



St. John's Church

(Founded 1858)

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The 164th Annual Parish Meeting

Sunday, January 28, 2024

Agenda

- I. Opening Prayer
- II. Necrology – Gary Daughtery, Lucille Brassfield, Carl Balduf, John O. Jackson, Patricia Pike, Douglas Roby III
- III. Additions to the Agenda
- IV. Minutes of the 163rd Annual Parish Meeting on January 29, 2023
 - a. Approved and filed by the Vestry in February 2023
- V. Nominations and Election of Parish Representatives to the Vestry
 - a. Vestry – three to elect
 - b. Candidates – **Jerrid Mooney, Patrick Walter, Helene Waters.**
 - c. Thank you to Glenn Burton, Cathy Morgan, Morley Stevenson and Tristan Williams for your service on the Vestry.
- VI. Senior Warden's and Junior Warden's Report
- VII. Choirmaster's Report
- VIII. Reports from Parish Ministries, Committees, and Organizations
 - a. Acolytes, Lay Readers, and Ushers
 - b. Altar Guild
 - c. Armitage Club
 - d. Daughters of the King
 - e. Kitchen and Coffee Hour
 - f. Malawi
 - g. Outreach
 - h. St. Catherine's Guild of the ECW
 - i. Sunday School
 - j. Parish Statistics
- IX. Rector's Report
- X. Other Business
- XI. Motion to adjourn
- XII. Blessing

ST. JOHN'S OPERATING POLICIES

Adopted February 17, 1997

Revised January 14, 2002, December 14, 2015, September 21, 2022

The following sections pertain to the Annual Parish Meeting and the Election of Members of the Vestry.

- I. Concerning Annual and Special Meetings of the Parish.
 - A. Annual Meetings or Special Meetings of the parish are to be scheduled by the Vestry, and advertised well in advance. They are to be called in accordance with national and diocesan canon laws.
 - B. Annual Meetings may be conducted with an agenda, but in such a way that free and open discussion of any topic is encouraged and allowed. There are to be no limitations on nominations, motions, or length of speeches or discussions.
 - C. Special Meetings are to be called for consideration of only specific topics. Free and open discussion of the topic/s is encouraged and allowed. In consideration of the topic/s, there are to be no limitations on nominations, motions, or length of speeches or discussions.
 - D. "Voting privilege" at an Annual or Special Meeting of the parish is defined as residing with those persons who:
 1. Are baptized.
 2. Have attained the age of 16 years.
 3. Have attended St. John's regularly for at least six months immediately prior to the meeting.
 - E. An election of four members of the parish to serve as members of the Vestry is to be conducted at the Annual Meeting. Persons who have attained "voting privilege" are eligible for election. Additional guidelines, dated November, 1992, are applicable.
- II. Concerning Vestry membership.
 - A. Three new members of the vestry shall be elected to three year terms at each Annual Meeting of the parish. Those persons who have attained "voting privilege" at Annual Meetings are eligible for vestry membership. (See definition above.) The four persons among those nominated who receive the most votes shall be considered as elected. A tie situation is to be broken immediately by conducting a run-off election.
 - B. The three year terms of vestry service shall commence immediately upon the adjournment of the Annual Meeting in which they are elected and terminate upon the adjournment of the Annual Meeting of the third year.

Senior Warden's Report – Charles Roby

This past year was a solid year for our wonderful church. We were able to run our organization in a normal fashion following the Covid-related restrictions that were imposed upon us in recent years and maintain a balanced financial position. Additionally, we did this despite a fair amount of broad cost inflation.

It has been a true honor and privilege to serve as your senior warden. This has been a growing experience for me as a person both from a leadership and spiritual standpoint, so I'm grateful to all of you for this opportunity and I'm looking forward to another positive year for our church in 2024.

The biggest takeaway for me while serving in my position is I now fully appreciate the enormous amount of time and effort that is put forth by so many people and various groups to run our church. Obviously, we could not survive as an organization without the significant time and effort made by all of you.

The list is substantial and includes: Father Kelly for his preaching and spiritual leadership, the laymen and lay readers who support Father Kelly's efforts, Huw, Grace, and the choir for their wonderful organ play and singing that brighten our services and lead us closer to God, our ushers who greet us every week and keep our services on track, the ladies of the Altar Guild, St Catherine's Guild, the Daughters of the King, and the Sunday School Program for all of their important spiritual and fellowship-related contributions, Chris and her entire team who run our kitchen and coffee hour for our weekly fellowship, Elizabeth for her substantial operations and administrative efforts, our co-treasurers for their patient and careful work, our faithful weekly 'counters', the two "Pats" who help keep our building running efficiently, and Bernard who keeps our lot running smoothly and secure.

While I must remind everyone of the importance of giving financially to our church, my hope here is to augment that message. First, the onus is on all of us to continuously work to invite additional people and new members to join us for our services and various community activities. I know from experience that my personal evangelism efforts have been only marginally successful, but that is not stopping me in my efforts. I continue to pray about this and work to try and attract new people to our community. Despite it being a sad and solemn event, my brother's funeral service last year was an excellent example of where we introduced our church to a large group of new people. Second, all of us must continue to pray and think creatively about new activities and events that we can hold and sponsor at our church to create new revenue streams for us to grow our community. In short, aside from our actual services, we must think about and run our church as a business and with a for profit mindset.

If we can grow our community and strengthen our financial position, then we will secure our future and our ability to exercise our freedom of worship with like minded people. Thank you for your support in 2023 and please continue to pray for me, the Vestry and Father Kelly going forward. And finally, remember your input and questions are always welcome.

Junior Warden's Report – Morley Stevenson

2023 was, much like 2022, a year in which there were no major projects completed. Once again, it was a year of little things. As such, Pat Walter and Pat Burson, with their attention to routine, and to making sure that minor emergencies did not become disasters, are most deserving of our gratitude. Their steady, quiet labors on our behalf too often escape our notice.

In my report last year, I projected that we would restore the fence and curb along the Fisher Freeway side of our property. That did not happen. We were unable to secure a right-of-way permit from the city in time to begin the work while the weather remained favorable. I anticipate completion of that project this spring.

We will be getting a new historic marker, to replace the weather damaged one that has been in place since the mid-1980s. This will be a completely new marker, with the text revised to accurately record our name, as it appears in the Articles of Agreement for the organization of the church, and to correct a minor detail in the biography of our founder. These markers are of cast aluminum. A marker can be refurbished with a new coat of paint, but any changes in the text requires that a new casting be made. We should have our new marker some time in the spring. It would be wonderful if the fence repair and installation should occur at roughly the same time to give summer of 2024 a festive start.

Our senior warden, Charles Roby, and I have been working on a source for replacement kneelers. We have identified a source and will be working on determining a reasonable price per kneeler. We have

an improved design and propose to offer members of the parish the opportunity to sponsor a kneeler. This would mean gradual replacement over a period of time, as sponsors come forward.

This meeting brings my term as Junior Warden and vestry member to an end. I shall continue to be involved with the projects cited above. We also have some major projects ahead, if we are to preserve the church we all treasure. We can do it, and make significant improvements, as well.

We will be acquiring a new neighbor within the next couple of years. This will be the first time, since long before my family became members here, that we will be sharing the block between the Fisher Freeway and Montcalm with anything other than a parking lot. The long view to the south that has been a feature of our garden will vanish. A new building, up to eighty feet high, according to the terms of our lease with Olympia, will form a wall to the south. Our garden will be a shady place throughout much of the year. It will become a passage between Woodward and Witherell, rather than an open space, bound only on the north side by the church. Design of the garden we will develop, also a feature of our lease, presents an array of exciting opportunities. The new barrier to the south will actually be liberating. It will provide definition this space currently lacks and cause new possibilities appear. The next couple of years will be very exciting, indeed.

Choirmaster's Report – Dr. Huw Lewis

With apologies to Yogi Berra, I confess that as I stand here today, I feel as though I'm experiencing "déjà vu all over again"...

This time last year, I was reporting how excited I was to have appointed a new John Leigh Edwards Organ Scholar who was born in Oklahoma, and who was at The University of Michigan pursuing a doctoral degree in organ. Well, guess what: This year, I'm really excited to report how excited I was to be able to appoint a new John Leigh Edwards Organ Scholar who was born in Oklahoma, and who is at The University of Michigan pursuing a doctoral degree in organ... Yes, this is true. This is not a dream!

The Scholar I was talking about last year is Abe Wallace. Abe had successfully applied for the year-long Gerre Hancock Fellowship offered by the Association of Anglican Musicians. Abe is the second Organ Scholar to have received this important recognition: David Heinze also received a prestigious Hancock Fellowship. Abe took up his responsibilities at St. George's Episcopal Church in Nashville, Tennessee in mid July. I recently asked him how things were going, and he sent me the following message:

"My time at St George's Episcopal Nashville has been wonderful so far. I have thoroughly enjoyed being steeped in the 'work' or (sic) a church musician week in and week out. In addition to Sunday morning Eucharist services, we have monthly Evensong and Compline services, as well as special concerts for things like All Saints Sunday.. Needless to say, there's quite a lot to do! Perhaps the most rewarding part of this experience has been working with the choristers at St. George's. We have seventeen young ones (ages 8-18) that sing with the choir on a bi-weekly basis. It is a joy to help them learn to work together, and to get them to focus on some of the underlying theology of what it is that we are singing. After this appointment, I hope to finish my degree at Michigan (all that is left is a document and a few recitals), and find full time work as a church musician. It must be said, though, that while I always had really enjoyed church work, it was my time at St. John's that really emboldened that spirit in me. I am pursuing the career I am today largely in part because I was lucky enough to encounter Huw, Fr. Kelly, and the whole community at St. John's, Detroit."

It's lovely to see that our Organ Scholarship program continues to make a difference in young lives!

All of you have now met our new Scholar, Grace Jackson. Grace began her time with us August 1st, and has been an absolute joy. Grace hails from Oklahoma where she completed her undergraduate degree in piano and organ performance at Oklahoma City University. Following her undergraduate studies, Grace went to the University of Notre Dame for her Master of Sacred Music, which she completed in 2023. I first encountered Grace in a master class that I taught at Notre Dame in January of 2022; and I was delighted that she agreed to come to St. John's.

Grace is not only a very talented musician and wonderful human being, she also possesses terrific organizational skills. So she's not only contributing beautifully to our weekly worship, she's been a terrific help in running the music program. I look forward to a long and happy relationship with her.

From a musical perspective, last year was a good one, even though we were plagued as never before with continuous sickness. But by the end of the year, things had settled down, and I believe it's true to say that our Christmas Eve services were some of the most beautiful Christmas services I can recall.

With each passing year, I continue to remain deeply grateful to Fr. Kelly, our Rector, to our Vestry, and to you, the wonderful people of St. John's, who continue to support and encourage me in heading up the music program. Every week, I feel honored for the privilege of enriching your worship with music; and I feel blessed to be supported by your kindness, your encouragement, and, of course, to be held up in your prayers.

Acolytes, Lay Readers and Ushers

The Acolytes serve at the altar during the worship services, assisting the clergy. Right now we have a small, faithful core group of Servers and we are always welcoming new members to the corps. After Stevenson Langmuir's move to New Jersey Cole Stevenson has stepped into the roll of acolyte at the 8 AM Service. Jack Ellis has also begun to serve with us regularly at the altar at 10 AM and we welcome his contribution! Contact Morley Stevenson for more information about becoming a Server.

The Lay Readers read the Lessons at Holy Communion and Lessons and Psalms at Choral Morning Prayer. Brian Campbell coordinates the schedule. If you would like to join this group please contact Brian.

The Ushers greet people at the door, coordinate people going up front for the reception of Communion during the Service and help with overall flow of people at the Services. Contact John Barge and Peter Grim for more information about volunteering.

Altar Guild – Virginia Burton & Sarah Babcock, Directresses

The members of St. John's Altar Guild continue to prepare the altars for worship services every Sunday and to clean and care for altar vessels and linens. In addition, the Altar Guild serves at weddings and funerals and is responsible for altar flowers throughout the year.

Many thanks to all the women who serve on their designated Sunday each month and to those carrying out various duties. Polishing brass, serving at weddings, writing notes of appreciation for flower donations, mending linens, arranging poinsettias and lilies for the holidays, and replenishing votive candles. Their faithfulness and dedication are truly appreciated!

Of course, we are grateful for Fr. Kelly's guidance and help and for keeping us on track with the church calendar.

There are many opportunities to lend a hand, whether part-time or in a more involved role. We always welcome new members. Elizabeth Savage, our office manager, has recently joined the guild on the fifth Sundays during the year.

Please contact Sarah Babcock if you feel you might like to serve St. John's and the Lord.

Armitage Club

Men in the parish are invited to join together for breakfast on Tuesday mornings for fellowship and discussion. The group is currently meeting at the National Coney Island on Mack Avenue in Grosse Pointe. Pat Walter is the coordinator of this group.

Daughters of the King – Lena R. Nealley

Again this past year, Daughters of the King has been a healthy, happy group of women who welcome visitors and new members as we meet monthly. As part of the National Order, we strive to pray, serve our parish and community, and to spread Christ's gospel to others.

We meet at the church, typically on the second Saturday of the month, with time to update business, study (Bible or Bible-based), update prayer lists, and pray together, with warm and wonderful Christian friendship throughout. Usually some food is involved, too. Our new study for 2024 will be on John's letters (I John, II John, and III John).

Our service projects for the chapter are sponsoring the Christmas Giving Tree and sponsoring the Baby Shower for Pregnancy Aid. We have added the Annual Advent Tea, which was a wonderful event on Saturday, December 2, 2023. This year was very successful, with excellent attendance, special music (Thank you, Chels and Grace!!), meaningful devotions, wonderful food, and a time to prepare our hearts and spirits for the true meaning of Christmas. As we continue this annual celebration, we hope many more women and girls will set aside the date and join us for the blessing!

This December our chapter again sponsored our Giving Tree at the church which benefitted the Georgia Street Community Collective. All the gifts of blankets, adult and children's clothing, toys, and books were so gratefully received. Special thanks to all the generous givers of St. John's Parish!

In the Spring, we will again sponsor a Baby Shower, with the entire parish joining in, to benefit Pregnancy Aid, an organization which assists women with unplanned pregnancy to afford tests and prenatal care, and with diapers and children's clothing for their babies. Each year a wonderful collection of baby items is given, and is gratefully received.

We warmly welcome interested women to join us at a meeting. A three month training period is needed to become a member; a spring session is currently being planned. Ask any member (silver cross!) for more information.

Kitchen & Coffee Hour – Chris Golembiewski

Food and fellowship are the goal of Coffee Hour every Sunday. 'Post Covid' changed the manner in which snacks are served on Sundays. Coffee Hour 'teams', flipping out of pocket cost for treats, have been replaced by a core group of women to serve coffee, chips and packaged treats every week. Of course, we always accept home baked and store bought special treats from anyone in the parish!

In addition to Sunday Coffee Hour and helping with Soup Sundays, St. Pat's luncheon and the luncheon prior to the annual Tiger Baseball outing, we hired caterer Edwin Smith for our first 'Welcome Back' luncheon in September. Edwin did such a fine job for us that we brought him back to prepare some awesome fried chicken and roasted potatoes for our annual 'Homecoming Sunday Potluck Luncheon'. We look forward to bringing him back in 2024.

St. John's is blessed to have many wonderful folks involved in many ministries within the church – including the kitchen. The tireless work of Martina Stevenson, Suzanne Porter, Stella Heatley, Sarah Babcock, Nancy Donnelley, Denise Grim and Debbie Swain help to meet the goal of parish fellowship during Coffee Hour. Anyone interested in volunteering (men and women!) please talk to any of these folks – we'd be happy to have your help!

Malawi – Fr. Michael Bedford and Chris Golembiewski

St. John's supports the Diocese of Northern Malawi in two ways. First, through "Loose Offerings" received on the first Sunday of each month. Second, through our Spring and Fall Ingatherings, that take place in May and November. The generous offerings of our parishioners throughout the year support the Bishop Biggers Educational Fund.

In 2023, St. John's contributed \$6,396 to Bishop Biggers' education fund. In addition, in March parishioners contributed \$830 in response to a special appeal to assist to help with relief efforts following a major typhoon that hit Malawi. The diocese was very appreciative of our response to their appeal.

Please keep the Diocese of Northern Malawi, and Bishop Biggers in your prayers, and continue to support Bishop Biggers' work through your special contributions.

Outreach Committee – Debbie Swain and Chris Golembiewski

This year, was one of a change in leadership, as Cathy Morgan retired from the position of chairperson, replaced by Cathy. Cathy has been a stellar advocate of St. John's ongoing mission of community outreach. Cathy did a remarkable job as chairperson of the committee which this year was comprised of Debbie Swain, John Barge, Bryan Monaco, Sally Monaco, Libby Schudel, Peter Grim, Elizabeth Savage and Chris Golembiewski. Each member of this committee is commended for their dedication and support of the mission of the committee.

As in the past, each organization provided us with their mission and financial reports. Site visits were made, followed by meeting to determine distribution of grant money which in 2023 totaled \$51,800. This year's recipients included Beds for Kids, Cass Community, Crossroads, Elli's House, Georgia Street Community Collective, Keep Growing Detroit, NOAH and Vista Maria.

St. Catherine's Guild of the Episcopal Church Women – Debbie Swain

January Undecorate the Church, take down Warm Fuzzy Tree (Items went to Mariner's Inn, Ellie's Place, & Georgia Street), Annual Meeting Soup Luncheon

February Valentine Coffee Hour, Valentine Tree, Toiletry Project (69 backpacks/bags), First Psyanky Egg Class, Mardi Gras Tree, Shrove Tuesday "Pancakes & Trivia"

March 2nd Psyanky Egg Class, St. Patrick's Day Tree, St. Patrick's Potluck Luncheon

April Easter Tree, Palm Sunday Annual Bake Sale, Plant Urns for Easter, Arrange Easter Lillies on the altar, Easter Sunday Coffee Hour, Chrismon Workshop (8 ladies made 80 ornaments), Cass Community Children's Book Drive

May Mother's Day Tree, Outreach Sunday Reception, Memorial Day Tree with photo, Malawi Ingathering

June Father's Day Tree with photos, Plant church garden

July Fourth of July Tree, Toiletry Project, Founder's Day Ice Cream Social

August Baseball Tree, Church Garden Weeding, School Supplies & Underwear for Crossroads

September College Tree, Welcome Back Luncheon, Trash to Treasure Sale (2 weekends)

October Halloween Tree, Annual Food Drive for Georgia Street, Coat & Blanket Drive for Georgia Street, Monaco 50th Wedding Anniversary Reception, Homecoming Luncheon, Craft Project, Clean up Church garden, Mums for the urns

November Craft Project, Malawi Ingathering, Annual Pie Sale, Chairs delivered, Cocoa & Donut Sale for Thanksgiving Parade, Set up for Advent Tea

December Advent trees with Chrismons, Set up Christmas Bazaar, Advent Tea, Put up wreaths and urns, Tree lighting and carols, Annual "Cookie Walk", Pre-greening, Warm Fuzzy Tree, Advent Soup Sunday, Finish Greening, Place poinsettias on the altar

Sunday School – Lena Nealley

We are struggling along at St. John's for our weekly Sunday School, with a dedicated duo of leaders (Lena Nealley and Martina Stevenson) and a small attendance----often just one, sometimes two or three young people. (Hurrah for Jolie, who is there almost every week!)

This year our regular pianist, Catharine Langmuir, has moved and we are singing without accompaniment. **(Anyone who plays piano and wants to join us for a few minutes to begin our worship service, please step up!!)**

We continue using a curriculum of **Weaving God's Promises**, a study of Old Testament lessons in the fall, and a Gospel of John study of Jesus and His ministry for our winter-spring lessons. We have a good time with our worship, Bible study, discussions, puzzles, coloring pages, and snacks. Special thanks to all who encourage our Sunday School. Please encourage and invite other young people to come (ages 5-12). Let us all keep working to make St. John's a wonderful place to worship each Sunday.

Rector's Report to the Annual Parish Meeting

January 28, 2024

“The Church is the divinely appointed agency in the world for the building of the Kingdom of God. This Kingdom is to be establish on earth, here and now. Thus the challenge comes to BUILD A KINGDOM. The hearts of men must be full of the love and goodness of Christ. Only then will be forced out all the sordidness, selfishness, greed and unrighteousness that are now there. Than will all men understand each other as brothers in Christ. Then will labor problems, sex problems, race problems, group problems, international problems fade away, because men's hearts will be right with their fellow man and with God.”

The words above continue to ring true since the 9th Rector of St. John's, Rev'd R.W. Woodroofe, published those words in March of 1926. Amazingly almost 100 years have elapsed, and since his departure in 1934, I am only the Fourth Rector to serve here. Rev'ds Johnson, Frisby, Kim and I combine for nearly 90 years in this office. When I find things like this in old copies of the weekly Chronicle, which we have published since 1904, I am continually amazed at how much remains the same despite the vast differences as well.

For Father Woodroofe the World War, and the Spanish Influenza pandemic were in the recent past and he was here for the Depression's start. I.C. Johnson was here for the invention of the polio vaccine, the second World War and the Korean Conflict. Fr. Frisby lead us through the turbulent times of the Vietnam War and all the social unrest here at home in both the city and in the church, and Fr. Kim served us during times of even greater change in the church while witnessing the planting of a seed of hope of renewal in our neighborhood that did not begin to bear fruit until my arrival with the opening of stadiums/arenas, and the District Detroit plans to come. Who would have imagined 9/11 and the wars in the middle east beginning just 7 months after I arrived and of course we are still dealing with residual effects of the pandemic.

Through all of these worldly changes we still have sordidness, selfishness, greed, and unrighteousness. We still have labor problems, sex problems, race problems, group problems and international problems. They have not faded away. Sin continues because our hearts are not 'full of the love and goodness of Christ.'

And so we as The Church are called to strive to cooperate with God's Grace and allow Him to fill our hearts with that goodness and love. And while we are being filled we must also be overflowing so that love and goodness affects others as well. A popular hymn based on a prayer attributed to St. Francis (but actually written in the 19th century) asks us to be "channels" of God's peace. But a channel is something that water just flows through. A better analogy is to be a reservoir. Behind a damn the water begins overflowing its banks which makes lush and fertile all that is around it. We need to let God fill us to overflowing so that those we interact with will be affected by the overflow of goodness and love! This is the work of the Church in building the Kingdom of God.

Next week we begin our Sunday Alpha Course. After coffee hour come on over to the undercroft level of the ministry center to see the Alpha Course video for that day and participate in a discussion afterwards. This is a great way for us to be renewed in (or learn anew) the basics of the faith.

Another way we are filled is through prayer and worship! Being regular about attendance as worship strengthens and fills you and encourages others just by your presence. Developing a robust life of daily prayer at home, or joining us for weekday services at St. John's, is also vital.

Knowing the Bible through regular reading and study helps to fill us. My Daily Morning Meditation online, listening to a Through the Bible podcast or other online resources are very helpful! Take advantage of the opportunity to open the Scriptures and read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest.

Getting involved in ministries inside and outside the church is also a great way to be filled and to share that overflow! It is an opportunity to share the faith that you are learning with others.

God willing, at the end of February I will mark my 23rd anniversary as your Rector, third in length only to I.C. Johnson and Fr. Frisby! I am so grateful that God continues to allow me to minister here in this part of His vineyard. May He grant us many more years ahead as we are filled to overflowing and help bring that love and goodness to The District Detroit, Metro Detroit, and the world.