

## Youth Ministry Annual Report



2020 was another extraordinary year for St. John's middle and high school students. Our year started strong with a spirit, laughter filled weekend in Gatlinburg, TN on our winter retreat in late January. The theme for the weekend was a decades event and our students, particularly, enjoyed a silent disco on Saturday evening of the retreat.

Meanwhile, our Fill the Bowl planning team was hard at work planning what we had no idea would be our last in-person gathering for some time. Despite Corona-virus, our students were able to raise nearly \$44,000.00 for The Lunch Project through our Nascar themed 30 hour fasting and service event.



St. John's students were then invited to a weekly virtual EYC meeting from March through May and then periodically through August for fellowship and fun games. Jillianne and Sarah offered socially distanced porch sits to our youth throughout the summer! Our primary Christian education offering each week became our Thoughtful Thursday devotion offered each week via our Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook accounts. At the end of May our youth offered a virtual youth Sunday worship experience; the same day our graduates enjoyed a drive-parade and the day



was a lovely celebration of their accomplishments. In late August a weekly safe, socially distanced, and masked in-person gathering became our norm. The primary objective of these meetings was to offer students a safe and low-key place to land each week in the midst of the stress of the pandemic, quarantining, and virtual school. We offered a modified fall retreat day in November at the Whitewater Center

for our middle and high school youth.

In December, our senior class headed up our annual Christmas wreath fundraiser, selling 115 wreaths. Christmas trees were again not available from our supplier but we hope to be able to return to that offering next year. One unexpected blessing of Covid-tide was that having some extra time meant that room 309 could receive a mid school year re-vamp in the form of some fresh paint and new couches. We can't wait to fill the room with students!



While attendance has been understandably lower than normal, we are so grateful to God and our very generous Parish for the opportunity and resources to continue to be in ministry to our youth. The social, spiritual, and emotional opportunities we are able to offer for our youth over this past year are meeting the needs of some of our youth. However, none of this would be possible without the plentiful and generous presence of our 30 adult EYC volunteers. Each of our crews is blessed to have two adult advisors gathering with them each Sunday evening on the SJE side lawn and being available virtually to their crews. We are currently meeting in small groups of 15 or less each week spread out across the side lawn and garden area and cannot wait for the moment when **all** of our youth will feel safe enough to gather in-person once again.

