



All Saints' Day, A.D. 2012

Beloved in the Lord at Saint John's:

We write to you to share with you an overview of **The Ministry Plan for Saint John's for 2012**. We also are writing to invite you to share generously in the funding of that ministry.

First, a word about 2011. What a year of blessing! We thank Almighty God and we thank you. Although as we began 2011 we forecasted a deficit by year end, it is likely, with your Faithfulness, that we will end the year in the black. Perhaps more importantly, by the time we mail this document we will very likely be a debt free parish! That means that in addition to fully funding the Ministry Plan for 2011, many of you helped the parish retire over \$300,000.00 in debt.

That is two years in a row, despite continuing downward pressure in the larger economy, that St. John's has had a thriving year. God has been generous to you and you have been generous in return.

Your generosity last year allowed us to call two of the fine young priests of the Church today. The Reverend Michael Pipken and The Reverend Joshua Bowron have come into our faith community and enrich our lives week by week, both in terms of the scholarship they share and their love and service to the Lord and his people. The addition of Jillianne Booth to the staffing of youth ministry has made it possible for us to return to 2007 staffing levels and expand and enrich that ministry – particularly in terms of a digital approach to the children of a digital age.

As we approach appropriate staffing levels, the Rector has had more time to work with the leadership of the parish in providing for our future together – particularly in terms of **churchHome** and Strategic Planning. Fr. Paul has also had more time to teach and more time to be present to God's people in the sundry challenges of life and to be present and a source of encouragement and focus in the affairs of the Diocese and larger Church. As we shared at the Annual Meeting last year, in the immediate future we will make additional changes so that the Rector spends less time on parish administration and more time in teaching, preaching and working for the future of St John's and the Episcopal Church.

And so we enter A.D. 2012 grateful, strong, encouraged and ready to expand ministry within our parish community and reach out into the world with the Good News of Jesus Christ!

The Ministry Plan for Saint John's for 2012 will have the following six (6) major areas of emphasis.

*1. We will continue to strive for **beautiful, meaningful worship** with a special emphasis on meeting the needs of young families and providing for a sacramental life for young adults as they enter a very busy and independent period of life. *There is and will continue to be an opportunity to worship every day of the week at Saint John's.**

2. We will continue our efforts with **churchHome** – our effort to support parish homes in the *practice of the faith*. We will enter phase II in 2012 which will implement what we learned from our highly successful pilot project last summer.

3. Saint John's will continue its very serious work in the area of **Biblical Literacy and Adult Christian Formation**. We are currently offering 17 Bible Studies per week. This is an effort that we hope to expand even further as we introduce Jesus, the Lord of the Church, to God's people through the study of Holy Scripture. There is at least one Saint John's Bible Study every day of the week! Our Adult Christian Education offerings will continue to expand this year. Our Sunday Morning classes are full to overflowing and so our Sunday offerings are now expanded and enriched and we look forward to even more in the months ahead.

4. Saint John's will continue our work in developing a **Parish Health Ministry** whereby we seek to meet the real world needs of our parishioners across the broadest possible spectrum of care – ranging from prenatal attention to special care for our seniors and home-bound. Our first pilot project is now underway.

5. We will continue the outstanding work of the **Outreach** Committee in 2011 and continue to re-focus and direct our Outreach Ministry establishing bona fide partnerships. The focus of our Outreach Ministry will allow us to maximize our impact on the lives we seek to serve in the name of Christ Jesus.

6. In the next few months we will complete our work with and begin communication of the **Strategic Plan** for the parish and continue our work of **transforming the very nature of what it is to be a Vestry** of a thriving, leading parish.

We are calling you to give generously and we want you to feel good about that giving. We enter 2012 having put in place three (3) very important changes to ensure the health of Saint John's as we move forward. Now you can feel even better about giving to the parish because:

1. **We are in the process of transforming the Vestry** from a group of faithful souls who essentially report what happened in the month prior and responded to financial emergencies and problems, to a group of leaders dedicated to guiding the parish into the future through the articulation and execution of a Strategic Plan. Our energy will be forward looking rather than retrospective and primarily devoted to leadership that supports the proclamation of the Good News of God in Christ.

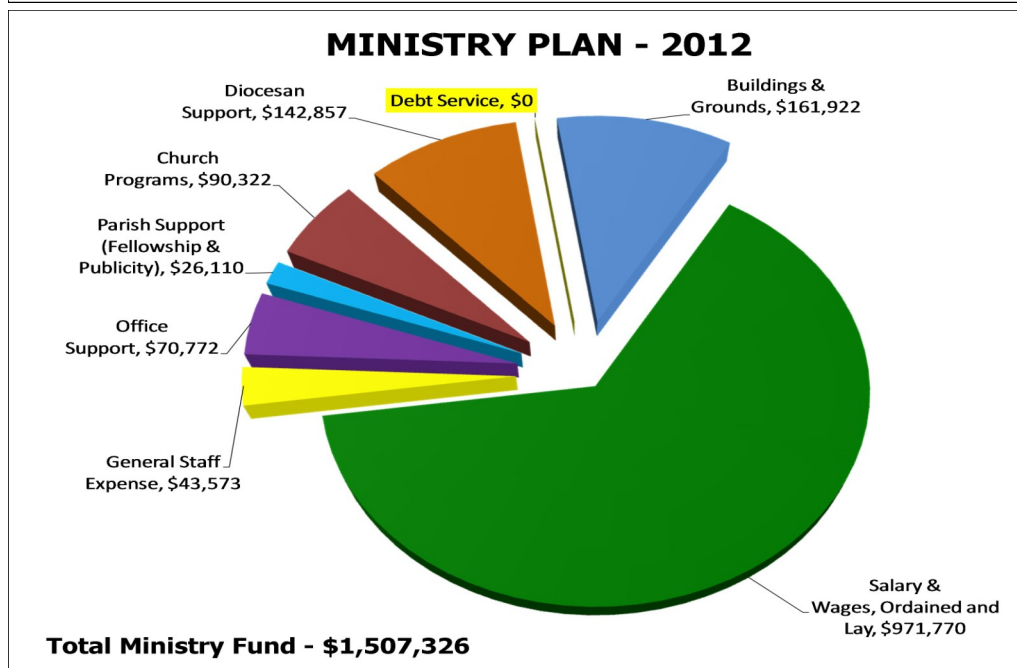
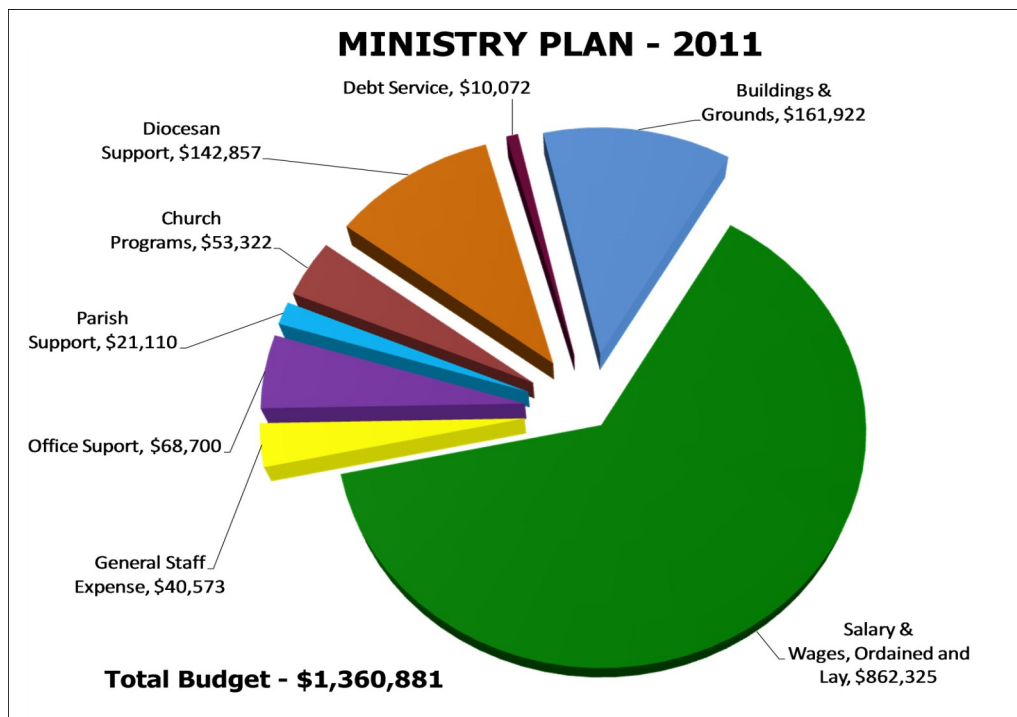
2. **We have transformed the Foundation into an Endowment Fund.** We now have in place a mechanism that will provide those who love Saint John's a way to give generously and long term, including wills, estates and major gifts. We have established a Fund with maximum transparency and firewalls to provide for the long-term needs of the parish and honor the intent of those who give.

3. **We have transformed the management of parish expenses.** We now operate with a Purchase Order System. Every purchase of the parish over \$25.00 is subject to a detailed review and approval process prior to purchase to ensure that the parish operations are managed consistent with the budget and available resources. This new control should ensure highly reliable data regarding expenses and help us manage this aspect of our work.

A Growing Budget for a Growing Parish

We are proposing a growth budget for 2012. While we have kept the growth modest it does represent some growth relative to last year. *We return basically to 2007 funding levels.* We have been honest about that to which God calls us and what it will require to fund that ministry. There is no “pad”, there is no budget game playing. If we are going to continue to do the good work in which we are now engaged we will need to make some additions to staffing and wages – particularly in the area of **Communications and New Member Integration and Relations.**

We have provided a comparison for you. We want you to see what we are proposing compared to 2011. You will see that this is still a very tight budget.



We are pleased to share with you that we are not only one of the healthiest Episcopal Churches in the country, but one of the thriving Churches in a city full of thriving Churches. We believe that the Holy Spirit is with us, that we are charged by and thrilled with the Good News of God in Christ. We believe that people come to Saint John's and experience reverent, moving worship, and inspired preaching and sound teaching. Children are introduced to the Lord Jesus who loves them, young people are equipped for a life of faith and we work diligently to care for our senior members and those who are home or institution bound.

At Saint John's we are doing more Ministry than we have ever done and we are doing it "*with gladness and singleness of heart*". God is blessing us with real growth in people coming to Saint John's for their family Church.

Won't you please join us in creating the St. John's of the future ? A commitment card is enclosed. Please say your prayers and give as generously as you are able. The Lord will bless your generosity.

Gratefully,

The Rector, Vestry and Finance Committee
St. John's Episcopal Church