St. John on the Mountain
2010 Parish Profile
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A Collect for our Centennial

“Almighty God, heavenly Father, you sent the Holy Spirit at the birth of your Church to lead us into all truth; open the hearts and minds of your servants to receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit, that we may be guided and governed by your presence in the growth, renewal, and mission of the Church of St. John on the Mountain; may we all be of one heart and one soul, united in one holy bond of love, work, and service, and, grant that all who seek and worship you on this sacred ground may find and know you here; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever, Amen.”
The Episcopal Church of St. John on the Mountain is a close and caring community of Christians that offers a warm welcome to any who enter its doors. Its bedrock is its history and tradition; its life is its spirituality and faith; its future is the strength of its people, their optimism, their leadership capacity and their potential to offer spiritual and practical support both within and beyond the parish. We are inclusive, and we are strong in our Christian faith, our Episcopal traditions and our support of the leadership of the Diocese of New Jersey and the Episcopal Church.

The Church is set in a serene environment on the top of a small ‘mountain’ in Somerset County, New Jersey, among woods and fields, grand century-old estates, large modern-day mansions, new condominiums, cottages and working and gentleman farms. The center of the small town of Bernardsville lies three miles away.

Our community has a high average standard of living and high relative levels of educational attainment. Parishioners have been affected to varying degrees by the economic decline of the past two years. (Many livelihoods are dependent on the financial, pharmaceutical and telecommunications industries.) We are professionals and service workers, carpenters and landscape gardeners. We are teachers, politicians, captains of industry, small business owners, not-for-profit managers and entrepreneurs. Politically we are diverse and not shy to debate it!
Our parish survey (conducted in the Fall and Winter of 2009/10), and a more recent review of our parish demographics, reveal an active and vocal segment over 50 years of age. Among these members are parishioners who have spent 40 or 50 years steeped in the traditions of our church. Some come from the same “Mountain” families that funded St. John’s chapel privately for many years before it became a separate parish in 1949. As might be expected, some of these members tend to be somewhat conservative and resistant to changes in our worship and other aspects of our Church life.

One of our challenges is to care for our increasing aging population. Our many older members have given much to the church throughout their long lives. We are charged to provide the pastoral care they need and deserve.

Due to the energy of our previous Rector and the diligence of our Church School Director, the last 10 years saw significant growth in the number of young families, although this has declined somewhat in the past two years. Younger families say they are here for their children – to give their children the benefits of our caring community, our church family, our Christian teaching and our faith example.

As children reach their teens, the families are noticeably “missing in action.” The 30–50 year olds are poorly represented in the survey and in most activities and some entire families have drifted away from active participation in the Church.

Like many churches, St. John on the Mountain has experienced an overall decline in membership over the past few years and is facing challenging financial circumstances. Progress has been made in 2010. Major issues for us and our new rector are: to instill new energy, attract new members and continue to improve financial stability. The success of this endeavor rests in our strong spirit, reflecting our devotion to Jesus Christ and to our beloved Church, which has nurtured our families and our community for over 100 years.

We are blessed with a wonderful environment in which to worship and study, pray and play. Our Sunday services are joyful occasions, raised up by the magnificent music that is the gift of our organist and choirmaster and our excellent choirs.

Coffee hours are well-attended and our pot-luck suppers are renowned. The beautiful new parish hall, built as a result of the capital campaign associated with our centennial in 2007, provides us with a resounding space for all our events. Despite the challenges that we face at St John on the Mountain, we are Episcopalians, we enjoy each other and love to have fun.
The centennial capital campaign was launched in 2005 to support a $4.2 million church renovation. The result is widely admired although there was concern among some parishioners about the amount of the investment and the decision by the vestry to take out a $1.2 million loan to complete the project as planned. At the same time, we maintained a vibrant spiritual and outreach program reflecting the passions of the parish and our rector. By the time of our centennial in 2007, signs of stress were showing. Our reach had exceeded our grasp. In 2008, the vestry reluctantly voted to scale back our ambitions in an effort to live within our means.

Uncertainty about his future, including the housing of his family, contributed to the departure of our Rector, an event that caused considerable pain and anxiety within our parish.

The past two years have seen a slow, steady healing process. Our Interim Rector has called us to do more with less, to volunteer and lead, to rebuild our spiritual community and put our differences behind us. Construction is complete. After a 2010 capital campaign that exceeds $600,000 in new commitments; our debt is projected to be paid down to less than $600,000 by the end of this year.

Although we are experiencing the start of a turn-around in 2010, there is still much work to do and many challenges ahead for our new rector, the vestry and the entire parish. We must continue to attract new members, care more about each other, restore our pledge to the Diocese, rebuild our Outreach program, repay our loan and replenish our reserves. We are in search of a new spiritual leader to guide us down this path.

The Right Rector

“... not the best rector in the Episcopal Church, but the right rector for our Church”

The qualities we seek in our Rector are founded in the vows of the priesthood as outlined in the Book of Common Prayer, and further based on the desires and needs of our parish.

First and foremost we seek a Rector with spiritual maturity (though not necessarily of mature years), who will minister to the spiritual needs and guidance of our congregation. Our Rector will be reflective and intentional, articulate and communicative. It is important to our members that the Rector has a strong liturgical foundation and the ability to deliver an imaginative and inspirational sermon. We love our music and we pray that our new Rector will share in that love.

Our new Rector must be able to build on our strengths and help us overcome our challenges. We seek a leader who is not afraid to face the temporal, practical and financial issues of this church while keeping spirituality at the forefront. We would have a warm, caring person with a deep and fundamental love of Jesus Christ, the Episcopal Church and his or her flock. We seek a patient and responsive leader, with a willingness to be pastorally present to parishioners in hours of deep need, as well as on occasions of joy and celebration.

The new Rector should possess a generosity of spirit and the willingness to accept us as we are.
At the same time, he or she must lead us, by the virtues of hospitality and outreach, to attract new members to our community; to draw in those who are searching for a spiritual home. We are not seeking to grow into a different church; our young people, in particular, have expressed a desire for our new Rector to “like us and be like us, rather than to try to change us.” This does not mean that we will not welcome growth, or that we are not willing to try new ideas - just that we want to maintain many aspects of our blessed life at St. John on the Mountain. As our Bishop exhorts us to exclaim, “We love our Church!”

The Rector will oversee Christian education and formation, teach the Gospel by word and example, prepare candidates for baptism and confirmation and develop programs to enrich the spiritual formation of congregants of all ages. We are looking for a “people person”.... one who can easily and naturally engage and connect with our members (of all ages and genders), one who has good interpersonal skills and one who will be open and accessible to all.

The Rector will serve as chief steward and administrator of our parish; we seek an energetic person who has strong leadership, management, communication, and organizational skills, and who works well with others both as a leader and “on the team”. A positive attitude, listening skills, and a good sense of humor will serve us all well.

Above all, we want a person seeking a challenge, with the prospect of reaping significant pastoral and spiritual rewards, who ultimately will be at peace with his or her role as the Rector of this active yet intimate parish.

**Right Onward!**

“Dear God, please give the new Rector of St. John on the Mountain:
10 arms to reach out and embrace our whole family and draw us together,
100 ears to listen to all our dreams, 1000 heads full of wisdom to guide us,
10,000 hours of patience to put up with our foibles,
100,000 pounds of strength to support us and those we support,
....and a gigantic heart to love us all. Amen.”
Over the past decade St. John on the Mountain has been ‘a pastoral church flirting with becoming a program church’. Our size and our ambitions, during a period of growth and relative stability during the 1990’s, made many believe that we should add to our staff and offer a wider range of programs to people of all ages and stages. An Assistant Rector was hired after a period without one.

In 2010 we are largely content to be a pastoral church, as reflected in the Fall 2009 parish survey. But we still harbor some of the ambitions of a program church. There is an overwhelming desire to retain the status quo for our two most treasured programs, Christian Education and Music, and to add more programs, especially for teens and twenties and for seniors. Just over half of the respondents to the survey feel that the parish would be best served by a full-time rector and a part-time assistant, although many feel that one full-time rector will suffice. This question did not address the issue of what we can afford.

Spiritual depth and “the way our members minister to each other” both garner support as goals, while social action is considered important by a smaller percentage of survey respondents.

Parishioners value highly the strong sense of community that abounds at SJOTM. Respondents come here to meet spiritual needs and for friendship and fellowship; the sharing, caring and bonding; the love. They come for the comfort and familiarity of the place.

The young people of our Parish express a desire to engage more with the Church, even if it is – for some of them – only during college breaks and summers. One concern that they have is that there are too few of them to make a success of any program. We need to find ways to meet this need. Some seniors feel that pastoral care and programs for seniors need more support.

As our parish is diverse, so are our parishioners’ views of St John on the Mountain, now and in the future, as expressed in responses to the survey. For example:

- **Children or Seniors?** 31% of respondents would choose a pastor who is good with children, while 28% would choose one who is good with seniors. We don’t see this as mutually exclusive. We want both!

- **How traditional a theology?** 46% want a pastor who represents a more eclectic and ecumenical theology,
while 39% prefers a pastor with an orthodox point of view with regard to our denomination.

- **Charity begins at home – or abroad?** For half the respondents the amount of focus on Outreach is appropriate, while 20 respondents thought it too much and 29 not enough.
- **The Diocese – what’s fair?** Recent cuts in the Diocesan Pledge are viewed by many as unavoidable, while others believe that it is a sacred duty to pay our Fair Share. The Vestry has made a commitment to restore both Outreach and the Diocesan Pledge to previous budget levels as soon as this becomes financially possible.

If these divergent views can be summarized, our vision for the future is of a secure, spiritual community that is growing gently as the word spreads about who we are and who we want to become: loving followers of Christ, full of hope, generous to each other and to our Church, financially solvent, prudent and self-supporting, and, unburdened of the weight of economic and personal pressures, together seeking a closer walk with God.

> “May St John on the Mountain be the best it can be, for Jesus Christ and for the world. No less. So help us God.”

### The Challenges

**Make a home for all.**

Across the spectrum, parishioners see St. John on the Mountain as their “Home Church.” These include some who love the Church but feel they have been somehow abandoned. We need to offer them spiritual leadership, pastoral support and attractive programs to draw them back among us. Our mountaintop location and the demographics of the region make it difficult to attract a more diverse population. We desire, however, that neither color, race, nor sexual orientation shall create a barrier for those wishing to worship God on this Mountain.

**Sustain our own community and reach out to support others.**

We must restore the balance between supporting the needs of our own community and reaching out to others financially, practically and spiritually. We are proud of St. John’s strong tradition of Outreach and active participation in our Diocese and our Companion Dioceses. We seek to recognize this as a fundamental part of our lives as Christians.
and bring back its spirit to the heart of our parish. Between 2000 and 2008 we created strong relationships in El Salvador, then our Companion Diocese. We are continuing along this path in 2010 with active engagement with the Diocese of Ecuador Central, which became our new Companion Diocese in 2009.

**Restore trust and openness between the leadership and parish.**

We need to trust our leadership to make the right choices, even when they are very hard ones. And we require of them a level of accountability and transparency sufficient to inspire and increase that trust. We want to know that our leadership, in addressing our earthly concerns, is guided by God. We pray that our new Rector and lay leadership will work closely and effectively together towards commonly accepted goals. We look for deeper listening and more open communication among and between leadership and parishioners, and for the participation of the parish in decisions that significantly affect the future of our Church.

We need leaders who will inspire the hope, faith and love of all our parishioners in their Church -and also their generosity towards its support.

**Finances**

The economic downturn of the past two years has affected St. John on the Mountain adversely, as the church - along with sister institutions - has struggled with declines in attendance and pledge support. In the case of our church, this decline has been exacerbated by the transition in the church leadership and the earlier decision to add net debt to our balance sheet to complete the building project that was started with the Centennial funds in 2007.

We are operating at a deficit in 2010, as we have in recent years. However, the Vestry is committed to producing a balanced budget for 2011 and has already made strides in this direction. Difficult decisions have been made to reduce and rationalize costs. The average pledge has increased to over $3,000 per pledge, and the 2010 Capital Campaign has reduced the debt by half, savings thousands of dollars in future debt repayments. The turnaround has begun. Strong management and trusted leadership is needed to ensure that we meet our goals.

A preliminary budget for 2011 appears in *Appendix A.*

**Parish Statistics**

**Source: The Parochial Report**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010 (Jan – Oct)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>133 Average Attendance</td>
<td>123 Average Attendance</td>
<td>114 Average Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Baptisms</td>
<td>11 Baptisms</td>
<td>4 Baptisms</td>
</tr>
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<td>22 Confirmations</td>
<td>0 Confirmation*</td>
<td>10 Confirmations</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Marriages</td>
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<td>1 Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Burials</td>
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<td>9 Burials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* 2-year program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 2-year program
Worship is the center of our Parish life. We are dedicated to the growth of individuals at every age in worship that challenges and nourishes us. We reach beyond our physical space through education and outreach, seeking to meet our needs and those of the larger community.

We offer two services on Sunday mornings in the months of September through the middle of June. Holy Eucharist, Rite I is celebrated at 8AM in the Chapel. There is usually no music at this service. A Choral Holy Eucharist, Rite II, is celebrated at 10AM in the main sanctuary. Adult Education and Rite-13 are provided between the two services at 9AM. There is a single choral service at 9:30 AM on Sundays during the summer months.

The Church has an active Altar Guild, as well as Acolytes, Lay Eucharistic Ministers, Lay Readers, and Ushers. Members of the Vestry rotate weekly as “greeters” at the Church doors.

The Congregation expects a challenging, thought-provoking sermon. The style of prayer tends to be conservative; there are no personal intercessions.

The Music Program at St. John on the Mountain is considered one of its major attractions, with many respondents to the Parish Questionnaire listing “Music” as what initially attracted them to St. John’s. The Choirs, which consist entirely of volunteers, offer an opportunity for singers of all ages to participate in our worship services and in the “Music on the Mountain” Concert Series. The Church has had only two music directors in 50 years, both very talented and much loved musicians.
Activities & Ministries

Christian Education ~ 2009/2010

Along with Music, the Christian Education program at St John on the Mountain is one of the two most valued programs. On the average Sunday about 55 students attend Sunday School classes from pre-K through Rite 13.

Rite 13 Journey to Adulthood Program

In the fall of 2010 we will begin a new two-year confirmation class. They will be confirmed in the spring of 2012.

Other programs offered by the Church include:

- Junior High Youth Group
- Senior High Youth Group
- Adult Christian Formation
- Men’s and Women’s Bible Study

St. John’s Nursery School

St John’s has a successful, growing, separately managed, non-denominational Nursery School that is available to all children between the ages of 2 and 5 who live in the local area. This year a Day Care Program has been added for infants. The School acts as an entry point into the Church for some families and also generates some rental income to the parish. The Rector is a non-voting member of the Board of St. John’s Nursery School.

Fellowship & Fundraising

The major Fellowship activities at St. John’s are the Mountain Art Show, Simple Suppers, Men’s and Women’s Bible Study, and Mission Outreach.

The Annual Mountain Art Show is St. John’s major fundraiser, raising $25,000 to $35,000 per event in recent years. It is a large and ambitious undertaking involving many parishioners. 2010 marks the 30th Anniversary of this juried Art Show, which is held at the end of October.
The 2009 Art Show in the New Parish Hall

Simple Suppers bring randomly selected groups of parishioners together to share a meal several times during the year. This allows parishioners who might not know each other get a chance to meet for fellowship outside the setting of the church.

Outreach Projects. St. John’s sponsors several local Outreach projects. In 2007 St. John’s assisted in the building of four Habitat for Humanity residences in downtown Bernardsville, one of which was funded by a $45,000 contribution from our Centennial Campaign. We continue to support Raritan Valley Habitat in its building projects throughout Somerset and Hunterdon Counties.

Every month members of the Parish serve lunch at Grace Church Soup Kitchen in Plainfield, NJ. The Somerset County Food Bank is supported by many of our Parish family. The “Adopt-a-Family” program pairs Parish families with needy families in Somerset County by providing Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter dinners.

The growing knitters’ group and Prayer Shawl Ministry has reached out to parishioners and non-parishioners in need, as well as the cancer unit at Morristown Memorial Hospital.

Over 50 parishioners, including children, visited El Salvador when it was our companion diocese. The parish continues active involvement in our new companion diocese in Ecuador.

Pastoral Care. St John’s has a dedicated Pastoral Care Committee that provides care for those members of the Parish who are experiencing health problems, both physical and emotional. Members of the Committee are available to administer the sacraments to those who are homebound and would like to receive a visit combined with communion.
The Church and Its Environs

Our Facilities

The Church of St John on the Mountain is a beautiful stone and stucco building in a wooded setting at the top of Mt. Harmony Road in Bernardsville, NJ. The Church building housing the main sanctuary was built in the 1960s. It is a well proportioned space seating up to 325 worshippers. Overflow at especially well attended events is accommodated in the narthex and in a newly opened space in the transept.

The Chapel, the original building on the property, was consecrated in 1907. This charming space is used for 8AM Sunday services and for other services such as Ash Wednesday and the Easter Vigil. Occasionally weddings and funerals take place in the Chapel.

The organ in the main sanctuary, a three manual 50-stop instrument built by Petty Madden of Hopewell, NJ, was installed in 1996. It was designed by our former music director, the late John Low Baldwin. The organ in the Chapel is a 9-stop tracker designed by CB Fisk of Gloucester, MA.

Major renovations were made in 2007-2009 using funds from the Centennial Campaign. A new Parish Hall was constructed with a newly renovated kitchen and bathrooms. The Sacristies of the church and the chapel were completely renovated and expanded and the music and choir areas were improved. Air conditioning was installed in the main building and many code and safety issues were addressed. The buildings are now fully handicapped-accessible. The ground floor of the Parish Hall houses the St. John’s Nursery School. It is state certified and is a member of the National Association of Education of Young Children.

Adjacent to the Church is the Parish House, also of stone and stucco built in 1960 to house our Rectors. The building served as the Rectory of the Church until 2008. The Parish House contains three offices, 2 ½ baths, a meeting room, an office workroom, kitchen, and a basement. There is also a one-room apartment with bathroom above the two-car garage.
St. John’s owns a five-acre parcel of land across the road from the Church and Parish House that provides a large parking area and informal recreation space. It is partly paved (for handicapped access), partly gravel, and partly grass. There is a smaller parking area along the side of the chapel, which abuts the Nursery School classrooms and the Memorial Garden.

The Memorial Garden is a tranquil space among the trees behind the Church and Chapel. It was established in 1971 as a burial ground for the ashes of parishioners who choose to be laid to rest on the Mountain.

The Surrounding Area

The Community of Bernardsville

Bernardsville is located in an area known as the Somerset Hills. Parishioners come primarily from three New Jersey counties: Somerset, Morris and Hunterdon. Nearby towns include Basking Ridge to the immediate east and Morristown, eight miles to the north. Bernardsville is about an hour from New York City and has both train and bus service to the city. Princeton is approximately 30 miles to the south and Philadelphia is 1 1/2 hours away.

As of the Census of 2000 the population was 7,345. It was 93.9% white, of which 6% were Hispanic (predominantly from Peru, Paraguay and Ecuador) and about another 4% belonging to other minorities. There were 2,723 households. School enrollment was 1,771. The median household income in 2000 was $104,162, and the per capita income $69,854.

In addition to St. John on the Mountain and St. Bernard's, Bernardsville also has a Methodist Church, a Presbyterian Church, a Christian Science congregation, and a Catholic Church. There is a two hundred year old Presbyterian church in nearby Basking Ridge, as well as a Jewish Synagogue. The town of Mendham includes an Episcopal Church, and the Episcopal Convent of St. John the Baptist. Bernardsville has an excellent public school system.
The Diocese of New Jersey

The State of New Jersey is divided into two Episcopal Dioceses, the Diocese of Newark, with its diocesan center in Newark, and the Diocese of New Jersey, with its Diocesan Offices and Cathedral (Trinity) in Trenton. St. John on the Mountain is located at the northernmost point of the Diocese of New Jersey. The Diocese comprises 160 congregations in the southern two-thirds of the State of New Jersey. The Right Reverend George Councell was consecrated 11th Bishop of New Jersey in October 2003. St. John on the Mountain is a member of the Watchung Convocation.

For further information about The Church of St. John on the Mountain, please visit our website; www.sjotm.org.
## Appendix A

### Preliminary 2011 Budget

*As of November 18, 2010*

<table>
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<th>2009 (Actual)</th>
<th>2010 (Budget)</th>
<th>2011 (Preliminary)</th>
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<tr>
<td>No. Pledges</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>114</td>
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<td>Pledge Amount</td>
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<td>Average Pledge</td>
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### Income

- **Pledge Income**: $355,927, $339,000, $339,873
- **Contributions**: $68,354, $65,000, $68,000
- **Altar Guild/Flowers/Music**: $10,920, $10,000, $10,000
- **Interest Income**: $793, $500, $250
- **Fundraisers**: $34,677, $40,000, $40,000
- **Nursery School**: $10,920, $10,000, $10,000
- **Special Contributions**: $35,000, $0, $0

**Total Income**: $505,671, $469,500, $474,123

### Expenses

#### Programs

- **Altar Guild**: $9,177, $9,800, $9,800
- **Music**: $5,620, $4,800, $4,800
- **Worship**: $1,876, $1,350, $1,350
- **Christian Ed**: $2,937, $2,400, $2,400
- **Youth Groups**: $479, $1,040, $1,040
- **Sunday Nursery**: $6,363, $3,860, $3,860
- **Adult Ed**: $700, $2,000, $2,000
- **Visiting Clergy**: $2,300, $2,750, $2,750
- **Fellowship**: $2,650, $2,240, $2,240

**Total Programs**: $32,103, $30,240, $30,240

#### Personnel

- **Rector Compensation (1)**: $98,239, $100,742
- **Rector Housing Allowance (1)**: $16,000, $16,000
- **Organist/Choirmaster**: $55,620, $52,839
- **Administrator**: $58,404, $34,020
- **Sunday School**: $20,218, $15,163
- **Bookkeeper**: $16,848, $12,636

**Total Personnel**: $335,895, $265,328, $231,400
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<th>Operations</th>
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<td>Outreach Deferred from 2008</td>
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<td>Mission Outreach</td>
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<td>Diocesan Pledge</td>
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<td>GTS</td>
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<td>Rector's Discretionary Fund</td>
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<td><strong>$39,000</strong></td>
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<th>2008</th>
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<td>Rector Transition/Search</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>($86,950)</td>
<td>($75,051)</td>
<td>$1,053</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: 1. Rector’s total compensation (including salary of $66,361 p.a.) is budgeted to allow the maximum (10) years from ordination at a Level IV church, plus housing allowance. 2. Loan repayments based on $500K pay down in 2010 triggering rate reduction in 2011.
Post Script

St John on the Mountain is ready to welcome its next Rector. The leadership is ready to face the challenges together with whoever is called. The Parish is ready for the next phase of its joyous journey of faith and fellowship.

“Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, who knowest our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking: we beseech thee to have compassion upon our infirmities; and those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask, vouchsafe to give us for the worthiness of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Prepared on behalf of The Vestry of The Church of St John on the Mountain, Bernardsville, NJ by the Profile/Self-Study Committee. October 2010.
And, with God’s help, bathed in prayer.
Bishop Councell and a parishioner contemplate God’s world beyond the Mountain