



St. John's Anglican Church Parish of Horton

*Rooted in ancient wisdom
and growing into a vibrant future.*

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

*This parish is located in Mi'kma'ki,
the traditional and unceded lands and waters of the Mi'kmaq.*

We are all Treaty people.

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Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
St. John's Anglican Church, Parish of Horton
February 23, 2025

Call to Order and Declaration of Quorum - There being a requisite quorum, Warden Cameron Finlay called the Annual General Meeting to order at 11:18 AM.

Opening Prayer - Rev'd Nicole Uzans opened the meeting with a prayer.

Election of Chair of Meeting - Cameron Finlay moved to appoint Rev'd Nicole Uzans to chair the meeting. Murray Phillips seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Election of Secretary of Meeting - Cameron Finlay moved to appoint Michelle Mansfield as Secretary of the meeting. Murray Phillips seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Approval of the Agenda - Rev'd Nicole Uzans called for a motion to accept the AGM Agenda as circulated. Jim Nelson moved to accept the AGM Agenda. Dale Hennigar seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of the AGM Sunday, February 18th, 2024 - The Rev'd Nicole Uzans asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of the last AGM as circulated in the Annual Reports booklet. Bill DeGrace moved to approve the minutes of the last AGM. Helen Whidden seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Unfinished business from 2024 AGM - Rev'd Nicole Uzans noted there was no unfinished business from the last AGM.

Communications - Rev'd Nicole Uzans noted there were no communications to be shared.

New business - Rev'd Nicole Uzans paused to open the floor to any new business. There was none.

Financial Report for 2024 - Cameron Finlay noted that Treasurer, Bob Wrye was instrumental summarizing and developing the report, which was presented by John Whidden in Bob Wrye's absence.

Cameron Finlay then presented slide visuals summarizing the revenue and expenses. Key messages were:

- *Regular envelopes & PAR =43% of all revenue, to which he added a resounding thank you to parishioners;
- * Festival offerings account for an additional 4%;
- *Personnel expenses account for 47% of all expenses (6 people plus guest presiders)

* Outreach, Spiritual Development, and Young Adult Ministries account for ~10% of expenses.

Cameron Finlay then presented How the Money was Spent: Worship 37%, Pastoral Care 17%, Spiritual Development 19%, and Administration & Maintenance 26%; He highlighted that 74% of all expenses were for Worship, Pastoral Care, and Spiritual Development.

John Whidden then presented the Financial Report on behalf of Bob Wrye. He began by expressing appreciation to Bob Wrye for his years of service as Treasurer; to Randy Mansfield for conducting the Audit this year; and to Gary Dunfield for his excellent work as bookkeeper.

He summarized the Income for 2024. Some highlights were:

*actual deficit of \$7222 vs. budgeted deficit of \$20000;

*parishioners' contributions were up slightly;

*there was an increase in investment income, due to interest from the Pearman endowment and an increase to 5% from 4% in Diocesan Consolidated Trust Fund;

* the control of the Troyte-Bullock fund bequest was turned over to St. John's; it is now valued at \$290 000, and will be invested with the Diocesan Consolidated Trust Account;

John Whidden then called for any questions. There were none. He then summarized Expenses, which in general, were in line with budget. He went through the Assets and Liabilities. John Whidden, Rev'd Nicole Uzans, and the Wardens responded to questions for clarification.

John Whidden then moved to accept the Financial Report for 2024 as printed and circulated in the Annual Report. Murray Phillips seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Warden Karen Padovani presented a visual of the impact of the outreach work by the ACW. She noted that this is in addition to the outreach itemized in the church budget and thanked the ACW for their great work.

Acceptance of Annual Report, including the Rector's Report, Warden's Report, and all Committee Reports included therein- Rev'd Nicole Uzans called for a motion to approve the Annual Reports as circulated. Karen Ferguson moved to accept the Annual Reports. Seconded by Jim Nelson. The motion carried.

Presentation of 2025 Budget- Rev'd Nicole Uzans then called on John Whidden to present the 2025 Budget. John Whidden presented highlights of the 2025 budget. These included that we are budgeting for a deficit of ~ \$15k. He reviewed a list of Capital Items. Some questions and discussion followed. A suggestion about the belfry painting was referred to the Property Committee for further discussion.

Cameron Finlay presented slides to highlight items of the 2025 Budget:

- *the \$15k budgeted deficit may be less if it can be offset by grants.

- *Special attention was given to addressing capital concerns now to avoid future capital expense crises.

- *Investing in community outreach and leadership development allows roles to be shared within and beyond the Parish.

Some questions and discussion followed. John Whidden then moved that the 2025 Budget be accepted as presented. Jim Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Election of Treasurer-Rev'd Nicole called for a motion to accept Bob Wrye as Treasurer as required by Canon Law, due to his length of time in this position. Approval from the Bishop also is required and has been given. Reid Spencer moved to approve Bob Wrye as Treasurer. Camille Herbin seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Elections: Wardens, members for Parish Council, Synod delegates, PC Secretary, WAICC representatives-and Presentation of Chairs of Committee as Identified in the Slate of Officers- Rev'd Nicole Uzans reviewed the slate of Elected positions as circulated, recognizing Reid Spencer, Cathy Spencer, and Karen Ferguson who will be joining Parish Council. Murray Phillips moved to accept the slate of Elected positions as circulated. Camille Herbin seconded the motion. The motion carried. Rev'd Nicole Uzans thanked Ron Stuart and Dale Hennigar for their service on Parish Council.

Commissioning Prayer for Lay Leaders- Rev'd Nicole Uzans led everyone in prayer.

Adjournment-Rev'd Nicole Uzans called for a motion to adjourn. Jim Nelson moved that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Reid Spencer. The meeting adjourned 12:35pm following the singing of a hymn.

Respectfully submitted Michelle Mansfield, Secretary

PARISH OF HORTON
OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES - 2025

Rector:The Rev'd Nicole Uzans
Music Director Dr. Michelle Boyd
Parish Administrative Assistant Deborah MacDonald (retired Sept 30th);
Jane Rovers (started Nov 15th)
Sexton Peter Brown
Auditor..... Randy Mansfield
Digital Communications Manager Meg Finlay
BookkeeperGary Dunfield

Members of Parish Council (additional to Rector):

Wardens Cameron Finlay & Karen Padovani
Treasurer Robert Wrye (died Dec 13th);
Reid Spencer (appointed by Parish Council Dec 17th)
Secretary..... Michelle Mansfield
Members at Large.....Val Burtzell, Bill DeGrace, Dianne Thorpe,
Jim Nelson, Reid Spencer, Cathy Spencer

PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES FOR 2025

(For duties, see Canon 35) The Rector and Wardens are ex-officio members of all committees

<p><u>SIDESPEOPLE</u> Murray Phillips</p> <p><u>SYNOD DELEGATES</u> <i>(also members of Regional Council)</i> Cameron Finlay Karen Ferguson</p> <p><u>SANCTUARY GUILD</u> Camille Herbin (President) Cathy Stewart (Flower Convener)</p> <p><u>PARISH REPRESENTATIVE FOR ALONGSIDE HOPE</u> Liz Adamson (died in July, 2025)</p> <p><u>PROPERTY</u> John Whidden (Chair) Gordon Thorpe Camille Herbin (Cemetery Chair)</p>	<p><u>FINANCE</u> Robert Wrye (Chair & Treasurer) Gary Dunfield (Book Keeper) John Whidden (Secretary) Ian MacDonald Reid Spencer (appointed Chair & Treasurer in December)</p> <p><u>REPRESENTATIVES TO WOLFVILLE AREA INTERCHURCH COUNCIL (WAICC)</u> Rev. Dr. Rob Hankinson Rev. Nicole Uzans Val Burtzell</p> <p><u>REPRESENTATIVES TO ST. ANNE'S CAMP</u> Jim Nelson</p> <p><u>ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN (A.C.W.)</u> Beth Turner & Dianne Thorpe (Co-Presidents) Dianne Thorpe (Secretary <i>pro tem</i>) Judy Amos (Treasurer) Debbie MacDonald (Devotions)</p>
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PASTORAL STATISTICS ACCORDING TO THE DIOCESAN SCHEDULE

2025 (2024) (2023)

1. Total Families on Parish Roll: *uncertain* (175) (175)
2. Total Individuals on Parish Roll: *uncertain* (240) (240)
3. Baptized Communicants on Parish Roll: *uncertain* (240) (240)
4. Confirmed Persons on the Parish Roll: *uncertain*
Records of the above have not been maintained for several years

5. Number of Identifiable Givers: **(85)** (92) (100)
6. Average Sunday Attendance: **(62)** (61) (70)
7. Christmas Eve and Morning Attendance: **(132)** (70)* (132) **Snow storm*
8. Easter Attendance: **(99)** (96) (103)
9. Pentecost Attendance: **(64)** (74) (54)
10. Second Sunday in September Attendance: **(43)** (58) (56)
11. Average Attendance at The Elms and Wolfville Nursing Home (monthly): **(30)** (30) (30)
12. Lay Parish Staff: **(5)** (5) (4)
13. Average Attendance at Post-Secondary Dinners: **(8)** (8) (8)

ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICE STATS SUMMARY

Average weekly YouTube views	46 (50) (49)
Average weekly YouTube views for Services of the Word	48 (46) (47)
Average weekly YouTube views for Eucharist services	44 (50) (50)
Christmas Eve views (2 services)	82 (73) (42)
Christmas Morning livestream views	37 (37) (27)
Easter Morning views	48 (60) (34)
Pentecost views	40 (34) (33)
2 nd Sunday in September videos (<i>start of term</i>)	46 (42) (72)

MINISTRY TO YOUTH, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Number of Teachers: **(10)** (13) (0) *volunteers at Community Roots day camp*
Number of Registered Pupils: **(14)** (12) (0) *enrolled in Community Roots day camp*

PARISH RECORDS

1. Baptisms: **(1)** (0) (3)
2. Persons Confirmed: **(0)** (0) (0)
3. Marriages: **(0)** (0) (1)
4. Funerals: **(1)** (7) (6)
5. Interment of Ashes **(2)** (2) (3)
6. Received from other Communions **(0)** (0) (0)

ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS

1. St. John's Anglican Church Women average attendance at monthly meetings: **(9)** (12) (15)
2. Sanctuary Guild **(14)** (23) (23)
3. Brass Cleaners **(2)** (2) (9)
4. St. John's Adult Choir **(13)** (13) (12), *performing anthems or motets most weeks. Practice weekly*
5. Individuals who lead the Prayers of the People at the 8am service **(1)** (2) (2)
6. Individuals who lead the Prayers of the People at the 10am service **(6)** (6) (5)
7. Individuals who read the lessons at the 8am service **(4)** (5) (5)
8. Individuals who read the lessons at the 10am service **(16)** (16) (13)
9. Eucharistic Assistants for the 8am service **(2)** (3) (2)
10. Eucharistic Assistants for the 10am service **(5)** (5) (4)
11. 8am Greeters **(5)** (4) (4)
12. 10am Greeters **(8)** (8) (8)
13. 10am Counters **(8)** (8) (8)
14. 10am Livestream Operators **(5)** (5) *new ministry started in September, 2023*
15. Number of small group studies **(5)** (6) (5)

BAPTISMS

Gabriel Walker LeDuc

RENEWAL OF MARRIAGE VOWS

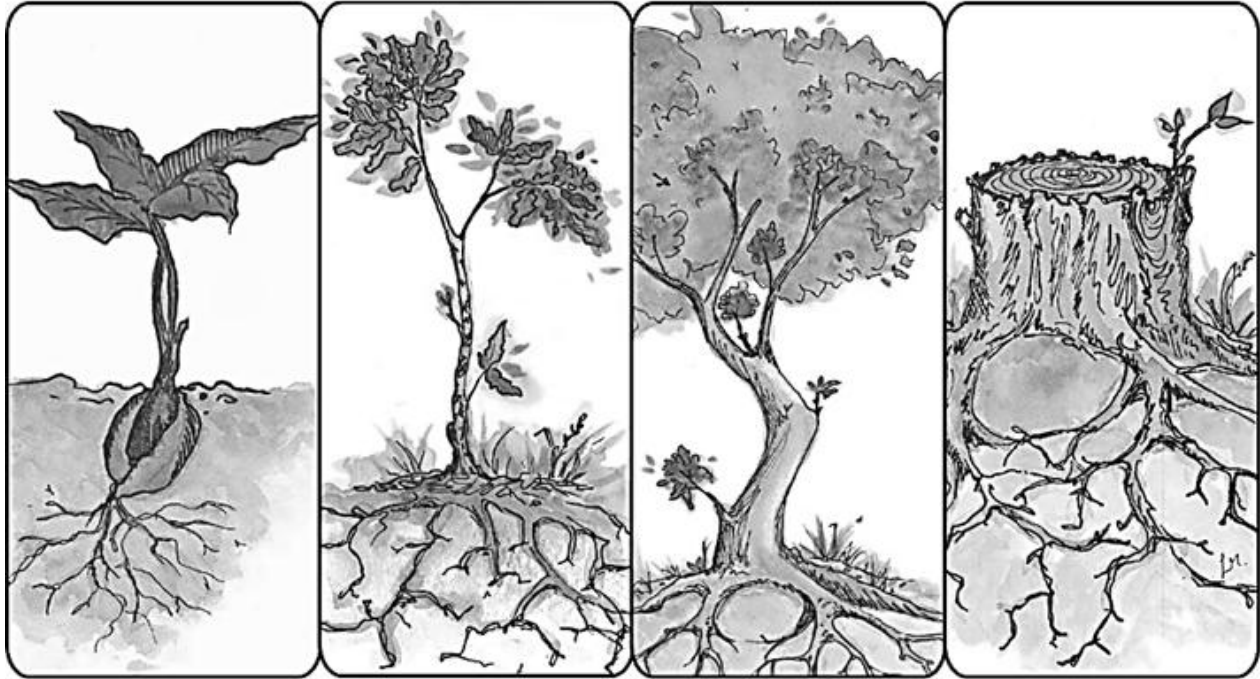
James & Denyse Nelson

INTERMENT OF ASHES

Valerie Elaine Flecknell
Doris Mae Ross

FUNERALS/CELEBRATIONS OF LIFE

Mary Elizabeth Adamson



See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare. (Isaiah 42:9)

RECTORS' LETTER

The image above was created for Diocesan Synod 2025 and the fourth panel has become something of an unofficial logo for our Diocese. That tiny sprout rising out of a stump captures the kind of *hope* we are called to in times of change and uncertainty. In so many parishes, the memories of 'what used to be' are strong, but many of the ministries, people, and marks of prestige we knew in the past are gone. Especially when loss is so prevalent, we need eyes to see the new growth God is nurturing in our midst. After all, as Christians we 'keep faith' not by clinging to the things of the past, but by witnessing to God's abundant goodness in life, in death, and in resurrection to new life.

When I look around our parish, I see many signs of new life and growth. For example, last July we held our second Community Roots day camp at St. John's. Several returning campers told us how much they'd been looking forward to that week and we all welcomed new campers & volunteers, too. Out of our camp experience, energy and leadership arose for St. John's to host a monthly Children's Church, which got its soft launch in December. None of this resembles the Sunday School that used to exist at St. John's - and it shouldn't! The former things have come to pass. They served well in their time, but God is doing new things with who we are *today*. That's something to celebrate!

When we are rooted in resurrection hope, we can also be honest in our sorrows and graceful in our goodbyes. This past year, we were saddened by the death of Bob Wrye, longtime Treasurer of this parish and a loving father who delighted in directing Christmas pageants when his kids were young. We also marked the retirement of Debbie MacDonald from her ministry as Parish Administrator. Thankfully, Debbie remains involved with the ACW, our funeral ministries, and our annual Remembrance Day tributes. But for years, Debbie connected personally with folks across the parish and beyond, coordinating details and schedules to keep things running smoothly. We all feel these changes and we're still growing into the new ways we'll *be* as a parish in the wake of these significant goodbyes.

I am personally grateful to both Debbie and Bob; for the love they gave to this parish and the friendship they extended to me. So also, I am grateful for each one of you and all the gifts that you bring to our life as a parish.

As new folks walk through the church door or step into vital parish ministries, we know that the ground for their growth has been tended by generations of the faithful here at St. John's. We also know that our present and our future cannot look like our past. God is doing new things, and we are all called to join in with hope, joy, and love.

As you read this AGM report and look back on a year now complete, may you catch a glimpse of the many ways new hope is arising in our midst.

Grace and peace,
The Rev. Nicole Uzans

WARDENS' REPORT

St. John's continues to be a welcoming and evolving parish, drawing people from a wide range of backgrounds. This diversity reflects both the openness of our congregation and our reputation as an inclusive community, offering a safe and affirming place for spiritual exploration.

Early in the year, the Bishop met with Parish Council and others, which included a discussion on this very topic. Bishop Sandra encouraged us to continue investing financially and creatively in people – particularly in leadership development and community-focused projects. While the return on these investments may not be measured on a bank statement, they yield deep dividends in community health, resilience, and spiritual vitality.

On that theme, below are a few highlights on the ways St. John's made meaningful connections in 2025:

- The **Pop-up Study Cafe** has become a much-anticipated tradition. What began as an experiment has grown into a regular part of outreach in the life of St. John's. The café is no longer just something we host; it has become part of who we are – a place of welcome, hospitality, and connection.
- The third annual **Songs for All Souls**, an evening of music and reflections co-hosted by Valley Hospice Foundation, provided community members the opportunity to grieve in a safe space, and honour the lives of those who have departed this life.
- A dozen enthusiastic students from **Landmark East School** brought their energy and enthusiasm to St. John's in the fall as part of their annual "Thank You Day". It was more than just a morning of raking – it was a time of community, connection, and gratitude.
- **Musique Royale** returned to St. John's, not once but twice, in 2025. Both the Halifax Rättvik Trio and the acclaimed Quebec-based ensemble ArtChoral filled hearts, our church, and our spirits with their music.
- Following the Sunday service on a late June morning, families, friends, and neighbours gathered together for a **community picnic** with food and fellowship. We were reminded that moments like these are where community is built and where new connections form.
- St. John's was full of laughter, stories, and shared joy for one week in July as we welcomed fourteen campers to our second **Community Roots Summer Camp**. Whether through storytelling, Godly Play, or shared meals and games, the children were immersed in the experience of building community and relationships – with one another, with our volunteers, and with God. A special thank you to the Anglican Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island for their support.

- A **wind phone** was installed in the cemetery behind the church where members of the community can “call” a deceased relative and experience their inner grief.
- Our website was updated with a refreshed **inclusivity logo and statement**. At the Diocesan Synod, participants were encouraged to be more welcoming of the 2SLGBTQI+ community in our parishes. In response, Parish Council decided to purchase a pride bench made by the Flower Cart to be placed near the roadside sign and are considering other options to outwardly display our welcome to all.

The year was a busy one as we made **improvements to our physical space** to improve safety and accessibility.

- New lighting in the parking lot and new signage make it easier for folks to find us, particularly after dark.
- The aging oil tanks in the church and rectory were replaced.
- A heat pump was installed in the rectory, and a second heat pump will be added to the church in early 2026. We expect these units will reduce long-term heating and cooling costs and also decrease our dependence on fossil fuels as part of our commitment to environmental stewardship and creation care.
- Thanks to a generous grant from the Eastern Kings Memorial Foundation, St. John’s purchased an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and two dozen members of the congregation learned how to use the device. We hope we never have to use our AED – but if the time ever comes, we’ll be ready.

Leadership at St. John’s is marked by a thoughtful balance of tradition and adaptability. We strive to be transparent in our decision-making and remain connected to all who work tirelessly in making St. John’s thrive.

- Each committee has a Parish Council member as their dedicated liaison contact.
- Parish Council minutes, once approved, are posted for general review.
- Parish Council members have participated in a number of leadership development training programmes through the Diocese.
- In conjunction with the Diocesan review of Canon 35: Church Governance, draft parish by-laws developed by the Diocese were reviewed and amended and will be brought to our Annual General Meeting for approval.
- St. John’s was well represented at the meeting of Synod in the spring, a summary of which is included in this Annual Report.

- Recognizing the importance of stewardship in all aspects of parish life, Parish Council identified the need to make stewardship of time, talent, and resources a higher priority moving forward.

We pause with gratitude and sadness at the passing of Bob Wrye, who served as Treasurer for more years than we can count, and whose wise counsel and careful stewardship of our resources helped bring St. John's to where we are today.

The year ended with Hosting Hope, a series of small group discussions where we shared what church means, what we are lamenting about the state of the Church today, and what gives us hope. The themes that emerged from the Hosting Hope sessions were reviewed and will be invaluable as we continue to look to, and plan for, the future.

As we write this report, we are deeply grateful for all who contribute to our shared life at St. John's—far too many to name, yet each essential to who we are. We offer special thanks to Debbie MacDonald, who retired this year after many years of devoted service as Administrative Assistant; over the years she touched nearly every aspect of parish life and was truly our go-to person. We also bid farewell to Meg Finlay in her role as Digital Communication Manager. As the pandemic hit in 2020, Meg stepped up to keep us connected online and even after she was no longer in Wolfville, she continued to grow our online presence through a rejuvenated website and social media channels. These two roles have been combined into one, and in November we were pleased to welcome Jane Rovers as our new Parish Administrative Coordinator.

As the Bishop reminded us, the Church carries a message of hope that the world urgently needs to hear, and St. John's is well-positioned to share that hope in both traditional and emerging ways.

Respectfully submitted,
Cameron Finlay and Karen Padovani, Wardens

SYNOD REPORT

The 152nd session of Synod was held on May 23-25th, 2025 at St. Francis Xavier Campus in Antigonish. All churches in Nova Scotia and PEI were invited, and most were represented. The Rector and two designated lay people from each parish were in attendance- we even had a 7-month-old baby! Rev. Nicole Uzans, Cameron Finlay, MaryEllen Finlay (as an observer), as well as myself, Karen Ferguson, attended all three days. There were 260 people registered, representing 125 churches and 94 parishes. Synod is a business meeting - there were 15 resolutions voted on, 5 of which related to the Canons, which are the laws governing our church. I attended the "New to Synod?" Session, and found it very informative.

The theme of this session was "Therefore, We have Hope", with Bishop Sandra Fyfe presiding. Special guest was Bishop Deon Johnson, from Missouri, and he was inspirational. The question posed to us was- "**What do I need to remember to restore our HOPE in our parish, our community and ourselves?**" One of the first people I met on the way to my accommodations was Bishop Sandra, who gave me a hug. That helped me feel hopeful and more confident in my purpose of being a Synod member.

The meeting started on Friday night with speeches and worship, and an address by Bishop Deon asking us, "How do we nurture our seeds of hope inside us to create ambassadors of hope?" The Saturday was very long, with resolutions discussed; I was impressed with the passion of the speakers who came to the microphone and spoke, and the significance of how that passion was received. Bishop Sandra did an excellent job of keeping the meeting on track. There were 8 at our table -it was nice to get to know people from other parishes and hear of their struggles and success. We four from St. John's got together for supper, which was a highlight for me. It is so wonderful to break bread with people and get to know them a bit better.

We had worship and music at the chapel at St. FX which was lovely. Sunday brought more meetings and address from our guest speaker, Bishop Deon Johnson, asking us "**What does it mean to be a Welcoming and Hospitable Church?**" It is worth pondering that question. I witnessed a few "holy moments" over the weekend and met many wonderful people.

I gave a report to Parish Council, as well as a "fireside chat" to both services upon my return. I think Synod is something every church member should experience. It gives you a perspective regarding where your church fits within the diocese and reassures you that we are in good hands-God's hands.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Ferguson

CANON 35 (Parish Governance) AND PARISH BYLAWS

In our Diocese, parish governance must abide by Diocesan Canon 35. In light of demographic and other changes across our parishes, a revised Canon 35 was voted on (and accepted) at Synod 2025. The new Canon 35 includes bylaws which may be customized to reflect the particular character and practices of each parish. In 2025, each parish was required to review, revise, and if desired, rewrite the model bylaws prepared by the Diocesan Canon 35 working group.

At St. John's, a team of Linda Ellis, Cathy Spencer, and the Rev. Nicole Uzans did a thorough review of the model bylaws, noting any variance with our current governance practices and suggesting areas for Parish Council's attention. Parish Council reviewed the bylaws and suggestions made by the ad hoc team at two consecutive meetings. Parish Council voted to approve the customized bylaws and forwarded them to the Diocesan Office for approval, which was granted on January 14, 2026.

As the final step in the Canon 35 bylaw adoption process, the Annual General Meeting is asked to ratify the Parish Bylaws brought forward by Parish Council. Here is some information to guide your consideration.

Why do we need canons and bylaws anyhow?

Parish Councils are "corporate bodies" under the Anglican Church Act of Nova Scotia. Corporate bodies must have bylaws, and the new Canon 35 allows each parish to establish good governance structures, fine-tuned to its situation.

What do the Canon 35 bylaws cover?

Sections 1 & 2 - Purpose and Definitions

Sections 3-8 - Signing authorities and financial transactions

Sections 9-20 - Meetings (annual and special) of the members of the parish

Sections 21-28 - Parish Council

Section 29 - Internal organization of the Parish

Sections 30-31 - Protection against errors in process

Section 32 - Dispute Resolution

Section 33 - Changing the bylaw

What changes did the Canon 35 review make? What wasn't working in the old Canon?

Some key changes from the old Canon 35 include:

- Parish Councils are smaller. *St. John's Parish Council must now include a minimum of the Rector and any other clergy canonically appointed by the Bishop to serve in the parish; 2 or 3 Wardens; Parish Council Secretary; Treasurer; Lay and Youth delegates to Synod; and 3 members at large. It **may** include an additional 3-9 members at large. Some specific positions on Parish Council may be held by the same individual.*

- Signing officers and bank signing authorities cannot be people who are not at arm's length from each other (spouses, family members).
- Banking arrangements of parish organizations must have signing officers who are members of Parish Council.
- Expectations of Parish Council members are spelled out, including conflicts of interest.
- Electronic meetings and communication are now authorized.

What else do I need to know?

Your Parish Council has done a thorough review of the new Canon 35 and bylaws. Parish Council is obligated to abide by these documents, as well as other pertinent Canons, the parish SafeR Church documents, and Diocesan policies. All members of the parish may consult these documents at any time. Many are on the Diocesan website (<https://www.nspeidiocese.ca/>) and the bylaws and SafeR Church documents are available through your Rector or Wardens. Additionally, the bylaws have been posted to our website under 'Parish Communications' (<https://www.stjohnsanglicanchurchwolfville.ca/>).

At the Annual General Meeting, you will be asked to vote on a motion to ratify the parish bylaws brought forward by Parish Council, in compliance with the new Canon 35. **You are encouraged to get as familiar as you would like with the new Canon 35 and parish bylaws in advance of the AGM.** Please reach out to your Rector or Wardens with questions at any time.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION MANAGERS REPORT

This year, our digital ministry continued to grow and connect people in Wolfville and across the country. As we share our worship services, events, and outreach activities, our parish opens our doors, both virtually and in-person, and invites in those who are with us regularly and newcomers to the area seeking a Christian community. In 2025, our website was viewed almost 6000 times, with the data showing increasing interest throughout the year! Our livestreamed services continue to connect our blended parish of in-person and online worshippers, as we regularly have about ten people watching with us live every Sunday morning. Through participation in the simultaneous chat, I know that our online community values the ability to pray with us and looks forward to being welcomed each week.

We have 150 subscribers to our YouTube channel (as of December 2025), and an average of 46 people watch our Sunday services (counting both live viewership and those watching later on in the week). This year, we hit an exciting milestone on our YouTube channel – over 3000 hours of viewing time of our streamed and recorded content has been logged! Having streamed about 150 services since 2023, this speaks to the number of people who watch our weekly and festival services. Over on our other social media accounts, we continue to gain followers. Instagram is how we connect with students, who primarily interact with our posts at the beginning of the academic year and around the times of the Pop-Up Study Cafés. On Facebook, our posts for events and outreach are regularly shared by parishioners, friends, and even the bishop. If you are on YouTube, Facebook, or Instagram, please follow us online at @stjohnswolfville, and make us a part of your digital life, as well as your spiritual life!

Our digital presence has grown a lot in the past year, and I would like to personally thank everyone who submitted blog posts, photos, and who volunteer for the Stream Team. Your contribution is far-reaching and very much appreciated, not just by me, but by those who join us regularly, those who can only join us digitally, and those who are looking online for a church to join. As I hand over this important ministry to the capable hands of Jane Rover, the new Administrative Coordinator, I would like to say what a privilege it has been to serve St John's in this way, and how much I have been grateful for the trust this parish has given me in presenting this wonderful community to the online world.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Finlay

WOLFVILLE AREA INTERCHURCH COUNCIL (WAICC)

The Wolfville Area Inter Church Council (WAICC) met each month in 2025, except for July, August, and December, normally on the 2nd Wednesday of the meeting month, and usually in the lower hall of the Manning Memorial Chapel. When the Chapel was otherwise occupied WAICC met at St Francis Church Hall. All meetings were of a hybrid style, allowing the attendance of those unable to meet in person.

2025 marked the 55th year of WAICC, and the events of the year made for notable observances, activities and celebrations. The year began with WAICC offering condolences and a small financial gift to Valley Connect Outreach whose Kentville building had suffered fire damage. This response reflected WAICC's concern for the larger community and for inter-agency solidarity. Regular programs of Special Needs support, and mid weekly worship services at the Wolfville Nursing Home and the Elms continued, and by year's end included a leadership contingent from Port Williams United Baptist Church. The 2nd Community Meal observing Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and the Annual Walk with the Cross on Good Friday, both were greatly assisted by the hospitality of Wolfville's L'Arche community. The Food Bank, a joint effort of WAICC and the Food Bank management Committee, noted an increase in Christmas hampers and in numbers of "guests" calling upon this critical service. In addition, work on the Standards of Excellence review, requested by Food Banks Canada, continued unabated throughout the year, and by year's end it was an absolute joy to learn that our local work on this review had been approved. Before year's end a new committee was formed to research and assess the space needs and current resources of the Food Bank.

Another highlight of the year was the work done by WAICC's Housing Needs committee (now a member of Nova Scotia's Not for Profit Housing Association). Two projects were made possible with the assistance of grants from WAICC: the once weekly visit of Open Arms Mobile Outreach Team to provide services for people who are unhoused in the Wolfville area; and assistance towards the hiring of a manager for Valley Roots Housing Association. WAICC's financial house was kept in good order through the work of WAICC's Treasurer and Finance Committee. With the assistance of professional advisors, fund raising, and investment policies were reviewed, and accounts signatories were updated. A federal government proposed revision to "the Advancement of Religion and Charitable Status" was examined.

One disappointment of the past year was the "indefinite postponement" of hosting NAIN Connect. The current uncertainty in the United States prompted 2/3rds of potential attendees to respond that they were "unable to commit" to this year's Conference. Perhaps in 3 years' time?? A positive outcome of the postponement was renewed interest in a lecture/educational series on social justice and public theology.

The current member Churches and organizations of WAICC are:

St. Francis of Assisi Roman Catholic Church (Corpus Christi Parish); St. John's Anglican Church (Parish of Horton); Orchard Valley United Church; Port Williams United Baptist Church; Wolfville Baptist Church; the Valley meeting of the Society of Friends; L' Arche Homefires; and Manning Memorial Chapel, Acadia University.

Each Church or organization nominates "up to four" representatives to WAICC for a term (the normal being one two-year term renewable once) to be decided by the member churches or organization in consultation with the representative.

The 2025-2026 (until the June WAICC AGM) Executive Officers are:

Rev. Dr. Scott Kindred-Barnes, Chair;

Rev. Nicole Uzans, Vice-Chair;

Rev. Dr. Rob Hankinson, Secretary;

Ms. Devon Edmonds, Treasurer;

Ms. Nancy Harbers, Past Chair.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Hankinson,

along with Val Burtzell, St. John's representatives to WAICC.

MUSIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The choir enjoyed another year of singing together in 2025, with the continued support of the Choral Scholar Program. Duncan Stumpf – a very musical Geology student who also plays bassoon – joined our bass section in January, and in September, Abby MacDougall – a music student – joined as a soprano Choral Scholar. We were also pleased to welcome back Emma Proctor (who was a Choral Scholar in 2024) in September and are very grateful to have Emma Martin continuing in her third year with the choir. Bailey Pringle and Kyla Neville sang with the choir in the winter of 2025, but unfortunately, school commitments prevented them from returning in the fall – although we are grateful that Bailey continues to help out with the choir when she is able. We love the energy and enthusiasm that these talented students bring to the choir, in addition to their beautiful voices. Thank you to everyone who donates to the Choral Scholar fund to make this important and beneficial outreach possible.

Of course, we are grateful to all of our stalwart choir “regulars” who volunteer their time every Thursday and Sunday: Adam Boyd, Cameron Finlay, MaryEllen Finlay, Heather Jordan, Franziska Kruschen-Leiter, Elaine Slauenwhite, Cathy Stuart, Helen Whidden, and John Whidden. We are also very grateful to have Margaret Finlay join the choir and also offer solos whenever she is home for a visit!

In addition to our Choral Scholars, we enjoyed having several instrumentalists and guest singers join us throughout the year: Rebecca Czerny (violin), Anneka Dunnewold (clarinet), Jacki Edwards (flute), Mark Hopkins (trumpet), Tristan Hopkins (trumpet), Emily Markwart (organ), Cian McCarron (bodhran), Jenny Melvin (fiddle), Reid Spencer (baritone), Ciara Wheeler (oboe), and Maria Zimmermann (soprano).

Some musical highlights from the year: Carrying on what has now become an annual tradition, the choir offered numerous musical selections for “Choral Sunday” on the last Sunday of Lent. We also had the Acadia University Singers provide music for a service during Lent. We marked the beginning of Advent by singing Karen Marroli’s *Light of Peace* – a five-movement choral work that incorporates traditional Celtic tunes. We were fortunate to have Jenny Melvin and Cian McCarron join us to add fiddle and bodhran, and we reprised two movements for the Christmas Eve Service.

This fall Emma Proctor stepped into the role of guest director, leading the choir in singing Peter-Anthony Togni’s “Instrument of Peace.” Emma is in the process of applying to graduate programs in music to prepare for a career in choral conducting, so this opportunity was a particularly beneficial one for her as she put together her application materials.

Two significant developments for the St. John’s music program were the arrival of both hymn books (the Anglican Church of Canada’s most recent publication, *Sing a New Creation*) and

new gowns. Thank you to all who donated to make these acquisitions possible, and an extra special thank-you to Cameron Finlay for all his work in coordinating the gown purchase.

In addition to these special items, the choir also continues to benefit from the increase to the annual budget for music that was first implemented in 2024. As a result, we were able to add *The Light of Peace* along with several other new pieces of choral music to our library, including Togni's "Instrument of Peace" as well "Ispiciwin" by Cree composer Andrew Balfour. It is both inspiring and satisfying to be able to share new music with the congregation and provides a nice balance to the work we do in learning music as we alternate between old favourites and new.

We did have to bid farewell to a few choir members over the year. Amelia Wheeler completed her studies at Acadia and moved back home with her family in Halifax at the end of July. She was a dedicated member of the St. John's Choir since joining as a Choral Scholar in September 2022. (Emma Martin also graduated from Acadia in May, but fortunately for us, she accepted her first teaching position that keeps her in the area!) Three exceptionally dedicated "regular" choir members also retired in 2025: Elaine Slauenwhite, Patti Stuart, and Ron Stuart. We are grateful for their many years of service – they will be missed greatly!

We also remind the congregation that the choir always welcomes new members. If you, or someone you know loves to sing, we invite you to join your voice to an integral part of worship at St. John's.

As we look forward to 2026, we hope it will be a year of continued growth and invigoration for the music program at St. John's. I end my report by acknowledging *my* gratitude to all our hard-working, enthusiastic, and dedicated choir members, for the joy and light you bring to our fellowship together.

Respectfully submitted by
Michelle Boyd, organist & music director

ALONGSIDE HOPE (formerly PWRDF) REPORT

Alongside Hope (AH) is the new name for PWRDF, which began in 1958 as the Anglican Church of Canada's agency for sustainable development and relief. Over the decades PWRDF has worked with trusted partners in Canada and around the world to help build a more just, healthy and peaceful world. Though the name has changed, the work and vision remain the same. *Alongside Hope* continues working with partners in preventive health, mother and child wellness, food security and nutrition, clean water and sanitation, Indigenous language and cultural reclamation, economic empowerment, and emergency humanitarian relief in Canada and more than 30 countries around the world.

Members of the St. John's community have long been generous supporters of this ministry. Despite the death in July of our *Alongside Hope (AH)* parish representative, Liz Adamson, we continue to try to raise awareness about the work and mandate of *Alongside Hope* through notice board posters and displays, information packages with summaries of current projects, and occasional announcements in the Sunday bulletin.

One campaign of particular interest at St. John's in 2025 was the "*Resilience Fund*" to support AH's partners most affected by massive cuts to international aid budgets, especially USAID. The *Resilience Fund* emphasizes support for AH partners working with refugees, in critical health care such as HIV, and gender-based violence. The national campaign goal of raising \$250,000 by June 30 was easily met and thus was eligible for a matching grant of the same amount. Our congregation has also taken a particular interest in AH's work to help provide emergency humanitarian aid in Ukraine and Gaza.

Advent is always a good time to highlight this ministry and on Sunday Dec. 7th Nicole gave special mention of the work of *Alongside Hope*. Worshippers at the 8 AM and 10 AM services received information packets from AH detailing its initiatives around the world and in Canada and were encouraged to consider a Christmas gift from the AH "*World of Gifts*" catalogue.

Looking ahead, there are many opportunities to learn and engage more with *Alongside Hope*. The new AH Diocesan Co-ordinators, Leah Marshall and Gillian Power, are available to speak at regional events and to parishes, as did their dedicated predecessor, Chris Pharo, on many occasions. A small group from St. John's had a preliminary discussion last summer with a few interested people from St. James in Kentville to consider possible future AH collaboration. You are encouraged to take advantage of the excellent resources *Alongside Hope* provides to share its story. Many of you already receive the quarterly print newsletter, "*Under the Sun*" (accompanying "*The Anglican Journal*"). There are also excellent online resources. Go to <https://alongsidehope.org> to sign up for a monthly e-newsletter or seasonal daily devotions, watch videos or join a webinar.

From *Alongside Hope* we hear good news stories that help us find hope and determination in today's broken and frightening world. Thank you for remaining committed as God's people to building a more just and peaceful world and for your continued support of *Alongside Hope*.

Respectfully submitted,
Helen Whidden, past PWRDF Parish Rep
Karen Ferguson, Parish Council AH liaison

THE PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT

Several projects were undertaken in 2025. The first was to repaint the belfry which had not been done since its installation twenty years ago. This was a brief task, but not inexpensive as it necessitated hiring a bucket lift to get the painters safely aloft. The other outside jobs were the installation of two light standards for the parking lot and floodlights to illuminate the new church sign beside the parking lot entrance; these were organized by Bill DeGrace.

A heat pump was installed for the rectory with five heads covering most rooms on the two floors. Indications are that the rectory is more comfortable now, and that temperature can be lowered in areas not in immediate use. The system will also make it comfortable in summer heat. While the oil furnace is still maintained as a backup, it is expected that overall heating costs will be reduced.

One new tree, donated by a parishioner, was planted in the graveyard. Most of our mature trees date from the early 20th century or earlier and are coming to the end of their allotted time. Over the past 15 years five oak or maple saplings have been planted as replacements or as infill near older trees, and we expect to continue with this to maintain the canopy over the graveyard which is an important element in its air of tranquility.

Fred Rogers continues to do the ploughing and salting of the parking lot and drive, as well as some gardening and related jobs as needed. Please note that snow removal is centred around Sunday morning, so if there are to be gatherings at other times when there is expectation of snow or ice, please let me know in advance so I can notify Fred. Aaron Rogers has been doing the mowing for the entire property and comes as trimming is needed. Again, if there is an event planned for which freshly trimmed grass would be required, please let me know in advance.

I am grateful to the wardens and Rector for their support, and for the assistance which Gordon Thorpe is always happy to provide.

John Whidden, Chair

ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN'S REPORT

Our ACW meets on the third Monday of the month except July and August. All women in the parish are welcome to attend. We met eight times in 2025 with an average attendance of nine.

In March we had Rev. Nicole as our guest speaker, which was enjoyed by all. A discussion was held on prayer - Come and Find the Quiet Centre. Sunday, March 30 was Mothering Sunday. The ACW provided Simnel Cake to parishioners at both services.

In June members of the ACW and Sanctuary Guild met for a spring luncheon at the Old Orchard Inn. On June 29 we provided refreshments for our Parish Picnic.

Our October meeting was a Bring & Share fall lunch.

November 7 & 8 found us busy preparing Plum Puddings for the annual church bazaar. We made 197 this year. Thank you, Vicki, for organizing this successful event and everyone who participated. November 16 the ACW hosted a reception following Song For All Souls. White Ribbon Sunday was observed on November 23. ACW provided white ribbons for our parishioners. Saturday, November 29 was our annual Christmas Bazaar. We had another very successful year and thank you to everyone who helped make this a success.

On December 16 the ACW delivered nineteen shoeboxes to the Mission to Seafarers in Halifax. This ministry was established in England in 1856 and has been supported through the Anglican Church since then.

We are busy throughout the year with fundraising. We use these funds to support our church, diocese and outreach programs.

The ACW has an ongoing Book Sale in the sunroom which is very successful. This provides us with a way to reuse and recycle our books and puzzles.

Our annual Canadian Church calendar sales also support our fundraising.

We continue to offer monthly support to World Vision. Our current foster child is 2 year old Hridhi Das from Bangladesh. St. John's ACW has been supporting World Vision for over 40 years.

Some of our local outreach projects in 2025 were St. Anne's Camp, Wolfville Area Food Bank, the SMILE program at Acadia University, the Grief Library at Valley Hospice, Open Arms, After the Last Bell and the Portal.

Our ACW also provided a reception for one funeral this year.

Thank you to all the ladies of our parish who provide their support and assistance throughout the year.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dianne Thorpe

ACW FINANCIAL REPORT

Income

Bazaar \$4910.25
Bring & Buy \$ 105.00
Dues \$ 136.25
Books \$ 146.00
Calendars \$ 200.00
Donations \$ 300.00
Float \$ 825.00
Painting \$ 50.00

Interest \$ 0.02

Subtotal \$6672.52
Balance 25 \$3707.52
Total \$10380.04

Expenditures

St. John's Church \$3000.00

Outreach

World Vision \$ 588.00
Portal \$ 100.00
Food Bank \$ 200.00
Open Arms \$ 100.00
After The Last bell \$ 100.00
Grief Library \$ 100.00
Smile \$ 200.00
St. Anne's Camp \$ 500.00

Guest Luncheon \$ 62.00
Calendars \$ 136.80
Poster \$ 17.49
Gift Dot \$ 200.00
Plum Pudding Supplies \$ 514.89
Birthday Cake \$ 13.48
Float \$ 825.00

Subtotal \$6657.66
Balance 26 \$3722.38
Total \$10380.04

Respectfully Submitted,
Judy Amos

SANCTUARY GUILD REPORT

The members of St. John's Sanctuary Guild continued to cheerfully carry out their important work in 2025. We all feel it is such a privilege to prepare our Lord's table for our Holy Communion Services.

We work very well together and often help each other out in times of illness and unexpected absence. Sincere thanks is extended to all of our team members for your care and dedication.

Over the past year we continued to provide the necessary supplies for preparing the Altar for Holy Communion as well as those special needs for Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas services. We are funded by our Parishioners with gifts and memorial donations, as well as investment income from bequests.

Our lovely old Altar is beautifully adorned weekly with flowers from the above sources and, in the "garden months", from the personal gardens of our Parishioners. Many thanks go to Cathy Stewart, our Flower Convenor, for coordinating and arranging these lovely bouquets.

As monetary donations for flowers are now managed by our church treasurer, the only way to ensure dedicated flowers are placed on the Altar on the requested day, is by directly contacting Camille or Cathy well beforehand.

This coming year we are short in team members due to several retirements. We heartily thank Elaine Slauenwhite, Karen Hennigar, Sharon Carey, Helen Shaw and Patti Stuart for their many years of dedicated service. We will miss you.

We have indeed gained two new members, Mary Lynne Bruce (returning from past service) and Michelle Mansfield. We are so glad to welcome you both to our membership.

We shall be soliciting new members for 2026. Everyone in the Parish is welcome to volunteer and will be given one-on-one training. New members will always be working with an experienced member thereafter.

Respectfully submitted,
Camille Herbin
President Sanctuary Guild

ST. JOHN'S EMAIL PRAYER CHAIN (SJACPC)

The St. John's Anglican Church email Prayer Chain (sjacpc) was established on December 10, 2006, to permit prompt reactions to requests for prayer. In 2025, 22 prayer requests were sent, and the members have responded with prayers. We have seen the power of this ministry and the comfort and help it brings to those prayed for and those praying for them. There is not a high volume of emails associated with the prayer chain, with an average of 47 emails per year. Last year was a little slower than average with only 22 emails. Everyone is encouraged to join the prayer chain. We currently have 44 members. If you are not currently a member, I encourage you to join. You can join by sending a blank email to sjacpc+subscribe@googlegroups.com

A subscription box is available on the St. John's web site, and you can send a request through that link, or you can call Murray Phillips (902-542-1342) or speak to me and ask to join. NOTE: Any member of the email list can request prayer by sending a message to the list, using sjacpc@googlegroups.com as the email address. Replies go to the message sender by default.

Respectfully submitted,
Murray Phillips
Prayer Chain Coordinator

REPORT OF THE ST. JOHN'S SIDESPEOPLE (Greeters and Counters)

Thank you to everyone that served as either a greeter or as a counter in 2025. We had to recruit a couple of new volunteers to replace folks that were unable to continue for a number of reasons. I want to acknowledge the service of both those retiring and those volunteering. We have a very good team at the moment; however, **we can always use a few more greeters and counters**. With our current group, the task comes up once every four weeks. The overwhelmingly positive first impression people get of St. John's Anglican Church; Parish of Horton is the reception they get from our greeters. The friendly and warm greeting goes a long way to making a newcomer feel welcome and consider making us their spiritual family.

The COVID-19 "layoff" inspired a number of parishioners to switch to **Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR)** donations. Perhaps this would be a useful idea for you. This is a monthly pre-authorized direct transfer to the Church from your bank. For details, please contact me (details below). This has resulted in smaller "in person" collections and made the job even easier for our counters.

PLEASE NOTE: Only cheques made out to *St. John's Anglican Church* can be processed. Even when the final recipient is another organization this is true. Receipts for your donation will come from *St. John's Anglican Church* and our treasurer will transfer the funds to the other organization. Any cheques made out to others have to be returned, or mailed to them, resulting in delays. Please **put your donor/envelope number on any non-collection envelopes or cheques** to assist in getting the donation credited correctly. People on PAR receive a set of blue envelopes and these have the number on them.

With our counters making a "night deposit" at the bank, the accuracy of the counters is especially important, since once the money is in the bank, it is impossible to get information on an individual donation. **In order to make the tracking of donations to various donor accounts, it is essential that parishioners mark special requests on their envelope rather than on the cheque.** Some people also include a list in their envelope, and this is extremely helpful. The counters try to transfer the information, if it is not marked on the envelope, but this takes additional time and may be missed.

If you are interested in becoming a greeter or counter (or both), please contact me. (902) 542-1342 or phillips.murray@gmail.com.

Respectfully,
Murray Phillips
Chairman of Sidespeople

ST. ANNE'S CAMP REPORT

This past summer season has been eventful for St. Anne's Anglican Youth Camp.

Donations and grants totalled \$60,000 funded:

Repair to Kaulbach Recreational Building Floor,

Rebuild of Swimming Area jetty and raft,

2 new Propane Refrigerators.

Repaired and reshingled the Dining Hall Roof.

New locks for all the buildings all keyed to the same key.

The Long Lake Forest Fire came to within 3 kms of the camp. Fire fighters put drip hoses on the peak of each building. Pumped water from the lake and kept all the buildings wet enough that they were not damaged by the fire. As a result, the camp was closed through most of July, August and September.

The camp functions as a cost recovery charity so a steady cash flow and income is essential.

The Annual September Turkey Supper usually held at the camp was particularly important this year. We were unable to use the camp for the supper this year. However, the Fire Department in Bridgetown volunteered the use of their hall at no cost. Volunteers from various camp user groups stepped up to help us put on a very successful supper.

We are planning new projects for next season. Two buildings need new shingles. We have several quotes to review and are starting to look for grants and donations.

Respectfully submitted,

James Nelson

St. Anne's Camp Representative

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The past year was, I believe, a challenging one in the life of our Church in many ways. From a finance point of view, we finished with a deficit higher than that which we had forecast and significantly higher than of the previous fiscal year. Far more importantly, at the end of the year we lost our Treasurer of long standing, and I would like to take this opportunity to remind us all of the remarkable contribution Bob made to this church over the years. He will be sorely missed.

As usual, a large portion our Income came through parishioners' contributions. In the budget we set an ambitious target for parish giving, and we came very close to achieving that target. Additionally, we showed a significant increase of \$43,400 in our total income, actually over budget. Aside from the increase in congregational giving, the decision to move funds from CIBC and Royal Trust into the Diocesan Consolidated Trust Fund, begun under Bob, turned out to be an excellent decision in terms of return on investment, as well as timing. We saw, and will see, increased returns on that fund.

On the Expense side for the year, we undertook significant planned capital expenditures in this year, including a heat pump for the rectory to improve efficiency, new exterior lighting and signage, and painting the bell tower. Those costs, to be included in the budget presentation at the AGM, were higher than anticipated, but necessary to the well-being of the physical property we manage. These costs were not undertaken lightly, but the results are there clearly to be seen, both physically and financially. Good stewardship of our resources involves addressing capital issues with financial care for today, as well as ensuring quality work for future generations.

Thank you again to our financial team for their continued work on our behalf. Gary Dunfield has continued as our Accountant/Bookkeeper and Envelope Secretary. He has done a great deal to bring our records in line with current standard, and I would like to offer my personal thanks for the time he has so generously given through Bob's illness, and support through the transition to a new Treasurer. Finally, I want to thank all of you for your continued and generous support of the life of our Church and the varied projects we undertake and support.

Respectfully submitted,
Reid Spencer, Interim Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee.

AUDITOR'S REPORT, FINANCIAL STATEMENT, AND 2026 BUDGET

The Statement of Income and Expense along with the Auditor's Report, and the Budget for 2026 will be circulated one week prior to the Annual General Meeting.