



October 27, 2022

Dear Friends,

It is a privilege to serve on the Vestry of St. John's in the Mountains.

I remember my parents and extended family serving on the Vestry of the parish where I was raised. They led by example, often saying to my brother and me: "To whom much is given, much is expected." They taught me to listen for God's call for my life and to be open to possibilities, opportunities and challenges.

In the early 2000s I served on the Vestry of All Saints in Hoboken, NJ. The end of my term coincided with my engagement and a move to Arlington, VA in December 2006. Many years and three children later, my family came to our vacation home in Stowe, VT on March 12, 2020. I thought this was going to be a two-week stay while COVID "blew over" in the DC area, but, as happened to many during the pandemic, COVID caused us to modify our plans. We're still here, flatlanders finding our way in a new community.

When it became clear that we would be calling Stowe home for the foreseeable future, I timidly joined Zoom services with St. John's. I gradually began to recognize some faces, and I learned more about the parish while participating in the annual audit in the summer of 2021. I was surprised when Father Rick asked me to serve on the Vestry, but I prayerfully considered the request and discerned that God was calling me to serve in this community.

At times, serving on the Vestry can feel like a lot of work, but I am excited by the conversations and ideas that have been generated during the sabbatical process, the possibilities of new initiatives and directions, and what some may even call a renewed sense of purpose. On a personal note, I'm particularly thrilled by the possibility of exploring different worship times, the integration of technology to make services accessible to those near and far, and the myriad ways our physical building can be used and shared with others to deepen our parish's connection to the broader community around it.

Change is on the horizon, and the future is uncertain, but I am filled with hope and excitement. I hope you will join me in supporting the ongoing ministries of St. John's through the offering of your willing and hopeful spirit, your time, and through your financial commitment.

On behalf of the Vestry, I invite you to join with us in making a financial commitment to the future of St. John's. We will have an in-gathering and blessing of the pledge cards on November 13th, which coincides with the return of Father Rick from his sabbatical. If you cannot be present for this celebration, you may mail your pledge card to:

St. John's in the Mountains
PO Box 1175
Stowe, VT 05672

With gratitude for the blessing of being part of this community,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary".

Mary T. Stiles-Hendler
Co-Warden, St. John's in the Mountains

St. John's in the Mountains Episcopal Church

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