

to LOVE and SERVE

2027 Annual Giving Appeal

St. John's Episcopal Church ~ Essex, Connecticut



LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

When I was a girl, I was so proud of going to church and being able to drop some money in the collection plate. Perhaps that kind of pride is not the most spiritually grounded way of approaching generosity to the church, but I was 6, so I think God might have given me a pass.

My father used to “lose” coins in the cushions of his favorite chair, knowing that I would be searching for them, and he taught me to give some of what I found to the church so that I could have a good Sunday School and music to sing in the choir and costumes for the Christmas pageant.

As I have grown older, my understanding of *why* I give has changed. It isn't so much about what I will get in return, even though I know that the ministries of the church are impossible without our generosity. No, I give because it brings me closer to God. God invites us to be generous, and in responding to that invitation, my faith grows deeper and broader.

A pledge is a promise Tim & I make every year to support the life and ministry of this place. We know we will benefit through programs and music and materials as will those we serve in our community who need our generosity. But mostly we pledge because God asks us to, and there has never been a time when we have not been blessed exponentially in return by a deepening of our faith, enrichment of our spiritual lives, and profound joy at being so abundantly blessed.

I hope you'll join us and make a pledge for the coming year so that we can dream big about how we love and serve God and our neighbor in Essex and beyond.

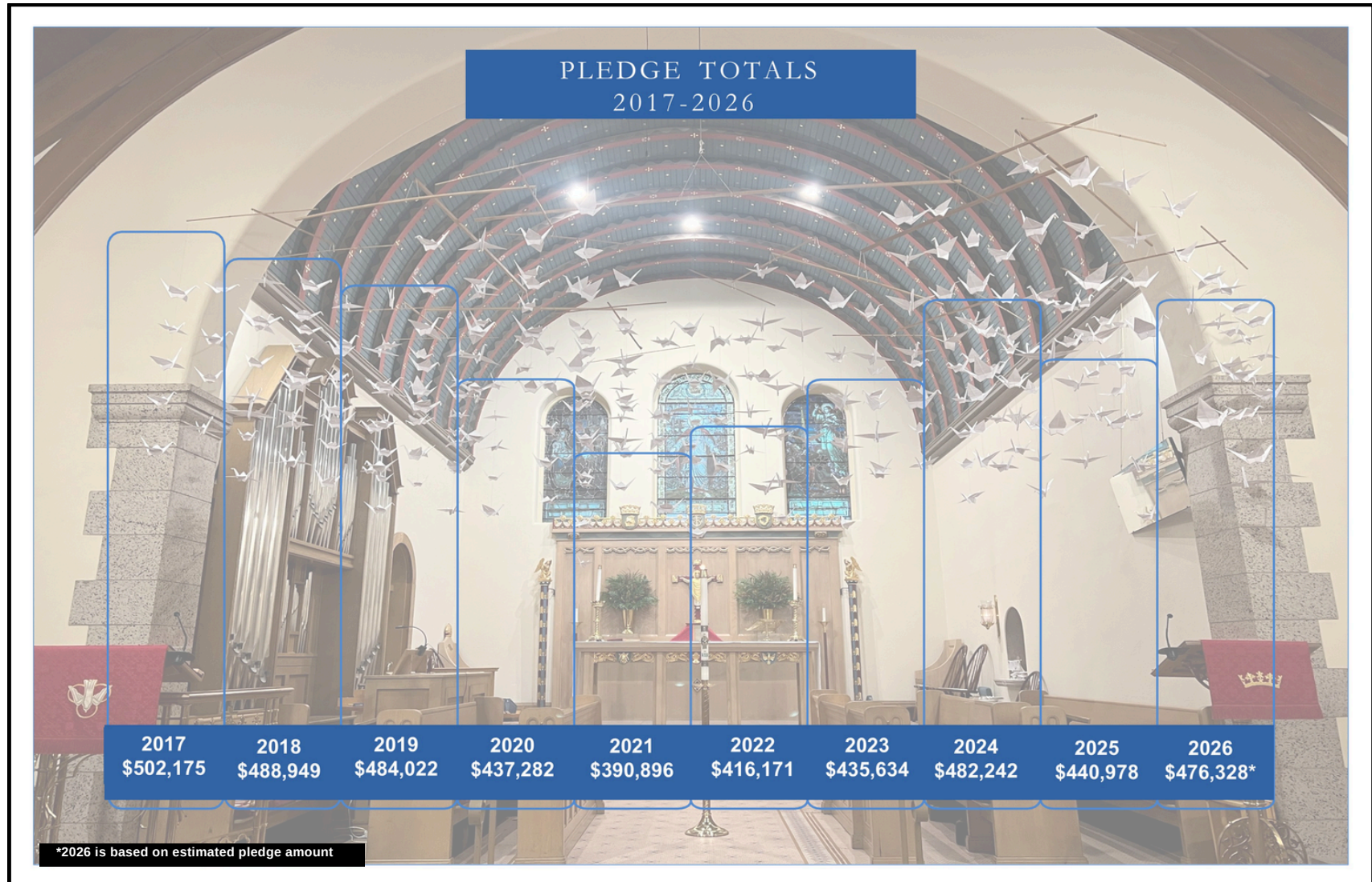


Elaine



To love and serve is our theme - funding our mission is how we accomplish that.

Over the past decade, dollars pledged toward our mission have reflected what is going on in the life of the parish. Times of transition saw dips in giving (which is normal). The pandemic caused a major decrease. Except for another transition, we have been on an upward trajectory since then. If we continue on this path, we'll be able to dream big about how we grow in love and service to God and our neighbors.



God's mission ~ our impact:

More than
285
volunteers

to
Love
and
Serve

9,000+
volunteer
hours

Over \$80,000
given locally
and to
Common Mission
with our diocese

Eucharistic Visitors

Altar Guild

Habitat for Humanity



Soup Kitchen



Witness Stones

Bill's Blessings



Angel Tree

Rummage Sale

Readers & Intercessors

Buildings & Grounds

Meal Ministry

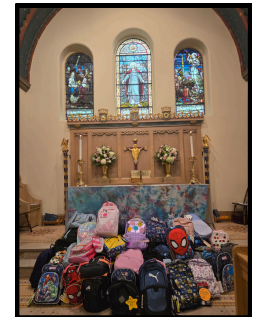
Ushers



Greeters

Military Ministry

Altar Servers



Monthly Pastoral Card Writing

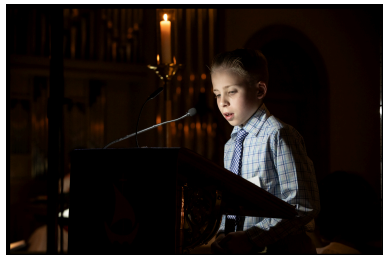
to **Love** and **Serve**

A Sacred Place

Choir

Food Pantry

Backpack Drive



Offering Counters



Heavenly Helpers

Vestry

Coffee Hour

Videography

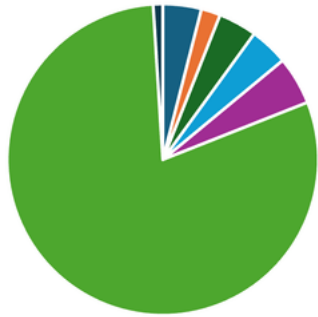


Investment Oversight Committee

St. John's Projected Income to fulfill our mission for 2027

Pledge Goal: \$500,000

How do we fund our mission? Our most important source of income is you, our pledging parishioners. Our pledges annually fund approximately 80% of our expenses. The Annual Giving Appeal is designed to give you an idea of the importance of pledging and of thinking big when it comes to our ministries.

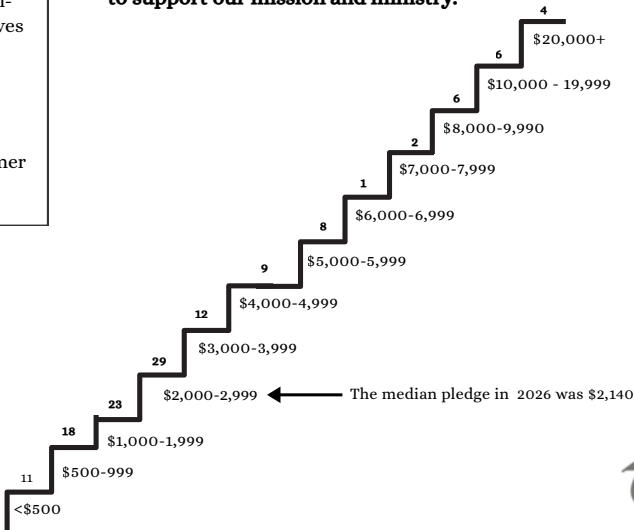


- 1 Loose Plate - \$26,000 (4%)
- 2 Other Gifts and Fees - \$14,000 (2%)
- 3 Diocesan Donor & Bequest Endowment - \$24,000 (4%)
- 4 Heritage Endowment - \$25,000 (4%)
- 5 Hayden Trust - \$30,000 (5%)
- 6 Annual Pledges - \$500,000 (80%)
- 7 Prepaid Pledges - \$10,000 (1%)

What are our other Fonts of Revenue?

Loose Plate Offerings: This is money that is placed in the offering plate on Sunday that is not part of a pledge. We include an estimate in the budget, but it is not as predictable as pledged income.

If we dream big for 2027, increasing our giving to support this year's theme "to love and serve," we magnify our capacity to support our mission and ministry.



Endowment Income:

St. John's is blessed with three endowments established through parishioner bequests and reserves:

- **Diocesan & Donor Bequest Endowment:** This fund is managed by the diocese and is largely unrestricted. Following best practice, we draw 4.5% annually for budget support.
- **Heritage Endowment:** This is a quasi-endowment funded by parish reserves and other gifts and is spent at the Vestry's discretion following a 4.5% draw policy.
- **Hayden Trust:** The trust was established from the sale of the former rectory. This partially funds the rector's annual housing allowance.

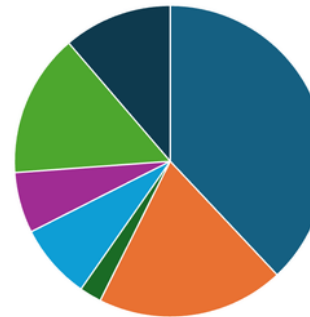
How much should I pledge?

This pledge ladder breaks last year's 129 pledges into levels of giving. It shows our reliance on larger gifts. A healthier breakdown of pledges would be more evenly spread with a higher median pledge. Are you ready to move to a new level in your giving?

St. John's Projected Budget Expenses for 2027

Operating Budget by Category: \$657,330

St. John's budget does not change dramatically year over year. Clergy and staff salaries and benefits accord with diocesan guidelines, and these expenses are spread over the program, administration, worship, and music budgets. Care of our buildings and grounds supports our mission through the many ways our facilities are used each week.



- 1 Clergy & Staff Salaries - \$249,698 (37.99%)
- 2 Clergy & Staff Benefits - \$127,765 (19.44%)
- 3 Programs & Education Support - \$15,000 (2.28%)
- 4 Administration & Communication - \$51,450 (7.83%)
- 5 Worship & Music - \$41,500 (6.31%)
- 6 Buildings & Grounds - \$97,728 (14.87%)
- 7 Diocesan Contribution & Mission & Justice/Outreach - \$74,189 (11.29%)



to LOVE and SERVE



How Do I Pledge for 2027?

- Fill out the enclosed pledge card. You can place it in the collection plate between now and Ingathering Sunday on November 1. *We will reuse the stamped return envelope if you do not seal it!*
- You can also drop the card in the mail.
- You can pledge online at www.stjohnsessex.org/give or use the QR code below.
- Pledge payments can be automated through your bank.



All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.

Acts 2:44-45

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Join us in loving and serving God and our neighbor,
living into God's mission here at St. John's.



Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Thanks be to God.