



# st John's

EPISCOPAL CHURCH



# Parish Profile

2023



# An Invitation

Welcome, and thank you for your interest in St. John's Episcopal Church of Boulder, Colorado! This profile tells the story of our church, who we are, how we invite God into our lives, church, and community, and who we seek to shepherd us into the future. We are a church full of love and dedicated to caring for each other and for those beyond our church grounds. We find ourselves in a good place, strong in spirit even as we emerge from the COVID pandemic that deeply impacted all houses of faith. We seek a rector who will help to gently guide us and walk with us in this journey, who will teach us, who will find joy and laughter with us, who will comfort us, support us, and engage with us as individuals and in our work, and someone who, in the words of our baptismal covenant, will help us to "strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being." We look forward to welcoming our new rector into our church family with our whole hearts.

Please read on to learn more about [St. John's](#).



# Our Mission

*Led by the Holy Spirit, St. John's mission is to inspire people to grow into the heart and mind of Christ by engaging together in worship, service, and spiritual formation.*

# Our Beliefs

St. John's is a community of faith. We are an open and affirming parish who believe that all human beings are created in the image of God. We care for each other and work for positive change in our community and the world.

Our church is warm and welcoming and all who enter the doors of St. John's are invited and encouraged to receive communion at the Lord's table.

St. John's is a place for worship, fellowship, opportunities to explore deeply within oneself, strength and renewal. It is a sacred space where one feels the presence of God and the Holy Spirit.

# Who We Are

At the heart of our church is a mission to be an inclusive, Christ-centered community, striving to break down barriers between people and serving all those who seek spiritual sustenance and clarity.



online. Our membership draws from Boulder and surrounding cities including Longmont, Louisville, and the mountain communities.

We are cradle Episcopalians as well as those who come from different religious traditions and denominations, or no religious tradition. We reflect a broad range of interests and backgrounds, contributing to the many and varied ministries active in the church. A recent parish survey depicts a highly educated, intellectually curious congregation with a progressive theological perspective, an appreciation for traditional liturgy and music, and a desire to deeply explore our spirituality. The survey classified us as a “transformational church” with high levels of both energy and satisfaction.



We have nearly 200 households/families who pledge to the church financially each year, 881 members and participants, and each week see an average attendance at services of approximately 160 in-person and 50



# Who We Seek

St. John's is seeking a rector who will lead us into the future with warmth, compassion, and humor. We are looking for a rector with a pastoral heart, intellectual curiosity, strong teaching and preaching abilities, a heart for social justice, and an ability to inspire. After the distancing required by the pandemic, the congregation yearns for personal connection and community. We seek a rector with strong skills in communication and in pastoral care, one who can connect deeply with people of all ages, and one who listens attentively and cares about each of us. Our faith formation programs for children and youth are especially important and we expect active support for them from the rector.

We are blessed with an exceptional staff, all of whom enjoy working together and are excited about their ability to support and enhance the mission and work of St. John's. Our next rector needs to have a collaborative, collegial management style. Since St. John's has many ministries, the rector must be skilled at delegating work and empowering other clergy, staff, vestry, and lay ministers in their work.

St. John's values progressive and inclusive theology. We love sermons that dive deeply, engaging both our intellects and our hearts, sending us out into the world to love and to serve. Since we feel called to work for justice and equity, serving those in the community and the world who need our help and advocacy, we seek a rector who will support these efforts theologically and practically.

We are also seeking someone who can build alliances and networks beyond the walls of St. John's to other faith groups in the area, to the larger community, and to The Episcopal Church in Colorado.

# St. John's History



St. John's, the oldest Episcopal church in Boulder, was founded by Episcopalians who started meeting in Boulder in 1873 and built a small church in 1879. That building was replaced by the current sanctuary in 1903. Over the last 120 years, the church has grown to have a bell tower, chapel, parish hall, church offices, kitchen and education wing.

As the population of the Boulder area grew, St. John's recognized the need for new Episcopal churches and worked to establish three others in the area: St. Aidan's, across from the University of Colorado, St. Ambrose, out east of Boulder on South Boulder Road, and St. Mary Magdalene, north of Boulder in Heatherwood.

Beginning in the 1960s, St. John's began to take an active role in issues of justice and compassion. Father Jim McKeown opened the church building to the "hippies" and runaways who were drawn to Boulder. In 1971, recognizing the need for housing for people with low incomes, St. John's built the San Juan del Centro housing project. When that project was sold after 20 years in operation, St. John's put the money into a foundation which eventually was used to build Eagle Place affordable housing in Lafayette.



Before the construction of the education wing, the church owned a 4-apartment house on the corner of 15th and Pine. Beginning in the 1990's, one of the apartments was dedicated to housing a person with HIV. In 1993, St. John's declared itself an "AIDS-Aware Community."

In 2016, the congregation funded the installation of solar panels in order to be visible and faithful stewards of the earth, to ensure that renewable energy provides savings to the church, while maintaining the beauty and historic value of the buildings and grounds. The parish has no outstanding debt on the buildings or the solar panels.

The COVID years have been challenging for St. John's, as we suspended worship in person and switched to online services. The clergy worked out a system of satellite Communion sites, staffed by volunteers from the congregation, so that we could continue receiving the Sacraments safely in socially-distanced, masked small groups. This was so successful that some parishioners have said that they miss these smaller communities, now that we are back to worshipping in the church together.

*Photos courtesy of Boulder Historical Society/Museum of Boulder*

# Strengths

## Worship



Worship is at the center of life at St. John's. We look to our worship services to engage our hearts as well as our intellect and to experience a spiritually enriching, welcoming opportunity to know God's presence. Gathering together to receive the Holy Eucharist, we celebrate the inclusivity of St. John's and embrace our Open Table where everyone is welcomed. We use Rite II in our services and we also celebrate our Anglican heritage and traditions through our music and rituals. Lay leadership and participation play an important role in our liturgy. Our clergy, lay leaders, and choir are in full vestments for most of our services. We strive to have worship opportunities that allow people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with God no matter where they are on their spiritual journey.



neighbors at our annual Pine Street Palm Sunday procession - with a live donkey!

Numerous opportunities to come together for prayer and worship are available. Two worship services are

held each Sunday. A 7:30 a.m. spoken Eucharist is held in the chapel. The principal Choral Eucharist, held at 9:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary, offers both in-person participation as well as a YouTube livestream. During the 9:30 service, Faith Formation classes for children and youth, as well as nursery care, are available in the education wing. A Saturday Evening Bluegrass Mass on the patio features a live band of bluegrass musicians and contemporary songs. Additional unique services of Reconciliation, Contemplative Evensong, Daily Morning Prayer, and Centering Prayer groups complement the Eucharistic services. We also share worship with our Methodist, Lutheran, Congregational, and Baptist

# Strengths

## *Music*

St. John's has a long tradition of excellent music that is integral to our worship. The music ministry is one of the major reasons that people are attracted to and stay at St. John's. Our expansive pipe organ, lovingly played and cared for, fills our sanctuary with rich notes from Hymnal 1982 along with improvisations from our talented principal organist.

The St. John's music director, Andy Halladay, and organist, Aaron Hirsch, are rebuilding the music program, which was curtailed during COVID. Both adult and children's choirs (Choristers) again support the congregation in singing hymns, chants and psalms, and providing anthems during the offertory. "Pick-up" choirs during the summer months allow members of the congregation

to try singing with the adult choir to see whether they might like to join.



In addition, the newly founded St. John's Music Society presents free concerts for the Boulder-area community. Our adult Choir and Choristers have performed at these concerts (for example, a performance of Fauré's Requiem), as well as guest artists who have appeared throughout the year. The church also hosts local groups such as Ars Nova Singers and the yearly Messiah Sing-along. These events introduce people from the community to St. John's, some of whom have become members.



# Strengths

## *Faith Formation Across All Ages*

Like many churches, St. John's experienced a decline in involvement in children's ministries during the pandemic, compounded by staff changes. In 2021, we were blessed to hire both Lu Walters and Chris Williamson to rebuild our children and youth programming. Under their skilled guidance, our

practices. St. John's also offers nursery care for the youngest Episcopalians.

Our children and youth ministry is much more than Sunday School. Our new leaders also coordinate regular opportunities for families to gather for picnics, game nights, pizza and movie nights, potlucks, as well as monthly events where youth from area churches gather together in fellowship. They also began a new tradition of annual family retreats to Cathedral Ridge, The Episcopal Church in Colorado's Camp and Retreat Center. In collaboration with our music director, Andy Halladay, the children have presented three musicals to the congregation this past school year, all co-written by Andy and Lu. This summer our Faith Formation leaders brought back Vacation Bible School to St. John's. The weeklong camp was well attended by children from member families and children from the surrounding community, and provided volunteer leadership opportunities for our youth.



programs have been steadily growing, attracting new families monthly. Currently, over 30 families have children who regularly participate in Faith Formation, Youth, and Acolyte programs. Each week on Sunday, the children and youth (middle and high schools) gather for lessons, discussions, and activities. So that children also experience communion, they either join their families at communion time in the sanctuary, or we offer a communion service in our chapel where one of our clergy teaches the children about our communion

St. John's also has a strong Adult Formation series that offers several opportunities each week and includes discussions on current and relevant topics and a variety of guest speakers.

Currently, we offer bible study groups to explore our faith, a series on issues of race, and this fall we will begin a Sacred Ground Dialogue series. St. John's also offers a group for the 4-year Education for Ministry (EfM) program.

# Strengths

## *Ministries*

St. John's has many active ministries, largely directed by laity. Our ministries fall into the categories of Fellowship, Spiritual Formation, Prayer, Service, Worship, Leadership, Pastoral Care, and Social Action. To highlight a few: our Foyer Dinner groups give small groups an opportunity to share meals and conversations with members of the church they might not yet know. Our Hiking Group gives our active population a chance to explore the region's natural beauty. Our Garden Guild helps keep our grounds beautiful year-round. Our Knitting Group and Prayer Shawl ministry provides warm scarves and hats for our unhoused neighbors, our members in need, and graduating high school and college seniors. Our Eldercare Network helps with the needs of our homebound parishioners. Our Social Action Ministries are explained more fully in the Outreach section below. Please visit our [Ministry opportunities page on our website](#) for more information on all our ministries.



# Strengths

## Outreach

The St. John's community honors the sacredness of the Earth and God's gift of all life upon it. A core value of our parish is to "walk the talk," following Christ's command to love and serve others locally, nationally and globally. Outreach is in our DNA and congregants are proud to be part of St. John's continuing commitment to work beyond our walls. Parishioners met in January of 2023 to collectively identify and strengthen major Social Action Ministries (SAM) primarily focusing on Food Insecurity, Caring Neighbors, Community, Equity and Inclusion, Gun Violence Prevention, and Climate Care.

We welcome without question our unhoused neighbors. Our monthly soup kitchen provides made-from-scratch, nutritious meals as well as bag lunches, and is in partnership with St. Benedict Health & Healing to provide personal hygiene items, haircuts, and health checks during our guests' monthly soup kitchen visit. An on-campus afternoon Grab-and-Go meal, in cooperation with Boulder-sponsored

Community Table, includes coveted home-baked cookies. Volunteers serve at the church's household & personal care products pantry, giving in-need families the chance to stretch their limited grocery dollars a little further. Teams of parishioners partner with both local and regional organizations to help provide basic needs of food and clothing to immigrants and those in poverty or crisis.

Racial justice issues call numerous members of our congregation who devote time and money to support local NAACP efforts and social justice for refugees, immigrants and Indigenous peoples. Fundraising, of course, is also part of St. John's outreach. Following the devastating Marshall fire in which several parishioners lost their homes and many more were affected by the tragedy, the congregation generously gave financial donations as well as personal support. Fundraising within the church has also provided wider assistance to organizations such as Locally Haiti and Episcopal Relief and Development.



# Strengths

## Staff Cohesion

Nearly the entire staff and clergy are new to St. John's, as we experienced a significant amount of turnover in recent years for various reasons (retirements, staff departing for new opportunities, staff moving out of state, and other reasons). At this time, St. John's is blessed with a joyful, dedicated, talented, and capable team who love working together. Enter the church office during the week as they prepare for services and events and you will hear laughter, enthusiastic planning sessions, and see evidence of their occasional good-natured pranks: a large group of rubber duckies is currently making the rounds arranged as a band complete with instruments in the music director's office, or a classroom of children lining up behind their teacher, or simply dancing across someone's keyboard. The staff's energy and enthusiasm are palpable and have led to a resurgence of much needed post-COVID

St. John's clergy are:

- Interim Rector: The Rev. Stephanie Kopsch
- Associate Rector: The Rev. Julia Domenick
- Priest in Residence: The Rev. Dr. Marc Smith
- Assisting Priests (non-salaried): The Rev Canon Lucy Amerman, The Rev. Barbara Crafton, The Rev. Albert Daviou, The Rev. Will Reller



vitality in the church. Their collaborative approach has brought us a renewed joy in our worship services together, a new, multigenerational bell choir, concerts, musicals, and social events. Going forward, our team will need the support and trust of the new rector to continue their good works and thrive. A collaborative, empathetic leader will make an ideal addition to this group of energetic and caring professionals. They all look forward to continuing to work with our new rector to create an empowered laity and to further St. John's work in the congregation and community.

The clergy's work is accomplished together with the following staff:

- Parish Administrator - Natalie Devine
- Music Director - Andrew Halladay
- Faith Formation Director - Lu Walters
- Youth Director/Parish Communications - Chris Williamson
- Caretaker - Tom Stumb
- Technical Director - Michael M. Conti
- Principal Organist - Aaron Hirsch
- Associate Organist - Lydia Morrongiello
- Organist Emeritus - Tony Lee, AAGO

Read more about the work and stories of our [clergy here](#), and our [staff here](#).

# Opportunities for Growth

As for most faith communities, the Pandemic presented an enormous challenge to St. John's and its parishioners. In-person services and activities were paused as lockdowns became a necessity. Rebuilding the St. John's community has been gradual; some have not yet returned and attendance remains lower than pre-pandemic numbers. Numerous families live in cities outside of Boulder, so the commute to church activities in combination with the demands of work and school creates additional challenges.



Opportunities to build relationships with each other outside of worship services is a high priority for our congregation. Parishioners also emphasize their desire to create intergenerational relationships, youth service projects, and a strong place for children within church life and worship.

An accompanying wish for building “churches within the church” is apparent from parishioner feedback. St. John's is large enough that smaller groups and ministries can build a sense of belonging and a place for connections that strengthen and enrich the larger church. St. John's is a magnet church. Most people visiting or new to the area will attend a service at St. John's first as it is the historical “grand dame” of churches in the middle of Boulder. Our beautiful campus and extensive facilities host a variety of meetings and activities, serving both our internal community and the wider community. Our church is a gift, but can also be a burden, as it is old and requires continuing maintenance and repairs. Minimal parking also presents a challenge. In addition, its historic designation proves to be somewhat constraining.

We also note that the world is becoming an increasingly hostile place. People are rapidly losing the ability to hold differing opinions without distrusting or even hating one another. Against that social climate, St. John's continues to be called (and naturally inclined!) to speak truth to power, and to stand up for the marginalized and voiceless. Doing this, however, comes at perhaps a greater cost than ever before. The next rector will be challenged to inspire and convince the parish to carry on their important and vital work without giving in to fear or despair.

# Church Membership & Financials

St. John's relies on faith-based budgeting to meet the demands of Church in the 21st Century. One of our challenges is that the financial support received from our membership is lower than average when compared to other churches. As a church filled with civic-minded congregants, we recognize that many are likely giving generously to other causes and we have work to do to emphasize the crucial need to pledge generously in support of the church they cherish.

Our finances are overseen by a treasurer, a paid accountant, our finance committee, and our vestry. We also comply with all diocesan requirements for contributions, audits, and controls.

St. John's enrolled a team this fall in Project Resource, a program of the College for Bishops designed to strategize and strengthen year-round giving in congregations across The Episcopal Church.

- *881 Members & Participants*
- *160 in-person, 50 online (2023) Average Sunday Attendance*
- *\$1,117,025 Pledges, Gifts & Other Income*
- *\$776,424 in pledges from 196 households / individuals*
- *\$1,144,683 Operating Expense*
- *\$490,000 Investment Account Balance*

*St. John's has no outstanding loans.*

*Part of St. John's buildings are registered historical buildings.*

# Where We Are



Located in the heart of downtown Boulder, Colorado, population 104,000, and overlooked by the majestic Flatirons, St. John's is one of several historic churches in the area. We are steps from the pedestrian portion of Pearl Street Mall where you can find a variety of unique dining and shopping opportunities, the historic Hotel Boulderado, and one of the state's largest independent bookstores, the Boulder Bookstore. Boulder is home to the University of Colorado Boulder, making this a college town with all the advantages that come with that: Division I sports, outdoor Shakespeare performances in the summer, and continuing education opportunities, to name a few.

Boulder area schools consistently rank among the top in the state. Nearby towns of Louisville, Lafayette, Superior, and Longmont, where many of our members

live, offer their own unique charms. Talk to any of our parishioners and they'll be sure to work to convince you that their town is the "best" place to live!

Downtown Denver is just a 40-minute drive away, and Denver International Airport is 45 minutes from here. Year-round outdoor activities abound; the region draws athletes from far and wide for our abundant sun and high-altitude training. The closest skiing and snowboarding is 30 minutes into the mountains.

Please [click here to learn more about Boulder](#) and the [region](#).

# The Episcopal Church in Colorado



[The Episcopal Church in Colorado](#) spans ninety-five congregations, nine Diocesan institutions, and 100,000+ square miles throughout the majestic state of Colorado.

The Right Reverend Kym Lucas has served as Bishop since 2019. Bishop Lucas is the first female, as well as the first African American bishop, in the 132-year history of The Episcopal Church in Colorado.

Photo courtesy of: The Episcopal Church in Colorado.

## Concluding Statement and Prayer

If you feel called to lead St. John's in our spiritual journey toward connection, collaboration and compassion, please email your cover letter, resume, OTM portfolio and links to two sermons (video preferred) to the Rev. Canon Vanessa Stickler Glass, Canon for Transition and Wellness at [vanessa@episcopalcolorado.org](mailto:vanessa@episcopalcolorado.org).

*Almighty and everliving God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with those who take counsel for the renewal and mission of your Church. Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory. Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. [BCP, p.818]*