

Upcoming Events

For youth events, see Youth Program link in Faith Formation.

Our Parish Profile is Complete and Accepted by the Vestry and Bishop Rickel

The entire document may be viewed below, at the end of this section.

**** Mark your Calendar! ****

Celebration of New Ministry

Thursday, September 9, 7:00 pm.

Celebrate our new ministry with Fr. Jonathan. Our parish will host Bishop Rickel who will lead us as we commit to "support and uphold" Fr. Jonathan in our ministry together. Preview the service in the Book of Common Prayer, p. 558. A reception will follow.

Education for Ministry (EfM)

Registration thru July 31

EfM is a Bible and Church History study program for adults that meets once a week September thru the first week of June. As a group of students and two mentors, we study the Old & New Testaments, and church history from antiquity through the French and American revolutions, the Enlightenment and ending in modern times. We also learn to think and talk about issues from a theological perspective. Contact Joanne Clark (360-738-2752) or Doug Dickenson (360-393-5765).

Sandwich Brigade

August 25, 6:00 pm, followed by Potluck Dinner.

We will make 180+ sandwiches and pack the 90+ bags with healthy delicious meals. If you can not join us Wednesday night, we also need homemade cookies to top off these special presents. Please deliver to St. Paul's kitchen before 10:00 a.m., on Wednesday, August 25th. Thank You.

Labor Day Family Camp @ Camp Huston!

Friday – Monday, September 3-6

"Family Camp" means Individuals, couples, groups--all are welcome!

Scholarships are still available through the Bishop Curtis Scholarship Fund and Camp Huston's Director's Scholarship Fund. Families need not "qualify" for a scholarship. REGISTRATION NOW OPEN ONLINE at: <http://www.huston.org/laborday.html>.

Additional information, including scholarship info, is on the YOUTH bulletin board in the Great Hall.

The Sunday School is looking for teachers in grades Pre-school through 5th grade.

Sept. 2010 - early June 2011.

Looking for more ways to get involved? The current teaching schedule is one Sunday per month! Training will be provided this summer. For more information, or to volunteer, please contact Lindsay Knight at (360)749-3308 or 733-2890 X 3313.

Ongoing Activities

"Woods Coffee" Women's Bible Study

Every Tuesday, 8:45 am, Boulevard Park Wood's Coffee.

All women are welcome to this intergenerational group of women from St. Paul's and Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, ELCA.. Questions? Call Holly Wood.

Wonderful Wednesday Summer Recess

Wonderful Wednesdays will be on recess during the summer and will resume in September, 2010.

Reminder... recycle your used printer cartridges by dropping them in the large white box in the Great Hall. Your recycling supports the youth of St. Paul's, who are able to cash in on your used cartridges! Thanks for your continued support of our kids!

Our Parish Profile begins on the following page.

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Bellingham, Washington**

Parish Profile
April 2010

Diocese of Olympia

St. Paul's Mission Statement:

**"To know Christ and make Him known in the world
through the power of the Holy Spirit."**

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1. Introduction

To prepare for the call of a new rector, the members of the Parish Profile Committee have researched and organized the following information about St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Bellingham. We hope and pray that this detailed document will be helpful in understanding the needs, vision and goals of our church family for future leadership and activity.

2. The City of Bellingham

Described as a vibrant, mid-sized university city in a pleasing geographical setting, Bellingham is located on Bellingham Bay in the northwest corner of Washington State in Whatcom County. Rated by *Money* magazine, *National Geographic Adventure* magazine, and *AARP The Magazine* as a desirable place to live, work and retire, it has attracted nation-wide attention.

Geography

Bellingham sits 90 miles north of Seattle, 21 miles south of the Canadian border and 52 miles south of Vancouver, B.C. The city encompasses about 28 square miles, with north Puget Sound and the San Juan Islands to the west and snow-capped Mount Baker and the North Cascade Mountains to the east.

History

Captain George Vancouver first explored the region of Bellingham Bay in 1792. An influx of white settlers followed in the 1850s to harvest timber and mine coal. As the region prospered so did the fishing industry and its related canneries. Georgia-Pacific paper mill (now closed) was for years a major employer. Currently the major industries in Whatcom County include the BP Cherry Point and ConocoPhillips refineries, and the Alcoa-Intalco aluminum plant. The other large employers are Western Washington University and St. Joseph Hospital.

Bellingham and Whatcom County

Population	1990	2008 (est.)
Whatcom County	127,780	196,529
Bellingham	52,179	78,905
Ferndale	5,398	11,359
Lynden	5,709	11,737

2008 Home sales	Average	Median
Bellingham	\$359,000	\$294,000
Whatcom County	\$330,000	\$260,000

2009 Property taxes \$11.25 to \$15.83 per \$1000 of assessed value

Sales tax 8.5%

Cost of living index relative to national average of 100% 114.5

Population: 25+ by Educational Attainment

Less than 9 th Grade	3.8%
Some High School No Diploma	7.9%
High School Graduate or GED	27.5%
Some College No Degree	21.6%
Associate Degree	9.0%
Bachelor's Degree	19.0%
Graduate of Professional School Degree	11.2%

Percentage of population affiliated with a religious congregation

Bellingham	29.37%
USA	50.20%

Population affiliated with a religious congregation

Roman Catholic	27.1%
Christian Reformed Church in N. America	10.5%
Assemblies of God	7.3%
LDS Church	7.3%
Evangelical Lutheran	7.0%
Reformed Church in America	4.0%
United Methodist Church	3.4%
Episcopal Church	2.8%
General Association of Baptist Churches	2.5%
Other*	28.1%

*Community, Independent, and Non-Denominational Churches; Presbyterian, Nazarene, Covenant, Greek Orthodox and Seventh Day Adventists. There are also Jewish congregations as well as adherents of the Eckankar, Sikh, Muslim, and Baha'i faiths.

Weather

Contrary to popular myth, it does not always rain here! Bellingham gets about 36 inches of measurable precipitation per year. That's less than Miami (57 inches), New York City (43 inches) and Boston (42 inches). The average high temperature in Bellingham in July is 72 degrees, with a low of 53 degrees. In January the high is around 43 degrees and the low 31 degrees. Annual snowfall in Bellingham averages 11 inches while at the Mt. Baker ski area as much as 647 inches may fall. On the average Bellingham enjoys 71 sunny days, 93 partly sunny days and 201 cloudy days.

Recreation

Both the city of Bellingham and Whatcom County offer excellent park systems with networks of trails, destinations, and outdoor related classes. Recognized by several national publications for recreational opportunities, the spectrum of activities includes boating, skiing, hiking, golfing, kayaking, fishing, and camping. To the east of Bellingham lie the Mount Baker Ski Area and the North Cascades National Park.

Medical Facilities

Peace Health Medical Group operates St. Joseph Hospital, a 253 bed, two-campus medical center. The hospital is supported by a medical community of over 400 physicians covering a full range of medical specialties. Facilities include the Cardiovascular Center offering [leading-edge diagnostics](#) and the latest technologies in [interventional cardiology](#) and [heart surgery](#), a Level III trauma center, the Cancer Care Center, and a state-of-the-art Childbirth Center.

Education

Excellence in education is a hallmark of our community, including nationally recognized K-12 public schools, Whatcom Community College, Bellingham Technical College, North West Indian College and Western Washington University. The University, the third largest in the state, is consistently ranked among the top public regional universities in national surveys. With a student body of nearly 12,500 students, it also offers Master's programs in multiple disciplines.

Transportation

Bellingham International Airport is served by Alaska, Horizon, and Allegiant airlines. Amtrak provides two trains daily between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. Whatcom Transit Authority offers more than 30 bus routes that serve Bellingham and Whatcom County communities. The Airporter shuttle connects Bellingham and other county towns with SeaTac International Airport south of Seattle. Every Friday the Alaska State ferry makes a run from the Bellingham Ferry Terminal to southeast Alaska. The Washington State Ferry system based in Anacortes provides access to the San Juan Islands. Bellingham tour companies offer excursions through the San Juan Islands and to Victoria, British Columbia.

Cultural Activities

Western Washington University and the Mt. Baker Theatre offer a wide range of lectures, concerts, and other cultural events. Whatcom Museum of History and Art show-cases its newly opened Lightcatcher building. Bellingham Festival of Music features a summertime musical offering. The Whatcom Symphony attracts nationally-renowned guest artists, and the Whatcom Chorale draws singers from throughout the county.

Social Needs

- People with Basic Food Assistance 12.9%
- Families below poverty level 7.8%
- Homeless adults and children in Whatcom County 2,500

Crime and Crime Prevention in Whatcom County

- Total crime rate 46 offenses/1000 population
- Violent crime rate 2.4 offenses/1000 population
- Domestic Violence 7.5 offenses/1000 population

The Juvenile Community Justice Center provides services to court-involved youth, including detention alternatives, academic support, GED preparation, vocational assistance, educational classes, social skills training and restorative community service.

Issues and Challenges

In 2001 Bellingham's economy suffered severely. Georgia-Pacific Corporation closed its pulp and paper mill, resulting in the loss of 420 high-paying jobs and nearly \$1 million to the local economy each year. Alcoa's Intalco Works aluminum plant also shut down part of its Bellingham operation. Local officials realized that the area's dependence on resource-based industries made it particularly susceptible to such events, and that diversification was necessary to ensure future stability and growth.

The current economic recession and the reduction in the tax base for the city and county have resulted in budgetary cuts affecting a wide range of governmental and educational services. This coupled with state and federal reductions make the near future for governmental support for social programs uncertain.

Suggested informational websites:

City of Bellingham: <http://www.cob.org/index.aspx>

Bellingham Whatcom County Tourism: <http://www.bellingham.org/>

Western Washington University: <http://www.wvu.edu/>

Bellingham Public Schools: <http://www.bham.wednet.edu/>

St. Joseph Hospital: <http://www.peacehealth.org/Whatcom/>

Whatcom County Sheriff: <http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/sheriff/index.jsp>

Whatcom Counts (social needs and services):

<http://www.whatcomcounts.org/whatcom/index.php>

U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html>
City-Data.com data about Bellingham):
<http://www.city-data.com/city/Bellingham-Washington.html>

3. The Diocese of Olympia

The Diocese of Olympia includes the western part of Washington State, from the Pacific Ocean in the west to the Cascade Mountains in the east. There are over 30,000 baptized members in more than 100 parishes, and an average Sunday attendance of about 10,000 people.

St. Paul's is one of 10 Episcopal churches in the Mt. Baker region of the Diocese, which includes churches in Whatcom County and neighboring Skagit and Island Counties.

The Bishop of Olympia is The Right Reverend Greg Rickel, elected as the eighth Bishop of Olympia in 2007. Bishop Rickel's priorities emphasize youth and young adult faith formation, stewardship of God's creation and congregational development.

The average age of the Diocese, consistent with that of the National Church, is approximately 62. Ethnically the Diocese is largely white, with six Hispanic congregations, three Asian congregations and one Sudanese congregation. In the Diocese 1,200-1,500 people of color attend an Episcopal church on a regular basis.

Members of St. Paul's take part in the following diocesan-level committees, commissions and programs: The Diocesan Council, the Cursillo Secretariat, the Planned Giving Committee, Episcopal Charities Appeal, the College of Congregational Development, the Commission for Evangelism and the Convener of the Mt. Baker Region. St. Paul's also hosts a variety of diocesan-wide meetings and events.

4. A Brief History of St. Paul's Episcopal Church

An Episcopal presence in this city was established in August 1883, when the Rev. Reuben Nevius (a missionary sent by Bishop Paddock) held a meeting for those in Bellingham interested in the Episcopal Church. With his help, six women formed the Women's Guild of the Church of the Messiah. In 1885, after local fund-raising efforts, a church building that still stands and is known as the Old Parish Hall, was dedicated to Saint Paul.

The current building, erected in 1926, is noted in the community as one of the most beautiful in the city. Its tall steeple overlooks Bellingham Bay and is a navigation point for the sailing community. Offices were added in 1952 and in 1996 a three-story addition that includes the Great Hall, Sport Hall, kitchen, library, and education rooms for adults and children. The facilities are in constant use by the congregation and community.

5. St. Paul's - The Look and Feel of Our Church

Programs and Activities

St. Paul's Church has an average Sunday attendance of 279 members, with 516 at the Easter Sunday service. In 2009 there were ten baptisms, eight confirmations, and one new member received by Bishop Rickel.

Most of our members come from the Bellingham area, though we draw individuals and families from all over Whatcom County. Our congregation is predominately Caucasian and over 50 years of age, but we hope for greater racial, social and generational diversity.

We are considered a large congregation, with approximately 660 active baptized members, and over 252 pledge units. (Details of our rich and diverse set of ministries and programs will be described under Section 7, "St. Paul's, Beyond Facts - the Look & Feel of Our Church" on p. 10.)

Our parish attracts worshippers of all ages and we seek to provide for the spiritual growth of each of our parishioners. Our pre-school through second grade children are experiencing the "Godly Play" program, which has already expanded into a second classroom to accommodate the interest and growth. More than 20 volunteers have been trained to work with this Montessori-based curriculum.

On Sunday mornings, our third through fifth grade church school youth are enjoying the "All Things New" program, which follows the liturgical calendar. A few in this group are also involved in a special program in which they make sack lunches for a local street ministry, encouraging the children to develop a sense of community.

Our Junior High Youth have just begun the "Journey to Adulthood" program with "Rite 13," the first section of a six-year curriculum. At this time participation is limited, but both our clergy and adult congregation take the faith growth of our youth seriously and the support for this program is growing. We hope and pray for greater involvement of our youth.

Our adult education program is available to people at any stage of their faith development. The Gospel is central to everything we offer and all programs relate to some aspect of the teaching of Christ. Classes that have been offered in the recent past or are currently being offered include ALPHA, an inquirer's class, Disciples of Christ in Community (DOCC), Education for Ministry (EFM), ongoing Bible study classes, several reading and discussion groups (using Bishop Rickel's book suggestions and guides), a course on Discovering your Spiritual Gifts, workshops covering topics such as Lectio Divina, Skills for Working in Small Groups, and Prayer & Personality Types, a course on Traditions of the Church and Christian Spirituality, and periodic topics of special interest for parents and seniors. We also invite inspiring guest speakers to our pulpit.

All parishioners working with children or vulnerable adults, as well as anyone with a key to the facilities, has completed training in the "Safeguarding God's Children" program. St. Paul's is fortunate to have its own certified trainer to provide classes as needed.

In addition, we are continually adding to our excellent church reading and video library for parishioners of all ages.

Guilds

The Chancel Guild (the oldest guild in St. Paul's Church) provides funding for the Chancel including the organ, choir robes, altar supplies and other needs that may arise. Rummage sales held in Spring and Fall raise funds for these supplies and also provide much-needed clothing and household items to our local community.

The Altar Guild prepares the altars for each service, tends the fine linens, polishes the silver and cares for the vestments of the clergy. They are responsible for set-up for each service during the week.

The Flower Guild works in teams to provide the altars with flowers and greenery according to the church calendar. They design and install all flowers arrangements in the Nave for Christmas, Easter and other celebrations.

The St. Anne's Guild coordinates receptions for weddings, funerals and other St. Paul's celebrations. This fall St. Anne's Guild will organize and manage the Holiday Faire, an annual project coordinated in the past by the Episcopal Church Women.

St. Paul's Guild shares the joys of Christian fellowship through worshiping and working together as they maintain the Memorial Garden (columbarium).

The Sewing Guild makes items that are sold at the Holiday Faire to raise money for outreach projects in the community. They also make lap robes and other items to donate to local nursing homes.

Outreach

St. Paul's has always placed a high priority on community involvement and outreach. We are committed to being the Body of Christ to Bellingham and Whatcom County, serving with our hearts and hands, as well as giving financial support through the United Thank Offering.

We continually support our local food banks, particularly with the "First Supper" baby food program. For instance, during the first nine months of 2009, St. Paul's contributed over 3,000 pounds of baby food! We also support Lydia House (an agency serving women and their children who are transitioning from homelessness), and the Whatcom Opportunity Council, which includes participation in an annual winter coat drive and a school supplies drive each fall. Each Tuesday our Alms Ministry team welcomes into the church the unemployed, the homeless, and others in need; as well as contributing modest financial help, we suggest other sources of assistance in Bellingham, working with the First Baptist Church and Assumption Church and Hope House. We also contribute to the InterFaith Community Health Center and support the Salvation Army's Angel Tree project.

Our parish provides many opportunities to promote friendship and spiritual growth, including the Parish Nurse Program, which is in the process of renewal. (Parish nurses do not provide "hands-on" care, but serve as "partners" in health and represent a caring church family and a professional health care system.)

St. Paul's church opens its doors to several non-profit organizations including the Girl Scouts, the Whatcom Chorale and The Whatcom Genealogical Society, all of whom use our facility for meetings and events.

St. Paul's gives Christmas and Easter offerings to local and international programs helping those in need. Our members also generously contribute hours of volunteer service to the local community. We truly strive to make a difference in our community because we take seriously the spreading of the Gospel. Our church mission groups are active in service projects in Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Formerly known as the Canterbury Club, All Saints Fellowship, which is supported by the Diocese, was formed to support and encourage college students as they gather together for meals and fellowship and prayer at Western Washington University. St. Paul's has close ties with this ministry.

Physical Plant

Our church is situated on the corner of Walnut and Eldridge Streets. The main building includes the church, a parish hall (combining the Great Hall and Sport Hall), a commercial kitchen, adult education room, church offices, library, and classrooms. The original wood-framed church building across the street from the main church facility contains one large room for worship, a kitchen, stage and classroom. A Memorial Garden (columbarium) is located between the church and Great Hall. The off-street parking lot across the street is owned by St. Paul's.

The church is Neo-Gothic in style and cruciform in design, and seats about 500 people. The exterior is a light tapestry brick, with terra-cotta-trimmed doors and windows. Wooden dados encircle the nave and chancel, with the Beatitudes superimposed on the upper dados. The stained glass windows in the two transepts and over the high altar depict Christ's Birth, Resurrection and Ascension. The large window above the baptismal font shows Christ blessing the children. The front of the Nave is graced with a wrought iron rood screen, and our clergy celebrate Eucharist for two of the three Sunday services at an east-facing altar.

The Great Hall and classroom addition are multi-purpose in design. For accessibility, the commercial kitchen opens into the Great Hall. Our Church School and nursery are held in upstairs rooms on Sunday and during the week the downstairs rooms are used by the Little Epistles program (preschool).

Another recent addition is a Memorial Garden (columbarium), with a number of niches available to our parishioners. Some consideration has been given to the possibility of expanding the columbarium. This question will be revisited by the Vestry in 2011.

Clergy, Administration & Staff

Currently between rectors, St. Paul's has a full-time Canon Missioner appointed by the Bishop of Olympia as well as a part-time Assisting Priest. The gifted ministry of these two men has been a blessing to our congregation.

A Parish Administrator handles the daily business of the church, freeing the priests for pastoral duties. The Parish Administrator aids the Rector and the Vestry with employee issues, updating the Lay Personnel Employment Handbook, making salary recommendations, reviewing employee benefits and advising the Rector and Vestry regarding other personnel matters.

Our Building Manager is a full-time employee, and our Parish Secretary and Music Director each serve $\frac{3}{4}$ time. Other part-time staff members are our Youth and Family Ministries Coordinator, two Church School directors, a Coordinator for Faith Formation, office assistant, bookkeeper, Sunday Sexton and nursery personnel. In addition to paid staff, we have a volunteer newsletter editor.

6. St. Paul's - Our Worship

Worship at St. Paul's

Traditional Episcopal worship liturgies at St. Paul's are at the heart of who we are as a community of Christians. Each week we gather to pray, sing, listen and learn as our minds and spirits are nourished, sending us back into the world with renewed sense of purpose and commitment to Christ and our Baptismal vows.

Sunday Services

At **7:45 a.m.** the St. Paul's early birds enjoy a quiet, contemplative Rite II Liturgy.

At **9:00 a.m.** we have a more contemporary Rite II service. The user-friendly service bulletin is printed in full. The "9 o'clock Band," consisting of flute, piano and guitar and vocalists, offers contemporary musical selections as well as traditional hymns and special music composed by our Music Director and musicians.

The **10:30 a.m.** service, a Rite II liturgy using the Book of Common Prayer and music from the Episcopal hymnal, is accompanied by the organ and Chancel Choir. Many of the prayers are chanted at this service and the music is classically traditional. Occasionally the Bell Choir and orchestra ensembles -- including strings, horns, flutes and guest soloists -- augment this service.

Nursery care is available during the 9:00 and 10:30 Sunday services for infants and young children, though children are welcome at all our services. "Busy Bags" are provided in the Nave for children who wish to stay with their parents during services. Church School for children Pre-K to 5th Grade meets during the first half of the 10:30 service, and then the children join their parents in the Nave for Communion. A coffee hour follows both the 9:00 and 10:30 services.

Other Services

Weekly Eucharist is scheduled Wednesdays at 6:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. and on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. Occasional services include Evensong, Abendmusik (Evening Music) during Advent, and Taize services during Lent. Other services special to the season also occur at St. Paul's.

Music at St. Paul's

St. Paul's has a vibrant music program offering many musical opportunities for both parish and community involvement. We possess a 64-rank Marceau pipe organ, a Baldwin grand piano, a harpsichord, and three octaves of hand bells. The Chancel Choir sings at the 10:30 Sunday service as well as providing music for special services. The 9:00 o'clock Band supplies more contemporary musical offerings for our families and younger worshippers. Our Youth Director and Sunday School teachers plan contemporary Christian music for the youth and children between services. Community concerts are frequently performed in our Nave. St. Paul's musical life is known and respected within Whatcom County for quality and dedication to the arts.

The Director of Music, Wade Dingman, is a world class organist. He also directs a choir of 30 members, and trains and directs the bell choir. He accompanies the band at the 9:00 AM service and arranges for occasional special music on Sunday mornings.

7. Defining our Community - The Ministries

As members of Christ's body we are called to look *inward, outward, and upward*.

Inward

As representatives of our parish, our Vestry has the primary responsibility of decision-making and action for our present and future health. Among the twelve Vestry members, we have a Senior (Rector's) Warden, and two Junior Wardens (a People's Warden and a Parish Warden) who oversee the needs of the congregation and the maintenance of our facilities.

In the many aspects of church life our primary purpose is to care for our members' needs, desires and hopes. Our Christian Education programs are designed for every age group from Sunday School, through Youth, college age and older. We have many young families whose children are involved in the Godly Play program, new to our parish in 2009. We have faith formation programs for those who wish to grow in Christian maturity and develop a closer life with God. During the school year we gather together every Wednesday for a worship service, supper, and then an evening class, bringing people together on a regular basis ("Wonderful Wednesdays").

On Sundays our Ushers and Greeters meet us at the church doors with service leaflets and make sure we find seating. Our Acolytes, Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers serve during the services, and during Holy Communion prayers for healing (physical, emotional and spiritual) are offered in our Mary Chapel. Trained Eucharistic Visitors are sent out by the congregation after Communion to parishioners who are ill, home- or hospital-bound, who wish us to share with them in the holy mysteries of Christ's body and blood. Our clergy are available for many opportunities of pastoral care, visiting parish members in hospital and arranging for weddings and funerals.

Each week “counters” tally up the pledge envelopes and cash contributions collected during the Offertory. We work hard to present and fulfill a balanced budget, which includes paying our annual Diocesan Assessment. The Finance Committee meets monthly to review our finances and manage investments. Our facilities are paid for, but maintenance costs for our church buildings are a continuing responsibility. The Stewardship Committee challenges each of us to consider giving to God of our time, talent and treasure in response to the grace we have received through the ministries of the church.

Our monthly newsletter, “The Messenger,” is mailed to all parish members, with up-to-date information about church activities and plans, letters from our Rector and Senior Warden, as well as financial reports, announcements, and other news items, along with a calendar for the following month.

The week at St. Paul’s is full of activities that involve many circles of fellowship, serving and learning. These include, beyond the guilds, volunteers who plan and serve refreshments at coffee hour and dinner at Wonderful Wednesdays, the Thursday morning Bible study, Tuesday Education for Ministry, and Rite 13 (preparing our youth for confirmation and church life).

We continue to host the Little Epistles (a pre-school program of St. Paul’s Academy) in our church building on weekdays. St. Paul’s Academy has undergone changes in leadership and philosophy, and as a result is no longer an Episcopal school. As we consider the future, our relationship with the Pre-school program is also in transition.

The Loaves and Fishes ministry provides food for families during times of crisis or illness. Our Prayer Shawl ministry has a bevy of skilled knitters creating shawls that are blessed by our clergy and taken to the sick and elderly for giving warmth and comfort, and a reminder that they are being prayed for. Teams from The Community of Hope visit parishioners who are homebound, ill, or in need of support.

We have an active Daughters of the King group at St. Paul’s, committed to the spread of the word of Christ and the kingdom of God through prayer.

St. Paul’s has an active Cursillo community whose members meet regularly in reunion groups and a bi-monthly Ultreya gathering. We have hosted a number of Cursillos for men and women.

The Men’s Fellowship dinner group meets monthly for meals, and the Women’s Inter-generational group arranges monthly programs at a breakfast held in the church Great Hall, with a series of inspirational speakers. Once a year the St. Paul’s women go on a weekend retreat to Camp Huston, WA.

There are many individual prayer groups such as the Contemplative Prayer Groups, the Parish Prayers (each Wednesday at noon), and a continually-updated Prayer Chain. As needs become known we reach out for divine help through prayer.

This past year, St. Paul’s has had three discernment groups which have met regularly. While their primary focus was to help three individuals discern their call to ministry, each member was challenged to reflect on their own life and calling. One

result of this has been a member accepted by the Diocese as a postulant for the priesthood.

Outward

As Christians we are part of the Communion of Saints which defines our true reason for being. As we look beyond our own congregation, God draws our attention to the needs of the world around us, including our own city of Bellingham. We send teams of youth and adults abroad; youth to Guatemala (led by a team of dedicated parishioners), and adults to Nicaragua, sponsored by El Porvenir, to help in building stoves, wells, latrines and wash houses, and assisting in reforestation projects.

In recognition of the great needs of the homeless and unemployed in Bellingham, the Alms Ministry, a team of trained parishioners, meets every Tuesday morning to hear the stories and encourage those who come for aid, averaging about 10-15 each week. The church has budgeted \$11,000 in support of this ministry for 2010.

We also network with the First Baptist Church and Assumption Catholic Church to make financial help possible. We work with the Lighthouse Mission, Hope House, Habitat for Humanity, the Opportunity Council and the Interfaith Clinic. We contribute food and funds generously to the Bellingham Food Bank. The United Thank Offering (UTO) supports projects that address the poverty of women and children in the Anglican Communion. We participate in this twice a year with prayer and financial offerings.

We attract neighborhood children for Vacation Bible School each summer, led by staff and volunteers.

St. Paul's is one of our Diocese's larger parishes and we take our responsibility in the Diocese seriously, contributing our Diocesan Assessment annually. At the Annual Parish Meeting in January, Diocesan convention delegates and alternates are chosen, and four new Vestry members are voted in at the same gathering.

A great source of information about St. Paul's, its people and its programs is to be found on our web site: www.stpaulsbellingham.org

Upward

As Episcopalians our worship is directed to God, our Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer. The worship liturgy is led by our clergy, Acolytes, Lectors, and Eucharist Ministers. To assist us in our praise to God we are grateful for many well-trained and skilled musicians.

We believe that all our work and worship is done to acknowledge God's love for us in Christ that feeds our love for those around us. It is all evidence of a healthy Christian community – not perfect, but growing and grateful.

8. Supporting Our Ministries – Our Stewardship & Finances

In 2008 we began teaching about stewardship as recognizing that all comes from God and that we need to live lives of thanksgiving. In 2009 we greatly expanded this program. A stewardship ministry was formed; training and education took place. Many were invited to participate and the results were impressive. We are currently working at year-around stewardship.

As part of this we implemented a new software system for tracking pledge and plate income. One of the positive results to come from this restructuring is a more complete and detailed statement of our financial picture. All of our facilities of St. Paul's are now included, and listed at historical cost, thus encompassing our cash position, land and improvements, all restricted funds, and any loans.

The finance committee and St. Paul's Vestry manage a large portfolio of restricted funds valued at over \$1.6 million. The income from these funds is used for many programs at our church including church school funding, organ maintenance and our original building major maintenance. We have made the financial condition at St. Paul's one of our priorities, and are working to heighten our parishioners' understanding and practice of financial stewardship.

Our most recent stewardship campaign was challenged by an economy in recession, and by the departure of a priest and a number of parishioners to form a new congregation, St. Brendan's Anglican Church. Despite these difficulties, the 2010 Stewardship campaign of St. Paul's Episcopal Church was a huge success, starting with the premise: "*All that I am and all that I have God has given me.*"

Our stewardship campaign began with written survey in which the congregation was asked, "If there were no St. Paul's tomorrow, what would be missing from your life? What kind of a void would there be? In others words, what does St. Paul's mean to you, or provide for you?" (See some of the responses to this question in Section 11, "Some Voices of St. Paul's: Speaking Up.")

In 2009 we also carried out a census to give us a more accurate list of our current membership. For a deeper congregational understanding of church finances, and to demonstrate our stewardship of money, the budget of the church was then published, clarifying our position and our hope for the future.

A committee of volunteers was then formed to call on the other parish members. They were trained by a representative of the Diocese of Olympia with facts, and a philosophy of giving that changed the focus from *the needs of the church* to *the blessing of each soul in the parish*. Committee members were sent to call on only two or three people, asking them to consider giving not money but rather a commitment to God in return for his grace and generosity to them.

Following this campaign, the average pledge was up 18% over the prior year. As a result, the vestry was able to design a budget that did not lay off any staff or cut any programs. (In the community of Bellingham, where the average annual wage is approximately \$45,000, the average pledge increased to approximately \$1,900.)

Balance Sheet 12.31.2009

Total Assets (Includes Cash, Trust Funds, Land & Buildings)	\$5,597,353
Total Liabilities (monies we owe)	\$0.00
Total Equity	\$5,597,353

Operations

2009 Actual

2010 Budget

Income

Pledge Income	\$452,469	\$496,514
Plate and Holiday	75,686	40,400
Endowment Fund	42,718	40,000
2007 Prior Year Surplus	33,623	45,000
Miscellaneous	20,156	19,234
Total Income	\$624,652	\$641,148

Expenses

Administrative & Office Expenses	\$35,068	35,021
Diocesan Assessment	62,467	97,000
Outreach	10,250	12,250
Personnel Payroll & Benefits	360,881	379,505
Physical Plant Expenses	101,868	104,250
Program Support (Adult Ed, Music, VBS, Worship, Etc.)	10,671	13,122
Total Expense	\$581,205	641,148
Surplus (Excess of Income over Expense)	\$43,447	\$0.00

9. Our Spiritual Life at St. Paul's

What is the expression of the faith and the church at St. Paul's? First, the church is Anglican--the authority for the faith resides in Scripture, Tradition and Reason. Each member of the church is responsible for attending to Christ and living out His presence in daily life. Anglicans follow the Via Media or Middle Way, tending to define a core set of beliefs and avoid extremes of interpretation or application of the faith to life, and seeing conversion not as a single event, but as a life-long process, an unfolding of the individual's life-long relationship with God.

At St. Paul's, we are a diverse community and all of the traditional threads of spirituality are present and need nurturing. Prayer pervades our corporate life, embodied in the use of the Book of Common Prayer. We pray for our people at worship services, in the Sunday and Thursday healing ministry, in the weekly contemplative prayer groups, at the weekly parish prayers group and the prayer chain organized by the Daughters of the King. We pray in the name of the Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We provide sacred space in our facilities, and spiritual space in our acceptance of various ways of experiencing God. Many of us love silence.

The chief expression of our faith is the Incarnational Tradition. This deeply sacramental expression of the Christian faith counts on the presence of God in the details of our lives--God is present, always, in everything. We celebrate the goodness of God's creation. We cherish the artistic, literary and musical traditions by which human beings have always attempted to approach God. We value the gifts from saints who have gone before us. Closely related to the Incarnational Tradition are the Celtic and Franciscan traditions. Their emphasis on enjoying God through the beauty of creation is welcome to a congregation like St. Paul's, who enjoy living in an exceptionally beautiful part of the world.

We also relate to the Holiness Tradition in the sense that we value the regular, disciplined practice of the faith. We enjoy our Prayer Book liturgy, and many of us participate in the Daily Office for personal devotions.

We encourage a variety of expressions of the Christian faith. Among the traditions in our corporate life are the Benedictine (especially the Community of Hope) and the Contemplative (especially our two contemplative prayer groups and instruction for *Lectio Divina* and the Labyrinth).

Finally, another tradition at St. Paul's is Social Justice. Our congregation has a long history of service to individuals, to the local community and to national and international communities, through such vehicles as the Alms Ministry, Sandwich Brigade, Hope House, and mission trips to Central America.

We serve individually in myriad ways. To a large degree, we embody the model of "Gather, Transform and Send". We believe that meaningful service flows from God through us, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are enabled to love God and our neighbors as ourselves.

10. Some Voices of St. Paul's - Speaking Up

When people were asked, "What does St. Paul's mean to you? What draws you, blesses you, keeps you at St. Paul's"? some of the responses received were:

St. Paul's is an oasis in a land filled with people who do not know the Lord nor love him. I can worship and reflect upon the greatness, love, and majesty of the Lord in my daily life and at home. St. Paul's is a refuge in the wilderness of the world.

St. Paul's is a community of generosity—we give time to one another. We share the Eucharist with all who come; we meet the needs of those we encounter. We try to love, as Christ loves us.

This is a reverent place, a spiritual home, a guide to spiritual living. An opportunity to experience the worship of the historical, traditional Church.

Through the generosity and support of St. Paul's many are aided—the poor, the hungry, the homeless. There is enormous outreach to a huge range of people in the community (especially on Tuesday with Alms Ministry).

This is my spiritual grounding place, with the opportunity to receive God's grace at the Eucharist, and a community of friends who both challenge and support me.

I value the presence of Holy Spirit in the community of St. Paul's. There's a family feeling, the blessing of connectedness with like-minded Christian believers and the thoughtful penetrating sermons from our clergy.

When I come to church on Sunday a.m, go into the pew and kneel on the bench I have such feelings of gratitude and thanksgiving to be *home* once more.

St. Paul's is a sanctuary from the trials and troubles of our everyday life. It is a place where for at least once a week we can find the calm, the peace and love of Jesus in an inspiring and supportive setting. This is my true home. All others come and go, but this church has been a rock.

I appreciate the prayers and the *music*. I am nurtured here.

11. Challenges & Opportunities at St. Paul's

St. Paul's parishioners see many strengths within our church, as well as challenges and opportunities for the future. In the parish self-study process, we heard the parishioners say:

There's an awareness of unity and forward movement among church members. **However**, we need to combine that with greater diversity, cultural, social and ethnic, including participation with members of the Native American nations in Whatcom County and inclusion of "non-traditional" families.

There's a renewed sense of purpose and forward movement in our congregation. We have weathered a critical church split with dignity and honesty. **However**, we are an aging congregation and demographics predict a decline.

Our worship is solidly based on the Episcopal Liturgy and the Book of Common Prayer. **However**, church members feel within that structure there is room for greater creativity in programming for older adults, and especially for young families with children. Newcomers are sometimes confused in using the BCP and the service bulletin. There also needs to be an effort made towards communication between worshippers at different services.

Our dedicated clergy perform their priestly duties with skill and dynamism, and staff members keep our church infrastructure moving along effectively. **However**, there is a desire for another full-time priest, and, perhaps, an ordained youth pastor.

Our musical programs are rich, with an excellent music director, choir, organ, band, and instrumental ensembles. **However**, parishioners feel we need to broaden and diversify the music for the 9:00 Sunday service to attract more families with young children.

Our church campus includes useful auxiliary buildings and spaces. **However**, it is felt that greater use of these buildings for wider community activities would foster our relationships with our city and community.

Our programming for children and youth shows a good beginning, with Godly Play, All Things New, Journey to Adulthood, and Vacation Bible School. We welcome families with young children. **However**, we look for greater commitment and momentum to further strengthen our ministries to families, children and youth.

Our outreach programs include ministries within our congregation, support to the community of Bellingham, and international mission trips, as well as support to Episcopal Relief and Development. **However**, we are limited in our outreach to college students, and we would like St. Paul's to be more fully utilized for Bellingham community activities.

Educational programs are many, varied and valued at St. Paul's. **However**, there is a desire for programs devoted to deeper spiritual growth and an emphasis on prayer and the contemplative life, as well as other small group activities based on shared interests.

Financially, we've learned in the past year what we can do with a strong and continued stewardship of our treasure, time and talent. Our church building is

beautiful and debt-free, and we have a healthy endowment. **However**, our average pledge is below national and regional levels, and maintenance for our historic building is costly. The Old Parish Hall needs further refurbishing and more effective use of its available space.

St. Paul's has a strong commitment to lay leadership, and lay leaders fulfill many of the church's personnel needs. **However**, there is a need for many additional parishioners to be actively involved, relieving some of the other volunteers and preventing lay leader burnout.

Our parish communications have vastly improved in recent years. We have a well-designed and well-maintained web site full of vital information (www.stpaulsbellingham.org). **However**, we lack a current pictorial church directory and an expanded databank which includes skills of parishioners, as well as consistent publicity for musical and other church events. Parishioners are urged to submit feature articles about parish life to local newspapers.

We think of ourselves as a friendly, welcoming and energetic family. **However**, newcomers as well as old-timers may need even more encouragement to get included and involved in parish life.

12. Vestry Goals

The Vestry provides leadership to St. Paul's, moving ahead in areas that are of concern, need attention, or will add to the well-being of the church and its mission.

Vestry goals for 2009:

1. Implement programs of faith formation within a unifying framework.

Current status -

- *Staff was recruited and Rite 13, as part of Journey to Adulthood, was successfully initiated.*
- *A long-term plan for youth program beyond Rite 13 is being developed, and a program for the short-term has been implemented.*
- *A statement of vision for Faith Formation and the Catechumenate was completed.*
- *The program Godly Play has been successfully implemented.*
- *A general plan for Adult Faith Formation has been developed and is being implemented.*

2. Review and update the basic forms of formal communication used at St. Paul's - Sunday Bulletin, Website and Newsletter.

Current status -

- *A task force was established. It has revised the Sunday bulletin, developed guidelines to improve the newsletter, submitted a grant to improve electronic communication within the parish, and is working on updating and revising the website.*

3. Implement a comprehensive stewardship program based upon a personal contact with every member.

Current status -

- *A Stewardship Committee was established and they conducted a successful campaign for the 2010 year. They are continuing their work, with a focus on time and talent as well as money.*
- *A Planned Giving Committee has been established and is currently working on updating policies regarding gifts and giving, establishing a Legacy Society and information about planned giving.*

4. Conduct a realistic assessment of St. Paul's focusing on "who and what we are..."

Current Status -

- *A Parish Profile development process has been successfully conducted.*

Vestry goals for 2010:

1. Call a new Rector.
2. Support the development of an effective Newcomer Ministry.
3. Continue year-round stewardship with an emphasis on moving beyond just fund-raising.
4. Conduct a comprehensive review of the Youth and Family Ministry.
5. Complete the work begun in 2009 on communication.
6. Develop a coordinated approach for supporting and developing outreach ministries.

13. Hopes of the Parish

Through our parish self- study process, it has become clear that our vision is not so much about changing the world to meet our needs, but to change ourselves so that we may become a warm and welcoming community for those who seek a spiritual home for themselves and their families. The following themes reflect our primary hopes for the future of St. Paul's:

1. We seek to be a dynamic cradle-to-grave community; therefore, **we need to demonstrate a warm and welcoming hospitality that helps integrate newcomers into our parish family.**
2. In order to reach out to age groups that are under-represented in our community, **we wish to create an environment that attracts young students, young adults and families, and in which children are visible and free to participate in all church activities.**

3. In order to build a community in which we can all learn and grow in faith on our way to spiritual maturity, **we hope to offer a wide range of in-depth classes, taught by a range of individuals.**

4. We aspire to develop worship that enhances our closeness to God and encourages us to live out our faith. This will involve **our embracing the gospel call to hospitality, regular, meaningful prayer and worship, active stewardship, and service to our local and global communities as need arises.**

When asked to *“Imagine standing in the midst of our church five years from now,”* one parishioner said, *“I envision kids laughing, families by the droves. Color outside all year around, drawing people in by beauty outside and in.”*

14. Conclusion

As we begin to engage in the process of calling a new Rector by developing this Parish Profile, as required by the Diocese of Olympia, we feel truly grateful for the generous responses to our surveys and the requests for feedback from our congregation. We feel confident that the people of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church are aware of both our great advantages as well as our ongoing needs and deficits. It is clear we are all blessed by being part of such a loving and caring family. Now we rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit for our Vestry as they make significant decisions about what comes next for our congregation.

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