

As St. John's enters the second year of our relationship with Fr. David Sellery, the Vestry and Fr. Sellery have compiled this progress report to inform the congregation and the Episcopal Church in Connecticut (the Diocese) of the faithful work we have undertaken together.

Our focus at St. John's is on three missions:

- *Praising God, Serving Neighbor:* Our primary mission as Christians is to actively embrace the great commandments (Mat 22: 37-39).
- *Renewing, Rejoicing, Welcoming:* We fulfill our mission by vigorously revitalizing and enriching the spiritual life of the parish family through dynamic, involving, inspiring ministries. (Phil 4:4)
- *Witnessing Christ's Love:* We actively reach to the broader community with exemplary energy, dedication, kindness, courtesy and respect. (Mat 28: 19-20)

Our mission and our faith inform how we participate in God's mission

- In all things, we will do well by doing good. St. John's will thrive as a faith community, if we are rigorously faithful to the Gospel and responsive to the grace of the Holy Spirit. (Josh 24:15)
- While ministering to the needs of older, established parishioners, we spiritually nurture new families and encourage them to become more active and in time assume greater involvement in positions of responsibility and leadership. (Mat 19: 13-14)
- We will reach out to those members of our parish family who have become inactive or who have drifted away; positively encouraging them to be part of, and to draw strength from, a loving, supportive Christian community (Luke 15: 4-7)
- We will identify St. John's as a faithful witness of Christ's love in the community by our outreach ministries to the most vulnerable. (Mat 25:40)

The work we have done together has supported and enhanced our mission.

- *Renewing worship*
 - Streamlined the bulletin and reintroduced the use of the Book of Common Prayer
 - Enriched All Souls service to commemorate the departed
 - Revived use of Litany for Healing at certain services with laying on of hands and anointing
 - Integrating the annual Blessing of the Animals service into the 10:00 service closest to Oct 4
 - Revived and expanded roster of parish members serving in support of worship as chalice bearers, lectors, and intercessors
 - Use of Pre-printed Large Font Bulletin Inserts for Sunday Lessons and provision of loaner copies of the Book of Common Prayer in large font for use by parishioners during service

- Sustained ministry to the many members of St. John's at two area residences for the elderly, Noble Horizons and Geer Village

- *Expanding Outreach*
 - Partner with Family Services Salisbury, Canaan, Falls Village (Christmas Angle Tree Project and Back to School Supplies and Clothes)
 - Successful Day of Appreciative Inquiry with The Reverend Rob Voyle with participants from all across the Episcopal Church in Connecticut
 - Monthly Stocking of Salisbury Family Services emergency Pantry
 - Weekly prayers for Community Partners – Salisbury Ambulance, Lakeville Hose Company, Salisbury Family Services and our Resident Trooper
 - Support of Hispanola Health Partners mission in Haiti
 - Increased outreach to AT Hikers
 - Re-instituted Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
 - Greater understanding and engagement of groups who use our space (AA, ESL, Puentes, Drumming Circle, 12 Moons Coffeehouse, Northwest Music Association)
 - Sustained and reinvigorated annual Fall Festival booths with new volunteers and energy.
 - Selected to host, for the first time, the Red White and Blue service by the American Veterans of Litchfield County, the Sunday before Memorial Day, 2016, for this first time this widely supported and attended event has been brought to Salisbury

- *Creating new opportunities for outreach and fellowship*
 - Golden Circle Ministry– opportunity for parish women to come together on projects of service to church and community
 - “Sunday Sundaes”
 - Increased links with ecumenical partners in Salisbury religious community
 - Creation of Circle of Hope Ministry to widows in parish

- *Revitalizing Relationships*
 - Salisbury School and St. John's: Fr. Sellery has participated in Chapel Services at Salisbury School and Salisbury School Chaplin Rev. Kirk Hall has preached at St. John's
 - St. John's Church and wider community: participation in the Memorial Day Parade; and participation in Week of Prayer

- *Transforming Communications*
 - The parish website was revised to become more illustrated, animated, interactive and user friendly
 - Engagement with Social Media – Twitter and Facebook pages
 - Implementation of online Ministry Scheduler program –schedule, manage and communicate with ministry volunteers – grow greater participation

- Use of automated phone tree to instantly notify members, share information, maximize member involvement
- The weekly parish E-News has been expanded, more illustrated with timely photos from daily life in the parish, and produced internally to save money
- In a digitally hybrid community, with many members not being online, we have also increased the number of special mailings for stewardship, liturgical events, recognition and issues
- Fr. Sellery broadcasts a weekly video message on CATV6, targeted to home-bound and parish members at area retirement communities (direct wired to over 4,000 residences in the North Canaan, Canaan, Lakeville, Salisbury, Sharon and Norfolk area, comprising approximately 16,000 viewers)
- Adoption of Visions Training “Guidelines for Effective Dialogue” for all parish gatherings

- *Stewardship of our Buildings and Grounds:*
 - Approved new guidelines for Facility Use at St. John's
 - Renegotiated (and retained) parking lot lease with neighbor, Salisbury Market Association
 - Obtained a new maintenance contract for exit lights/signs and fire extinguishers
 - Obtained new copier contract for a net savings of \$195 per month
 - All thermostats placed on timers
 - Furnace serviced for the first time in memory
 - Replace lightbulbs with energy efficient CFL bulbs
 - Exterior lights placed on energy efficient timers
 - Replaced bathroom floor in Upper Parish Hall
 - Enhanced the sound system, by adding speakers in the organ loft, and a microphone on the altar. An older sound system was redeployed for use in the Lower Parish Hall
 - Cleaning of parking lot in preparation for re-lining parking spaces
 - Regular ‘garden parties’ to maintain our beautiful memorial garden and Columbarium, a peaceful oasis for the community

- *Finance and Human Resources*
 - Adopted new Procedures for Bill Payment
 - Reviewed and implemented redesigned job descriptions and roles for Leadership Team and all paid positions in the parish
 - Adopted a balanced budget by implementing various economies:
 - Internal management of website
 - Implementation of maximum hours without overtime for Sexton
 - Elimination of full-time office manager position
 - Hiring part-time financial administrator
 - Reduction in size of Sunday Bulletin
 - Purchase of folding machine

- Greater transparency and monthly reporting to leadership team and parish
- Engagement of new Auditor to review finance and administrative procedures Review of routine costs and vendors

- *Vestry*
 - Sustained leadership continuity with Senior and Junior Wardens
 - Received resignation of long-term Treasurer
 - Identified a relatively new parishioner to become Treasurer
 - Added members to the Vestry

- *Enhancing our Education Ministry*
 - St. John's Church and St. Mary's RC Church: co-sponsored educational opportunities and undertook a pulpit exchange
 - St. John's Church and Lakeville Methodist Church: undertook a Joint Vacation Bible School in August
 - Actively working to grow our Sunday School capacity

- *The Episcopal Church in Connecticut*
 - Meetings with The Reverend Canon Tim Hodapp, The Reverend Virginia Army regarding Priest-In-Charge Process and development of parish goals and activities
 - Consultation with Robin Hammeal-Urban, Canon for Mission and Integrity

Summary

- Over the past year, St. John's has nourished a very rich spiritual life based on adherence to sound scriptural guidance and full participation in the inspiring beauty of our traditional Episcopal liturgy. In addition to Sunday and Rite 1 and Rite 2 worship, this has involved introduction of the initiatives enumerated above
- Together we have created a receptive, hopeful atmosphere in the parish. This has been fostered in worship, preaching, events, regular and special messages of encouragement, and robust fellowship both regularly and on other occasions
- With the support of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut (the Diocese) for our Priest-in-Charge, Fr. Sellery is serving the parish and community in a growing range of pastoral and liturgical duties; building our capabilities for faith formation and reaching prospective and inactive parishioners. It's another positive sign of growth and renewal at St. John's