

*Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a rector for this parish, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP Page 818*

## **A HISTORY OF ST. JOHN'S PARISH**

The Holy Eucharist was first celebrated on the banks of the Allegheny River by British chaplains from Fort Pitt. As the population increased, there was a need for a church to be built in Franklin, Pennsylvania. Land was donated for that purpose, and the first church was constructed in 1826. That served the parish until 1866, when the advent of the oil industry brought a rapid rise in population. The first stone church was built in 1826, near the corner of Buffalo and 12th Streets, but was destroyed by fire in February 1900. The reconstructed, cut stone church reopened on Easter weekend 1901 and was dedicated on St. John's Day, December 27, 1904.

Since 1866 St. John's Parish has had a full time rector. Thirteen priests have served in that capacity in the last 142 years.

Today, we have a strong congregation and a beautiful, historic building in good repair, sometimes referred to as "the jewel of the diocese."

## **THE PEOPLE OF ST. JOHN'S**

St. John's is a parish of pastoral size and philosophy with members of the congregation coming from various religious backgrounds, as well as many "cradle" Episcopalians. We lean strongly toward traditional preferences in worship.

We function as a church family with an active social life. We have fun together and enjoy sharing meals. Our congregation is well-balanced with energetic toddlers, a strong teen presence, a large young adult to middle aged group, both single and married, and an active group of older members. We have a mixture of educational backgrounds, career paths and family units.

As a congregation we are warm, welcoming, friendly and down-to-earth. We are supportive of our clergy and enjoy close relationships with them. We have an amiable working relationship with our Vestry and Wardens. Our membership numbers are stable, with an average Sunday attendance of approximately 130.

We view ourselves as traditional and somewhat predictable. Many of our members are active throughout the community, presenting us with many opportunities to make ourselves known to those seeking a place to worship.

## **PARISH LEADERSHIP**

Lay members are active in many leadership roles in the local Church as well as the Diocese, National Church and our local community.

St. John's food pantry, the Daughters of the King and Youth Group are a few of the Church organizations operated and supported almost exclusively by lay leadership. We have been experiencing a change in leadership in the local Church where the longtime leaders have stepped into new roles, often related to pastoral care or mission, while newer members have been elected to the traditional leadership roles on the Vestry. Our current Vestry includes both lifelong St. John's members and members of only a few years.

St. John's also has strong lay leadership in Prayer. A parishioner is as likely to go to one of these lay leaders for prayer requests as they are to go to the Rector. St. John's members have stepped into many roles of spiritual leadership and are active on Sunday mornings, serving as readers and lay Eucharistic ministers.

Our Church has been well represented at Episcopal conventions, and will have a member of our Parish representing the Diocese at General Convention in 2009. We have great leadership resources as managers from our local schools, industry and social services attend our Church weekly.

The Altar Guild, Lay Eucharist Ministers, Lectors and Acolytes function smoothly. The Daughters of the King and Bible Study groups are active in prayer and healing ministries. St. John's wishes to continue the development of new leadership, while fully utilizing the skills and involvement of our longtime leaders.

## **WORSHIP STYLE**

Step into St. John's at either of our Sunday morning services and you will find a strong link to traditional Eucharistic centered services. Our 8:00 am service, normally conducted as Rite I, is attended by a smaller, but very dedicated, group. At our 10:00 am service, centered on Rite II, a larger group attends and the service is enhanced with traditional hymns of the Episcopal Church and our choir. There are many talented musicians in the Church who regularly share their gifts. The groups that attend the early and late services have distinct personalities and preferences, yet share one vision for our continued spiritual growth. St. John's has been very fortunate in having had many Priests with a gift for a good sermon. The congregation welcomes, expects and appreciates a strong, well delivered message.

Sunday morning remains the centerpiece of the church week. For many members Sunday morning is the only connection they have to the Church.

## OUTREACH

Our outreach currently includes a variety of activities to better serve God, our community and the world. In the past we have sent two mission teams to Honduras and participated in a Diocesan youth mission to Appalachia.

St. John's has offered Vacation Bible School to the community for many years. An average of 25 to 30 children attends the weeklong VBS and enjoys lessons, music, crafts and snacks.

We have a very active Senior Youth Group for grades 7 through 12. Every Sunday evening, 10 to 15 kids enjoy learning, giving, caring, sharing, fun and, of course, food!

St. John's Food Pantry has grown quickly in response to the needs of our community's less fortunate families. From humble beginnings a couple of years ago with a few volunteers gathering and handing out about 50 boxes of food, this outreach has developed into a well-oiled machine. Each month, with a huge delivery of low cost supplies from Second Harvest Food Bank in Erie, our many St. John's volunteers offload, sort, pack and distribute about 180 boxes of food and toiletries.

Parishioners volunteer on a weekly basis to visit the sick and shut-ins each Sunday after the 10 o'clock service to share with them the lovely Altar Flower arrangements and let them know their friends at St. John's Episcopal Church send their love and prayers.

Daughters of the King is a relatively new group and is concentrating on the prayer life of our congregation. Along with regular meetings devoted to prayer, this group has taken on the much needed task of welcoming parishioners, both new and old, to St. John's.

An inter-denominational Bible study group meets at 1:30 pm on Tuesdays. Ministering to women, this group has been well attended for the past 25 years.

St. John's encourages civic and diocesan use of our facilities for meetings, luncheons and special events. Our parking lot is widely used by the community during the week.

## **FINANCES**

The people of St. John's take great pride in our physical facility and have taken many steps to perpetuate its good condition and appearance. The exterior recently underwent a \$125,000 restoration which included repairing the bell tower, repointing the stone work and replacing the steps and sidewalks. The landscaping was completely updated to complement the exterior repairs. The Tiffany windows were restored between 1994 and 1999 at a cost of \$450,000. The recent office upgrading was completed at minimal cost and consisted primarily of painting and carpeting. The functional systems of the church have been monitored diligently and repaired or replaced as necessary, including the heating system.

An annual stewardship campaign generates the bulk of our income. St. John's vestries have worked diligently to provide sound fiscal management of our resources and the church is currently debt free.

## **STAFFING & PARISH STATISTICS**

The staff of St. John's consists of one full time rector (currently the interim), one part time office manager (approximately 30 hours per week) and one part time sexton (approximately 20 hours per week).

The parish statistics for reporting purposes are as follows:

Baptisms	4 in 2007, 2 in 2006
Confirmations	7 in 2007, 6 in 2006
Marriages	6 in 2007, 3 in 2006
Burials	2 in 2007, 4 in 2006

The average attendance is approximately 25 at the 8:00am service and 105 at the 10:00am. Our rolls contain 110 family units for a total of 300 persons.

## **GOAL STATEMENT**

Our spiritual goal is to increase the amount and usage of small groups to improve the spiritual lives of our members. Our community goal is to expand the sheparding of members, by members. Our physical goal is to improve the accessibility of our facility. Our overall goal is to increase the size and number of our congregation.

## **RECTOR'S JOB DESCRIPTION**

St. John's Church is presently searching for a full time rector. We are a pastoral sized church grounded in the Episcopal traditions. Our ideal candidate would be a liturgically centered individual with excellent communication skills. Strong preaching skills are an important attribute and a focus on the Eucharist is essential.

We celebrate Rite I and Rite II services on Sunday, Morning Prayer on Wednesday, and a midweek service on Wednesday. We are searching for a candidate who would provide pastoral care, leadership discernment and adult education. Past rectors have been involved in the community in a variety of capacities, and such involvement is encouraged.

St. John's is a dynamic place to worship, a true family of God, in a wonderful small town. We anticipate growing both in number and in spirituality. Prayerfully consider joining us to bring God's plan to Franklin, Pennsylvania.

## **ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND RECTORY**

St John's is an historical church located in the heart of Franklin, built in 1901 after a fire destroyed the previous structure. With its soaring bell tower and massive stone facing, it is an impressive edifice. The sanctuary is graced with Italian marble floors, rosewood pews, well restored brass and a world class collection of Tiffany windows. The seating capacity is approximately 300.

### **Sanctuary**

Connected to the church is the Parish Hall, constructed in 1898, used for social gatherings, meetings, adult education and bible studies. Flanking the Parish Hall is the office suite; consisting of the Rector's office, a large office used by the office manager of the church, a smaller office used currently as a storage area and a unisex restroom. This suite was recently updated and features all the amenities of a modern office, including networked computers, fax and multifunction copier.

### **Parish Hall**

St. John's also features a Chapel, located just off the Parish Hall and connected to the Sacristy. The Chapel is a beautiful one, featuring stained glass windows of German bubble glass and truly lovely woodwork. It is used for the 8:00 am Sunday Eucharist, a midweek Eucharist, private baptisms and weddings. Seating approximately 40 people, it is a delightful gem in St. John's facility.

### **Chapel**

The lower level of St. John's houses the kitchen, two restrooms, the nursery, the choir room (currently shared with the food pantry), a teen room and a multi-purpose room used for dining or partitioned into Sunday school classrooms.

### **Rectory**

The rectory of St. John's is a lovely Victorian home adjacent to the Church and the Parish House. Built in 1898, in the Queen Anne style, it boasts three stories, a distinctive tower

and a massive front porch. Recently repainted in soft shades of brown and tan, it features a modern eat-in kitchen, a pantry with laundry, a living room, a dining room, a study, a powder room and a greeting hall on the first floor. The graceful stairway leads to four second floor bedrooms, one full bath, one three quarter bath and a fanciful turret room. The third floor, while recently unused except for storage, could easily be used as an additional bedroom, with a lovely view of downtown Franklin. A one car attached garage completes the property.

## LOCAL AREA

Franklin, Pennsylvania is a small, rural town located in the northwestern part of the state. Once a robust and prosperous oil town, Franklin now boasts an active arts community, fine dining at a variety of restaurants, plenty of outdoor activities, strong local schools, and popular festivals year-round. All of this while located only a short drive to Pittsburgh, Erie, and Cleveland.

The arts community has been active for many years. Dating from the start of the Silver Cornet Band in 1856, to the opening of the Barrow-Civic Theatre, Music in the Park series, and Franklin on Ice, Franklin has provided the area with entertainment and fun for all.

Restaurants in Franklin offer a wide variety of choices, from Italian and Chinese, to gourmet specialty, and an assortment of popular restaurant chains.

As more people look for outdoor activities, whether it be with their family, friends, or even alone, Franklin has become accommodating to the outdoor enthusiast. One of the more popular activities is the Allegheny Bike Trail, which connects towns from around the area with a paved trail and picnic areas along each trail.

Franklin Area School District consists of a Senior High school, a middle school and six elementary schools. <http://www.fasd.k12.pa.us/franklinasd/site/default.asp>

Festivals are a large part of a Franklin's culture. Applefest attracts thousands of people over an October weekend and draws from as far away as California and Canada. Along with many craft and food tents, Applefest also brings in car enthusiasts with a classic car show, athletes and health conscience people with a 5k race, history buffs for tours of Franklin and its historic sites, art lovers for Tiffany window tours at St. John's and many more events for the family. Other festivals include Light-up Night, a Christmas kickoff with the lighting of downtown and fireworks; A Taste of Franklin, for those craving a taste of what Franklin's eateries have to offer; and the Rock 'N River Festival, to show off your stone skipping skills and compete with others.

<http://www.franklin-pa.org/> (Franklin Chamber of Commerce)

<http://www.franklinpennsylvania.us/> (City of Franklin)