



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

FOR

ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS:
SUSTAINING PEOPLE, PLACE, AND PEACE,
2019 – 2022

***Capital Campaign for St. John in the Wilderness:
Sustaining People, Place, and Peace,
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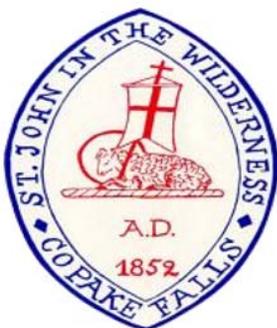
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Church of St. John in the Wilderness seeks to live into our Baptismal Covenant by being an inclusive, welcoming and supportive house of worship; a community that ministers to and with children and youth; a church whose doors are open to all our neighbors and which reaches out to serve Christ in all persons; a community that advocates for justice and peace for all, and respects the dignity and worth of every individual; a church which celebrates creation and shows reverence for the beauty that God has given us.



Overview

The Mission Statement of St. John in the Wilderness bears witness to the inspiration for the Capital Campaign outlined herein. This church faithfully lives its Mission Statement on a daily basis, but doing so is ever challenging. This Capital Campaign is meant to sustain St. John's buildings and grounds, the spiritual and physical wellbeing of St. John's members and neighbors in Copake Falls and environs, and the ability of St. John's worshipers to continue to live into the Baptismal Covenant. Thus, this Capital Campaign is about sustaining place, people and peace.

To address capital needs at St. John, a Capital Campaign Committee was formed in 2017, which took four main actions to inform the present document: (1) to commission a MEP (Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing) Assessment Report from Crawford & Associates Engineering, PC; (2) to commission a current architectural conditions survey of the buildings and church campus by two parishioner architects, Marjorie Hoog and Dale Peterson, and Crawford engineers; (3) to commission a Preliminary Landscape Plan from Jamie Purinton, RLA; and (4) to conduct a survey of St. John's parishioners as to their priorities for capital projects, with the results reported in *A Voice in the Wilderness*. All documents are posted at www.stjohnw.org.

This three-year Capital Campaign reflects those priorities that are urgent or near-term in nature, and as well as those priorities that are intermediate to long-term in nature, and are discussed in four sections below. The financial goal for the three-year goal Capital Campaign is \$332,000. Please search your hearts and resources to help sustain the people, place, and peace of St. John into the future.

The Campaign and the Need

The Church of St. John in the Wilderness is strongly rooted in our area through history, worship and active involvement of our parish in the life of the community. Through our members we support the Roe Jan Library, Habitat for Humanity and food programs for those in need. In our facility we host Alcoholics Anonymous, Friends of Taconic State Park, Winds in the Wilderness concerts, yearly dramatic presentations, and exhibitions featuring local artists. Our church buildings are historically and culturally significant structures that border one of the largest unfragmented forests between Virginia and Maine, an area of 14,400 contiguous acres of protected open space spanning three states and designated as one of America's "Last Great Places" by The Nature Conservancy. We have a strong foundation for the future – but our facilities have a backlog of needed repairs and upgrades.

Like most churches, perhaps especially in the Northeast, our role in the community has changed dramatically. Church membership and attendance have plateaued. Our membership reflects the aging demographics and income disparity of our surrounding community. The need for increased involvement in the community has grown. Our facilities play an important role by providing vital, active spaces for people to gather for learning, fellowship and growth.

Our facilities also reflect our national and global commitments. We are stewards of a building with historical and cultural significance that is on the National Register of Historic Places. The way we maintain and manage our buildings reflects our global commitments to greatly reduced energy use in an era of climate change. We support the Episcopal Church's Genesis Covenant and its energy reduction goals.

We have a great physical legacy – two buildings that provide an inspiring place for worship and three gathering places suitable for meetings, classes and other community events. But there are many areas where deferred maintenance has taken a toll. Some facilities do not meet code access and safety standards, which are especially important for areas used by children. Our service to people with mobility challenges is limited by our lack of accessible access. Thankfully, our Capital Campaign can address these challenges and prepare us and future generations for sustainable worship, service and community outreach in Copake Falls.



Figure 1. St. John in the Wilderness, view of Church building from the northeast.



Figure 2. St. John in the Wilderness, view of Rectory building from the southeast.

History of the Church and Rectory

The Church of St. John in the Wilderness is an Episcopal parish founded by the owners of the Copake Iron Company. The Church, built in 1852, was designed by Richard Upjohn, notable architect of New York City's Trinity Church on Wall Street. His many churches were designed in the Gothic Revival style; this one is of particular interest as it illustrates the style in a wood vocabulary. St. John in the Wilderness is a wood frame building clad with board-and-batten siding. The majority of the building (excluding the chancel) rests on a 1966 cement block foundation to replace the original deteriorated stone foundation and to introduce the undercroft space for community use.

The building itself (Fig. 1) consists of a four bay nave, an entrance narthex and an apse facing East. The West façade is enhanced with an open frame bell cote – reconstructed in 2014 -- on the steeply pitched gable roof. The chancel is dominated by a triplet of simple lancet windows cut into the wall without molded surrounds. These are original. The gilt inscription around the chancel arch and the stenciling on the splayed inner surfaces of the window surrounds are not.

The interior of the Church is unadorned, featuring smooth plaster walls and minimal wood trim and moldings. Only one of the stained glass windows is original. Traditional is the center aisle plan and raised altar. The pews and altar furniture are all original, as designed by Upjohn. The best summary by architectural historian William Pierson Jr. is as follows: “As a work of architecture, the building is a masterpiece of distilled grace.”

Also designed by Upjohn, the Rectory (Fig. 2) was built in 1853. The main parsonage building consists of a two-story cottage-like building – with the same board-and-batten wood sheathing as the Church and a jerkin-head roof. A community room, Burke Hall, located under the original rectory, was dedicated in 1955, a single story office wing was added in 1991, and an open exterior porch was built, all of which were done in a style compatible with the original building. The Church was listed on the National Register for Historic Places in 1995. The entire St. John campus has been an integral part of the Copake Iron Works Historic District since 2007.

Capital Campaign for St. John in the Wilderness: Sustaining People, Place, and Peace, 2019 – 2022

To accomplish the needed repairs and desired enhancements to the buildings and landscape of St. John in the Wilderness, a program has been developed to address urgent and short-term needs as well as intermediate and long-term initiatives. Care will be given to respect and preserve the built historical and natural features of St. John’s campus; Fig. 3 shows present and envisioned landscape features in a Preliminary Landscape Plan prepared by Jamie Purinton, RLA, on July 12, 2018; this document may be found on the St. John website, www.stjohnw.org.

1. Connecting Past to Present

- Mechanical and electrical upgrades
- Interior church finishes
- Sacristy overhaul

2. Accessibility and Safety

- Foundation reinforcement
- New exterior ramp to front entrance of church
- New exterior stair and landscaping

3. Church in the Wilderness

- New pavilion
- New parking next to the rectory
- New paths, gathering places, exterior stairs
- Restoration of the cast-iron graveyard fencing and new seating

4. Implementing Sustainable Design Practices and Tying to Taconic State Park

- Rain garden and regrading of area west of rectory
- Blacktop replacement
- Interpretation of old railroad line, with pathways and landscaping

1. Connecting past to present

To preserve our historic and beloved church, mechanical and electrical upgrades, as identified by engineering report from Crawford & Assoc., need to be implemented. This includes replacing our two oil-burning boilers with high-efficiency propane-fired ones and replacing the aging fire/security systems. Additionally, the interior finishes of the church are in need of an uplift: from restoring the original pews, refinishing the wood floor, installing new carpeting at the aisle and nave, repainting throughout – including the unique gold-leaf stencils---, and reconstructing the communion rail; to modernizing the lighting and overhead fans. The sacristy needs to be overhauled, with new energy-saving insulation throughout, new walls and ceiling, new flooring, cabinetry, sinks and lighting.

Mechanical and electrical upgrades: \$43,000

Interior church finishes: \$35,000

Sacristy overhaul: \$21,000



Figure 4. Interior of St. John in the Wilderness, Christmas Eve, December 2018.

2. Accessibility and Safety

Our historic church needs to be easily and readily accessible to its parish and the community at large. We propose to remove the existing blacktop adjacent to the building, reinforce the foundation, introduce French drains at the whole perimeter of the edifice, and implement a native species environment surrounding the church, as proposed by our Landscape Architect Jamie Purinton. An accessible ramp, in keeping with the Richard Upjohn design, and a new stair from the undercroft (replacing the existing stair under the current Bilco door) would make our building inviting and safe to all.

Foundation reinforcement: \$35,000

New exterior ramp: \$20,000

New exterior stair and landscaping: \$21,000



Figure 5. Church exterior accessibility and safety issues.

3. Church in the Wilderness

We want to recapture and enhance our link to the outdoors. St. John in the Wilderness serves the community by hosting regular outdoor events, concerts and activities. Yearly church benefits are held under tents. However, a great amount of the area is hard to reach and not well used. Following the Landscape Master Plan by Jamie Purinton, we propose building a small pavilion -- with water and power--, new outdoor gathering places, accessible parking, paths throughout the site, improvements in the graveyard, and stairs where changes of grade occur.

New Pavilion: \$35,000

New parking next to the rectory: \$25,000

New paths, gathering places, exterior stairs: \$20,000



Figure 6. Graveyard improvements, such as benches, are needed.



Figure 7. Cast-iron graveyard fencing needs replacement.

4. Implementing Sustainable Design Practices and Tying to Taconic State Park

Sustainable design follows the tradition of the picturesque movement, by celebrating rustic details and local materials, featuring old trees and respecting native species. This landscape can be improved in terms of sustainability by updating the storm water design. Storm water management is particularly important at our erosion-prone steep inclines, which are adjacent to a pristine stream. Again following Jamie Purinton's Landscape Plan, we propose a new rain garden (capturing rain water from the roof gutters); replacing blacktop surfaces with surfaces that allow water penetration, minimizing lawn areas, and surrounding all buildings with woodland and fern landscaping. French drains and added AC/dehumidification will be provided to reduce water penetration and high humidity in the undercroft. We also want to enhance the area where the old railroad lines to The Copake Iron Works used to be and make that accessible.

Rain garden and regarding of area West of Rectory: \$20,000

Blacktop replacement: \$25,000

Interpretation of old railroad line, with pathways and landscaping: \$15,000



Figure 8. Need to improve parking areas on site.

Summary of the Capital Campaign, 2019 – 2022

1. Connecting Past to Present

- Mechanical and electrical upgrades \$ 43,000
- Interior church finishes 35,000
- Sacristy overhaul 23,000

2. Accessibility and Safety

- Foundation reinforcement \$ 35,000
- New exterior ramp 20,000
- New exterior stair and landscaping 21,000

3. Church in the Wilderness

- New pavilion \$ 35,000
- New parking next to the rectory 25,000
- New paths, gathering places, exterior stairs 20,000
- Restoration of the cast-iron graveyard fencing and new seating 15,000

4. Implementing Sustainable Design Practices and Tying to Taconic State Park

- Rain garden and regrading of area west of rectory \$ 20,000
- Blacktop replacement 25,000
- Interpretation of old railroad line, with pathways and landscaping 15,000

Total \$332,000

Conclusion

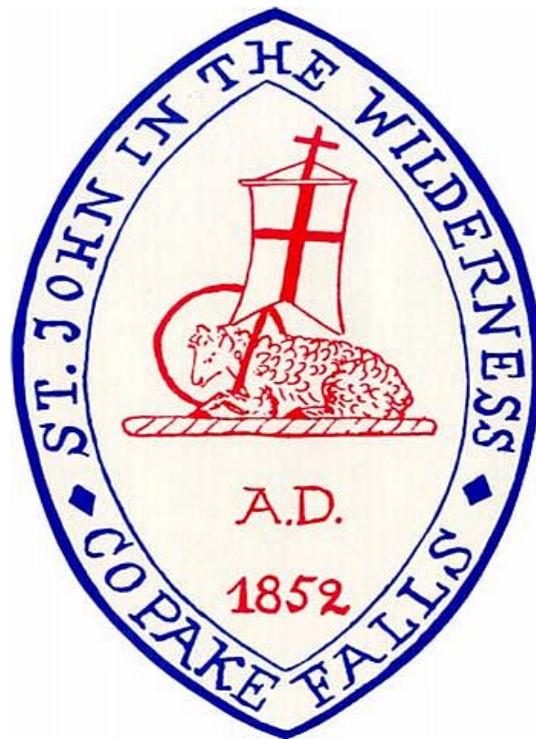
The goal of the *Capital Campaign for St. John in the Wilderness: Sustaining People, Place, and Peace, 2019 – 2022* is to raise \$332,000 over three years. These Capital Campaign goals are beyond St. John's annual stewardship goals.

The plan for this campaign is fiscally conservative, and priority is given to those projects that address immediate and near-term needs to preserve St. John's infrastructure, to increase handicap access, to improve parking, and to upgrade the Church's interior, all items consistent with the MEP (Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing) Assessment Report from Crawford & Associates Engineering and the survey of parishioners on their capital project priorities.

The Church of St. John in the Wilderness is blessed to be the custodian of beautiful, historic buildings sited on a verdant landscape that is nestled in the wilderness of the surrounding Taconic State Park. It is the current generation's responsibility to care for and improve upon these resources for future generations. Sustainability of people, place, and peace is the goal.

Thank you for your generosity to St. John's! The Capital Campaign Committee looks forward to working with you on finding the projects outlined in this brochure about which you most care.

-- Brian Boom and Lucy Eldridge, Capital Campaign Committee Chairs



Church of St. John in the Wilderness

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