

Parish Profile St Paul's

Profile compiled edited. March 2017

ST PAUL'S ANGLICAN CHURCH FORT ERIE, ONTARIO

THE CHURCH AND ITS COMMUNITY



Figure 1 View from Niagara Blvd

Established in 1821, St. Paul's is a beautiful stone church overlooking the Niagara River. While the church building itself is close to 100 years old, it is in remarkably good repair. About 30 years ago, the congregation added a lounge, meeting hall, kitchen and four offices on the upper level of "The Centre," while the lower level is rented out to the Fort Erie Co-Operative Day Care and to Meals on Wheels. The basement area under the church houses the choir rooms, an office for the Organist/Music Director, Sunday school rooms and storage space. The church and the Centre sit on a well-landscaped lot near the corner of Gilmore Road and the Niagara Boulevard in the old town of Fort Erie.

The physical plant of St. Paul's is in excellent shape. All deficiencies in the Decennial Building Report have been corrected. A new steel roof was installed over the entire structure in 2010. Repairs have been completed to the stained glass windows in the church, including major work on the Rose Window. Current fire code regulations resulted in the retrofit of the kitchen facilities, the installation of fire rated doors, a Fresh Air induction system as well as upgrades to emergency equipment. A Safe Church Policy requirement has been met with the installation of doors with windows throughout the building. The building is accessible to the disabled from the Idylewylde street entrance. The parish is in the process of enacting a formal policy for persons with disabilities and is considering any additional work that needs to be done.

Pride in our church is evident through the on-going maintenance and restoration both inside and out. Recent bequests provided funds for painting of hallways and offices, as well as the purchase of flowering plants and artwork.

St. Paul's is the only Anglican Church in the old town of Fort Erie. However, six years ago St. Paul's entered into partnership with St. John's, Ridgemount, effectively creating a two-point parish. All Saints, Ridgeway, lies in the west end of the municipality, currently under the care of its Rector, Reverend Daniel Bennett.



Figure 2 Historical Church

History

By the War of 1812, the British had already built three forts here. The third saw significant action during the War of 1812. In 1820, the Reverend William Anderson was appointed Chaplain to the Garrison, a post held by every subsequent Rector of St. Paul's to this day. The parish of St. Paul's was established the following year, although there had been an Anglican presence in the area since 1792, when an Anglican minister from Niagara-on-the-Lake began to visit the community to hold services in various homes along the river. The present church is the third to sit on the same site. The first, a small wooden structure, was replaced by a large stone building in the mid-1800s. A gas explosion on Ash Wednesday destroyed that church in 1893. The present church is almost an exact replica, and was constructed with stone acquired from the ruins of the old British garrison.

The churchyard is an active cemetery with a columbarium. The earliest identifiable grave is from the early 1800s.

Population

The population of Fort Erie is about 30,000. The city is situated at the east end of Lake Erie where it empties into the Niagara River. It is composed of several communities spread over several kilometers: the Old Town of Fort Erie, Ridgeway, Crystal Beach and Stevensville.

Archaeological evidence indicates that there was significant Aboriginal habitation here as early as 7500 B.C. aboriginal peoples are still present here with a thriving Native Friendship Centre located in town.

There are large Anglo-Saxon, Italian, and Chinese populations in town, and recently many Latin American, Haitian, Middle Eastern, and Central African people have also settled here.

Since 1985 Fort Erie has been Canada's major land entry for refugees coming to Canada travelling through the United States. As a result, the Town's population has become increasingly diverse with refugees from Central America, Colombia, Central Africa, Haiti and many other countries settling here.

The Peace Bridge, which connects Buffalo to Fort Erie, has witnessed the largest influx of refugee claimants at a land border since the mid-1980s. Some 130,000 refugee claimants have crossed at this border since 1985 with over 2,000 crossing between April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017. The Fort Erie Multicultural Centre has established a refugee reception centre at this crossing to provide rest, refreshment and information to refugees as they have their initial examination. The Multicultural Centre provides language instruction, orientation and resettlement for refugees remaining in Fort Erie. It works closely with our 2 refugee shelters, which can accommodate about 30 refugees. There are a large number of volunteers in Fort Erie assisting refugees.

Economy

Fort Erie has undergone drastic changes in the last 35 years and is becoming a home destination for retirees. Three new subdivisions have been approved for 2017. One is near completion. There has been an insurgence of seniors from Toronto and area in the last few years. Niagara Region has become one of the hot spots for growth in Ontario. The Town once had a number of large factories and a railway yard that employed thousands, but almost all of that has changed. The only significant industries left are in aerospace (Airbus Helicopters Canada, Aerosafe and Fleet Canada), food processing (Rich Products), auto parts (Durez Canada), and specialty manufacturing (Barbican, Peninsula Plastics and Clarke Manufacturing Industries). The U.S. border is a major factor. There is significant employment with Canadian Border Services Agency, the Peace Bridge, and various brokerage houses. The Peace Bridge is the second most important commercial border crossing to the U.S.

Tourism is a significant industry in town. There is a historic old restored British fort, a zoo (Safari Niagara) and a series of parklands and recreation trails operated by the Town of Fort Erie and the Niagara Parks Commission. The Lake Erie shore offers opportunities for recreation and a lot of Americans own homes and summer residences on that shore. Fort Erie is also home to a century-old horse racetrack. While a short racing calendar has now been in place since 2013, its long-term future has recently been assured by the provincial government through to 2021. There are tentative plans to build a major car raceway and a marina resort in the near future.

There are two principal areas of poverty in the town. One is within the parish boundaries and sits on both sides of the large CN railway and railway bridge (North End) to the U.S. The other is in Crystal Beach in the western part of the town on Lake Erie. "Hunger is a serious problem with at least 4,000 people a month receiving assistance with food." St. Paul's has a program to assist one of the food banks and is the landlord for the local Meals On Wheels Agency, with its offices in the Lower part of the building.

Education

As of April 2017 there are 4 public and 4 separate elementary schools within the boundaries of Fort Erie. Presently there are two public high schools, which will be consolidated into one high school beginning September 2017, when the new school will be open and the old ones closed. There is a separate high school in Port Colborne which students are bused to every day. There is one private high school, Niagara Christian Collegiate.

Niagara College and Brock University are both within easy commuting distance (30 minutes), as are many institutes of higher education in Western New York State. The town has a large, well-run public library with a main branch in town, a block from the church, and smaller branches in Ridgeway and Stevensville.

Religious Communities

Most Christian denominations are represented in the community: Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Baptist, Presbyterian and Brethren in Christ and several small evangelical congregations. St. Michaels Roman Catholic Church is the largest parish with 1500 families, located one block from St. Paul's. There is a United Church in Ridgeway and another in Stevensville. The Fort Erie Ministerial Association has been revived in the last couple of years, with the intention to meet on a regular basis. The churches represented co-operate to provide ecumenical worship during the lunch hour each Wednesday of Lent, Advent and as other opportunities arise.

Leisure Opportunities

Leisure activities abound in Fort Erie. We have a large, modern YMCA; a Leisureplex with two ice rinks and indoor walking track; an additional ice rink facility located in the west end; appropriate facilities for numerous minor sports leagues, such as 3 golf courses, baseball, lacrosse, soccer; a tennis club; several public sand beaches; and a wonderful recreation trail that is part of the "Trans-Canada Trail," a walking, cycling, and rollerblading path that runs from Niagara Falls along the Niagara Boulevard to Fort Erie, and then makes its way along the lakeshore and an abandoned rail line up to Ridgeway. It is a real "back to nature" feature in the middle of an urban community.

Fort Erie also hosts a number of festivals through the summer months. These events celebrate the long history of friendship and co-operation between Canada and the USA. There are annual re-enactments of battles held at the Old Fort. Fort Erie has an active Arts Council which has held art shows, sponsored performances of the Niagara Symphony (at no charge to the community), and works to promote the arts and culture of Fort Erie.

The community is less than an hour's drive from the Shaw Festival, the wineries and heritage of Niagara-on-the-Lake. The parkland, events and entertainment facilities of Niagara Falls are 15-20 minutes away. St. Catharines is home to the Niagara Symphony, the Brock Centre for the Arts and numerous other cultural facilities and events. The town also benefits from its close proximity to Buffalo, N.Y., which possesses numerous museums, concert halls, a zoo, and many cultural and sporting events, as well as an impressive variety of restaurants, shopping venues, parks, and an international airport.

Medical Care in Fort. Erie

The situation involving medical care in Fort Erie is complex. Douglas Memorial Hospital is the local hospital site under the jurisdiction of the Niagara Health System. Its Emergency Room was removed about 5 years ago and converted to a 24-7 Urgent Care Centre. A brand new tertiary care hospital has been opened in St. Catharines and there are plans to build a new facility off the Queen Elizabeth Way at Lyons Creek Road, just north of Fort Erie's boundary, to replace aging hospitals in Niagara Falls and Welland. Most of the patients in our local hospital are those who have had acute care in another centre and are completing their care in Fort Erie. There is an excellent regional nursing home (Gilmore Lodge) with a lock-down wing for seniors suffering from dementia, as well as three other nursing/seniors residences providing differing levels of care within the parish boundaries. There is also a Community Health Centre and a public health office with nurses and an inspector.

WORSHIP



Figure 3 from Rear of Nave

The regular service times at St. Paul's are 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., with the average attendance being 63 (this includes both services) with a total of 130 envelope holders. All 10:00 a.m. services have the support of a 10-12-member choir and music director. In the summer our service times are the same but attendance declines somewhat. Our liturgy recently has been from the BAS and has included Morning Prayer once a month on the 2nd Sunday. We are considering changing the service times to accommodate St. Paul's and St. John's more fully.

The lay readers lead in the service of Morning Prayer and preach when the rector is at St. John's on the 2nd Sunday of each month. They are to assist the rector when no one is available.

We have 2, possibly 3 confirmation candidates at this time. We have had three Baptisms and one Wedding planned for in August. In 2016, 16 parishioners were committed to God's care. The anointing for healing has sometimes been performed during the administration of

communion by the rector while the deacon distributes the sacraments. St. Paul's has an active group of volunteers who regularly assist with worship: *altar guild, intercessors, readers, choir, servers, chalice bearers and sides people*. These dedicated groups of volunteers provide great leadership in the parish and enjoy fellowship and friendship through their service. Although there was once a *Worship Advisory Committee*, it has been allowed to lapse of late. Such a group, which meets regularly with the priest in charge to reflect and advise on worship, could be quite useful to the new incumbent.

SPECIAL SERVICES



Figure 4 Altar at Easter

In December there are Advent and Christmas services. A special tradition at St. Paul's is the Candlelight Lessons and Carols service, to which the wider community is invited. There is a family service Christmas Eve at St. Paul's with the Sunday school's Christmas pageant, a service at St. John's and a later Choral Eucharist at St. Paul's.

Holy Week over the years has seen a variety of worship services. St. John's parishioners have joined St. Paul's for these occasions.

A Service of Praise, Thanksgiving and Remembrance is held in late September – early October, on a Sunday afternoon, for family and friends of those who are buried in our cemetery. The service is a collaborative effort between the Rector and the cemetery trustee. The service concludes with a time of quiet reflection in the cemetery, followed by a reception in the hall. A similar Memorial service is held at St. John's on a springtime Sunday morning.

In the past a Blessing of the Animals service has been celebrated on a Sunday closest to the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi every year at St. Paul's. Every pet receives an individual blessing, and our guests have so far behaved themselves. The service is very informal and appeals to pet lovers throughout the community. Representatives from the local SPCA are often invited and present. A basket in the narthex welcomes donations for pet food that is regularly taken to the SPCA. As well, the SPCA uses the parish hall annually for its own fundraiser, inviting pictures of pets with Santa.

As mentioned, St. Paul's and St. John's participate yearly in the Ecumenical Lenten Services, a weekly noon hour service, followed by a brown bag lunch, hosted by the various churches in the community. We also take a regular turn in the monthly Community Coffee Hour.



Figure 5 Nave from Sanctuary

The rector, due to our historic connection to the old Fort Erie, has had the post of honorary chaplain to the Royal Canadian Legion, Fort Erie branch. Clergy from St. Paul's have regularly participated in Remembrance Day services hosted by the Legion.

There has been a recent tradition of all the Anglican parishes in Fort Erie combining with the Lutherans for a joint service in the picnic grounds at the old Fort Erie, in June, usually on Father's Day. There are a Eucharist, pot luck lunch, and games for the children.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Christian education for our youngest members is the Sunday school, which gathers in the Parish Lounge during the 10:00 am service. There is one dedicated teacher who is assisted by a regular volunteer who looks after administrative tasks and 2 other volunteers who help when needed. On any given Sunday there may be between 2 & 6 students.

In the past there have been Wednesday morning Bible study sessions as well as evening study groups. There is considerable interest in reviving more contemporary Bible programs in the future. During Lent 2016, 12-15 people met each Wednesday evening for a potluck dinner and discussion of religion and film. This year, we have just concluded a Lenten Study of spirituality in literature, which attracted 13-14 people at each of the three weekly meetings.

Several members of the congregation have taken advantage of the Cursillo Movement, participating in a Weekend retreat. The Alpha course and the Bishop's Diploma Course have also been offered at St. Paul's. Several parishioners have taken some of the Diploma courses. The Living the Questions series has also been offered.

There is a library in the lounge at St. Paul's that includes a children's corner with picture books, short stories and stuffed toys to keep the littlest readers company. Many of the books for adults deal with various areas of church teachings, and there is a good selection of self-help books as well. The only rule in the library is to read, enjoy and learn from whatever book you borrow.

Organizational Structure

A Church warden must be the full age of 18 years, a member of the vestry, a duly qualified voter and a communicant.

Wardens:

Rectors Warden, People's Warden, Deputy People's Warden – no Deputy Rector's Warden at this time. The Rector's Wardens are appointed by the Rector, the others elected by the majority of those present at the annual Vestry meeting. They hold office until the next annual Vestry meeting.

Duties include:

Church finances, relationship to Rector, Officers, Envelopes and Pre-Authorized payments, budget, financial records, bank accounts, treasurer, signing of cheques, appointment of Parish Staff, Insurance, Parish Records, requisites for Worship and sacraments, regular services in the absence of the parish clergy, and to provide appropriate housing allowance in lieu of a Parish Rectory.

Corporation – meeting

Rector, Rector's Wardens, People's Wardens

Meeting held typically once a month

The *corporation*, along with the deputy wardens, works closely with the incumbent to oversee the financial affairs of the parish, as well as to ensure the care of the building and grounds.

Parish Council

At the annual meeting of the vestry of each congregation of the Diocese, a committee shall be constituted to be known as the Parish Council and composed of the following:

- Rector
- Churchwardens
- Lay Delegates, or representatives to Synod
- Such other members of the congregation as may be elected at the annual vestry meeting, not fewer than two in number
- Such members of the vestry as may be appointed by the rector not to exceed the number elected by the congregation

Approximately 16 volunteers serve on *Parish Council*, which meets bi-monthly or as needed. Our Parish *Admin* volunteers as the secretary not only at Vestry but also at the Parish Council. Parish Council should hold regular meetings, at least quarterly, and its functions should be to consider whether, and to what extent, the Church in the parish or mission is fulfilling its purpose among its own members, in the community at large and as a part of the Church as a whole. In these deliberations, the work of the parish should be evaluated under the values and initiatives of our current Diocesan Vision for Ministry.

Staff – clergy and laity, paid and volunteer: Licensed Lay Worker, vocational Deacons, and Honourary Assistants.

Staff: Paid

Rector, Interim Priest, Secretary / Administrator, Music Director and Sexton

Secretary / Administrator

St. Paul's has for a number of years employed a parish administrator. Our current administrator works far more than those scheduled hours. He is an extremely capable and organized worker who can also be counted on to provide background information, good advice and a sympathetic ear whenever called on by clergy and lay people. It should be a goal of the parish to pay him a living wage as the Diocese recommends, his work hours were moved to 20 each week in the last 2 ½ yrs.

The administrator works very closely with the Rector, the wardens and the congregation to ensure that deadlines are met, tasks are completed and information is available when needed. He uses both Microsoft Office and Servant Keeper software in the daily operations of the office. He maintains the church website and Facebook page, as well as an email list of parishioners for announcements and communication of church events. He is the first contact for concert arrangements, ticket sales and promotion.

He is the main contact with other service organizations in the community and assists the Corporation in scheduling the use of the church facilities and in ensuring that all insurance requirements are met by outside user groups. He is an excellent source of information about community resources, serving himself as Chair of the Board for Meals on Wheels and as a member of the local Masonic Lodge.

There is a parish Manual, a Procedures Manual and an Events Binder in place, the filing system is well organized and all records are up to date. The phone system and office equipment are also in fine working order.

Organist

Our Organist / Music Director has been with us for 2 yrs. Choir practices are usually held September to June on Thursday evenings at 7:30 pm.

Cleaning (Sexton)

Our Cleaner has been with us at St. Paul's for 10 years, working 10 hrs. per week.

Licensed Lay Worker: Ø

Staff: Volunteer:

Laity: Intercessors, Chalice Bearer, Lay Readers, Vergers

Vocational Deacon: One

Honourary Assistants: none

Vocational Deacon

The Vocational Deacon at St. Paul's was ordained in 2007. He is a retired refugee lawyer but presides as a Deputy Judge of the Small Claims Court. His principal work is outside the parish walls, involving him in several local and diocesan committees with his chief attention directed at

refugees and the poor. He serves as Deputy Director of Deacons for the diocese and is presently a member of Synod Council. He is part of our parish visitation committee and visits our local hospital every two weeks. At St. Paul's during the Eucharist he proclaims the gospel, preparing the altar and doing ablutions, dismissing the people and helping out where needed. Depending on which service and the availability of lay assistants, he will lead the psalm, the creed, and invites the congregation to say the Confession. He preaches about 4 or 5 times a year and assists with the ecumenical services. He is presently a member of Synod by virtue of his office as deputy director and attends parish council.

Priest Assistant

The Priest Assistant at St. Paul's grew up in the parish and hence knows many of the parishioners very well. He is involved in the amateur theatre company. This committed involvement in the life of the church and wider community is invaluable, especially in his ministry to many of the seniors in our long-term care homes. At St. Paul's, he officiates and preaches at the 10am Eucharist on the fourth Sunday of the month. He has since been named rector of All Saints Ridgeway, serving 1/3rd time. During summers, he is involved with the diocesan youth camps. During the interim period, he willingly presided at most of the funerals, and filled in whenever and wherever asked.

Volunteer Screening and Management Infrastructure

In binder:

1. Steps for volunteer management and screening
2. Reporting process and screening requirements
3. Job descriptions and screening requirements
4. Guidelines for working with children, youth, and other vulnerable people – Code of Conduct
5. Sexual misconduct
 - a. Policy: Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Assault

Filing System:

Documents

- a) Diocesan guidelines
- b) Code of conduct
- c) Forms and templates
- d) Declaration forms

Job Descriptions

- e) Training information
- f) Records of thank you for each ministry

Organizations – that use the building. A.A., Weight Watchers, Parkinson's Support, Bridges Community Health – Cooking classes, Niagara Speech Services, Co-operative Nursery School, Meals on Wheels and the Wheels to Meals program.

Filing Cabinet – Rector's office

- a) Paid Staff information. Clergy info held at diocese.

Volunteer Files

- a) By person
- b) Labeled by season and year

Three-year cycle of high and medium risk assessment, PRC (police record check), references and declarations.

Programmes and Organizations

The Sunday school has 3 to 6 students, though not every week, fewer as of late. One teacher and an Administrator oversee planning and preparing the children's program on a weekly basis. In the past the 'Spark' program was used. One of the teens was elected as our new Youth Synod Representative at Vestry in February.

We just completed our Vision Day which had a great response along with many good and new ideas for improving our church and community.

Our Pastoral Care team provides a special ministry to those members of our community who are hospitalized, housebound or living in nursing homes. In addition to friendly chats and visits, they also assist with the celebration of the Eucharist at the four long-term care facilities in Fort Erie. During the interim period, a concerted effort was made to co-ordinate clergy and lay care and contact of parishioners who are absent from worship for a time or housebound because of illness.

Our Altar Guild works well together and we enjoy input from our priest. We love working together on decorating for the special holidays.

St. Nick's Children's Shopping Day and The Victorian Tea are our main events for fund-raising. The former has been running for approximately 35 years and The Victorian Tea this May will be our 15th. St. Nick's last year had 127 children come in and do their shopping.

The St. Nicks / Victorian Ladies group provide a homemade meal and entertainment to clients of Meals on Wheels as part of their congregant dining program. We serve them 6 times a year on Wednesday afternoons with about 40 people on the average.

On Shrove Tuesday the church has a pancake and sausage dinner, facilitated by the choir, served to church members and the wider community. The choir has also held musical events and a pub night for fund-raising.

YOUTH

As may be the case with many parishes, our small number of young people lead busy lives outside the church walls. Some teens in our parish family are visible at worship and other gatherings, but many are not. Those whom we do not see opt for work, sports activities or other personal pursuits. There are a few who have been attracted to diocesan events such as Youth Synod & NYC and have attended these in the recent past. There is room for young people to participate in liturgy on a regular basis, though none seem to be called to this.

Few of our teens have participated in parish events. Those who have enjoyed a welcoming experience and speak well of the time spent. However, these instances are dependent upon their availability and combined with the irregular timing of the events, it is impossible to foster a pattern of participation.

Youth Ministry and Education

Our Sunday School teachers and their teen helpers spend many hours planning, preparing and instructing our children on a weekly basis. There is a Sunday School *secretary* who volunteers to prepare handouts and take attendance as well as gather collection. Other individuals in the parish are willing to help out for pageants and other special events.

Hospitality

Volunteers faithfully provide coffee supplies and organize our coffee hour after each service.

Outreach

Poverty and hunger are problems for the Greater Fort Erie area, based on information from support groups in our area, including the Salvation Army, COPE (food bank), St. George's Catholic Church (food bank), and the Saint Vincent DePaul Society, Meals on Wheels, and local clergy. Approximately 4,000 people need assistance once a month. A past rector presented this situation to St. Paul's Parish Council and the Deanery Clericus for consideration; thus, Food for the Soul was established. Under this program, on the fourth Saturday of each month, St. Paul's provides a hot meal for 80-120 guests. In the last few years we have partnered with Fort Erie Secondary School, whose students in their well-run and award-winning culinary program cook and serve the meal. Volunteers from the congregation set up the tables, visit with the guests, and clean up afterward. Three other churches in the area provide for the remaining Saturdays in the month.

In 2015, the Salvation Army, Bridges Health Center, and St. Paul's began discussions for the use of the St. Paul's kitchen to provide meals, nutritional counseling, and instruction in meal planning to clients, making our community centre a food hub for those who need these services. A grant of \$19,000 from the United Way was received for a new exhaust system in the kitchen, which has now been installed. The kitchen is the best among all of the churches in Fort Erie for community use.

Every week a group of women meet to create knitted prayer shawls and blankets for distribution to parishioners who fall ill and to the local schools for distribution to youth in need. St. Paul's provides office and storage space, as well as assistance, to Meals on Wheels. Every other month volunteers prepare and serve a hot lunch in the church hall to the clients of Meals on Wheels.

Fellowship Groups

The St. Nicks/Victorian Tea Ladies meet regularly to plan and carry out much needed fund raising activities, especially the springtime Victorian Tea and the December St. Nick's Shopping Day for the children of the community. These hard-working women also host the Wheels to Meals luncheons for seniors who receive Meals on Wheels, as described above under "Outreach."



Figure 7 Food for the Soul team members



Figure 6 St Nick's Children's Shopping Day



Figure 9 St Nick's Children's Shopping Day



Figure 8 Prepping food for Victorian Tea

FINANCES

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Corporations serving St. Paul's, as well as St. John's, have been diligent financial stewards, making carefully considered decisions about the various spending initiatives that arise. Our DMM is paid on time and in full, all incoming accounts are settled promptly, and our obligations, actual and perceived, to the support of the church, the diocese and PWRDF are fully met. Our parishioners can be counted on to support the various financial appeals as they arise; a new roof was installed in 2010 at a cost of \$100,000 and the debt paid off within two years. There are plans to expand and improve both parking lots on the premises and replace Parish Centre windows, although they have been put on hold for the time being. A new hot water boiler system will be required in the near future (+/- 5 yrs.).

There is a full listing of all the parish bank accounts and the wardens, and deputies are signing authorities on every account. St. Paul's is fortunate to be the beneficiaries of several trust funds, and we have a regular source of income through the rental space in the centre to the Fort Erie Co-operative Day Care, a group that has been with us for over 30 years. Our meeting rooms are available for a nominal licensing fee to various community groups, and our lounge and hall for private receptions and parties.

There has been no planned Stewardship campaign for many years. A successful capital campaign in summer and early fall of 2016 raised \$20,000 for repairs to the walls in the church, which

repairs have now been completed. Although our budget (summarized below) showed a surplus for 2016, we have historical debt (cumulative over the past four years or so) of \$39,000.

	December	Annual
	YTD. Actual	Budget
	<u>2014</u>	<u>2014</u>
receipts	181,726	178,500
expenses	194,524	198,437
+ / -	(12,798)	(19,937)
	<u>2015</u>	<u>2015</u>
receipts	170,046	177,500
expenses	187,190	200,922
+ / -	(17,144)	(23,422)
	<u>2016</u>	<u>2016</u>
receipts	185,374	173,075
expenses	177,453	188,267
+ / -	7,921	(15,192)

STEWARDSHIP

For many people attending St. Paul's and St. John's, volunteering their time and talents is a natural expression of their faith and their commitment to the church. There are more than 50 identifiable volunteers on our parish rosters. The following is a brief outline of the various groups within the parish, as well as some of the tasks that are routinely undertaken by volunteer personnel.

Financial

The *cashier* counts the collection and other donations, prepares and makes bank deposits. The *treasurer* collects, records and makes bill payments; ensures funds are organized and accountable; prepares monthly statements for Parish Council and yearly statements for Vestry; sits on the Financial Advisory Council (FAC) and assists in the preparation of the annual budget. An *auditor* audits the financials yearly for Vestry. The *envelope secretary* records givings by regular and occasional donors, issues statements, tax receipts, and prepares annual statistics. The *memorial fund secretary* records donations, sends donor lists to the family of the deceased and works with the envelope secretary. The Financial Advisory Council is a group of volunteers who meet every few months to advise on financial matters, concerns and budgeting.



Figure 10 Celebrating Col. Kerby birthday



Cemetery, Buildings & Grounds

The cemetery trustee assists during funerals, arranges burial details, maintains the churchyard and organizes the grass-cutting contract. Also, this trustee arranges work parties that do leaf-raking or storm clean-ups, with which members of the parish assist. There is no buildings and grounds committee at present; the corporation and the Parish Administrator presently handle maintenance and restoration work by internal or external sources.

Fundraisers

Several organizations in the church carry out annual fundraising activities, such as the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper and the Cemetery Memorial service. But there is a loosely organized group of volunteers who cook and serve spaghetti suppers, organize pub nights with silent auctions, and have on occasion catered wedding receptions and dinner meetings for outside groups.

PROPERTY

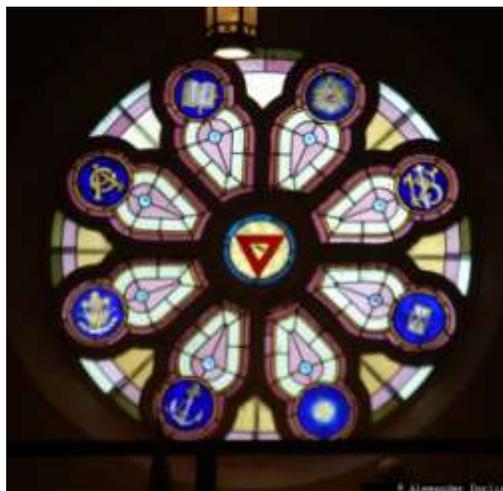


Figure 11 Rose Window

The Church and Parish Center are in good physical repair. In 2010, the roof of the church and center was replaced with a metal roof. The forced air furnaces in the Church were replaced 10 years ago; the hot water tanks were replaced 2 years ago. The stained glass/coloured glass

windows of the church have been repaired and properly covered, with vented lexan. The Rose window in the West was removed and frame rebuilt 4+ years ago. An A.E.D. (defibrillator) was purchased 2 years ago, and is situated in the main hallway, just before the Parish Lounge doors. A Forced Air (heated) Make Up System was installed in the kitchen this winter (2017), allowing for fresh air to be introduced into the kitchen when food is being prepared and the gas stove in use.



Figure 12 Parish Center Hall

Currently there are 2 licensees at St. Paul's, with use of space agreements in place with Fort Erie Meals on Wheels and Fort Erie Co-operative Nursery School.

The Nursery School uses a full side of the Parish Center in the lower floor and pays as of 2017 \$865.00/mo. for 10 mos. and \$250.00 for 2 mo. (July/August). The License runs, based on a 3-year renewable term and should be renewed late summer/early fall of 2017

The Fort Erie meals on wheels licensing agreement follows similar terms. They use one office space in the lower part of the Parish Center, paying \$375.00 / mo.

WIDER CHURCH



Figure 13 Choir Summer party (from a few years ago)

St. Paul's has had a few events which we have shared with other churches in the vicinity. At Christmas time our choir and St. Michael's Choir came together and had a combined lessons in Carols at Christmas time, which was very well received.

St. Paul's has also hosted the Clericus Luncheon, and our St. Nick's ladies do an excellent job with that. During Lent St. Paul's is involved in the Lenten Services with the various churches in Fort Erie and they each take a turn hosting the service.

Once a month we also prepare a meal for Food for the Soul. The Fort Erie Secondary School prepares the meals, and we have volunteers from our parish helping with serving and cleaning up.

Weight Watchers meet every Monday night, the Parkinson's Support Group meet Tuesday mornings, Niagara Speech Services therapist(s) work out of St. Paul's on a varied schedule, and three AA groups meet here each week.



SITUATION ANALYSIS

Situation Analysis (current concerns and opportunities)

- What do you consider to be your parish's part of God's mission?
 - Leadership – One obvious instance of preparing our parishioners to be leaders is the training of our lay readers, four of whom in 2016 completed a several-week class in preaching. Lay readers have taken an increasing role in the worship services.
 - Ministry – An especially active ministry is the Pastoral Care Committee, which has seven members who go to homes, hospitals, and nursing homes visiting those in need.
 - Welcoming and reaching out –
 - Welcoming – The congregation as a whole welcomes all who enter our doors. We could use additional intentional means to make newcomers' transitions easier—for example, an information booklet about worship services and programs and a greeting committee at the 10:00 service.
 - Reaching out – In the parish at large, a loosely knitted group of individuals reach out to parishioners whom we have not seen in church or heard from in a while.
- How is the parish engaged in pursuing the diocesan Vision for ministry?
 - Our parish is strong in the category of Prophetic Social Justice Making, with our involvement with Food for the Soul and the St. Nick's shopping day in December, which enables children to purchase gifts for family and friends at a very low price. Though this shopping experience, these children learn that giving is better than receiving. In addition, our deacon's work with refugees in the Multicultural Centre is an outward expression of our love for all.
 - With respect to Outstanding Leadership for Ministry, the training and work of our lay readers and Pastoral Care committee stand out.
 - Places for improvement include establishing a Continuous Culture of Improvement and Life-Changing Worship, though we are making some improvements in the latter (see "Visioning Day" under "What Plans . . . Do You Have for the Future?").
- What is special about your parish?
 - St. Paul's is a long-established church with a wide connection to the Greater Fort Erie Community by way of extended family members and friends. We are well recognized and supported by them.
 - We have many dedicated volunteers who help in outreach and programs.
- What are the main issues and concerns of your parish in pursuing its part in God's mission?

- To show love, compassion, and hope for all—those in our parish as well as the wider community. This goal is reflected in our mission statement: "Equipping God's people for leadership, ministry & service, welcoming and reaching out to all, in Christ's name."
- What is your parish's main focus at the present time?
 - Over the last few years, our focus has been partly on survival--in particular, balancing our budget and maintaining our building. Our recent visioning day has shone a light on how we might be more focused on spiritual growth as well as survival. (See the comments on the Visioning Day in "What Plans . . . ?," below.) .
- What plans (mission, vision, strategic plan, less formal plans) do you have for the future?
 - Our Visioning Day in February 2017 helped us discern and label areas of concern to us--for example, church growth, experimental liturgies, upbeat and diverse music in the liturgies, social media updates on the Web to keep the parish and the community informed about events, the possibility of alternating services between St. Paul's and St. John's churches in the summer so that there can be one joint service instead of two separate ones. Emerging as especially important were enlivening worship services with new liturgies and more-varied music, as well as extending hospitality to visitors.
- What is the climate in the parish at the present time?
 - The climate of our parish at the present time is one of both excitement and trepidation. We are excited about the possibility of a sustained relationship with a new incumbent. We have some trepidation because we realize that in some ways we need to reinvent ourselves to survive in the long-term.
 - We are emboldened by the possibilities opened to us by our Visioning Day.
- What are the identified priorities in future clergy leadership amongst surveyed Clergy Role Expectations?
 - One expectation of the future incumbent is that he/she will minister to the sick, the dying, and the bereaved. We would hope he or she would deliver relevant sermons regarding the Gospel and other readings of the day. The incumbent would do counselling with members when necessary, referring them to health care services (mental/social agencies) should they be needed. He or she would be required to administer the sacraments and would serve as a high moral standard for the parish. In addition, the incumbent would need strong administrative skills to manage parish business and develop relationships with community groups and leaders.

SUMMARY

As shown in the "Situation Analysis" and this entire profile, St. Paul's has significant strengths, including active outreach ministries, very dedicated volunteers for its programs and events, and a long and rich history which has connected us to the local community. We seek a rector who will help us to maintain our strengths and to reinvigorate worship, as well as build on our already firm relationships with the Fort Erie community to help the parish to be vibrant and grow.