

Annual Parish Meeting 2026



St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Savannah, Georgia

AGENDA FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF
THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF SAINT PAUL THE APOSTLE

*1801 Abercorn Street, Savannah, Georgia 31401
February 8, 2026*

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PRIEST IN CHARGE REPORT

Hebrews 11:1 (NIV): "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

When I reflect on life at St Paul's during the interim years since Fr. Willoughby's retirement, two words emerge: faith and trust. In Hebrews we read, "faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

Our parish family, through all, has demonstrated great confidence and great trust that God is leading us, through reflection and with patient expectation, toward a new chapter in our journey.

Through these years, we haven't "dropped a stitch." Thanks to the leadership of our Interim Rector, Fr. Kevin Kelley, Deacon Ella Roundtree and Fr Leonel Polanco, our parish travelled an uncertain road in good spirit, with patience, and with "sure and certain hope".

In the past year, our Liturgical schedule and practice was implemented without interruption. Thanks go to our Altar Guild, Flower Guild, Servers, Lay Readers, Lay Eucharistic Ministers, Pastoral Visitors, for supporting our worship and ensuring that it continues to create the "beauty of holiness" that blesses us every day. The Sacred Music at St. Paul's, our organist, musicians, and choir, has enhanced our worship beyond words.

As you will read in their annual reports, mission outreach through Food Pantry and Backpack Buddies has been more effective than ever. ESL programs have continued, AA has been supported, and Christian Education through weekly Bible Study and seasonal Evening Study groups has enriched us. Fr Leonel has increased our Spanish Speaking Congregation with inspiring dynamism and enthusiasm. Unified liturgies during the year have been opportunities for English Speaking and Spanish Speaking parishioners to join in worship and fellowship.

The Search Committee, and the Vestry, have been tireless in ensuring that the highest standards and practices have been followed both in the Search Process for our new Rector and in the Administration of the Parish's financial and material affairs.

We have been travelling a winding road. We have been on the road together, praying and supporting one another in countless ways as we journey, with faith and trust, towards a new day. Thanks be to God.

Fr. John Palmer

From the Parish Register:

	2024	2025
	Attendance	Attendance
Sunday Masses:	6561	6763
All other:	5581	5789
Total	12142	12552

Baptisms	6	10
Confirmation	0	17
Marriages	1	2
Visits to the Sick	67	62
Stations	6	6
Blessing of Pets	1	1
Burials	5	5
Easter Eve/Day	263	261
Christmas Eve/Day	285	267

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

As we gather for this year's Annual Meeting, I offer this report with deep gratitude for the faith, perseverance, and generosity that have sustained our parish throughout the past year. 2025 was a season of transition, resilience, and renewed hope for St. Paul's. It was an honor to serve as Senior Warden and to contribute to all that we accomplished together.

The Vestry of St. Paul the Apostle is comprised of nine parishioners in good standing, elected to serve up to two consecutive three-year terms. We extend heartfelt thanks to Alan Bolton, Roger Gregory, and Lorna Smith, who concluded

their terms in 2024. Their dedication and steady service were gifts to our parish. Lorna's final contribution—recording the minutes of the 2025 Annual Meeting—was received with deep gratitude.

This year, Christina Chancey and Jim Weathers were elected to join continuing members Kyle Eckmann, Ilse Mejia, Darrell Naylor Johnson, Simona Perry, Richelle Southwick, Harriett Speer, and Billy Wooton. Ilse served faithfully until relocating during the summer. Because one of the Vestry's strategic goals was to reduce its size from twelve to nine members, the Vestry chose not to fill her seat until the 2026 Annual Meeting. We are also grateful to Cuffy Sullivan, who graciously agreed to serve as Treasurer and has offered invaluable leadership in strengthening the church's financial operations.

Throughout 2025, the Vestry met monthly on the third Sunday or Monday, with additional special-called meetings held as needed for time-sensitive matters. Executive sessions were convened for confidential personnel or operational concerns, though no votes were taken during these sessions. All Vestry meetings were open to the parish, and minutes were consistently posted in the Parish Hall. At our first meeting following the Annual Meeting, the Vestry elected the following officers: Senior Warden – Darrell Naylor Johnson; Junior Warden – Kyle Eckmann; and Clerk – Richelle Southwick. Later in the year, Kyle resigned for personal reasons, and Vestry member Simona Perry stepped down in accordance with protocol upon becoming a postulant for Holy Orders. Both Kyle and Simona contributed to the vitality of the church in numerous ways during their service and have continued to do so beyond their time on the Vestry. We are grateful to Ana Carter and Eric Nowicki, who agreed to complete the unexpired terms of Eckmann and Perry.

St. Paul's has been blessed by the faithful ministry of several gifted clergy over the past year. We extend sincere gratitude to Mother Lauren Byrd, who stepped down to pursue her long-held calling to writing. We also give heartfelt thanks to Father John Palmer, Father Leonel Polanco, Deacon Ella Roundtree, and Father Victor Morano for their dedicated service to our parish.

We are especially grateful to Father Palmer, who graciously expanded his responsibilities during the interim period until our new Rector is installed. In addition to celebrating the 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. services, he has provided pastoral care and participated in weekly staff meetings.

It has also been a blessing to work alongside Father Kevin Kelly during his time as Interim Rector. He completed his ministry with us on December 31 and has returned to Valdosta to serve as Rector of Christ Church. His steady leadership and pastoral presence were invaluable during this season of transition.

Like many congregations, we navigated emotional and practical challenges, especially regarding clergy transitions. One of the most difficult moments was receiving notice of an accord related to Title IV matters involving our former Rector, conveyed in a letter from the Bishop of Alabama to St. Paul's and to clergy and wardens throughout the Diocese of Georgia. Bishop Logue's visit and guidance during this period were critically important. I am grateful for his leadership and support, which helped keep us mindful that even in seasons of hardship, God continues to call us forward in faith toward a hopeful and Spirit-filled future.

In February 2025, the Vestry met with Canon Lasch to review the process for calling our next Rector. We learned that the Search Committee, once formed, would partner with Saison Consulting and Holy Cow Consulting—whose parish-wide survey informed our church profile. Survey results were shared at in-person meetings and posted on the St. Paul's website. In March, the newly formed Vestry held a retreat at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, focusing on preparing for the search process and strengthening our sense of shared mission and momentum.

Following consultation with the Bishop and the Canon to the Ordinary, the Vestry formally commissioned the Search Committee in May. The committee was charged to work independently of the Vestry, with one Vestry member serving as part of the group. Richelle Southwick was selected for that role, and Christina Chancey was appointed Clerk of the Vestry so Richelle could dedicate herself fully to the search process. To launch the search, Vestry members attended all three Sunday services—8:00, 10:00, and 12:15—to announce the committee's formation and introduce its members. The Search Committee held weekly meetings and diligently kept the Vestry and congregation informed. At the time of writing, interviews have been completed, and the final stages of the process are taking shape. Sincere thanks to the committee for their extraordinary dedication, integrity, and thoughtfulness throughout the year.

It was an honor to lead the *Our Common Gift, Our Common Life* stewardship campaign alongside Simona Perry and Harriett Speer. Special thanks to the parishioners who shared their reflections and meditations on the theme. The campaign's results reflected a congregation deeply committed to the mission of the

church. Both the number of pledges and total giving increased. Your generosity—through your presence, your gifts, and your willingness to share your time and talents—continues to sustain our ministry.

As I look back over the past year, my heart is full of gratitude for all the ways God has guided, strengthened, and sustained our parish family. Serving as your Senior Warden has been a humbling privilege. And as we turn toward the year ahead—with a new Rector soon to be called, renewed momentum in our ministries, and a congregation steadfast in faith—I am filled with hope. May we continue to walk together in courage, generosity, and trust, confident that God is still shaping a future for St. Paul's that is abundant, joyful, and full of grace.

Darrell Naylor-Johnson

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

As we reflect on the past year, I am pleased to present an overview of our maintenance and improvement activities that have contributed to the overall functionality and aesthetic appeal of our facilities. Our commitment to maintaining a safe and welcoming environment has guided our efforts.

1. ****Ice Maker Replacement****: We recognized the necessity for a reliable ice maker to serve our community events and gatherings. The old unit was replaced, ensuring that our kitchen operations run smoothly.
2. ****Air Conditioner Replacement at 221 E. 34th****: The air conditioning system at this location was outdated and inefficient. We successfully replaced it with a new, energy-efficient model, significantly improving climate control for the comfort of all who use the space.
3. ****Fence Removal at 221 E. 34th****: In an effort to enhance the appearance and accessibility of the property, we undertook the removal of the old fence. This decision has opened up the area, allowing for better visibility and a more inviting atmosphere.

4. ****Sanctuary Lights Replaced****: The lighting in our sanctuary was updated to improve both functionality and ambiance during services. The new fixtures not only enhance the aesthetic of the space but also offer improved energy efficiency.
5. ****Refrigerator Compressor Replacement****: We addressed ongoing issues with our refrigerator by replacing the compressor. This upgrade will ensure that our food storage remains reliable and safe for all our catering needs.
6. ****Walsingham Chapel Roof Replacement****: The roof of Walsingham Chapel was in dire need of replacement. Our proactive approach not only protects the integrity of the chapel but also ensures that it remains a treasured space for devotion and community gatherings.
7. ****Parking Lot Light Replacement****: To improve safety and visibility in our parking areas, we replaced outdated lighting. This enhancement provides a safer experience for everyone visiting our facilities, especially during evening events.
8. ****Parking Lot Lines Painted****: Finally, we completed the painting of the parking lot lines, which has organized our parking areas and improved accessibility. These projects reflect our dedication to maintaining and improving our facilities for the benefit of our community. I want to thank everyone involved for their hard work and commitment to making these improvements possible.

Erick Nowicki, Interim Junior Warden

VICAR'S REPORT LATINO/HISPANIC MINISTRY

This is to inform the 2026 Annual Meeting of St. Paul the Apostle that during this year the Hispanic/Latino ministry has continued to work hard and tenaciously to strengthen its members and reach others, so that together it can continue to grow spiritually and numerically.

The weekly activities of Holy Eucharist and Morning Prayer: Sunday Spanish Language Holy Eucharist 12:15 p.m., Tuesday Morning Prayer 9:00 a.m., Tuesday Bible Study 7:30 p.m., Wednesday Bilingual Holy Eucharist 7:00 a.m., Thursday Spanish Language Holy Eucharist 6:15 p.m., Friday Bilingual Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m. And we observed the major Feasts of the Church according to the Book of Common

Prayer through Liturgical Offices and Holy Eucharist, regardless of whether it was a weekday.

Other activities that were held from 2024-16 January 2026: In 2025 we had a Mass for Thanksgiving in November with a beautiful gathering with great attendance. On the occasion of Christmas, we had a gathering that included the exchange of gifts. We had two special Quinceañeras, four children's presentations in the congregation, and one thanksgiving for a new child. We held spiritual retreats for Advent in both 2024 and 2025. Throughout the month of October 2024, we celebrated the month of the Rosary when we visited families in their homes to pray the rosary. We held one mass in honor of St. Jude on October 28, 2024. At the beginning of December, we began the novenas to the Virgin of Guadalupe when we visited families at their homes for 11 days in the evenings. We held one Mass at the house of Carolina Marín in honor of the Concepción de María, the patron saint of Nicaragua. We held two masses in honor of the Virgin of Guadalupe. The Congregation held a Lenten Retreat in 2025. During Hispanic Heritage Month we prayed for the countries to which we dedicate Masses during on each Sunday of the month and enjoyed that countries special cuisines during the gathering. The pastoral visit of our Bishop Frank took place during this time in a great Bilingual celebration. We celebrated a special Christmas Eve Mass in 2024, celebrated The Holy Name in both 2025 and 2026, and the special Masses of the Epiphany in 2025 and 2026 with the Traditional Rosca de Reyes, which is a beautiful Mexican tradition that includes the distribution of toys to the children in attendance. Through celebrations like Rosca de Reyes, we celebrate our valued ancestral Latino traditions that strengthen our life of faith so that we are better able to transmit these traditions to future generations.

During 2025 we had 10 baptisms, 8 first communions, and 11 confirmations. And, we had 4 Requiem Masses of relatives of members of the Hispanic congregation. We bought a statue of St. Joseph, we restored a statue of the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph for Christmas, and we bought a statue of a baby Jesus, all with resources from the Hispanic congregation. These statues provide tools for Hispanic Episcopalians to grow their life of faith.

We ask for your prayers in order to advance our goals to grow spiritually and numerically during 2026. And we especially ask your prayers for the members of our Hispanic congregation who are scared and suffering the impacts of this government's immigration policies and as I continue my pastoral visits. If you need any more

details, I am available to provide them. Asking for continual blessings from the Holy Spirit upon all of us.

Rev. Padre Leonel Polanco de la Cruz+
Vicar for Hispanic/Latino Ministries

Informe del Ministerio Hispano/Latino Parroquia San Pablo Apóstol, Diócesis Episcopal de Georgia. Desde el 1er. Domingo de Adviento 2024 hasta el 16 de enero 2026.

Informamos a la Iglesia San Pablo Apóstol convertida en asamblea parroquial, que durante este año este ministerio Hispano/Latino a seguido trabajando con ahínco y tesón, para fortalecer a sus miembros y alcanzar a otros, para juntos seguir creciendo espiritual y numéricamente.

Las actividades habituales de Santa Eucaristía, Oración de la Mañana, siguen siendo de forma habitual los Domingos 12:15p.m., Martes 9:00a.m. Oración de la Mañana, Estudio Biblico Martes 7:30p.m. los Miércoles 7:00a.m. Santa Eucaristía Bilingüe, Jueves Santa Eucaristía 6:15p.m., Viernes Santa Eucaristía Bilingüe 10:00a.m. y observamos las fiestas Mayores de la Iglesia según el Libro de Oración Común, por Medio de Oficios Litúrgicos y Santa Eucaristia, sin importar que sea día entre semana.

Actividades que se celebraron durante los años 2024 y 2025/2026

Este Año 2025 tuvimos una misa de acción de Gracias y un compartir hermoso con gran asistencia y un compartir con intercambio de regalos por motivo de la fiesta de la Navidad. Tuvimos dos misas especiales de acción de gracias o Quinceañeras, 4 presentación de niños en la congregación y acción de gracias después del parto, nuestros retiros espirituales de advientos 2024 y 2025, la celebración del mes del rosario trasladándonos para acompañar a las familias durante todo el mes de octubre 2024,, 1 misa en honor a San Judas el 28 de Octubre, a principio del mes de diciembre las novenas a la Virgen de Guadalupe acompañando a las familias durante 11 días en las noches, 1 Misa en honor a la Concepción de María en casa de Carolina Marín ante una cantidad de Nicaragüense, que conmemoraban su fiesta patronales y 2 misas en honor a la Virgen de Guadalupe. La Celebración del retiro de la congregación para la Cuaresma 2025. La celebración por todo lo alto del Mes de la Herencia Hispana, donde oramos por los países a los que dedicamos las misas

durante estos domingos y disfrutamos de su gastronomía durante el convivio y la visita pastoral de nuestro Obispo Frank en una gran celebración Bilingüe, La Misa especial de Nochebuena 2024, la Celebración del Santo Nombre de Jesús 2025 y 2026 y las Misas especiales de la Epifanía 2025 y 2026 con la Tradicional Rosca de Reyes, una hermosa tradición mexicana, convivio y la entrega de Juguetes y dinámicas para los niños presentes y las celebraciones especiales valoradas como riquezas ancestrales de nuestros pueblos Latinos que fortalecen nuestra vida de fe y lo que queremos celebrar y compartir para poder transmitir a esta y futuras generaciones. Tuvimos durante este año 2025, 10 bautismos, 8 Comunión, y 11 confirmaciones. Durante este año litúrgico que termino tuvimos 4 Misas de Réquiem de familiares de miembros de la congregación hispana. Compramos 1 imagen de San José, restauramos una imagen de la virgen María y San José para la navidad y compramos una imagen de un niño Jesús, todo con recursos de la misma congregación hispana y seguimos dotando a los Hispanos Episcopales de herramienta para el crecimiento de su vida de fe.

Es importa también pedir sus oraciones para poder avanzar en las metas trazadas de hacer todo cuanto fuera necesario para crecer espiritualmente y numéricamente durante este 2026 y también por los miembros de nuestra congregación hispana que están asustado y sufriendo los impactos de las políticas migratorias de este gobierno; mientras yo le sigo acompañando pastoralmente con visita en sus hogares y sirviendo a los enfermos con visitas.

Sin otro particular por el momento quedando de ustedes para cualquier explicación posterior y pidiendo el continuo rocío del Espíritu Santo sobre cada uno de los miembros de la Junta parroquial, se despide.

Rvdo. Padre Leonel Polanco de la Cruz+
Vicario para Ministerios Hispanos/Latinos.

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE'S REPORT

The Investment Committee is composed of the following members:

Rector	Vacant (Interim Rector served through December 2025)
Senior Warden	Darrell Naylor-Johnson
Parish Treasurer	Cuffy Sullivan
Elected to Three Year Term by Annual Meeting	Sarah Ward (Chairperson) January 28, 2024
Elected to Four Year Term by Vestry	Gary Shelby June 19, 2023
Elected by the Investment Committee	Marsha Tolbert (Secretary)

The Investment Committee meets at least quarterly to monitor the investments of the Parish, provide reports to the Vestry on the status of the investments, and to make recommendations to the Vestry related to the investments. Quarterly meetings are typically held on the second Wednesday of the middle month of each quarter at 6:00 PM. This is designed to precede the upcoming Vestry meeting. In 2025, the Committee met four times: **February 18, June 6, August 13, and November 13 (Virtual/Zoom)**. During the 2025 calendar year, the Committee monitored the Investment Fund managed by the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF) and its investment management partner, State Street Global Advisors (SSGA). The ECF/SSGA selected portfolio is designated Active/Passive with ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) and select the ratio of 60%/40% (equities/fixed income investments).

At the quarterly meetings, the Committee reviewed monthly statements from ECF/SSGA. The Senior Warden reported the recommendations and observations of the Investment Committee to the Vestry at its meetings. The fund started the year with a balance of \$1,015,331.49 and ended the year with \$1,143,010.81. The fund has continued to appreciate through the year adding \$147,763.40 of value.

In 2025, the fund received two gifts of stock from Kristin Lee totaling \$99,203.01. This was to be put toward the organ repairs and was withdrawn the same month to cover those expenses. Additional funds were withdrawn at the request and approval

of the Vestry* totaling \$43,993.53 for the organ repairs and capital improvements. Quarterly fees and taxes are automatically withdrawn and reflected in the statements.

**In June 2024, the Vestry approved the transfer of \$363,281 to cover repairs to the organ and capital improvements to the buildings. To date, \$185,226.38 has been spent (not including the donation from Kristin Lee) and \$178,024.62 remains in the Investment Fund to be allocated toward certain capital improvements upon request.*

Additionally, the following decisions and recommendations were made:

- Recommended to the Vestry to add the position of Treasurer as *ex-officio* member of the Investment Committee. This position was subsequently approved by the Vestry.
- Two donations from Peter Paar's Estate are anticipated to be received and partially deposited into the fund the first quarter of 2026.
- The 2026 meeting calendar is below. We discussed making some of these meetings virtual.

February 11, 2026 (Parish Hall)

August 12, 2026

May 13, 2026

November 11, 2026

Sarah Ward, Investment Committee Chair

RECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

What follows is a brief overview of the work that the rector search committee has conducted on your behalf since May 2025. May 2025 Committee Members appointed by the Vestry: Omelia Donahoo; Max Haas; Paul Hammond; Kristin Lee; Roy Morris; Lorna Smith; Richelle Southwick; Sarah Ward.

May 25, 2025: The search committee was commissioned and blessed during all three masses.

June 9, 2025 - our first meeting in which we chose Max Haas as chairman. We worked with Nora Smith (Saison Consulting) for 2 hours to become familiar with the rector search process.

Phase 1: Gathering Knowledge

- Holy listening sessions.
- Holy Cow! Survey: 78 responses

Survey results were presented to the Vestry & Search Committee and other staff by the Holy Cow! Consultants.

The search committee held two sessions with parishioners to pass on the information we learned.

Phase 2: The Profile

A subcommittee of Richelle, Kris, Omelia, Lorna and Sarah was formed to create out parish profile and OTM profile.

The writing of these documents took three weeks, with meetings on both zoom and in person.

The documents were sent to Nora Smith (Saison Consulting), the Vestry, and Canon Lasch for review and edits were made as needed.

Phase 3: The Posting

Our posting went live on the Office of Ministry job board and in the Episcopal News Service on September 15, 2025. The listing remained open until October 13, 2025.

All applications went directly to Cannon Lasch, who then performed background checks for any red flags on each candidate.

During this phase the search committee continued to meet in preparation for the first round of interviews. We readied our interview strategy and refined our questions with the help of Nora Smith (Saison Consulting).

Phase 4: Interviews Round 1

Canon Lasch provided the committee with documents and video links for all our candidates on October 17, 2025. We had so many wonderful applicants! We set aside two weeks to allow each committee member time to read and watch the homilies for each applicant. We prayed and discerned independently before meeting to pray and discern together which candidates to bring forward to the initial interview phase. All initial interviews were held via zoom.

Two interview subcommittees were created to allow each candidate to be interviewed by a maximum of three committee members on the zoom call. This enabled us to complete all the first-round interviews within a two-week time span.

All committee members were required to watch all the interview recordings. After prayer and review independently, we met in person on November 15 for discernment and prayer together. At this meeting we selected three candidates to bring forward to the next phase.

Phase 5: In person interviews.

The committee held in person interviews with activities scheduled over two days for each of the 3 final candidates. These were conducted from Dec 29 through Jan 7.

Each candidate received:

- Gift baskets waiting in their hotel room.
- Trolley tour of Savannah.
- Driving tour of the wider area, including schools and shops; lunch with a few committee members on each day;
- Walking tour of the church and rectory.
- One dinner hosted by a committee member and attended by all members;
- One light dinner at the Diocesan Center with all committee members;
- Each candidate conducted Mass for the committee at the Diocesan Center;
- And the interview was conducted at the Diocesan Center.
- During this time each candidate also had a phone meeting with Bishop Frank and all were preliminary approved by the Bishop's office to move toward our final selection.

After all the interviews the committee met on January 7 in person for prayer and discernment. At this meeting we reached consensus on a clear favorite, with a very close second. We then committed to 24 hours of prayer and contemplation on our own before finalizing the selection process.

Phase 6: Presentation to the Vestry.

When we had our Priest Candidate, we notified Canon Lasch and received official approval of our choice from Bishop Frank.

Lorna & Max then completed the presentation slides for our presentation of our candidate to the vestry. The search committee met with the vestry by Zoom on January 10, 2026. The vestry voted to approve our selection at the same meeting.

Phase 7: The Process continues

With vestry approval our search is officially over.

But our priest cannot yet be named. There is a process that includes the vestry and the office of the Bishop and the priest. Negotiations must be made, contracts signed, and people to be notified before we can finally make our choice known to you.

Please continue to be patient but know that this process is almost over. We, the search committee members, are all very excited. We cannot wait for everyone to meet our next rector.

St. Paul's Rector Search Committee

ALTAR GUILD ANNUAL REPORT

Altar Guild had a busy 2025 which included two special events beginning with the Luncheon and Linens workshop on February 1st for members and potential members of St. Paul's Altar Guild. Everyone who attended enjoyed seeing up close and learning about some of the special linens we use at the altar. All enjoyed the fellowship over lunch. Special thanks go to Selden Frissell who hand embroidered lovely crosses on our new sacristy towels.

In March, Cuffy Sullivan and Christina Chancey arranged a workshop and lunch for Altar Guild titled Care of Sacred Silver. Thank you, Cuffy for the wonderful demonstration and expert information. This was attended by 15 Altar Guild members from across the Diocese. The attendees reported that they learned many things they did not know and enjoyed getting to know each other.

We also conducted our bi-annual Church Refresh Days. We are grateful to all of those Altar Guild members and additional volunteers who come out during Advent and Lent to expand the care of our beautiful building beyond what Altar Guild members and the cleaning service can accomplish on a weekly basis. Thank you also to all those who come to help make palm crosses, put up and take down the Advent wreath, hang Christmas banners and all the other things that that make what we do at St. Paul's special.

Most of all, applause to all those faithful, hardworking people who are here regularly to make sure everything is ready for worship on Sunday as well as weekdays. Whether you set up for Sunday, fill and replace candles or do any one of the many polishing, cleaning, straightening or filling tasks, please know that you are valued.

Altar Guild members set up for: 102 Sunday Masses; 6 Requiem Masses; 3 Ash Wednesday Masses; 7 Holy Week Masses; more than 200 Weekday Masses

Marsha Tolbert

DAUGHTER OF THE KING'S REPORT

The Order of the Daughter of the King was founded by Margaret Franklin on April 4, 1885, at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher now Church of Resurrection in New York City. The Order is an international religious order for Episcopal women. We pledge ourselves to a lifelong program of service and personal evangelism. We work to strengthen the spiritual life of the parish.

As members we pray and send cards to all members of the Church family who are ill at home or hospitalized.

Our chapter meets on the first Saturday morning of the month at 10:00 am in Bishop Brady Hall. Our meetings include prayer, study and business.

For His Sake

Kathleen Waite, President

THOMAS PARK FOOD PANTRY AT ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

As we enter the year 2026 our Food Pantry is looking at a few changes to the Pantry. The number of tireless and unceasing volunteers is dwindling. We currently have about 10 people regularly volunteering, 6 of whom are church members. There are numerous other church members we call upon occasionally for help as needed, along with the many parishioners who donate food or money when the call is made.

In 2025, we distributed 2,173 brown bags of groceries, 206 more bags than we distributed the previous year. Our clients self-report that we provided food for 4,070 children under 18 years of age, 1,779 adults between 18 and 64 years of age, and 1,803 seniors over the age of 65. That amounts to 7,652 people who were provided food this year, which is 2,500 more people than we provided food for last year. We try to include a variety of food in every bag we distribute, including cans of fruit, vegetables, soups, fresh fruit or vegetables when available, pasta, rice, cereal, and beans. And each bag includes some kind of frozen meat.

During November 2025, we added two extra distributions on each of the two Saturdays prior to Thanksgiving. These two extra days were meant to assist those who lost access to Food Stamps during the 43 days when the government was shut down in October and November.

During the last year, we have noticed significantly less food available to be purchased at the Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia. We purchase nearly all food items from the Second Harvest Food Bank at 9 cents per pound. We receive bread, when available, donated by retail grocery stores for free. When the food available from Second Harvest decreases as it has this past year, we have to purchase food from retail grocery or discount stores, at significantly higher prices, or we turn to our members for donations.

This upcoming year will no-doubt bring more changes to Thomas Park Food Pantry at St. Paul's. But the St. Paul's congregation is dedicated to this ministry, and our Pantry volunteers are committed to serving our neighbors for as long as we are able.

Our sincere thanks go out to everyone who has given their time, their talent, and their treasurer to help us feed our neighbors in this community, and we look forward to a day when no one on earth goes hungry or thirsty. Until that day, we seek God's blessing on this ministry.

Kristin Lee, Food Pantry Director by Default

LAY EUCHARISTIC VISITOR'S REPORT

Our Lay Eucharistic Visitation Team is blessed to serve as the hands and voice of Christ for parishioners who are unable to join us in worship. Through this ministry, we carry the sacrament of Holy Communion to those who are homebound, reminding them that they remain a vital and cherished part of our church family.

Throughout 2025, our team offered the Eucharist monthly to parishioners on our visitation list. During the year, we lovingly walked with members through times of transition. Two of the parishioners we visited passed into eternal life. One individual became unable to receive Communion, two returned to active participation in their previous church communities, and two others declined visitation when offered. At the same time, we welcomed three new parishioners into the ministry, ending the year with seven individuals receiving regular visits.

In addition to Eucharistic visits, our Outreach Team has begun sending cards to these parishioners as another expression of care, prayer, and connection. These small gestures help affirm that they are remembered, valued, and held in prayer by their church family.

Looking ahead to 2026, we hope to prayerfully expand this ministry beyond Eucharistic visitation to include occasional social visits, phone calls, or text messages. Our desire is to deepen relationships and help our homebound members know they are close to our hearts and never forgotten.

We welcome your help in this ministry. Please let us know if there is someone who should be added to our visitation list, if you feel called to join the Lay Eucharistic Visitation Team, or if you have ideas for strengthening and expanding our outreach.

Richelle Southwick, Chair

BACKPACK BUDDY REPORT

Our successes, we were able to provide an additional bag of food to go home with each student the week prior to Thanksgiving break. We also added additional food to the bags during the government shutdown. Renae Scott has come on board as a volunteer this school year.

We are currently providing 33 bags of food on a weekly basis to Charles Ellis K-8. Each bag consists of protein, vegetables, fruit, cereal, milk, juice, and snacks to provide food for students on the weekend. Several students throughout SCCPSS qualify for free or reduced lunch and many of those students receive a backpack of food to go home with them on Friday afternoons. Our primary source of food is purchased from Second Harvest, but we have had to purchase shelf stable milk from Sam's on a few occasions when Second Harvest didn't have milk in stock.

This ministry is supported by many volunteers from St. Paul's. The volunteers pick up the food, coordinate the schedule, pack the bags, deliver the food to the school, track the inventory and complete the monthly report for Second Harvest. Those volunteers include Audrey Lang, Christina Chancey, Cuffy Sullivan, Dan Porter, Ernie Brown, Ian Eckmann, Jonah Eckmann, Kathy Waite, Kay Tucker, Marianne Porter, Renae Scott and Will Hughes.

Our challenges moving forward are that we need additional volunteers to fill in when someone is not available to complete all the necessary tasks. If you are interested in helping with this worthwhile program, please reach out to us.

Christina Chancey and Cuffy Sullivan

FLOWER GUILD REPORT

The Flower Guild is a *ministry* whose purpose is to serve the parish by providing flowers for worship services and dedicated events. Flower arrangements bring the beauty of God's creation into the church. Their placement brings a traditional visual complement to the worship environment and experience.

For the Year 2025, a total of **twenty-nine parishioners** signed the Flower Guild Chart located in Bishop Brady Hall. The funds donated from the people who signed the Flower Guild Chart were \$2,190.00. Additionally, other parishioners chose to sign up online or by calling the office. The total amount given for Sunday arrangements was \$3,120 as of November 2025. Beginning in 2023, Father Kelly requested that the Flower Guild arrange flowers for all Sunday services. If there was no donation made for a Sunday, the funds for the flowers would come from the Memorial Fund as directed by Father Kelly. Due to the increase in flowers and floral supplies, the Flower Guild, reluctantly, requested an increase of twenty dollars for the suggested donation for the High Altar arrangement. With the increase of twenty

dollars, the suggested donation for the High Altar is \$110. The suggested donation for the Queen of Peace Altar and Walsingham Shrine remains the same.

At St. Paul's, a partnership exists between the Flower Guild and supportive parishioners who provide donations: High Altar, \$110; Queen of Peace, \$50; Walsingham Shrine, \$30. You may sign up for specific dates by using the Flower Charts on the bulletin board in Bishop Brady Hall. After signing your name to the chart, fill out a Flower Guild Donation Form found in the pocket located below the Flower Guild Charts. Return your completed form to the Administrator's mail-slot in the hallway near the parish office. Or you may go online and submit a google form using the link found in the emailed parish newsletter. Additionally, you may pick up a donation form located on the church piano and submit it by the collection plate at mass or mail to the church office.

The Flower Guild's work begins in the working Sacristy. This is a shared space used by Acolytes, Altar Guild, Flower Guild, and Clergy. On high Holy Days, one sees a choreographed dance between everyone using this busy space. Their mission to glorify God!

Being a member of the Flower Guild is a personal and meaningful way for interested parishioners to glorify God by giving their time and talent to decorate His house for worship. New members are always welcome. Those interested contact Elsie Clark, 912-657-7984, or call St. Paul's office, 912-232-0274.

Elsie Clark, Chair

MUSIC REPORT

I am excited to share an update on our choral program at St. Paul's, which has experienced significant growth and revitalization in recent months. Our choir has welcomed new members, bringing energy and enthusiasm to our worship services. This increase in participation has created a vibrant atmosphere, enhancing our collective sound and experience. We have successfully expanded our repertoire with a variety of new anthems, each contributing to our worship and allowing choir members to explore their artistic talents. These additions reflect our commitment to musical excellence. The new organ has greatly enriched our sound, allowing for a fuller and more resonant worship experience. Its versatility has broadened our

musical offerings, creating a more immersive environment for the congregation. I encourage all members of our congregation to engage with our music ministry, whether through singing in the choir or supporting our initiatives. Your participation is vital to the vibrancy of our program. Together, we can celebrate the successes of our choral program while continuing to enhance our worship at St. Paul's.

McDowell Fogle, Organist/Choirmaster

ST PAUL'S 2026 OPERATING BUDGET

Projected Income	\$	556,890.00
Projected Expense	\$	570,012.46
<i>Difference</i>	\$	<i>(13,122.46)</i>

INCOME

Pledges	\$	490,340.00
Open Offerings	\$	500.00
Memorial	\$	8,000.00
Flower	\$	4,000.00
Other Contributions	\$	3,000.00
Program Giving		
Thomas Park Food Pantry	\$	5,000.00
Backpack Buddies	\$	2,500.00
Refugee Resettlement	\$	18,000.00
Other Income		
Dividends	\$	25,000.00
Interest	\$	550.00
Income		\$ 556,890.00

PARISH STAFF EXPENSES

RECTOR	\$ 144,500.00
<i>Highest estimate</i>	
VICAR	\$ 23,210.72
<i>Pension paid by Diocese</i>	
MUSIC DIRECTOR/PARISH ADMIN	\$ 46,678.24
SEXTON/FACILITIES MANAGER	\$ 40,098.50
<i>Currently Open Position</i>	
STAFF Administrative Costs	\$ 8,800.00
<i>FICA, Workman's Comp</i>	
CONTRACTUAL	
Music Scholars	\$ 18,000.00
Nursery	\$ 2,400.00
TOTAL STAFF EXPENSES	\$ 283,687.46

OUTSIDE PARISH EXPENSES

DIOCESAN PLEDGE	\$ 40,848.00
OUTREACH	
Thomas Park Food Pantry	\$ 5,000.00
Backpack Buddies	\$ 2,500.00
TOTAL OUTSIDE PARISH EXPENSES	\$ 48,348.00

PARISH EXPENSES

Insurance	\$ 35,360.00
Debt Service	\$ 3,737.00
Office & Administrative Expenses	\$ 50,000.00

WORSHIP

Altar Supplies	\$ 6,000.00
Flowers	\$ 6,240.00
Ministry Expenses	\$ 1,300.00
Music Program	\$ 6,400.00
Contractual	\$ 2,000.00
<i>Substitute Organists, Supply Priests</i>	

HOSPITALITY/SPECIAL EVENTS	\$ 4,000.00
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EVANGELISM	\$ 1,000.00
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CHRISTIAN FORMATION	\$ 1,000.00
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BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

Church - 1802	
Utilities	\$ 19,000.00
Repair & Maintenance	\$ 3,400.00
Rectory - 224	
Utilities	\$ 8,400.00
Repair & Maintenance	\$ 4,000.00

Mission House - 214	
Utilities	\$ 15,000.00
Repair & Maintenance	\$ 2,000.00

Duplex - 221	
Utilities	\$ 8,500.00
Repair & Maintenance	\$ 12,000.00

Janitorial Services	\$ 16,640.00
Landscaping/Grounds Maintenance	\$ 12,000.00

TRANSITION: NEW RECTOR SEARCH

Moving Expenses	\$ 20,000.00
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TOTAL PARISH EXPENSES	\$ 237,977.00
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