



Photo: Father Max

TIDINGS

Winter 2025

St. Paul's Church in Nantucket
20 Fair Street
Nantucket, MA 02554
StPaulChurchNantucket.org

Rector's Message

Attributes of a Healthy Congregation

Warm greetings from the chilly island! As I referenced in my report at our parish's Annual Meeting, the clergy and lay leaders of the Cape & Islands region of our Diocese continue to explore together what constitutes a healthy congregation. Although our local circumstances are unique, we all agree on the importance of hospitality, that longtime parishioners and visitors alike feel welcome, included, respected, ultimately loved.

Especially in towns with population growth, several of the parishes in our region are thriving, as we are in so many ways. Others struggle with dwindling attendance, disharmony among parish leadership, lack of financial resources, and hostility toward clergy. This is true worldwide, but blessedly the opposite is true here at St. Paul's!

Through our daily commitment to serving the wellbeing of our island community and beyond in a variety of meaningful ways - at worship, through music, with weekly education series, reading in school, by delivering suppers, in home visits, at the laundromat, with foreign students, on the sidewalks

of our town— St. Paul's Church is truly known as a loving presence here on Nantucket. Those are attributes of a healthy congregation!

Through the generosity of the parish and the Diocese of Massachusetts, Olly, Meatball, Tulip & I depart for a three-month sabbatical—our first that doesn't include Block Island. We return home just in time for Daffodil Weekend, and we look forward to sharing another fabulous spring time and summer with you!

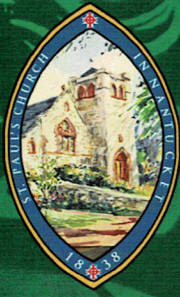
The peace and joy of Christ.

Max



Photo: Olly Wolf





St. Paul's Church in Nantucket

Our Staff

The Rev. Max Wolf, Rector
Joe Hammer, Music Director
Christine Borneman, Parish
Administrator
Curtis Barnes, Verger
The Rev. Susan Phillips, Deacon

Our Vestry

Lucy Leske, Warden
Liz Bristow, Warden
Kirk Baker, Treasurer
Peter Greenhalgh, Clerk

Dorothy Baker
Peter Barnes
Toby Broadus
Colby Crenshaw
Cece Fowler
Lou Gennaro
Jan Jacobi
Ruthie Klinck
Steve Paradis
Sheri Perelman
Jay Riggs
Patsy Wright

hello!
(tweet!)

A Word from the Wardens

by Lucy Leske



During Advent, we heard a sermon by Jeff Cox acknowledging that this will be a year of transition in our nation, our world, and our church. Some change will be welcome, and some will cause anxiety. Some will be easy, and some will be hard. After many years of dedicated service and leadership, two of our most valued Vestry members will be completing their terms and stepping back to the congregation, and we will welcome new leadership, new perspectives, and new ideas. On behalf of the Vestry, I would like to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude to Bob Felch, Warden, and Martin McKerrow, Treasurer, whose wisdom and experience I will dearly miss at our more than monthly meetings, phone calls, and email exchanges. St. Paul's is so blessed to count among its parishioners such fine, dedicated and hardworking people who embody our mission to make the love of God more widely known. I have no doubt that our Rector, Father Max, the staff, the Vestry, volunteers, and parishioners will ensure St. Paul's will grow stronger in 2025 and every year thereafter. Thank you.



PARISH COMMITTEES



Altar Guild Ann Oliver and Karen Bloomfield, co-chairs	Hospitality Committee Olly Wolf, chair
Campus Oversight Committee Steve Paradis, chair	Outreach Committee Dorothy Baker and Liz Bristow, co-chairs
"Call to Community" Campaign Committee Peter Barnes and Bob Felch, co-chairs	Stewardship Committee Peter Barnes and Patsy Wright, co-chairs
Communications Committee Patsy Wright, chair	Music Committee Joe Hammer, chair
Finance Committee Kirk Baker, chair	

TIME – TALENT – TREASURE

RISING STARS



by Karen Bloomfield & Ruthie Klinck

How did you come to St. Paul's?

Karen: I used to attend the outdoor church on the beach with the Congregational Church, which was convenient to our home then. I was talking to Olly one day when we were volunteering at the Thrift Shop, and she told me about the outdoor service at St. Paul's, and I was thrilled to join that service. When we moved here full time in 2022, I knew St. Paul's was the perfect church home for me. I love the people here, and love the atmosphere of inclusion, openness, and outreach in the community. It's a great fit.

Ruthie: I came to St. Paul's when I moved here in 2021. I was a parishioner at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Wellesley, Massachusetts, so the transition to St. Paul's has been a comfortable experience.

What do you most enjoy about volunteering?

Karen: I enjoy the varied opportunities here at the church. Outreach with the St. Paul's Suppers program is a way to spread the St. Paul's love, and the Altar Guild is a wonderful way to help the church and make new friends. The Christmas Market is a fabulous way to get to know fellow volunteers at Saint Paul's. It takes so many hands, and many hours to put it on. The Christmas Market is especially rewarding, as it is so appreciated (and anticipated) by Christmas strollers, both islanders and visitors. I'm also looking forward to helping with our Ready-Set-Read program in the coming weeks. I have a love of literacy, and value instilling the love of reading to children. It is a wonderful way to work and become acquainted with our diverse island.

Ruthie: Through volunteering, I have always found purpose outside of my own personal and professional life. I enjoy getting to know the community wherever I



Photo: Father Max

We are thrilled to announce the addition of these two amazing volunteers to our church family. Their passion and dedication to serving St. Paul's brings a fresh wave of energy and enthusiasm to our mission. We are so blessed for their willingness to share their time and talents with us. Each new volunteer brings unique gifts and perspectives that enrich our community. Please join me in welcoming Karen & Ruthie!

—P.W.

live and taking time to do something for another person.

What would you say to someone who is considering getting involved in volunteering at St. Paul's?

Karen: Working in the church is a privilege and a joy. What we're doing is important, and making connections with our fellow parishioners is wonderful.

Ruthie: Volunteering at St. Paul's is easy, fun and rewarding. Our outreach committee has worked hard to make sure that each service is well organized so that volunteers can easily step in to help. It is a great way to meet people of all ages and backgrounds whom you might not have otherwise known. It's about the people of Nantucket and the people of our church. It adds a dimension to life on Nantucket which is invaluable. The summer before my ordination, Father Gene McDowell asked me if I would like to be St. Paul's deacon when on island. The rest is history!!!



STEWARDSHIP Campaign

GROWING TOGETHER IN FAITH AND SERVICE

by Peter Barnes and Patsy Wright, Stewardship Committee co-chairs

As we reflect on the journey of our Stewardship campaign, we are filled with gratitude for the incredible spirit of generosity and commitment that we are receiving from our St. Paul's family. Since October, we have made significant strides towards achieving our goal. One-hundred and sixteen pledges totaling \$440,000, this equals 80% of our goal of \$550,000 for our 2025 campaign.

We are excited to share that as of this writing, we have received \$411,000, 75% of our goal. This progress is a testament to the incredible heart of this congregation. Together we are making a difference, not only in our church, but also in the wider island community.



For those who have pledged, thank you from our hearts for your generosity. If you have not yet pledged and would like to share in the future of St. Paul's, giving is easy. Pledge cards and stewardship brochures are always available at the back of the church, or you can download a pledge card from the donate now button on our website. If you prefer, call the church office and we will happily fill out a pledge card for you. Please be the one to get us to the finish line.

"There can be no Stewardship without stewards"

—JOHN JAY JACKSON, JR.



SPAGHETTI SUPPER

PHOTOS BY PATSY WRIGHT



Parishioners receive top drawer service from Charleston and Mary Virginia Crenshaw



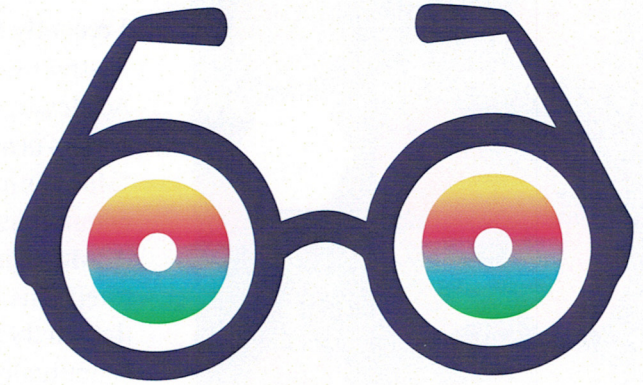
Dorothy helps Gina expedite those spaghetti dinners



Fellowship at the mid-winter spaghetti supper

I was a history major in college, but when I decided to teach literature and writing, I needed a Master's degree in English. My favorite professor offered a course in teaching the classics. He introduced us to the concept of appearance and reality. He traced it through *Don Quixote*, *Hamlet*, *Gulliver's Travels*, and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. It's at the heart of great writing and being able to recognize it is an important life skill. The cliché, "appearances can be deceiving," applies.

I had a recent experience that caused me to reflect on how that principle applies to the contemporary Episcopal Church.



by Jan Jacobi

PERSPECTIVES

To all appearances the outlook for The Episcopal Church is grim. Attendance is declining, churches are merging or closing, dioceses are tangled in legal matters involving deceased parishes, and young people find the church irrelevant. Churchgoing boomer and Gen X parents' despair for their millennial and Gen Z children who do not go to church.

Underneath this, I have found a more cheering reality.

The data distilled from surveys of millennials and Gen Z's indicate that in a godless, secular world, many young people are searching for something beyond the material. Although they are immersed in work and personal life (parenthood for the hardy), they are feeling an absence in their lives beyond the seduction of material success. Can they find a sense of meaning and purpose? Dare I say they are feeling the lack of a spiritual life?

For parents who ask themselves how they could have gone so wrong with furthering spirituality and religion in their children's lives, here is a hopeful tale.

As a youngster, our oldest son Ted appeared to have more interest in playing sports than attended church. As he grew older, Sunday morning became a time to sleep in. It turns out, though, that underneath an indifferent exterior, he was growing attuned to the spiritual. You could see it in the books he chose to read.

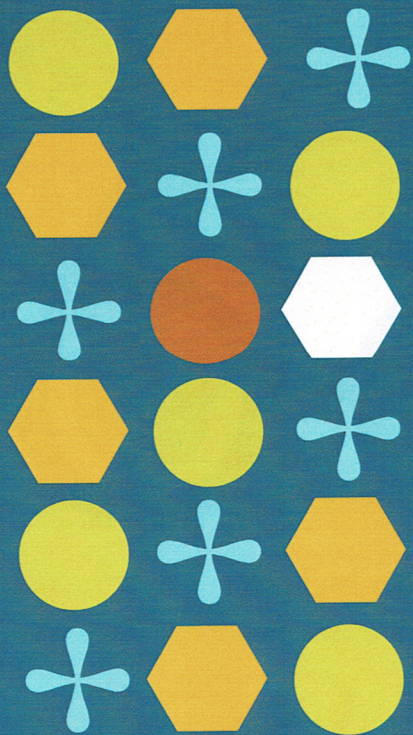
He and Samantha were married in an Episcopal church—

probably because Ted had developed a relationship with the rector outside of church. After several years in Brooklyn and the birth of their first child, they moved to Bedford Hills, New York. Wonder of wonders, they started to attend services at St. Matthew's Church in Bedford. Two-year-old Teddy was welcomed at the main service. He loved the music and was generally quiet during the sermon. Before long everyone loved having him there. Last spring Teddy was baptized at St. Matthew's.

Lest you think that Ginger and I claim credit for this, last fall Ted said to me, "You know, Dad, we are hard wired to do all the things that are bad for us." I had never thought of that. What he was telling me is that, on his own, through his spiritual/religious journey, he is finding a moral compass.

This is the reason for hope. Those millennials and Gen Zs are seeing the secular world for what it is. They are aware they are missing something. A parent's role is to plant a seed. No worry if it lies dormant for a decade or two. No worry if, on the surface, it looks as if our children have forsaken the spiritual. As we have wandered through the land of doubt and despair, so will our children. If we have planted those seeds, I am convinced they will sprout in this desert of moral desolation.

Hurrah for appearance and reality. It's the way God works his magic in our lives.



MUSIC NOTES

by Joe Hammer

I recently came across this doctoral abstract statement on the Oxford Academic, Oxford University Press's academic research platform: "Music is a powerful means of communication. It provides a means by which people can share emotions, intentions, and meanings even though their spoken languages may be mutually incomprehensible. Music can exert powerful physical effects, can produce deep and profound emotions within us, and can be used to generate infinitely subtle variations of expressiveness by skilled composers and performers."

While most of us know this already, it is good to periodically have affirmation of the power of music. In the context of worship music at St. Paul's, comments from many parishioners affirmed how the music and special services during Advent and Christmas spoke to them, helping them to communicate with God during this special season. Some of these special services include:

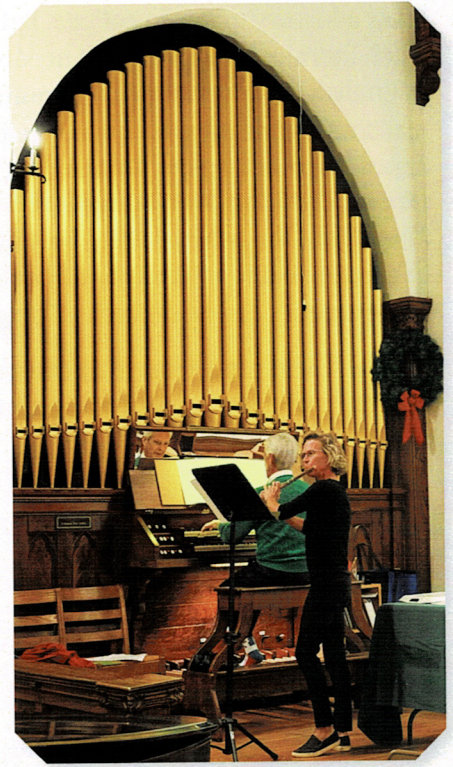


Photo: Patsy Wright

Joe Hammer & Pam Goddard perform a beautiful duet



Photo: Patsy Wright

The seventh annual Holiday Stroll Concert, Dec. 6: It seems that St. Paul's Holiday Stroll Concert has woven itself into the fabric of Stroll Weekend. Highlighting the musical talents of both St. Paul's parishioners and musicians drawn from the Nantucket community, the concert expresses the joy of the season, offers musical reflections on Christ birth, and provides a setting for sharing Christmas cheer with family and friends.

Advent Lessons and Carols with Eucharist, Dec. 8: St. Paul's choir, parish instrumentalists and vocalists shared their musical talents in offering, as "A truly transcendent experience."

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services: St. Paul's two Christmas Eve services and the 9:30 am. Christmas Day Service celebrated Christ's coming in both music and spoken word. As St. Paul's is wont, the church's musicians, stepped forward to make the service memorable and uplifting.

In moving forward, as the above illustrates and St. Paul's music tradition attests, music offered by St. Paul's for the Lenten and Easter seasons will provide opportunities to communicate the love of God and to worship God with thanks and praise.



Seventh annual Holiday Stroll Concert, Friday, December 6:

It seems that St. Paul's Holiday Stroll Concert has woven itself into the fabric of Stroll Weekend. Highlighting the music talents of both St. Paul's parishioners and musicians drawn from the Nantucket community, the concert expresses the joy of the season, offers musical reflections on the Christ child's birth, and provides a setting for sharing Christmas cheer with family and friends.

Advent Lessons and Carols with Eucharist, Sunday December 8

St. Paul's choir, parish instrumentalists and vocalists shared their music talents in offering, as more than one parishioner stated, "A truly transcendent experience."

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services

St. Paul's two Christmas Eve Services and the 9:30 a.m. Christmas Day Service celebrated Christ's coming in both music and the spoken word. As is St. Paul's wont, the church's musicians, both vocal and instrumental, stepped forward to help make the services memorable and uplifting.

St. Paul's Outreach: Grace in Action



by Dorothy Baker and Liz Bristow

This season, we've been reminded that extending love and compassion opens our hearts to receive them in return. The challenges we face may differ, but we are all in need of grace, belonging, and care—and together, we reflect these gifts in our community.



Randy Wight delivers a St. Paul's supper

Photo: Patsy Wright

Thanks to your generosity, our holiday outreach brought light to many homes. Through Secret Santa-Adopt-a-Family, we shared warm clothing, toys, and thoughtful gifts, while Stop & Shop and Cumberland Farms gift cards provided essentials for the season. Our Food Pantry continues to nourish us all, reminding us how deeply interconnected we are. Our ongoing ministries keep this spirit alive: St. Paul's Suppers offers 70 meals each week, Ready, Set, Read inspires young readers, and Laundry Love provides fresh clothes and dignity.

Thank you for being part of this journey. By giving love away, we all receive it in abundance.



The Laundry Love team





Words and photos by Patsy Wright

Christmas MARKET

A heartfelt congratulations to Olly & Co. for the incredible success of the St. Paul's Christmas Market, by far, our biggest fundraiser. Thanks to her exceptional planning, execution, and team of dedicated volunteers, she created a space where not just the St. Paul's community, but the island-wide community, came together in joy, fellowship, and merriment. Her dedication, creativity, and hard work truly shone through every detail. Her ability to coordinate volunteers, manage logistics, and bring everyone's ideas to life is truly inspiring. Thank you, Olly, for pouring your heart into this important initiative, and for making this Christmas Market not just an event, but a memorable experience for everyone involved. We are all so grateful for your leadership and vision.



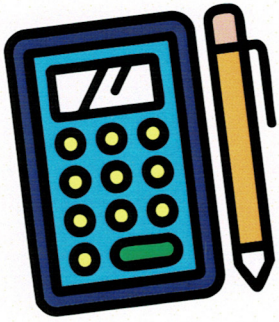


Photos by Patsy Wright



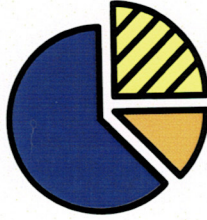
A happy and relaxed Olly feels the success





TREASURER'S REPORT

by Martin McKerrow



As is always the case, we'd like to thank you, our readers and our congregation, for your ongoing generous support of St. Paul's Church. Whether it is for Stewardship or our Capital Campaign, your outpouring of generosity has transformed St. Paul's financially, and that support has transformed and significantly increased our ability and willingness to ramp up our participation in our community and to address the long-deferred maintenance issues and the improvement of our facilities. And we are not finished.

As reported at the Annual Meeting, in 2024 we continued to find operating revenues in excess, albeit modestly, of operating expenses. This, coupled with support of the Call to Community capital campaign, meant that we ended the year with meaningful financial resources. Thanks to a rising stock market, our endowment-like Long Term Investments grew to record highs, with the unrestricted portion comfortably exceeding \$750,000.

Looking forward, these resources will be put to work. After a relatively quiet 2024, this coming year will see a major investment in our facilities, particularly the church, with a sprinkler system installation expected later in the year, and we'll be investing additional resources into Gardner Hall. We can only take on these projects due to your support, and we hope you'll keep it up.

This is my swan song as your Treasurer, and I'd like to thank you and the Vestry for your support, and also our bookkeeper, Becky Mack, who has allowed me to report our results to you. Thank you!



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Photo: Dorothy Baker

1 Nobody does gingerbread houses like the Fable family. Photo Father Max

2 Max wearing sandwich board

3 Bob Felch and Father Max share a hug at the Annual Meeting.

Photo Dorothy Baker

DID YOU KNOW?



by Peter Greenhalgh

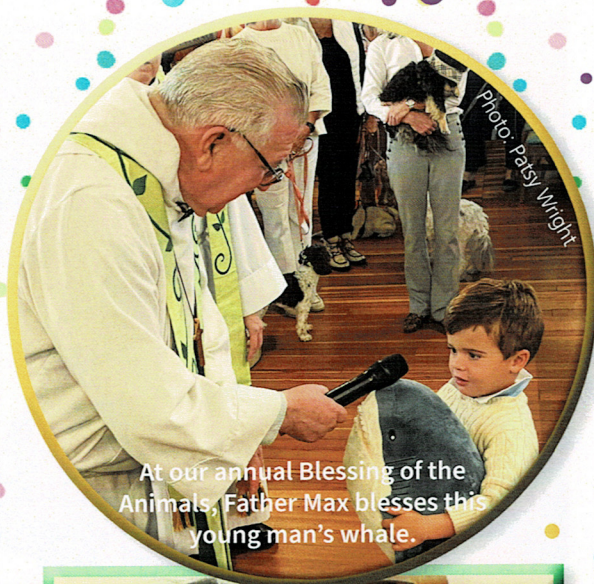
"Build it and they will come..."

With all the work that has recently been accomplished in our beloved church and its surrounding campus, I'd venture to guess that many folks do not know that Gardner Hall is a relatively recent addition.

Nantucket native, and my friend, the late David Wood, grew up on the island, and was a long-time St. Paul's parishioner. Reflecting on the genesis of Gardner Hall, David recalled that, the undercroft was dug out by hand! According to *Bob Ford's book, St. Paul's 1839-2014, 175 Years on Nantucket*. "The non-basement area under the church was excavated to provide for a large meeting room, a kitchen, and a robing and classroom area. The Sunday school and other church activities were then able to be held in the new spaces, and no longer needed to take place in the Rectory." In the mid-1990s, a major renovation of what is known now as Gardner Hall was completed. The kitchen and bathroom areas were moved and reconfigured to their present locations. The faux paneling was removed from the walls, the ceiling replaced and coffered, and the floors redone to provide for more welcoming and suitable space. Now, two decades later, we are embarking on the next chapter of revitalizing Gardner Hall, breathing new life into our gathering space, so vital for hospitality and fellowship among our parishioners.

Little known fact; William E. Gardner was a Nantucketer by ancestry, resident, education, and most of all, by his love of the island and its people. Bob Ford writes, "Dr. Will entered the Cambridge Episcopal Theological School and graduated in 1898. He was ordained a deacon in The Episcopal Church in May of that year, and a priest the following December. He was married at St. Paul's in 1898 and for the next forty years held positions with the Episcopal Board of Missions, Board of Religious Education and was the rector of several parishes in New England."

William Gardner and his wife retired to Nantucket in 1940. During these years, he assisted at St. Paul's and was designated Associate Rector in 1960. He authored four major Nantucket books, was active in the life of the community, the Atheneum, Nantucket Historical Association and of course our beautiful church. As a tribute to his contributions to the island and St. Paul's, Gardner Hall was named in his memory.



At our annual Blessing of the Animals, Father Max blesses this young man's whale.

Photo: Patsy Wright



Little Melah appears to be enjoying her Baptism

Photo: Patsy Wright



Our beautiful new Vestry room showcases our iconic Steven Swift table

Photo: Patsy Wright



St. Paul's Church in Nantucket

20 Fair Street

Nantucket, MA 02554

Visit Us

20 Fair Street, Nantucket MA 02554
stpaulschurchnantucket.org

Contact us

508.228.0916
office@stpaulschurchnantucket.org

Pastoral and other concerns

Please contact Father Max
fathermax@stpaulschurchnantucket.org
302.542.5587

Office hours

Tuesday-Friday, 9 a.m.-Noon



DO WE HAVE YOUR CORRECT CONTACT INFORMATION?

Email your updates to:
office@stpaulschurchnantucket.org

Follow us



on Facebook Live or Zoom

To join us on Zoom. Please see our weekly Parish Update for the meeting number and password. Please contact the Church Office if you need assistance.

You
Tube



Our online offerings are recorded and available at St. Paul's-Nantucket



Watch Sunday Eucharist live or taped, and videos of recent sermons and events on
stpaulschurchnantucket.org

9:30 am*

Sunday Eucharist *8:00 am in the Memorial Garden May 26 - Sept. 1, Weather permitting

Noon

Tuesday Lunchbox Series

Noon

Joe Hammer's Music Wednesday
Half-hour concert

11:30 am

Thursday Morning Bible Study
One hour, ends at 12:30 pm

GO IN PEACE TO LOVE AND SERVE THE LORD!