

# ST. PAUL'S ON THE GREEN

## **About St. Paul's**

St. Paul's is a diverse, inclusive Episcopal parish offering a radical welcome to all in Norwalk, in greater Connecticut, and beyond. We welcome, affirm, and include in every aspect of our church life persons from all walks of life. We extend God's radical welcome to people of every race, economic status, sexual orientation or identity, belief, or gifts: not just through our doors, but to the Communion table. We are committed to our community, take pride in our diversity, and promise all who enter our doors that they will be free to be who they are. We cherish excellence in worship—worship that is thoughtful, inclusive, modern, and inflected by traditions from across the globe and from centuries ago.

## **The Vestry**

The vestry is the elected body of the parish that shares with the Rector/Priest-in-Charge the responsibility for oversight of parish life and ministry and for advancing the mission of Saint Paul's. The vestry is subject to the Canons of the Episcopal Church and of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut. Vestry members are legal representatives and agents of the parish, with responsibilities for finances and management of property and human resources. Vestry members work collaboratively with the Rector/Priest-in-Charge and with each other to create a vision and plan of action that reflects God's call for the congregation. Vestry members serve for a three-year term.

## **Expectations for All Vestry Members**

- Have a love of God and commitment to following the way of Christ.
- Be active in and support the life of the parish through regular worship, participation, financial support, and prayer for the church and its mission.
- Be a servant of the people, willing to represent the interests of all parish members.
- Interact well with people and strive to earn the respect of the members of the congregation.
- Commit to partnership between the vestry and clergy leaders.
- Exercise confidentiality and practice healthy, honest, open communication patterns in the parish.
- Listen to the views of parishioners, especially their questions, suggestions, complaints and compliments, sharing these views, where appropriate, with the Rector/Priest-in-Charge, Wardens, and Vestry.
- Have enthusiasm and vitality for participating in vestry service, offering talents to discern and support the congregation's mission and vision.

## **General Responsibilities for all Vestry Members**

- Help define and articulate the mission of the congregation
- Support the mission by word and deed
- Ensure adequate resources in leadership and in financial stewardship
- Manage resources effectively
- Determine that appropriate programs, policies and procedures have been developed and are followed
- Oversee the management and maintenance of church property
- Oversee the business affairs of the parish
- Select parish representatives for activities such as community boards, etc.
- Work with the Bishops and Diocesan staff in the process of calling a Rector in the event of a vacancy
- Assess the vestry's own work and effectiveness.

## **Vestry Time Commitment**

Vestry members exercise leadership by example both in the temporal affairs (business life) and in the spiritual life of the parish. All vestry members should be able to make the following time commitments:

- Prepare for, attend, and fully participate in regular monthly Vestry meetings as well as ad hoc interim meetings
- Participate in committee/group work
- Attend Vestry retreat(s)
- Attend weekly worship services (rotating occasionally if more than one)
- Attend congregational events: coffee hours, meals, fundraisers, adult education programs, etc.
- Attend Diocesan meetings, as necessary
- Attend parish annual meeting.

## **A Time of Transition for St. Paul's**

In February 2020, St. Paul's welcomed the Reverend Daniel Simons as its Provisional Priest-in-Charge, launching a three-year period of mutual reflection and discernment. The provisional priest-in-charge period is a significant time of transition and therefore a prime time for addressing questions about identity, potential obstacles to systematic health and growth in faithfulness, and exploring new possibilities and previously unthought-of future paths. During this time, Father Daniel, the vestry, and the parish work with diocesan leadership to articulate and live into new or renewed goals for mission and ministry and a new or renewed sense of identity for St. Paul's. This intentional period of focused discernment may result in a variety of outcomes, including but not limited to having the parish enter into a formal Search Process or in a vestry decision to invite the Provisional Priest-in-Charge to serve as its next rector.