



ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



ESSEX, CONNECTICUT STEWARDSHIP 2025



September 2024

Dear Parishioners of St. John's,

I am writing to you as the Stewardship Chairperson for our 2025 campaign, filled with gratitude for your past and future generosity.

As we work together through this transition, it's important to reflect on the many blessings we've received and the wonderful accomplishments we've achieved together at St. John's over the past few years.

- With a dedicated group of volunteers and generous donations, our Tuesday evening soup kitchen continues to provide much-needed meals for our community's less fortunate members.
- We are blessed with a building and grounds committee that continues to make our church and grounds shine with all their efforts. This group does an amazing job, volunteering many hours to monitor the building's structure and mechanical systems. With a group of many skilled individuals, they can foresee problems and incorporate preventative maintenance measures that result in savings for St. Johns.
- Many of us have grown spiritually with participation in "A Year of the Bible." Reading the Bible, and discussing Bible passages and chapters as a group has provided comfort, and increased our faith in God's words and teachings.

Many other good things are happening at St. John's, some of which will be highlighted in our stewardship brochure and pledge letter.

As our Vestry works diligently to find our next rector, we need to continue to show that St. John's is a place committed to doing God's work, both locally and globally. The vitality of our church is sustained by our incredible volunteers who make St. John's thrive.

St. John's has truly been blessed, especially when many congregations are struggling to stay viable and solvent. We want our parish to continue to thrive today and for many future generations.

Stewardship is our responsibility to God, our church, and our community. "Using the gifts God has given us, to do the work God is calling us to do."

St John's received 28 new additional pledges for 2024, and many parishioners increased their pledges as well. Thank you for your generosity.

However, it is important to note that 57% of our total pledges came from only 16% of our pledging units; that is 24 out of 155 total pledging units, making up almost 60% of our pledge revenue.

As you receive your pledge card with this brochure, I encourage you to make a pledge. If you have pledged in past years, please consider increasing your contribution this stewardship season as you are able.

Thank you, and God bless.

Sincerely,

Greg Perruccio

Sharing Our Abundance: Ordinary People Doing Extraordinary Things

God Is Inviting People To St. John's

How do we welcome and incorporate people into our community?

How do we continue to provide a place where all people will be transformed by God?

- We do it by continuing to offer meaningful worship services with excellent music and compelling preaching.
- We do it by inviting people to try on new spiritual disciplines, like reading scripture and trying new prayer practices.
- We do it by investing in the professional development of our staff and lay leaders.
- We do it by offering opportunities for fellowship and relationship building.
- We do it by providing outreach to our communities both locally and abroad.
- We do it by providing classes and programs which deepen and enrich our lives of faith.

Our estimated 2025 budget expenses will be \$685,000 which is 15% higher than 2024 budget. It will cost St. John's \$13,000 every week to operate in 2025.

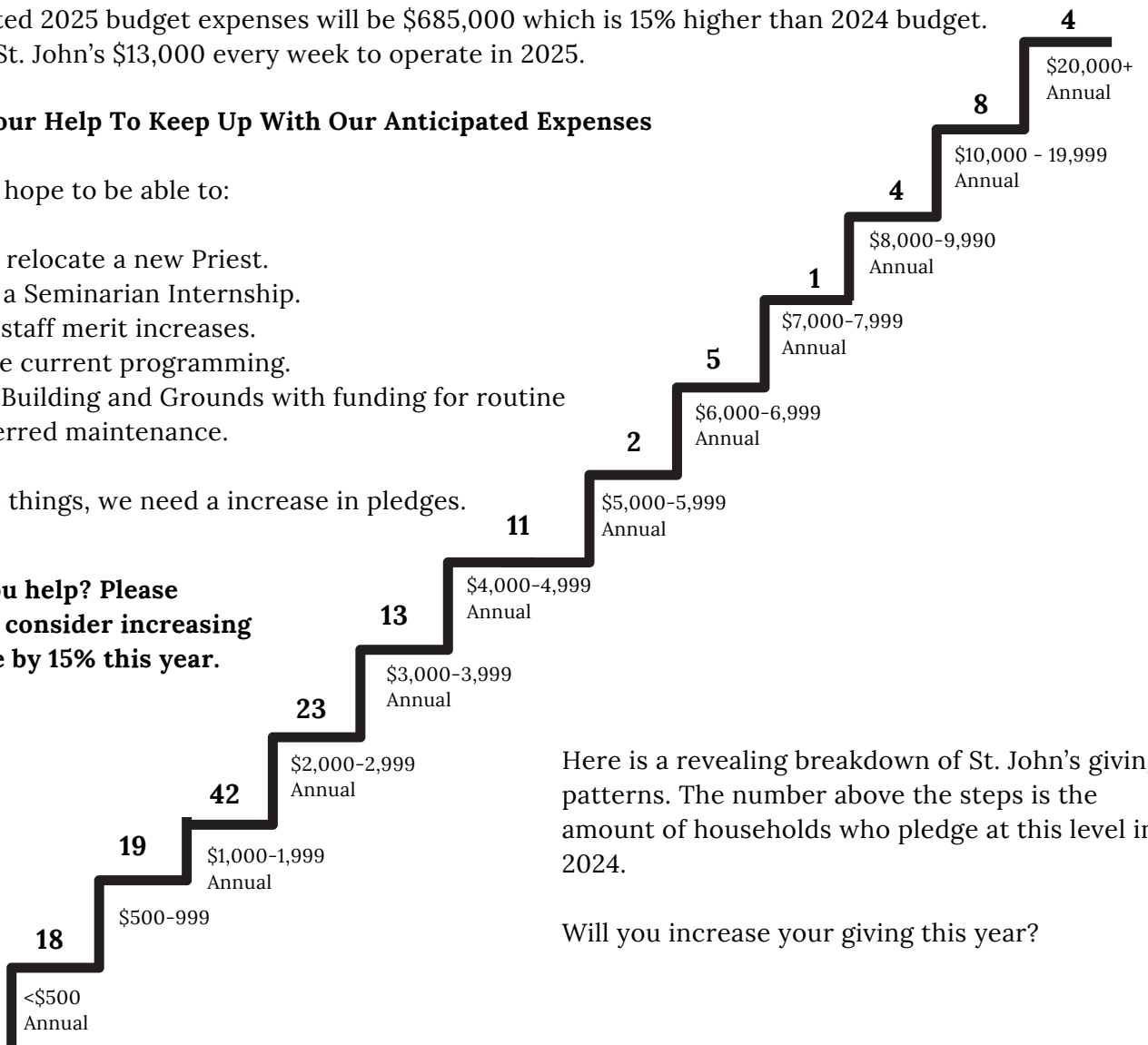
We Need Your Help To Keep Up With Our Anticipated Expenses

In 2025, we hope to be able to:

- Call and relocate a new Priest.
- Plan for a Seminarian Internship.
- Provide staff merit increases.
- Continue current programming.
- Provide Building and Grounds with funding for routine and deferred maintenance.

To do these things, we need an increase in pledges.

How can you help? Please prayerfully consider increasing your pledge by 15% this year.



Here is a revealing breakdown of St. John's giving patterns. The number above the steps is the amount of households who pledge at this level in 2024.

Will you increase your giving this year?

A Note from your Vestry

The words “grace” and “gratitude” come to mind as we enter a new stewardship season at St. John’s. We continue to live into God’s grace in community and are grateful to each of you for sharing your time, talent, and treasure with abundance. As we wonder, “What does God have in store for us in the months ahead?” we know one certainty: we’ll move forward together in faith, hope, and love, with God as our safety net. We also know that, like any charitable organization, a church has real-world operating expenses and depends on your financial support to ensure long-term sustainability and resilience.

On behalf of your Vestry, we thank each of you for your faithfulness, your generosity of spirit and resources, and for trusting us to navigate the path ahead. Keep doing all that you do to make St. John’s a vibrant community that cares for its own while providing a light of hope in today’s fractured world.

We look forward to sharing many good things to come. Thanks be to God.

Yours in Christ,

Scott Konrad and Sandy Loether
Wardens

Meet Max Cameron

Here is an inspiring story about Max, one of our young acolytes, that will make you smile.

“I wanted to see what was going on,” was – 10 year-old Max Cameron’s response to why he started coming to St. John’s every Sunday. One Sunday morning, as he and his dad were going to feed the ducks at the end

of Main Street, Max Cameron saw his grandmother, Mary Cameron, walk into church for the 8 a.m. service. He came to church with his grandmother just before Easter and has attended nearly every Sunday after that. Reverend Kate invited him to become an acolyte, and Max said yes with a sense of curiosity. To learn more, he googled “acolyte” and read that acolytes needed to be baptized. He wanted to be baptized because serving in this role was important to Max. On June 16, Max was baptized at the 8 a.m. service, surrounded and supported by his parents, grandmother, and other close friends and family. He even had the chance to “asperge” the congregation after his baptism, saying, “It was my favorite part of my baptism day.”

Max continues to serve as a torchbearer and gospel bearer at the 8 a.m. service most Sundays and loves to be a part of the altar party. “It makes the service more interesting,” he says and wonders if – one day – he might be at the altar as a priest.

