

Parish Profile

St. Paul's Episcopal Church Vergennes Vermont



Mission Statement

Saint Paul's mission is to be a community reflecting and demonstrating God's compassion and love to all through prayer, education, and outreach.

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Who We Are

St. Paul's parish life is full and active, serving a diverse and wide-spread congregation and community. Our programs and committees are both traditional and creative. Christian education comprises Sunday school, confirmation preparation, special youth projects as well as family bible study and adult education. Our worship services include Rite One, Rite Two and have occasionally included Taize prayer, folk mass, African liturgy and family worship with special input from our youth. These services are all supported by altar and flower guilds, liturgy committee, coffee hour group and a small enthusiastic choir led by our talented organist/choir director.



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Pastoral care is attended to by *Bridges*, a multi-functional umbrella of caring. Included in this is:

- Chain of Friends – for prayer and other needs
- Emergency meals
- Soup ministry – for elderly and house-bound
- Transportation to medical appointments
- Companionship by telephone or house call

Outreach occurs in many forms. Among these are:

- Continuing programs and special events
- Hosting Alcoholics Anonymous meetings
- Weekly food shelf contributions
- Storage for Vergennes City Band

We tithe our income at 5% for local, national and international projects. Annual Cocoa Mulch Sale and Memorial Day food booths also tithe funds for outreach. A recent family walk raised a substantial donation for Episcopal Relief and Development.



Memorial Day Food Sale

Special events during the year include such as Shrove Tuesday Talent Show, luncheon following the Bishop's yearly visit, annual summer picnic and worship on Lake Champlain. All bring the parish together regularly. The welcoming nature, spiritual strength and nurturing ministries of St. Paul's are the keystone of the life of the parish and community.

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We are a member of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont. We have been supported by the Bishop and this diocese in many ways including a deacon, youth education development, and grant monies for congregational development, building repairs and accessibility upgrades. We have participated in retreats, Rock Point Board, Diocesan Council, Diocesan Trustees, Rock Point Summer Conferences, Elderhostel, Annual Convention, Standing Committee and Accessibility Committee.



St. Paul's Annual Cocoa Mulch Sale

Who We Seek to Become

As noted in our mission statement, prayer, education, and outreach are our key ministries. We are a beacon in the community with our central location and seek to make a difference. At the same time, we are looking for clergy leadership that will encourage growth and work with us in our efforts to increase membership and bring more families with children into the parish.

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Our current program for welcoming and encouraging visitors and newcomers to return includes:

- Providing name tags at the door (and we wear name tags as well)
- Welcoming people when we share the peace and at coffee hour
- Following up with phone calls and notes or visits
- Encouraging children to use the large comfortable rug located in the front of the worship area during the services
- Children sermons as a regular part of our worship service
- Enthusiastically encouraging youth to participate in the worship service, especially on Family Sundays



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Responses to our self-study survey highlighted youth programs, Christian education for all ages, stewardship, outreach, and pastoral care as key concerns. A wide range of goals and objectives were suggested such as:

- Increasing Sunday school participation (We have plenty of teachers!)
- Formalizing our stewardship program
- Developing youth programs for teens
- Maintaining our web site with ongoing information updates
- Expanding pastoral care for senior citizens
- Increasing our outreach efforts both locally and globally

An example of opportunity for new potential local outreach includes the needs of migrant farm workers in Addison County, an opportunity that St. Paul's is only beginning to explore.

Additional opportunities exist, such as partnering with the Vergennes Opera House and other parishes in the area to present programs and sponsor ecumenical activities.

Finally, the possibility of calling a full time rector would in itself represent an act of faith and be a significant challenge financially.

The Rector We Seek

We are earnestly committed to having a vibrant church community and we seek a rector who wants to join us for an extended period of time. In the past we have had a variety of priests who were part time, some of whom were retired or near retirement. Now we have a new vision. We want our church to be very active, dedicated to outreach locally, nationally and internationally. We are excited to be on this journey and we will welcome a new rector, either part time or full time, who has the gifts and skills to help us realize our vision to make the relationship a successful one for everyone. We realize that the strengths we are searching for in a rector can not all be met in one person. Our new rector will:

- Walk with us as our congregation continues to grow and change
- Identify and encourage our gifts and skills
- Work with us in our efforts to grow the congregation
- Provide good preaching that is engaging and meaningful
- Join our pastoral care ministry

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- Engage our children and youth into the full life and ministry of our community
- Be active in our community
- Live within our community, preferably in our rectory
- Assist us with expertise in the use of our financial resources



Children's Sermon on Sundays

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Vergennes and Surrounding Areas

Vergennes, population of about 2600, the smallest and oldest city in Vermont is seven miles from Lake Champlain; an easy commute to Burlington and Middlebury.



The recent renaissance effort in Vergennes has produced revitalization of the downtown. Goodrich Aerospace Aircraft Integrated Systems, Country Home Products, dairy farmers, many small businesses, and the school district serve as major employers locally.

Opportunities for ecumenical programs are welcomed by the ministry with fifteen churches in the five-town area and five in Vergennes. The Vergennes Union schools offer solid academic programs for preschool through grade twelve and emphasize small classes with a wide range of activities. There is friendliness in town that you can count on to recognize people and stop to say hello or talk for a short time.

The vibrancy of Vergennes can be attributed to the effort and commitment of its citizens as they seek to create an equitable attractive community in which to live and raise a family.

History of St. Paul's

In 1811, twenty-two local citizens formed the Protestant Episcopal Society of Vergennes. This group worshiped in private homes and public buildings for

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many years until the original St. Paul's Church structure was built and subsequently consecrated by Bishop Hopkins on January 18, 1835. Initially, The Rev. Charles Fay served St Paul's as a missionary from Milton, and The Rev. Alva Twing was instituted as the first regular priest on October 14, 1837. According to church records, thirty-nine rectors have served the parish either part time or full time, with brief periods listed as "vacant" or "no record".

Some things don't change, and St. Paul's continues to be fortunate to have a faithful and generous congregation. Several current members of St. Paul's trace their roots to early members of the parish, including Albert Devine, the ninety-years-young warden emeritus who welcomes parishioners every Sunday and worships with three generations of his family. Jeanne Wisner's ancestor Gertrude Crook joined St. Paul's in 1864. Former organist George Swift recently left a generous bequest to St. Paul's and his ancestor was a member of the congregation in 1835. In summary, over the years, the parishioners of St. Paul's have been its greatest asset.

Buildings and Grounds

St. Paul's occupies a central location in Vergennes. The Vergennes Opera House and City Hall are located next door.



The 1835 church building is a brick gothic-revival structure and seats about 125 people in an airy sanctuary lit by large stained glass windows.



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The altar is raised slightly above the congregation and is set apart by the oak communion rail and antique oak rood screen.



Our recently renovated 1862 Hook Pipe Organ was built in Boston and brought to St. Paul's in 1874. Other renovations have added a handicap accessible bathroom and a pastoral care room off the narthex. Accessibility has been addressed by adding wireless microphones and headsets to assist in hearing.



The rectory, built in 1790, is one of the oldest buildings in Vergennes. This spacious and historic building currently serves as office and meeting area but is at its best as the rector's home. The lawn and gardens are tended by

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parishioners and often provide flowers for the altar. The building is adjacent to the parish hall and faces the city park.



St. Paul's Rectory

Leadership

We are an active congregation with an abundance of lay leadership. We have made an amazing transition from survival mode to ministry mode. There is a spirit of working together to accomplish projects as well as to meet emergency needs.



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Bishop Ely has assigned us a deacon who has been with us for about two years. The deacon assignment is at the discretion of the Bishop. She guides members of St. Paul's in their efforts to serve both the parish and the community at large. By sharing her vitality, strong faith, and extraordinary commitment to those in need, she has immeasurably enriched the lives of all in the parish and enabled increased support of local, national, and international relief.

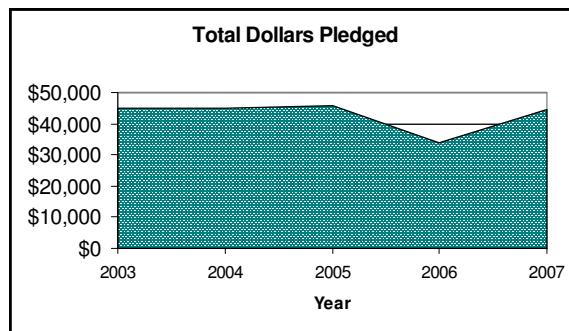
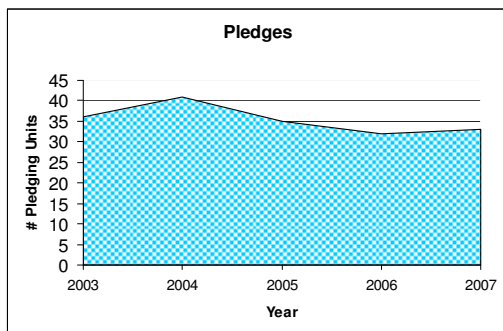


We value our current interim priest for his innovative ideas, knowledge, intellect, leadership skills, and excellent sermons. They have inspired, strengthened, and enlightened the congregation of St. Paul's.

Financial Report

In 2005 the parish was blessed with a bequest. It will allow us to seek "the best rector for St. Paul's," possibly a full time priest. This step creates a challenge to maintain the principal of the endowment. To date, this effort is already supported by increased pledges for 2007 and the congregation's commitment to growth.

Pledges of \$44,700 for 2007 represent an increase of \$11,500 over 2006 pledges (\$8,200 over actual pledge income for 2006). We have 32 pledging units. Including income from other sources and income from investments, 2007 revenues are anticipated at \$74,600. Estimated expenses for 2007 reflect an interim part time priest, search and transition expenses, and hiring a full time rector by fall. On an annualized basis, if we hire a full-time priest and find no other ways to increase income, a deficit of up to \$30,000 is probable. Therein lies our challenge: to find a way to balance future budgets and maintain the \$305,000 endowment principle.



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Other financial assets support designated ministries and services. Diocesan Unit Funds (restricted) total over \$165,000 and provide income to support both operations and outreach. The parish has no debt.

Rector's Compensation Package

Though the rector's stipend in the 2007 budget reflects a transitional year, the annualized stipend for a full time rector is estimated at \$37,800. We will provide benefits as prescribed by the diocese, such as medical and dental insurance and sabbatical leave. The new priest is encouraged to occupy the rectory and, if full time, will receive \$2,400 annually towards housing equity. Stipend and housing equity will be prorated according to full or part time status. Rectory expenses and insurance will be fully covered regardless of status.

Budget Information

	Budget 2006	Actual 2006	Budget 2007	Annualized Budget Full-time Rector	(See Footnote 1)
INCOME					
Pledges	33,289	36,545	44,702	44,702	
Other Gifts	9,000	11,610	5,000	5,000	
Plate	2,500	2,894	2,900	2,900	
Dividends	6,000	6,045	5,900	5,900	
Other Income	750	1,400	750	750	
Reimbursement		106	0	-	
Interest Income			15,333	15,333	
TOTAL INCOME	51,539	58,600	74,585	74,585	(see Footnote 2)
EXPENSES					
ASSESSMENTS	8,021	8,021	8,186	8,386	
OUTREACH	2,054	946	2,435	2,435	
SALARIES and BENEFITS	36,694	24,521	35,130	73,290	
PROPERTY	13,835	14,497	13,235	13,235	
LITURGICAL EXPENSES	785	632	750	750	
CHRISTIAN ED	500	395	500	500	
CONVENTION EXP	200	225	225	225	
FELLOWSHIP	300	95	300	300	
OFFICE	4,050	3,749	3,825	3,825	

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	Budget 2006	Actual 2006	Budget 2007	Annualized Budget Full-time Rector	
TRAVEL	1,250	3,407	3,700	1,750	
Unbudgeted Ex-(MDC)	0	553	6,400	-	
				-	
TOTAL EXPENSES	67,689	57,040	74,686	104,696	
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	(16,150)	1,560	(101)	(30,111)	(See Footnote 3)

Footnotes to Budget Information:

1. The budget was adopted for 2007 including the provision for half-time, three quarter-time or full-time rector, thus allowing the Vestry to select the "best rector for St Paul's."
2. Interest/Dividends from Endowment are designated to support operating budget in 2007 and beyond until income is replaced by growth in Pledges and other income
3. Actual deficit will be funded from Endowment in 2007 and beyond until growth in pledges and other income support operations
4. 2007 budget assumes Rector will live in St Paul's Rectory- all housing expenses paid and incorporated in budget

References

Links to other things related to St. Paul's and the area.

St. Paul's web site: <http://www.saintpaulsvergennes.org/>

Diocese of Vermont: <http://www.dioceseofvermont.org>

Vergennes Area Information: <http://www.vergennes.org/>,
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vergennes,_Vermont

Vergennes Opera House: <http://www.vergennesoperahouse.org/>

Vergennes Partnership: <http://www.vergennespartnership.org/>

Local newspaper: <http://www.addisonindependent.com/>

Lake Champlain Maritime Museum: <http://www.lcmm.org/>

Regional newspaper: <http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/frontpage>

Basin Harbor resort area: <http://www.basinhabor.com/>

Nearby towns: <http://twp.ferrisburgh.vt.us/>, <http://www.pantonvt.us/>,

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Local High School: <http://www.vuhs.org/>

Local Public Elementary Schools: <http://www.anwsu.org/>

Ministry Discernment Committee

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