possibilities of streaming.

The question of accessibility for people with disabilities, and in particular deaf people was discussed. The conversation will continue.

## **Parish Visioning: Selection of a Date for a Special Vestry**

Mtr. Alexandra spoke of the decision to hold a special vestry to vote on the motion to choose a direction for the church.

### ***Motion on the Special Vestry Date***

In recognition of the additional time needed to make an informed decision balanced against several factors including:

- the weight of uncertainty in the direction of our parish;
- the division of volunteer energy;
- the limitations posed by Covid related restrictions, including the inability to meet in our church and to visit other churches, and the restricted ability to meet with potential partners; and
- the upcoming end of Mother Alexandra's current contract with St. John's;

both option groups, as established by the MAP Visioning process, request that the date for a Special Vestry to vote on the direction to explore for our church be set for April 24, 2022.

Moved Andrea, second Alie

There was some discussion of the question of the reasons for date selected. Some discussion on the nature of the decision we will make at the special vestry ensued. The question of the finality of the vote was raised and discussed, and there was a consensus that the vote will be a vote to point ourselves in the same direction. The question of fundraising arose, and the need for operating funds was discussed, as was our relationship with the daycare. The importance of the survey on St. John's values was mentioned. The motion carried, 20 to one opposed.

## **Motion**

Both options groups, as established by the MAP Visioning process, acknowledge Mother Alexandra Stone's energy, enthusiasm, knowledge, and pastoral care and recognize the benefits to our parish and community of an extension of Mother Alexandra's contract with St. John's. We therefore bring forward the following motion:

- that our Management Team, namely our wardens and parish administrator, submit a request to our Bishop that Mother Alexandra's contract be extended if our financial capacity allows.

Moved, Andrea Rutty, second Lisa Rumble, brought to a vote and carried unanimously.

## **Expressions of Thanks**

Multiple thanks were expressed, including a thank you for Mtr. Alexandra's service and a hope we will be have the resources to employ her full time. Evelyn put forward a motion to thank Mtr. Alexandra for her work.

## **Closing Prayer**

## **Adjournment**

**The vestry adjourned at 14:46.**

Respectfully submitted,

John Spragge,

Vestry clerk, 2022

## **Minutes of Special Vestry**

The special vestry was held on April 24, 2022

## **Opening Prayers**

Mtr. Alexandra led opening prayers

## **Welcome**

The participants were welcomed; qualifications for membership were reviewed, and notice of recording for minuting purposes was given.

## **Roll call**

The vestry clerk called the roll; official list of attendees attached.

## **Discussion**

There was a short discussion of the effects of the vote, of the policies the parish will pursue. The procedure for voting was reviewed by Mtr. Alexandra. The question of which group would present first was addressed, and the consensus was the growth option would present first.

## **Presentations**

The growth and merger investigation groups presented and questions followed.

## **Discussion**

The Meeting discussed the question. Various concerns related to the practicality of each option were raised. Although positions were strongly felt, the discussion was civil, and kept within the bounds of a discussion of ideas. The discussion period was extended by five minutes to give everyone an opportunity to speak.

## **Result**

The vote was announced: 21 for growth, 11 for merger, 2 abstentions.

## **Minutes of Special Vestry**

January 15 2023 – via zoom

1. Opening prayer
2. Appointment of Vestry Clerk
  1. John Spragge
3. Election of new chair
  1. Evelyn Butler
  2. Carried unanimously
4. Roll call
  1. Roll called by clerk
  2. Evelyn Butler and Mtr Alexandra are not on the roll but present
5. Instructions for discussion
  1. Appended below
  2. Delivered by Deacon Evelyn
6. Reading the motion
  1. As appended below
  2. Read by Sheila Crummey
7. Motion presentation
  1. On behalf of the wardens
  2. Read by Lisa Rumble

3. Attached below

8. Questions for Mtr. Alexandra

1. A question was raised about sharing resources and the larger deanery
2. Questions about the implications
3. Ministry plan appended below

9. Discussion on the motion

1. Support was expressed for Mtr. Alexandra's work
2. The need for more time and a full time priest was expressed
3. We aren't a Walmart employer – fair pay is social justice
4. Support for ministry as a priority was expressed
5. Expectations for Mtr. Alexandra need to be clear
6. The lack of certainty in this was expressed – we may have unexpected and significant building expenses
7. The need to take advantage of our anniversary was expressed
8. The wealth of the church is our people

10. Instructions on the vote

1. By the vestry clerk

11. Vote

1. Twenty-two people were on the roll and able to vote
2. Twenty votes in favour and two abstentions

12. Joy Kennedy recommended putting the ministry plan in context with our hundredth anniversary project

13. Closing prayer

14. Adjournment moved by Jim Crummey, carried unanimously

### **Process Dialogue regarding Special Vestry Vote**

1. We will listen to each other without interruption
2. We will speak only to the motion before us
3. We will use only I statements
4. We will speak only from our perspectives

5. Each person will be invited to speak
6. A person can pass when asked to speak and will have an opportunity before the vote to speak
7. Members of Vestry will be asked if they are ready for the vote before the vote is taken

## **Motion for Special Vestry – January 15, 2023**

### **WHEREAS:**

1. Our April 2022 special vestry passed a motion to grow the congregation and set several benchmarks.
2. Two of those benchmarks were to be able to afford a full-time priest and a part-time bookkeeper for 2023;
3. Based on our proposed 2023 budget, we do not project sufficient revenue to afford both a fulltime priest and a part-time bookkeeper.
4. Management team estimates a short fall in 2023 projected revenue of \$42,000 if we hire Mother Alexandra as a full-time priest and we also hire a bookkeeper who would provide 8 hours a month of bookkeeping services (the amount management team estimates is required to provide the needed services);
5. Our rectory fund currently holds in excess of \$130,000;
6. We as a parish believe that Mother Alexandra has provided critical pastoral leadership as we discern our way forward after completing the Diocesan lead MAP process and holding the special vestry meeting last April 2022. Further, we believe her pastoral leadership will be far more effective if it is provided on a full-time basis, rather than the current 60% of full-time basis. Moreover, we believe there is a distinct and significant risk that Mother Alexandra's contract may not be renewed on the current terms which only provide 60% of a full-time position.
7. We further believe that if there is a change of clergy in 2023, it will seriously jeopardize the ability of our congregation to continue successful discernment of our future ministry.
8. **RESOLVED:**
9. We submit a request to the Diocese to be permitted to withdraw \$42,000 from our Rectory Fund, on a non-repayable basis, in order to hire Mother Alexandra on a full-time basis for the period commencing March 1, 2023 and ending February 28, 2024 and to enable us to hire a part-time bookkeeper (8 hours per month);

10. We adopt the attached ministry plan which will provide the rationale and benchmarks to be achieved which we will submit with our request to the Diocese for this one-time withdrawal

## **SJWT WARDENS' PRESENTATION AT SPECIAL VESTRY – JANUARY 15, 2023**

### ***WITHDRAWAL FROM RECTORY FUND***

As a congregation, we've made several gains since our special vestry vote last spring. Our attendance at Sunday service has increased. We've held several successful community events. We've been able to offer our space to more people interested in renting it for their projects. We've successfully developed a hybrid form of worship and expanded our in-person worship opportunities. We've begun a new ministry on Tuesday mornings, and we've begun a prayer discernment and sharing process to listen together for clues as to what God may be saying to us as a parish. Parishioners and clergy alike have worked hard to facilitate these milestones, and together with God's grace we've been able to see some positive results and enjoy some success.

But we still have substantial problems. After our vote at special vestry last spring we wanted to be able to hire a full-time priest for 2023, we wanted to be able to hire a part-time bookkeeper, and we wanted to double our congregation. So where are we now in relation to these goals? We haven't been able to double our congregation. We aren't in a financial position currently to hire a full-time priest or a part-time bookkeeper.

But there's more difficult news, this time about our donations: our donations have decreased since April 2022. The Advent stewardship campaign helped and we thank all those who donated generously. But overall, our envelope giving was significantly down over the course of 2022, and \$10,000 of our revenue has consisted of one-time gifts over the past year. We have a surplus of \$22,000 presently but we also have an outstanding debt to the Diocese of \$20,000 which was incurred in 2020. Furthermore, we haven't spent much on building repairs recently and this situation will not last very long in our old building. So in essence, there is no significant surplus.

So we need a part-time bookkeeper as soon as possible and a full-time priest. Wardens are concerned that we won't be able to support our gains or successfully discern our way forward in the coming year without retaining Mtr Alexandra. Her contract, which is paid at 60% of full-time, was recently extended at 60% until the end of February, pending the outcome of today's meeting. But we can't retain her beyond the end of February on a part-time basis.

We are concerned that we won't be able to continue successful parish discernment without retaining Mtr A – and this means retaining her on a full-time basis beyond February. We

believe that the leadership stability and continuity she would be able to provide are vital as we continue the process of discernment, and as we take steps to follow the promptings of the Spirit. We don't know whether successful discernment means growing into a sustainable ministry at 288 Humberside or whether it means something else. But no matter what kind of future God is calling us to, wardens feel strongly that we need Mtr. A to lead us from March 2023 to at least February 2024. So where are we going to find the money to fund this position at full-time capacity?

Last fall Wardens requested a meeting with Bishop Andrew Asbil, Bishop of Toronto Diocese, to discuss the situation. That meeting took place on December 8th. In the meeting, our present situation was outlined to Bishop Andrew as well as the question of how to retain Mtr A at full-time capacity. Bishop Andrew made it clear that he felt it would be untenable to undertake a capital campaign for the purpose of expanding our revenue without having a larger donor base of committed parishioners. This echoed previous advice we had obtained from a Diocesan representative early last summer. So without a capital campaign where will we find the funds to be able to afford to pay Mtr A a full-time living salary, as well as hire a part-time bookkeeper? What funds are needed for these positions? We have estimated that we need \$42,000 in order to put Mtr A's salary in the full-time category, and to pay a part-time bookkeeper as well.

This brings us to the rectory fund. There is currently \$133,500 remaining in the fund after the sale of the rectory. Bishop Andrew made it clear that we can apply to the diocese to withdraw \$42,000 from our rectory fund. If our application is successful, this would be a one-time withdrawal. It would in essence be our "Hail Mary pass", our last chance to withdraw and/or borrow funds from the rectory fund to maintain financial stability. The Diocese is very highly unlikely to permit any further amounts to be withdrawn from this fund. We have already borrowed \$300,000 which we can't repay.

What are the implications? This withdrawal of \$42,000, if it's approved by you today, and then by the Diocese, would decrease our revenue from the rectory fund by \$1500-\$2000 annually (this is interest that would be earned on \$42,000) and would decrease the amount available to fund any significant repairs. We would be left with \$91,500 in the fund for necessary repairs. That figure is arrived at by subtracting \$42,000 from \$133,500. The result is \$91,500.

If successful, this withdrawal of \$42,000 from the rectory fund would only set the stage for a great deal of hard work on our part to build sustainability of our ministry at St. John's. Over the next 12 months it would be necessary to grow our donor base to make our ministry at 288 Humberside financially sustainable, or to find another way for our faith community to continue to minister in west end Toronto. We would have to double down on our efforts to build our congregation and continue to make our ministry responsive to the spiritual needs of our neighborhood in the way God is calling us to do. We would need to build on the work of the discernment group so that we use this opportunity to have Mtr. A's full-time pastoral leadership to guide us forward.

Over the past few weeks we have published in the newsletter a motion to request this one-time withdrawal of \$42,000 from the rectory fund, together with a ministry plan that outlines how the money will be spent. We have asked you to prayerfully consider these options and to vote today according to your conscience.

So what's next? If it is not approved by the congregation today, the motion for withdrawal of \$42,000 from our rectory fund will be dropped and Mtr A will leave us at the end of February. If it is approved today, the motion, together with the ministry plan, will be submitted to the Diocese for consideration at the Risk and Governance committee for their meeting on February 9th.. If approved there it will make its' way to Diocesan Council for their meeting on February 23rd. If approved there, Mtr Alexandra will be with us full-time from March 1, 2023 to Feb 28, 2024.

This concludes the Wardens' presentation.

Thank you.

## **St. John's West Toronto Ministry Plan for 2023**

### ***Worship & Spiritual Formation***

Over the past year, St. John's has seen a small amount of growth in average Sunday attendance (31.48 in 2022 vs. 30.58 in 2021) and a more significant growth in average weekly attendance (40.24 in 2022 vs. 35.29).

We believe that this indicates a growth in engagement within the community. Over the course of the next twelve months, under the leadership of Mother Alexandra, we will continue to offer opportunities for worship and education outside of Sunday morning. We also intend to offer an invitational small-group study such as Alpha or the Institute for Evangelism's Christian Foundations.

We have already begun encouraging a deeper engagement in the liturgy among the community with the building-up of our lay-readers' and intercessors' ministries and the reinstatement of monthly lay anointing during the Sunday service.

### ***Outreach to the Neighbourhood***

At our vestry meeting in 2022, St. John's launched a new Stewardship Committee, which includes a focus on stewardship of our space and people through the organization of special events. Over the past year, with the help of volunteers from neighbouring Humberside Collegiate High School, the parish has held a number of events designed to welcome members of the wider West Toronto community into our space as well as to raise funds for the parish. These events have been well-attended. In addition to raising approximately \$3500, a couple of the people who attended the special events have become regular Sunday worshippers.

Over the coming year, we intend to continue to host special events of this nature and to explore new ways of reaching out to the wider community, including holding community events for families with children. One such event held last spring was very popular with neighbourhood parents, and there is a parishioner with extensive community ties to young families in the neighbourhood who has volunteered to oversee the planning of children's events.

St. John's has recently launched a weekly Breakfast-to-Go ministry, which serves both the parents of local preschool and elementary school-aged children and students of HumberSide Collegiate. While this ministry is still very new, we are already serving approximately 50 people per week and making our presence known in the neighbourhood. We have also formed partnerships with a couple of local businesses, who donate breakfast items to the ministry. In the coming year, we intend to continue our ministry of presence as well as to explore other opportunities to serve the local community.

Our Communications Committee has been working hard to increase our online reach. In addition to offering hybrid services and events, with the help of a number of volunteers as well as experienced media consultants hired through the Canada Summer Jobs Program, we have been expanding our social media presence and engagement.

### ***Financial Stewardship***

A Fundraising Chair was also appointed to the new Stewardship Committee launched in 2022. Since launching the committee, we have held two stewardship appeals, and a number of members have responded to these by making generous one-time gifts.

Overall, the existing members of St. John's are already regular and generous givers. Increasing givings will depend on growing the congregation, which will be our focus over the coming year. We are pursuing this through events, opportunities for worship, education and fellowship, and reaching out to past members.

In addition to our permanent licensees, St. John's has been able to rent our space for a number of one-off events throughout the year. Our location attracts fairly regular rental inquiries from film companies, which, while intermittent, are a good source of income. The lifting of a number of COVID-related restrictions on sharing space has recently made this type of rental easier to facilitate, and we intend to continue pursuing these as a source of supplementary income over the coming year.

Our communications committee has also been working on attracting rental opportunities through social media and existing neighbourhood connections.

### ***Discernment***

All of this is taking place against the backdrop of an ongoing discernment process. St. John's has a long history of providing a safe space for people who found it difficult to fit in in other

worshipping communities. The more widely inclusive culture of the church today is something we celebrate wholeheartedly, but it has also meant that St. John's is no longer one of only a few safe havens. In the past, this had been the foundation of St. John's attractional model. We are now in a place of transition as we seek to understand what kind of church God is calling us to be. In order to better listen for this, we have launched a discernment prayer group, who have committed to daily prayer and reading, and which meets regularly for prayer, study, and spiritual conversation. We believe that our commitment to discerning God's will is an essential part of ensuring that our efforts are grounded in faith, and we hope that we will deepen our relationship with Christ at the same time as we seek to grow our community

## **Interim Priest-In-Charge Report, 2022**

Although I arrived at St. John's in September of 2021 thinking that I would serve as Interim Priest-in-Charge for a short eight months, I am pleased to have had my appointment extended twice since then and to be looking forward (God willing) soon to be signing a year-long appointment. I am most grateful to the parish and wardens for taking the necessary steps toward reappointing me, pending the approval of the diocese.

Part of my desire to remain at St. John's for the coming year stems from the likelihood that it will be a challenging year for all of us. I pray that the stability that may come from retaining the same clerical leadership will help us to face on a surer footing the challenges, hard work, and decisions we anticipate, and I trust that we will all have the grace to remember that what is unfolding now is the working out, mysterious as it may seem to us sometimes, of the good purposes of God for this community and for each of us individually.

In a special meeting of the Vestry on April 24th, the membership of St. John's voted to pursue parish growth for the next one to two years rather than begin taking steps towards amalgamation or merger with another parish. This vote followed on a period of discernment led by the diocesan Congregational Development Committee, in which we followed the steps of the Mission Action Planning process. The work that we did examining our missional identity as a parish, our hopes for the future of the community, our disappointments with our shrinking numbers and financial instability, and the incentive the process gave us to move forward and try new things were all vital and necessary for St. John's. At the same time, the two options we ended up exploring and voting on reflected an already present divide in the way the community hoped to spend its energy in the immediate future. Perhaps inevitably, the decision to form two teams to 'pitch' each option to the Vestry either entrenched or, perhaps, merely brought to the surface a growing sense of division. We were challenged during the process and in the ensuing months to work against the tendency to think and speak of the congregation as comprised of two opposing sides.

On a positive note, over the months that have followed, I have seen the community rise up to meet this threat to our unity. We have struggled against the all too human tendency to believe that our own way is the only correct way and, rather than sinking deeper into division, we have grown in charity, in our ability to work together, and our trust in one another's motives. All of this is evidence to me that the Holy Spirit is at work in this place, and I thank God for continuing to guide us through this difficult time.

As part of our efforts to achieve financial stability, we explored the viability of running an external capital campaign. In a meeting with myself, Brad Christakos, Jim Crummey, and People's Warden John Spragge, the diocesan Director of Stewardship Development, Peter Misiaszek, acknowledging that a small group like ours has a limited amount of time and energy, advised us to pour our efforts instead into growing the size of our worshipping community and encouraging regular giving among parishioners. The leadership chose to

accept this wisdom and, over the course of the past year, we as a community have gone above and beyond to increase our presence in the wider community. We have opened our doors through numerous neighbourhood events in the hope that the people of West Toronto will see what we already know, that St. John's is home to a lively, supportive, inclusive, and loving community.

In addition to trying to attract people to St. John's, we have also begun reaching out beyond our doors. We have been a presence at several demonstrations calling for justice for First Nations communities and protesting the demolition of encampments in the city. We have also begun reaching out to the people who walk past our doors every day by offering coffee, hot chocolate, and baked good donated by local businesses on Tuesday mornings. It is my humble opinion that the more we ask ourselves 'what can we give' instead of 'what can we get' the more our neighbours and indeed our own members will see God at work in us and the more God will bless our efforts.

In order to better ask ourselves this question, and in order to better understand what God is calling us to be in this place and time, we have begun meeting on a monthly basis for prayer and spiritual conversation about the life of the worshipping community, grounded in daily prayer and regular engagement with the Holy Scriptures. The Discernment Prayer Group, as we've been calling ourselves, has cultivated a space for us to explore together our feelings about St. John's and our present efforts as well as our spiritual attractions. At the time of writing, we have met three times. I am encouraged to see us gathering to work through our questions about how God's presence is unfolding among us and to begin imagining what our future may look like in a safe and supportive space. The Discernment Prayer Group is intentionally designed to be different from the MAP process in that we are not seeking follow a schedule or to achieve particular goals. The aim is different. The MAP process was intended to move us toward decisive action; the Discernment Prayer Group is intended to move us from anxiety to receptiveness, and perhaps, should it become necessary, to equip us to face unexpected or unwelcome events in a spirit of faith and unity.

Ten months have passed since we, as a community, voted to pursue parish growth. There have been signs of life. We are becoming more well known to the neighbouring community thanks to our commitment to hold community events. We have seen our attendance figures begin to recover from the repeated blows of recurrent COVID-related closures. We have seen an increase in engagement with the work of our various committees. At the same time, despite the community's declaration that we are committed to working toward financial stability, and in spite of an Advent appeal, our givings are lower in 2022 than ever before. There are also indications that some of the more active members of the community are at risk of burnout. There is a growing sense that we need to be discerning about how we spend our time and energy. These will be challenges for us in the coming year, and I pray that we will approach them with grace.

One further result of our decision to pursue parish growth is that Philip Conliffe, whose invaluable work as Parish Administrator over the past two years has done nothing short of rescuing us from financial ruin, is no longer serving in this capacity apart from overseeing our remaining financial and bookkeeping obligations for 2022 and assisting us through the transition to employing a paid Bookkeeper and Treasurer. I know that I speak for all of St. John's when I say that, even more than his extraordinary skill, we will miss his wise, patient, and above all faith-centered leadership. We thank God for all that Philip has done for us and for all that he is.

I am also tremendously grateful to our Deacon, Evelyn Butler, for her pastoral and liturgical leadership as well as for her passionate pursuit of justice, and to the Social Justice Committee for their steadfast efforts to draw the neighbourhood into generous action against the growing food insecurity in our city.

I am enormously grateful to our Wardens for their thoughtful and dedicated leadership, and for tolerating my nearly incessant questions and requests.

I want to offer special thanks to everyone who has shared their time and talents with the community so that we can gather together in worship. Thank you to Cheryl, Evelyn, and Andrea for their ongoing work putting together the Orders of Service and organizing participants in the liturgy. Thank you to our head of the Altar Guild, May Webster, for ensuring that we always have clean vessels and linens for our worship, and to Lisa Rumble for also looking after our vessels, candles, and plants with such devoted care and for leading us in meditation weekly. Dan, Andrea, Alie, Lee, May & John Webster, Brandyn, and John Stephenson have continued to share their musical gifts with us to our great delight, while Andrea has done the less glamorous but no less necessary work of organizing the music and musicians for our worship services.

Many members of the community have shared their gifts with us as lectors and intercessors. The Communications Committee has worked tirelessly to keep both the congregation and the larger community informed of our services and other activities. And the Tech Team has been instrumental in ensuring that the services can be seen and heard by everyone worshipping at home. Thank you to Greg, Michael, Chris, and Harold, as well as to our occasional high school volunteers, for making our worship services available online.

Thank you to everyone who has come together to reach out to our neighbours through events and outreach.

Thank you to Chris Ruty for applying his talents as a historian to telling the story of St. John's throughout the years.

Thank you to our Screening Coordinator, John Spragge, for steadfastly ensuring our compliance with the Diocesan Screening in Faith policy.

And those whom I have forgotten, do thou, O Lord, remember.

Two funerals were held at St. John's in 2022, one for William Dunford, beloved husband of Deacon Evelyn Butler, and one for Fr. Christians Swaine, OHC, who served as Incumbent of St. John's for nearly a decade. We also celebrated the baptism of Kaielah Panayiota Papanicolopoulos Cauchi on the eleventh Sunday after Pentecost.

Our average Sunday attendance was 31.48 in 2022 vs. 30.58 in 2021, and our average weekly attendance was 40.24 in 2022 vs. 35.29 in 2021.

I remain tremendously grateful to all of you for the good work you are doing at St. John's, and I thank God for all that you are. Please continue to pray for me and for one another as I pray for all of you.

+

Almighty God, by whose providence our lives are ordered: grant us the spirit to labour heartily to do the work you call us to, in serving one God and looking for one reward. Teach us to put to good use whatever talents you have lent to us, and enable us to redeem our time by patience and zeal; through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*A Prayer for Daily Work from The Canadian Book of Common Prayer (amended)*

Respectfully submitted by Mother Alexandra Stone, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. John's West Toronto

## **Addendum (Report on Synod)**

The 161st Session of Regular Synod for the Diocese of Toronto was held online from November 17th to 19th 2022. I, Deacon Evelyn Butler, and our lay delegate to Synod, Sue Ferguson were in attendance.

Several important matters came before Synod, including the 2023 diocesan budget and the canon changes needed to implement the new governance pilot project.

The new diocesan visioning process, Cast the Net, was introduced. The process has at this point already included several rounds of clergy consultations on what it may look like to 'cast the net on the other side of the boat' (based on John 21.1ff). We are being asked to consider carefully what form ministry in the Church will take in the future now that the religious landscape in our city has changed significantly and almost certainly rendered unsustainable a model of ministry based on the maintenance of numerous large church buildings. The laity will be invited to participate via surveys and directed conversation in 2023.

Of particular note as well is the fact that numerous motions were brought before Synod regarding the exploration of how unused diocesan property may be used to create more desperately needed affordable housing in Toronto and the surrounding regions. It speaks to where the heart of the diocese is that all of these motions passed with approximately 80%

voting in favour. I am hopeful that the passing of these motions is a meaningful step toward our taking real, perhaps even sacrificial, action to combat the growing housing crisis in Toronto.

## **2023 Annual Vestry Meeting Deacon's Report of 2022 Activities**

In May, my work as deacon was suspended by the sudden illness and subsequent death of my dear husband Bill Dunford, in July. I gradually began resuming my duties in September. Throughout this time Mother Alexandra has been most supportive and compassionate. I would like to extend my deep appreciation for her kindness and for all that she does to support me in my diaconate. I also feel very loved and cared for by members of the parish. Loving relationships, a significant attribute of our parish of St John's West Toronto, is lived out by all of you. Thank you.

With the lifting of restrictions, imposed by COVID, we were able to reintroduce Eucharistic Assistants. Mother Alexandra and I held a preparation session for new Eucharistic Assistants and a review for returning Eucharistic Assistants. We now have a roster of five persons for this important liturgical function.

We have also reintroduced two readers for each service; one to read the first lesson and the psalm and another for the second lesson. My role includes recruiting and preparing parishioners for reading the lessons and writing and saying the prayers of the people. As well, I prepare a six week schedule for the various liturgical roles.

As Chair of the Social Justice and Advocacy Committee, I have presented details in the Committee's annual report regarding other diaconal activities.

Respectively submitted

Evelyn C. Butler

The Rev. Evelyn C. Butler, Deacon

## **Warden's Report**

As of the end of 2022, St. John's West Toronto is no longer under Canon 24 administration; we have full authority to manage our own affairs, and the responsibility that goes with it. This is in large part thanks to the ability and hard work of our parish administrator, Philip Conliffe.

Under Canon 24 administration, the administrator acts as the lay leadership of the parish on behalf of the diocese, but in most cases the wardens take on the work of representing the congregation and planning for the future.

Toward the end of the past year, it our need for a full time priest was apparent. We considered asking the diocese to allow us to borrow from the rectory fund to provide a full time priest and bookkeeper, so we can work toward growing the parish to a point where our donations and rental income cover our expenses, not only our immediate expenses, as they do now, but also expenses for the repairs we expect in the future. We met with Bishop Asbil in December, presented the proposal to a special vestry in January, and received approval from the congregation. At this writing, the Diocesan risk and governance committee has approved the request, and we are waiting for a decision from Synod Council.

The past year has been a year of achievement, mixed with some painful setbacks. We have had to face the painful reality of our difficult circumstances, admit we simply could not continue to pay for a youth minister. Accordingly, we terminated their employment at the end of April last year. At the same time, we were able to keep the church open, in a state of acceptable repair, with considerable work put in on minor repairs by dedicated members of the property committee. We have continued to provide a reliable and highly accessible online service. We have added to our spiritual offerings with a centering prayer service.

Our engagement with the community has continued, with community events ranging from a yard sale to the Holly Tea, which both brought in needed funds and cemented our ties to the community. Our role in collecting food for the food bank at Four Villages community health network has continued, and our food drives have been very warmly received in the community. In the fall we added another service to the community: the breakfast to go program on Tuesday mornings, which has enjoyed considerable popularity and generous support from merchants in the junction.

We have also steadily paid down our debts to the diocese, and cleared one substantial debt, from 2019, completely off our books.

At our meetings, we repeatedly came back to the absolutely essential role of volunteers from the congregation in our work. The stewardship, tech, and communications committees have done superb work, but we need more people to take on the work of growing the congregation. It is clear from our experience of the past two years: standing still is simply not an option for us. We need to grow. To grow, we need everyone's contribution. Everyone's work in this congregation, whether serving after church coffee, before school breakfast, planning community events or services, or helping keep the garden green and the walls vertical: all of it is both needed and deeply valued.

Respectfully submitted,

John Spragge,  
People's Warden

# **Appointments and Elections, Vestry 2023**

## **Priest's Appointments**

Rector's Warden:	Sheila Crummey
Deputy Rector's Warden:	Greg Los
Head of Altar Guild:	May Webster
Social Justice Chair:	Rev. Evelyn Butler
Tech Committee Chair:	

## **Wardens' Appointments**

Property Chair:	Alison Smiley
Communications Chair:	
Screening Coordinator:	John Spragge
Parish Council Member at Large:	
Parish Council Member at Large:	

## **Elections**

People's Warden:	Lisa Rumble
Deputy People's Warden:	John Spragge
Lay Delegate to Synod:	Andrea Rutty
Alternate Lay Delegate to Synod:	

## **Administrator's Report**

I was appointed by the diocese as volunteer Administrator per Canon 24 in October, 2020, at a time when the parish was facing a number of challenges including COVID, a priest-in-charge on medical leave, and the departure of a treasurer.

During my time at St. John's, I have fulfilled the treasurer's duties and have carried out the bookkeeping. I have also worked in consultation with the wardens and Mother Alexandra (since her appointment) on all matters related to the administration of the parish.

I am pleased to report that, for the second consecutive year, St. John's ran a surplus, this time of about \$22K. This was achieved in part due to unexpected revenue in the form of a bequest, unplanned rentals, and assessment relief from the diocese. While the Advent

Appeal yielded some incremental gifts, total donations from parishioners were down considerably vs. the previous year.

Expenditures were lower as there were limited repairs to the building. Early in the year we also made the difficult decision to eliminate the part-time Children and Youth Ministry position.

The surplus has allowed us to eliminate two long-standing liabilities: outstanding pension contribution arrears regarding a former employee, and the transfer of Anglican Foundation grant money to another parish, as the funds were obliged to follow the employees who were to run the programming for which the grant was provided.

As a result of these disbursements, the parish's assets now exceed its liabilities. However, there remains an outstanding debt to the diocese of about \$23.5K, accumulated in 2020, about \$4K lower than it was last year.

We have also successfully renewed the license agreement with our primary tenant, Early Enrichment Daycare Centre, for a term of three years, extending through 2025, as advised by the diocese.

In light of the vote at the Special Vestry in April to continue to pursue the growth of the parish, I believe it is now time for legal and financial responsibility of the parish to return to the wardens. With the diocese's consent, my term as Administrator came to an official end at the end of 2022, although I have been continuing to perform functions related to year-end financial activities. The parish needs to determine whether it has the internal resources to grow and extend its presence in the community. Volunteer support needs to come from within and all parishioners should examine their capacity to contribute to the functioning of the parish to meet the objectives voted for at the Special Vestry.

I have greatly appreciated the support and confidence that you have shown in me. It has been a pleasure working with Mother Alexandra and the wardens. Thank you to everyone for your many contributions of time, talent, and treasure. You are all deeply attached to St. John's and its values and are examples of the light of Christ in our neighbourhood. I wish you well as you begin this new phase of your ministry.

Respectfully submitted,

Philip Conliffe

# Financial Statement and Budget for 2023

	Actual		Budget		YTD Variance	Budget 2022	Budget 2023
	Jan-Dec 2021	Jan-Dec 2022	Jan-Dec 2022			Full Year	Full Year
<b>Income</b>							
<b>Contributions Undirected</b>							
Envelopes	\$ 29,565	\$ 13,875	\$	\$ (11,125)		\$ 25,000	\$ 13,000
PAR Contributions	36,684	36,644	25,000 33,000	3,644		33,000	34,000
Open Giving	62	997	300	697		300	1,200
Canada Helps	7,213	2,799	7,000	(4,201)		7,000	2,500
Bequests		5,000	-	5,000			-
Other	368	200	500	(300)		500	-
FaithWorks (St. John's share)	179	144	200	(56)		200	144
Subtotal, undirected	74,071	59,659	66,000	(6,341)		66,000	50,844
<b>Directed</b>							
Building Repairs	3,050	75	-				
			75				
Banner / Advertising	136		-				
Flowers	220	235	-				250
			235				
Music	687		-				
Gifts	1,305	25	-				
			25				
Social Justice and Advocacy	365	455		455			500
Trans Ministry	300		-				
			-				
Food Ministry	100	205	-				
			205				
Subtotal, Directed	6,163	995	-				
			995				
Subtotal, Contributions	80,234	60,654	66,000			66,000	50,844
			(5,346)				
Grants							-
Subtotal, Grants	3,513		-				
			-				
Fundraising Events	3,108	3,390	-				
			3,390				

Subtotal, Fundraising Events	3,108	<b>3,390</b>	7,500		7,500	7,500
			(4,110)			
Facilities' Use						
Rental - EEDC	36,000	<b>38,003</b>	38,000	3	38,000	40,500
Cost Recovery - EEDC	51,085	<b>58,023</b>	54,000	4,023	54,000	63,000
Rental - Girl Guides		<b>2,300</b>	1,000	1,300	1,000	1,300
Rental - High Park Group		<b>3,000</b>	3,000	-	3,000	3,000
Rental - St. John the Beloved		<b>4,300</b>	-	4,300	-	5,400
Rental - Other	2,650	<b>9,760</b>	5,000	4,760	5,000	10,000
Subtotal, Facilities' Use	89,735	<b>115,386</b>	101,000	14,386	101,000	123,200
Investment and Other Income						
Investment - Rectory Fund	5,428	<b>5,756</b>	5,400	356	5,400	5,000
Investment - House Fund	384	<b>292</b>	350	(58)	350	300
Interest Income	8	<b>4</b>		4		
York Rectory Fund	6,804	<b>6,804</b>	6,800	4	6,800	6,800
Subtotal, Investment and Other Inco	12,624	<b>12,856</b>	12,550	306	12,550	12,100

## Transfers from other Funds

	Actual		Budget	YTD Variance	Budget 2022	Budget 2023
	Jan-Dec 2021	Jan-Dec 2022	Jan-Dec 2022		Full Year	Full Year
Transfer from Rectory Fund				-		42,000
Subtotal, Transfer from other Funds	-		-	-	-	42,000
Diocesan Jubilee / Allotment relief		<b>5,589</b>	5,584	5	5,584	
Interim clergy reimbursement - diocese	7,592			-		
Boiler Funding: Insurance / Rectory Fund	25,595			-		
Canada Summer Jobs Grant	4,428	<b>4,677</b>		4,677		4,800
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy	5,999	<b>91</b>	91	-	91	
Total Income	\$ 232,828	\$ <b>202,643</b>	\$ 192,725	\$ 9,918	\$ 192,725	\$ 240,444

## Expenses

	Actual		Budget	YTD Variance	Budget 2022	Budget 2023
	Jan-Dec 2021	Jan-Dec 2022	Jan-Dec 2022		Full Year	Full Year
Personnel Expenses	52,888	<b>57,174</b>	53,000	4,174	53,000	85,800
Ministries and Worship						
Audio-Visual Equipment	3,513					
Quiet Day		<b>200</b>	-	200		

Social Justice & Advocacy	849	<b>435</b>	1,000	(565)	1,000	644
Trans Ministry	550		500	(500)	500	300
Youth Ministry			500	(500)	500	300
Rector's Discretionary Assistance						1,000
Church Supplies and Books	145		600	(600)	600	500
Flowers and Gifts	1,419	<b>487</b>	500	(13)	500	250
Worship		<b>738</b>	-	738		1,000
Subtotal, Ministries and Worship	6,476	<b>1,860</b>	3,100	(1,240)	3,100	3,994

## Music

	Actual		Budget	YTD Variance	Budget 2022	Budget 2023
	Jan-Dec 2021	Jan-Dec 2022	Jan-Dec 2022		Full Year	Full Year
Musicians	9,760	<b>7,950</b>	9,500	(1,550)	9,500	10,000
Copyright Licencing	222	<b>232</b>	500	(268)	500	500
Music Instruments	364	<b>874</b>	500	374	500	1,000
Subtotal, Music	10,346	<b>9,056</b>	10,500	(1,444)	10,500	11,500

## Congregation Development

	Actual		Budget	YTD Variance	Budget 2022	Budget 2023
	Jan-Dec 2021	Jan-Dec 2022	Jan-Dec 2022		Full Year	Full Year
Hospitality	151	<b>153</b>	400	(247)	400	400
Subtotal, Congregation Development	151	<b>153</b>	400	(247)	400	400
Events						
Yard Sale (incl. Float)		<b>396</b>		396		
Holly Tea		<b>252</b>				
Subtotal, Events	1,189	<b>648</b>	1,000	(352)	1,000	1,000
Diocesan Allotment	9,863	<b>7,008</b>	7,004	4	7,004	7,824
Utilities						
Electricity	4,068	<b>5,158</b>	4,300	858	4,300	5,500
Water	1,695	<b>1,890</b>	1,800	90	1,800	2,000
Phones	730	<b>800</b>	800	-	800	850
Internet	1,837	<b>2,062</b>	2,000	62	2,000	2,200
Security	425	<b>425</b>	450	(25)	450	450
Gas	10,773	<b>14,520</b>	11,500	3,020	11,500	16,000
Subtotal, Utilities	19,528	<b>24,855</b>	20,850	4,005	20,850	27,000
Building Maintenance						
Cleaning Service	34,118	<b>34,248</b>	34,500	(252)	34,500	35,600
Janitorial Supplies	3,062	<b>2,886</b>	3,200	(314)	3,200	3,200
Pest Control	1,092	<b>1,343</b>	1,200	143	1,200	2,000

Repairs and Maintenance	14,279	<b>4,399</b>	19,000	(14,601)	19,000	15,000
Gardening	153	<b>64</b>	250	(186)	250	250
Snow Removal	8,305	<b>6,233</b>	6,500	(267)	6,500	6,500
Boiler Maintenance	31,620	<b>3,425</b>	5,000	(1,575)	5,000	5,000
Elevator Maintenance	2,240	<b>900</b>	2,000	(1,100)	2,000	1,500
Fire Systems		<b>2,111</b>	1,200	911	1,200	1,500
Subtotal, Building	94,869	<b>55,609</b>	72,850	(17,241)	72,850	70,550
<b>Administrative Expense</b>						
Advertising / Website redesign	587	<b>227</b>	600	(373)	600	300
Administration Expense (Missing Funds)		<b>150</b>	-	150		
Canada Helps Charges	263	<b>103</b>	291	(188)	291	100
PAR Charges	115	<b>110</b>	120	(10)	120	120
Bank Charges and Interest	120	<b>121</b>	120	1	120	120
Insurance	13,322	<b>15,477</b>	14,540	937	14,540	16,500
Office Supplies	108	<b>1,070</b>	600	470	600	1,000
Postage	345	<b>144</b>	400	(256)	400	300
Photocopier	2,676	<b>3,362</b>	2,800	562	2,800	3,200
Printing	71	<b>138</b>	300	(162)	300	200
Professional Fees	3,638	<b>3,698</b>	3,800	(102)	3,800	10,000
Travel			200	(200)	200	200
Police Checks			250	(250)	250	250
Subtotal, Administration	21,245	<b>24,600</b>	24,021	579	24,021	32,290
Total Expenses	216,555	<b>180,963</b>	192,725	(11,762)	192,725	240,358
Excess of Income over Expenses (Expenses over Income)	\$ 16,273	\$ <b>21,680</b>	\$ -	21,680	\$ -	86

## Property Committee 2022

Thankfully there was little excitement in the property file this year. Appendix A, attached to this report, lists the numerous small jobs that were completed or identified. After the welding job of December 2021, leaking boiler pipes, apart from the pipe in the furnace room, have been less of a problem. Regular eavestrough cleaning regular and repair of downspouts in 2021 likely assisted in reducing flooding this year. That being said, we must report a leak in the roof at the back of the church as we approach the vestry meeting. Hopefully this will only require a patch repair but until someone knowledgeable about these things inspects it, we will not know how costly repairs might be.

To keep us realistic about the costs of maintaining the building, also attached, in Appendix B, is a Big Picture Property History. The bottom-line message is that we have had a major repair (\$9000-\$120,000) every other year over the past 13 years for a total of \$409,000. This does not include the cost of numerous minor repairs. Of the major repairs, 3 were paid for by the rectory fund, 2 by insurance, 2 by private donation and only 1 from givings.

In closing we report that this past summer, the property committee lost a very key and much loved member – Bill Dunsford. His invaluable advice and contributions were based on 30+ years as Commissioner of Public Works and Parks for the City of York. We were very fortunate to have his good counsel.

Alison Smiley and Greg Los

Property Committee

## **Appendix A**

### ***January – July***

No memorable problems

### ***Aug***

Sacristy sink – cold water tap leaking. Turned off. Greg repaired.

### ***Sept – Oct***

Window well plastic covers damaged resulting in flood damage in senior toddler room (window wells and flood damage repaired by Jo Costa).

Pipes leaked when boiler came on, had to wait for part – a flame sensor

Front entrance retaining wall stabilized (Joe Costa)

Fluorescent lights ballast replaced in daycare (Joe Costa)

Outdoor light fixtures repaired (Eduardo) at daycare entrance

Separate contract for pest control to deal with mice arranged with Orkin. Previously covered daycare only.

### ***Nov***

Men's washroom toilet replaced. (Valentin of Strongplumbing.com).

Pipe above toilet still leaking. Waiting for Biss since November. Suggested using tape.

Elevator – old switch was repaired/replaced by Prakash of Bruce Elevators after stopping between floors

Vacuum replaced by Cheryl

Eavestroughs cleaned by Shine Windows

## **Dec**

Outdoor sign has fallen. Communication Committee has provided detailed outline of what needs to be done. It may be a grant to cover the sign costs. Art Hunzelman says he can do this work in the spring. Unless there is a volunteer to help he will need to charge for a second person.

Church doors need painting (same colour as present) for Doors Open Toronto in May – referred to management team.

Leaking pipe in kitchen. At Sean's suggestion (Biss Heating), Greg will attempt to seal the leak with special tape designed for hot surfaces.

Light over daycare entrance has been replaced (Eduardo).

The lock at the entrance to the daycare has been refurbished.

Keys have been cut and the "panic" bar has been cleaned and oiled.

A piece of drywall now covers a hole which was thought to be one source of the mice. The pipes were wrapped with insulation. The covering is removable in case of extreme cold.

Eastside fence has fallen down due to neighbour re-construction. They have volunteered to look after repair.

Communication Committee made request re doors and windows repair and painting. 20 photos provided. Referred back to management team for decision on funding.

## **Appendix B**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Source of funds</b>
2009	Roof	\$120K	rectory fund
2015	Boiler	\$60K	rectory fund
2019	Plumbing	\$70K	rectory fund
2019	Tower Roof	\$9K	givings
2017	Engineering Report	\$10K	private (directed) donation
2017	Window repair	\$10K	private (directed) donation
2020	Day care flood	\$100K	insurance
2021	Boiler repair	\$30K	insurance
Total 409 K in 13 years for big items only – 1 every 2 years			

## Screening in Faith

The diocese has introduced a new system for the training for screening in faith; this is highly automated and wholly online. St. John's has been an early adopter. The new system has generally been well received by members of the congregation, and has generally performed successfully, although the coordinator has had to resort to technical support to resolve occasional problems.

The importance of all members of the congregation with roles which might bring them into contact with vulnerable persons cannot be overemphasized. Protecting the flock from wolves in the fold is an essential, and at some basic levels a shared responsibility. As coordinator, I have been privileged to enjoy the full support of the warden team, and the warm support – and sometimes the forbearance, of Mtr. Alexandra.

Respectfully submitted,

John Spragge,  
Screening coordinator

## Stewardship Committee Report

The Stewardship Committee was established at our February 2022 Vestry meeting with the goal of encouraging stewardship in a variety of forms. Stewardship includes not just fundraising but also caretaking of our church and creation care.

The Stewardship Committee was essentially composed of anyone who chose to attend meetings and participated in its various functions. This committee oversaw the following subcommittees, with leadership identified below.

- Fundraising (Appeals) - Jim Crummey, chair
- Fundraising (Events) - Andrea Rutty, chair
- Hospitality - Sheila Crummey, Lisa Rumble - chairs; now vacant
- Neighbourhood Outreach and Connections - Jennifer Jenkins, chair; currently open
- Social Justice and Creation Care - Deacon Evelyn Butler, chair

With the parish voting strongly in favour of pursuing the Growth option during the Mission Action Plan (MAP) process, the group who had been researching and presenting the growth option was mostly integrated into the Stewardship Committee, with the assurance that leadership for growth would be taken on by the Management Team and the parish as a whole.

## **Social Justice and Creation Care**

The Social Justice Committee lead many initiatives, including our church's recognition of Black History Month and Black Lives Matter, food drives, and environmental awareness. We were pleased to have St. John's parishioners present at the march in downtown Toronto in support of the people of Grassy Narrows and present at other social justice events.

## **Hospitality**

We are thankful to all the many parishioners who have volunteered as greeters and as refreshment hosts. Meeting everyone as they come to our church and making them feel welcome are so important and an essential part of the spirit of St. John's.

We are also thankful for the high school volunteers who participated in this part of stewardship.

With some parishioners moving over to our Tech Team and others moving away or having time conflicts, we entered a period of rejuvenation and rethinking of how greeting and hospitality are organized. Volunteers are always welcome to come help us with this vital ministry.

We also started to take a broader look at hospitality through a "Hospitality Audit" conducted by warden Lisa Rumble and parishioner John Stephenson. This type of audit helps us see our church from the perspective of someone coming for the first time - what do they see? how accessible are we? what would they experience? This information will be both useful and timely.

## **Fundraising (Capital Fundraising and Appeals)**

Capital Fundraising was an essential part of the Growth option research and presentation, particularly with the upcoming 100th anniversary of our church building. Capital fundraising was discussed with one Diocesan representative who recommended not commencing a campaign without a full-time minister.

Mixed messaging, and a loss of the momentum which had been present after the positive Growth vote, discouraged several interested and involved parishioners, leading them to step back from the Stewardship Committee and outreach activities.

We continue in dialogue and discernment among members of the parish with regard to the possibility of a capital campaign in the near future.

Following a summer lull, a flurry of fundraising activity occurred in the fall with specific events discussed below. One of the highlights was the wonderfully executed Advent Appeal which included moving testimonials from parishioners who donate regularly to our church.

## **Neighbourhood Outreach and Connections**

A key part of growing our church and being an active part of our community is reaching out to our neighbours. In April 2022, parishioner Jennifer Jenkins and her husband Mohamad Tavakoli and our neighbours Amit Modi and Nikku Sharma organized an Easter Egg hunt in our church and on our front lawn. This multi-ages family event was very well-attended.

In June 2022, neighbours were invited to join us for a Strawberry Social held on our front lawn and driveway which included strawberries, shortcake, sponge cake, shortbread, and ice cream. Many thanks to all who donated all of our yummy refreshments, especially the home-made shortcake! This was an excellent opportunity for parishioners to socialize and meet new people.

Other neighbourhood outreach events also included a Meet the Neighbours BBQ (Sep. 10), Back to Church Sunday Service (Sep. 18), and a Blessing of the Pets on our front steps (Oct. 1).

At our events, we encouraged sign up for two email lists - our regular church e-newsletter and an email list for those interested in community events and activities which would support our parish and church building. The latter was most recently used to promote the Oliver Peart concert and upcoming church events.

## **Fundraising (Events)**

We continue to revitalize and reimagine our fundraising events. A good example of this is the Neighbourhood Yard Sale we hosted inside our church on September 24, 2022. We used a different model for this yard sale, where neighbours rented tables and sold their own goods. This minimized the number of volunteers and time we needed to commit to this event. In addition, we offered burgers and hot dogs, some which we had left over from the Meet the Neighbours BBQ, as well as drinks, for sale. The food was a huge hit and we sold out of it very early. Neighbours really enjoyed participating and our church was filled with people.

Our beloved annual Holly Tea and Craft Sale returned, this time in a hybrid format where we held an online sale using the Facebook interface we had developed over the past two years and followed up with an in person event the following weekend. We had less crafter/artisan participants for the online event but some could only participate in that way. Other crafters/artisans welcomed the return to an "in person" event. We again used a 20% of sales fee which meant less risk for our sellers. Sales of our donated baked goods, preserves, and soups was again high. We also sold many donated goods at our St. John's table.

We were blessed to have the leadership of Brad Christakos, Katherine Kszan, and Sue Ferguson for much of our "in person" events and the help of many volunteers, including our frequent high school volunteers Aisling Waterson and Nashita Imthiyaz. We also want to give thanks to the performers and our tech crew who provided their talents, as well as the Girl Guides who continued their very long history of volunteering, at our Holly Tea.

The Holly Tea event was successful for many reasons. It brought a lot of people, particularly local residents, into our church and many people stayed awhile drinking tea, eating, listening to our live music, and chatting. It also provided reasonably priced goods for purchase and provided an opportunity for a local resident to participate musically. Our Holly Tea gave a warm and welcoming impression to all who visited and made an impact on many who had never stepped into our church before. There were many moments where one could feel the Christmas spirit alive at St. John's.

## **Concluding Remarks**

As this Stewardship Committee wraps up with this Vestry, we are thankful for the many people who participated in our online meetings and planning, and volunteered for a variety of activities and events. Everyone associated with the committee had an opportunity to get to know each other better and experience fellowship.

We look forward to new stewardship initiatives, especially in the areas of hospitality and fundraising. We also look forward to building more ties with our neighbours and reaching further out into our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Ruty,  
Chair, Stewardship Committee

## **SJWT Communication Team**

Members (June – Dec 2022):

Bryn Snow, Michael Taylor, Andrea Ruty, Christopher Ruty, Victoria Campos Gentile (summer student, then volunteer parishioner)

Following the April 2022 Special Vestry vote in support of growing the church, and the establishment of a Stewardship Committee, coupled with previous members, Susan Rynasko and Zach Cardwell, unable to continue, the Communications Committee went through a renewal process starting in June 2022.

Bryn Snow, an experienced writer and blogger based in Milton, joined the Communications Committee, which was re-branded as a "Team." Christopher Ruty also joined the Team, bringing further professional writing and communications experience, as well as an interest in preparing for St. John's celebrating the 100th anniversary of its physical and spiritual space on Humberside in 2023.

In late June, St. John's second Canada Summer Jobs student, Victoria Campos Gentile, also joined the Communications Team and made many valuable contributions, particularly with

social media, writing, graphic design, and photography. After her time under the student grant ended in September, Victoria remained involved with the Communications Team as a volunteer and as a member of the church. We also benefited from support from Victoria's mother, who helped with the social media promotion of church events through several Facebook groups based in the High Park Avenue apartment building she and Victoria live in.

Starting in mid-June 2022, the new Communications Team began holding weekly meetings via Zoom on Monday evenings, discussing communications strategy, messaging, and planning, and paying particular attention to updating the SJWT website, bolstering content for the SJWT weekly newsletter and on social media, updating the in-church notice boards, and in developing and promoting initiatives to increase engagement with the neighbourhood. The Communications Team has also been involved in promoting the availability of the church for external events / rentals through the SJWT website.

Some specific initiatives by the Communications Team in 2022 include:

- New Contact Card & Welcome Brochure package
- The design and distribution of "PlayBill" fliers to promote upcoming events
- Volunteers recruitment posters (ie. music, tech team)
- Designing and distributing promotional materials – printed posters, graphics for social media – for several events, ie.
- Meet Our Neighbours BBQ (Sept 10)
- Back to Church Sunday (Sept 18)
- Neighbourhood Yard Sale (Sept 24)
- Blessing of the Pets (Oct 1)
- Food Drive (Oct 29)
- Holly Tea (online & in-person) (Nov 28-Dec 3)
- Christmas Services

## **Tech Committee**

Members (Greg Los, Chris Ruddy, Harold Price, Michael Taylor & Alan Harnam with assistance from students Bailey Brown, Matthew Gibson and Jake Holl)

The 'tech team' is responsible for maintaining and using the equipment necessary for sound, video, streaming and recording of services and events in the church.

Over the course of 2022 the tech team has achieved significant success in providing a consistent and reliable streaming of the Sunday service and online participation to parishioners that could not attend in person.

Some of the accomplishments include:

- Every service streamed to Zoom for both viewing and participation by online parishioners.
- Funeral of Fr. Christian Swayne streamed for remote attendees and recorded and passed along to the OHC.
- Baptism Streamed and recorded. Recording, photos and service bulletin sent to parents.
- Additional wireless camera added for most services
- Recording of services

We had discussed the ability to record and/or stream concerts and other events at St. John's and recently we had the opportunity to record Oliver Peart's Piano Concert.

Despite these successes, the tech team faces several challenges in the upcoming year to ensure that we can maintain and even improve on our ability to provide a quality experience to remote parishioners and visitors.

- Camera quality, distance and location are an issue.
- Better setup/use of the congregation (audience) microphone. Currently the congregation is generally not heard by those on Zoom. Responses, Needs & Reflections, Prayer Requests, etc. while heard in the church are usually blocks of silence for those on Zoom.
- Training on soundboard and OBS. Documentation of setup and use.
- Excessive amount of time needed to tear-down and setup cameras and microphones each week. Greg Los should be commended for his unwavering support and commitment.
- Communication of needs and changes to the service, number of singers and/or instruments prior to the service to allow needed setup time.

While some of this can be resolved with some money for better equipment, there is also a need for additional volunteers to ensure coverage as well as better communication of the needs for the service or event being streamed/recorded.

The tech team is committed to continue improving on our ability to provide a quality alternative to traditional worship for those unable to attend in-person.

## **SJWT-100th Team Report to Vestry 2022**

In anticipation of SJWT celebrating the 100th anniversary of the parish's physical and spiritual life at 288 Humberside Avenue in 2023, work began in the late-summer and fall of 2022 to build awareness within the congregation of the anniversary, to collect historical materials, and to gather a team to discuss the history, promote it within and outside the congregation, and to plan SJWT-100th themed activities and events.

As a member of St. John's since 1997-98, and a professional historian with considerable experience working on various 100th anniversary projects (Canadian Public Health Association, Canadian Nurses Association, Connaught Labs/Sanofi Pasteur, the discovery of insulin), I volunteered to lead the SJWT-100th initiative. I was first introduced to the history of SJWT in 2001 at a time of renewal for the church as it marked the 120th anniversary of its founding as a parish in 1881, originally on Dundas St. W. and St. John's Road (today the site accommodates Malta Park and a Tim Horton's). At that time, I gathered historical materials in the church and from the Diocese of Toronto Archives that supported content creation for St. John's website and the publication of a booklet, "Open Doors and Open Windows", in support of our initial participation in Doors Open Toronto in May 2003.

The congregation's commitment to the growth option in the special Vestry in April 2022 highlighted opportunities for St. John's to leverage the 100th anniversary of the parish's physical and spiritual life on Humberside in a variety of ways that could invite more people into our warm, welcoming, and colourful building and perhaps join the parish. Thus, I was interested in applying my historical skills to help make St. John's past matter to its present and future.

Work on SJWT-100th began in 2022 within a renewed Communications Team through the support of Michael Taylor, Andrea Ruddy, Bryn Snow and Victoria Campos Gentile. My initial focus was on gathering and scanning historical materials found within the church, particularly Newsletters and Vestry Reports, some dating from the 1960s-70s, and the preparation of a series of historical articles for the SJWT weekly newsletter. The first SJWT-100th article was published in late August and they have appeared weekly since October.

The next step was to build a SJWT-100th Team, which first met via Zoom on November 22 and was attended by Michael Taylor, May Webster, Mother Alexandra, and myself. A second meeting followed on December 13, at which Brad Christakos and Quita Taylor also participated. There have also been meetings on January 9 and February 13, 2023, at which Allison MacDuffee, John Spragge, and Harold Price have also contributed. A primary focus of the Team's attention has been planning for several events in May 2023 to mark the 100th of the May 5, 1923, laying of the church cornerstone, and for St. John's participation in Doors Open Toronto on May 27-28, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Ruty,  
Team Leader.

## **Music Report**

Music Team: Dan Gooch (piano, trumpet), Lee Ramsay (vocals), Alie Ruty (vocals), John Stephenson (organ, piano), Stephen Targett (piano), May Webster (vocals), John Webster (guitar, vocals), Andrea Ruty (Coordinator)

Guest Performers: Brandon McKinson (vocals), David Krause (guitar, vocals), Daniella "Danie" Friesen (vocals), Michael Gentile (guitar, vocals), Greg Los (guitar, vocals), Jeff Stone (guitar, vocals)

We at St. John's have again been blessed with a roster of talented musicians during the past year. This has allowed us to offer liturgical music from a variety of genres and using a variety of instruments, including piano, organ, guitar, and trumpet. We continue to introduce contemporary worship songs suitable for each Sunday's themes while also using more traditional hymns from our Common Praise blue hymnbook and other hymnals.

During this year, we also expanded our use of various mass settings and have introduced a new and very tuneful mass setting by Patrick Francis O'Brien..

The ability of our key accompanists and vocalists to learn new material on a weekly basis and to lead our congregation is inspirational. We truly appreciate how much this helps our congregation learn and become comfortable with new hymns and worship songs.

Some of the highlights for the past year:

- Black History Month 2022 - focus on African-American spirituals, Black composers and worship performers, especially the song Hymn to Freedom composed by Canadian Oscar Peterson
- Transfiguration Sunday
- Margaret Rodrigues last Sunday

- Ash Wednesday
- Palm Sunday (organ and trumpet)
- Back to Church Sunday

We are now beginning to reintroduce group singing post-Covid, starting with duets and small groups of our vocal leaders. We look forward to bringing back some form of in person choir singing in the near future.

The music team has worked closely with the tech team to improve the quality of sound both "in person" through our church sound system and picked up for our hybrid Zoom services.

### ***Challenges and Goals for the New Year***

Looking into the upcoming year, we look forward to exploring more collaborations or groupings of musicians, especially using the talents of our own parishioners. We will also continue our efforts to seek music volunteers and opportunities to work with others. This includes communicating with our local high schools and music schools.

More frequently this year, our piano tuners and pianists have commented on some difficulties with the tuning of our aging baby grand piano and we would welcome a donated baby grand or grand piano that is in better condition. We are pleased that our organ is functioning well, within the limitations of its configuration, and will be exploring leather repairs which would help its responsiveness. These repairs have previously been verbally quoted at a reasonable cost and we will seek to have a written quote before proceeding.

Following the success of our recent music concert with classical pianist Oliver Peart, we look forward to bringing more concerts into our welcoming and acoustically grand space. It is hoped that this outreach will also benefit our Sunday service music.

To help maintain and support our music program, we encourage music-specific donations and music-specific appeals. We also encourage anyone who is interested to come join our music team, even if only to give feedback and advice!

"Inspiring music may fill the soul with heavenly thoughts, move one to righteous action, or speak peace to the soul." – Ezra Taft Benson

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Ruddy  
Music Co-ordinator

## **Social Justice and Advocacy Committee 2022 Activities**

Committee Members: The Rev. Evelyn Butler, Chair, Ms. Cheryl Atkins, Ms. Joy Kennedy, Ms. Lisa Rumble, Mr. John Spragge,

### **Breakfast to Go**

Under the leadership of Mtr Alexandra and Deacon Evelyn, a group of parishioners began a weekly food to go for students on their way to classes, Tuesday November 29 between 8:00 AM – 9:00 AM. To sustain the program, Sheila Crummey visited all the bakeries and a number of delis in Bloor West Village. She successfully secured weekly donations from Cinnaholic, the Grumpy Gourmet and Cobs Bakery. In addition to baked goods, we serve hot chocolate, coffee and tea each week to approximately 50 students, parents and neighbours.

Hosts for this program include Carrie Cardwell, Jim Crummey, Lisa Rumble, MTR Alexandra and Deacon Evelyn. If you are interested in supporting this ministry please speak to Mtr Alexandra or Deacon Evelyn.

### **Food Security**

Every Saturday morning, between 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM, we place food collection bins on our front steps for Four Villages Community Health Centre, emergency food cupboard. Throughout 2022 parishioners and our neighbours, faithfully and generously donated. Neighbourhood food drives in April and November, generated large donations of food and personal care items. Following our November food drive we have had a significant increase in weekly contributions. We are most appreciative of Sheila Crummey's faithful weekly delivery of the food to Four Villages Community Health Centre.

### **Black History Month**

To honour and celebrate Black History, we featured articles in our weekly newsletter during the month of February. The topics covered: The Background of Black History Month, Black History Sources of Information, Racism in Canada and Accomplishments of Black Canadians. As well, music by black composers and musicians were included in each Sunday service in February.

### **The Community Garden**

Lisa Rumble coordinates use of the garden plots. She reported that seven of eight garden plots were used last year, 6 at the rear of the church and one at the side. One at the rear was not used due to excessive shade from the burgeoning tree canopy. Three were used by people on our Vestry list. The remaining 4 were used by community members, for a total of seven. In fact, one lot was shared by 2 community members so in total we had 5 members of the community who were gardening alongside 3 members of the church. All gardeners

expressed gratitude for the generosity of St John's in giving them space, water, and lending them tools.

## **Gifts for Isolated Seniors**

We continued our donation of Christmas gift bags for isolated seniors, clients of Four Villages Community Health Centre, and prepared 30 gift bags for them.

Respectfully submitted

The Rev. Evelyn C. Butler

Chair

## **Motion Social Justice and Advocacy Committee**

One of our obligations as followers of Jesus is to care for the most vulnerable in our society.

As residents of Canada, we expect that the vulnerable will be assisted through social programs. Our Provincial Social Services provides these Social Security allowances:

Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) People living with long term disabilities that limit their ability to work

Ontario Works (OW) People who are trying to recover from catastrophic situations like family violence, illness or accidents, physical or mental health challenges.

Modest rate increases applied to both Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability have not kept pace with inflation Before the COVID-19 pandemic, single people receiving ODSP were 40% below the poverty line, while those receiving OW were more than 60% below the poverty line. Both rates fall well within what is considered "deep poverty", or an income 75% of (25% below) the official poverty line.

In September 2022 ODSB rates increased 5% and OW received no increase. A single person on OW receives \$733 a month.

Lower social assistance caseloads during the pandemic have resulted in a savings of nearly \$800 million for the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, and the provincial government currently has a \$2.1 billion surplus.<sup>1</sup>

### ***Effects of Low rates of ODSB and OW:***

- Dignity and self worth of individuals living in abject poverty
- Homelessness
- Increased demand on food banks

- Extreme poverty increase illness. The economic cost of the burden on our health care, emergency services, justice system
- Poverty has been estimated to cost Ontario between \$27 million and \$33 million annually.
- Individuals with disabilities are seeking MAID although they want to continue living but not in abject poverty

***WHY this Motion***

- Our parish can add our voice to this growing call for income support levels that allow people on social assistance to meet their most basic needs
- The Bishop and other faith groups meet regularly with the provincial government and it strengthens his message that parishes are identifying this need.

Moved by John Spragge and seconded by Lisa Rumble

We, the parish of St John's West Toronto call on the Province of Ontario to double social assistance rates for both Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program, and thereafter to index these rates to inflation, so as to provide a safety net that enables people to meet their most basic needs.