

2020 SENIOR WARDEN REPORT

My two years as St. John's Senior Warden have been an amazing time. When I started in January 2018, our Rector had recently departed for a new call in Mexico and we were all figuring out how to "do church" without a Rector. We brought on an Interim Rector, Ann McLemore, at Easter time 2018. Little did we know that it would be another 21 months before we would call Minerva Camarena Skeith, our new permanent Rector, and that during most of 2020 we would be operating during an unprecedented pandemic! Thanks be to God, however, and the leadership and dedication of our members and ordained leaders, we have come through the experience unscathed, and in many respects stronger and wiser for the experience.

There are many successes in the past year for which we should all give thanks. Despite the pandemic, we were able to continue worshipping together, first by FaceBook stream and most recently through Zoom meetings. Thanks to the ongoing generosity and financial gifts of many, many members, our financial stewardship remained strong during this challenging period. This has allowed us to support the operations of the church and its paid staff, and to help church and community members in need. Thanks to the magic of technology, we have maintained community and continued our training as Christ's disciples through Zoom fellowship opportunities, Zoom Christian education classes, Zoom small group gatherings such as the Sacred Ground Dialog Circles, and Zoom meetings to carry on the planning and execution of our church ministries. I hope and pray that through these efforts, we have been able in a small way to continue the growth of God's kingdom in our church and community.

None of this would be possible without the hard work, dedication and leadership of our church staff and volunteer leaders. I want to extend my fervent thanks to the members of our Vestry, and in particular our all-World Junior Warden Hal Hughes, for their unflagging support of the church's mission. I want equally to thank our staff members, Fay Jones, Philip Riley, and Alfonso Hernandez, our Deacon, Victoria Mason, and our Interim Rector, Ann McLemore, for their dedication, their long hours of work and the imagination they contributed to our efforts. These are truly servant leaders.

Many other volunteers made special contributions to our success by supporting church business and financial operations, participating as leaders of on-line classes, participating in diverse ministries such as Altar Guild, Christian Formation Team, Sacred Ground, and Stewardship Team, and by participating as readers and singers in services. A virtual hearty handshake and hug to each and every one of you. Thank you!

In particular, I want to acknowledge Bill Cox and Marvin Rasmussen. These two gentlemen have been pillars of our church as long as I can remember, but their dedication reached new heights during the pandemic. Without Bill's non-stop efforts to provide website, Facebook and Zoom technology support, as well as his non-stop efforts to plan and prepare all aspects of our service bulletins and other written content, we simply could not have succeeded this year. In much the same manner, Marvin worked tirelessly to ensure that all church financial issues were addressed in a timely manner, while he also contributed ongoing expertise and dedication to our technology development efforts. I know I speak for all our members when I say, "We could not have done it without you!"

Finally, I am excited beyond measure that we now have Mother Minerva among us as our permanent Rector. She is a smart, energetic and caring person who I believe is a perfect fit for our bi-lingual congregation. I look forward to the coming year, where we continue to learn together how best to "do church" in these trying times. In the longer term, I look forward to being part of a unified, energized effort by our members to make St. John's a church on a mission—a mission to be a loving, Christ-like resource to our community and our world, a church that is focused on healing brokenness, building bridges, and exemplifying borderless kindness.

John William, Senior Warden