



## Alison Forbes

**1. Please write a brief biography about your time at St. Patrick's, possibly including what drew you to this church.**

I was raised within the Church of England, baptized aged 7 weeks, confirmed at 11 years and as far back as I remember sang in the church choir with the whole family. I left home aged 19 to begin Nurse Training in London. There I realized I had a faith that was personal and very real, it was not simply a fruit of my upbringing and would need nurture. I attended a number of churches during that time but never really felt at home until Peter and I found All Hallows. We were full and active members (and still maintain close connections there) 1989 thru 2008, when we accepted a company move to Atlanta. We knew the Episcopal Church was in communion and so began our search for church home here that was local, welcoming and inclusive. After a short search enter ST PATRICKS.

**2. What keeps you at St. Patrick's?**

Those factors mentioned above and in no particular order: The liturgy; abundant opportunity to grow in faith and love; so many super IN and OUT ministries from which to give to and receive; ALL of the congregation, I generally attend the 8 am service (and when I can the Healing Service on Wednesdays) this service suits my churchmanship and spiritual needs right now. However I value enormously the variety of Worship services we have and the challenge and sometimes discomfort this presents me; St. Pat's is inclusive and as such fairly diverse, a representation of the world outside our walls and a reminder when we don't all agree, that we share so much more than we are different.; as the hymns say 'Faith is my stronghold' and 'Through all the changing scenes of life.....' I know that when all around me might feel unsteady, my faith and ability to be part of the liturgy in this glorious place, gives strength and stability. I feel blessed to take my place at the table and join with past, present and future members of the church throughout time.

**3. What gift(s) do you bring to vestry service at this time? (this is a discernment question, a convergence of gifts the giver has to share and the needs of this church)**

As you may know it is not easy for many Brits to speak out loud about our gifts, so to help me a little I will list some, that others have shone a light on for me! Much faith, love and an open heart; pragmatism; wisdom; sense of humour; optimism; always supportive not judgmental; organized and a 'completer-finisher. I offer last year's Retreat and my service to Altar Guild as examples at St. Pat's; I am happy to be part of an effective team, but am well able to lead if required. I was the Chairman of the Parkinson's Nurse Specialist Association for a number of years and on the Vestry at our London church; ability to hear others and then help the group find common ground to aid decision making or compromise; expert communication skills - honed during 30+ years and counting as a Neurological Nurse; emotionally intelligent and mature; reliable and a good timekeeper; assertive when required; able to set effective boundaries; a love of diversity.

# Nominees for Vestry



## Doug Carlson

**1. Please write a brief biography about your time at St. Patrick's, possibly including what drew you to this church.**

I've been a participating member of St. Pat's for roughly three years. During that time I've been fortunate to be involved in the Malachi's toy party (three years); Wayne Judge golf tournament committee (two years); 2015 youth mission trip to Harrisburg, PA; YEA Adult leader; Brotherhood of St. Andrew's; Usher.

When thinking about what has drawn me and my family to St. Patrick's, I believe it is the welcoming feeling the parish showed to our entire family. This is a place where all of us (Judi, Natalia and Jeremy) can come and take away something fulfilling each week.

**2. What keeps you at St. Patrick's**

Friendships, the meaningful work in which the parish engages, the warmth and sincerity of all the people, the openness to encourage the discovery of what ministry and faith means to me as an individual and last but certainly not least, the desire to be a part of the energy that is happening within St. Patrick's right now.

**3. What gift(s) do you bring to vestry services at this time? (this is a discernment question, a convergence of gifts the giver has to share the needs of this church).**

I believe my true gifts are yet to be uncovered and being a part of St. Patrick's provides me the space and spiritual support to discover them. What I can give to St. Patrick's through contribution to the Vestry is the desire to continue giving time in various ministries, to support our spiritual community under the guidance of our Clergy and the desire to try new ideas that help to continue strengthening and growing this unique experience we all call St. Pat's.



## Sean Dolan

**1. Please write a brief biography about your time at St. Patrick's, possibly including what drew you to this church.**

My family and I started coming to St. Patrick's in 2010. We had been looking for a new spiritual home for several months, after feeling lost for some time in our previous tradition. We were impressed with the people we met at St. Patrick's, and the patience everyone showed our wonderful but crazy kids. But really, it was seeing Jesus holding 100 helium balloons on Pentecost that really sealed the deal for us. Since then, I have become a Stephen Minister, attended numerous Arts Retreats (I love that St. Patrick's has a thing called an "Arts Retreat"), and most significantly, become a Sunday School teacher. (That is the thing that has surprised me the most - never in a million years would I have imagined teaching Sunday School to middle school kids, much less for four years)

### **2. What keeps you at St. Patrick's?**

St. Patrick's is a wonderful and open place for me. For reasons I don't fully understand, when I attend services at St. Patrick's, my mind stops racing, and there is a lot of room in my head to think, and to just be. I love the depth of faith that I see and experience there, and I love even more the comfortable way that faith coexists with profound doubt. As I once put it, St. Patrick's won't give you all the answers, but it's the best place I've ever found to experience the questions.

**3. What gift(s) do you bring to vestry service at this time? (this is a discernment question, a convergence of gifts the giver has to share and the needs of this church)**

I bring faith and joy, and on my best days, cleverness around tricky problems.



## Autumn Toms—Youth Representative

Autumn is a student at Dunwoody High School. She is an avid learner and reader. Autumn love all things music! She plays cello, piano, ukulele, and loves listening her favorite bands. Autumn is a Senior Girl Scout and is working towards her Gold Award. She loves playing tennis. Autumn is an amazing, awesome, and fun big sister to her two younger sisters.



## Patrick Finlen

**1. Please write a brief biography about your time at St. Patrick's, possibly including what drew you to this church.**

I was raised in the Catholic faith, and upon reaching adulthood I attended services periodically. It's not that I didn't believe, I just did not feel a connection. Beginning in 2012 I started attending St. Patrick's on a regular basis.

The thing I enjoy most about St. Patrick's is its commitment to serving others. The ministry that most impresses me is Malachi's Storehouse. I became involved with this service group several years ago and am still active with the Saturday morning mobile food pantry.

### **2. What keeps you at St. Patrick's?**

What keeps me coming back to St. Patrick's is its sense of community. Even though I attended Catholic services for a number of years I never became involved. I am not blaming the Catholic church for my lack of involvement I just didn't feel I belonged within the community. It was ok that I went to weekly services and tithed, but that was the extent of my belonging. At St. Patrick's I don't get that feeling of isolation.

Another reason for my staying with St. Patrick's is its strength of inclusiveness. This is exhibited in the phrase "All are welcome, all are welcome". I not only get to hear this weekly, but get to observe it at Malachi's Storehouse.

**3. What gift(s) do you bring to vestry service at this time? (this is a discernment question, a convergence of gifts the giver has to share and the needs of this church)**

After careful consideration, I believe the gift that I can bring to serve St. Patrick's is my commitment to serve others. Ways this can be done is utilizing my organizational skills, willingness to work with others, and belief that everyone has something to bring to the table to solve problems.

I further believe that, as a parish, we need to have a strong commitment to our youth for they are the future of St. Patrick's. This can be done in numerous ways, such as illustrating our commitment to assist others and inclusiveness.