

—The Episcopal Parish of —
**St. Mark
& St. Paul**
—On the Mountain —

October 2025



From the Rector: Denominational statistics, and our own community

The Episcopal Church has just released its compilation of statistics from 2024 Parochial Reports which churches make each year. You can view the entire report [here](#).

I found several items noteworthy.

- There are 6707 open parish and mission churches and 9717 active clergy in our denomination. Almost 50% of Episcopalians attend churches with average Sunday attendance of 151 or more, but 50% of Episcopal churches have attendance of 50 or fewer.
- Over 70% of churches reported engaging people via outreach ministries. By far most churches said that food and/or clothing ministries best exemplify their congregations. More than half of churches reported including non-parishioner volunteers in their outreach, something CAC has a long tradition of doing.
- Almost 27% of parishes enjoy the ministry of a deacon, something we have been blessed with in Betty Carpenter for over ten years.
- Median average Sunday in-person attendance in our denomination is 38. Half of Episcopal churches have attendance lower than or equal to, and half equal to or higher than, that number.

- In the midst of declining rates of religious participation across our country, it can be easy to think of ourselves as a small church. Yet among Episcopal churches we have average Sunday attendance well over twice the median.

St. Mark & St. Paul is a very active congregation for its statistical size. In boxing terms, we punch above our weight. Because of the University and other Episcopal institutions in and around Sewanee, we are blessed to have a large pool of people experienced in various aspects of ministry living in our community. This provides us highly-skilled volunteers and staff members to serve God inside and outside the church. Together we are able to respond to God's call to love and serve, one person at a time.

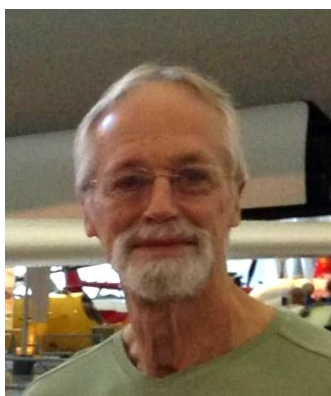
Statistics represent individual people, each priceless in the sight of God!

Vestry Update: Regular meeting of October 23

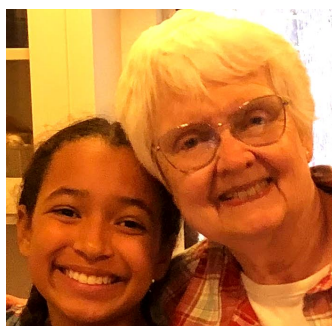
- Heard a report from the newly-founded parish Hildegard Guild for creation care and environmental awareness.
- Approved building of a gravel walkway from our landscape plan to run from near the front doors of the church to the entry to Kennerly Hall.
- Agreed to contract with Stroop's Accurate Refrigeration to replace the 3 HVAC systems in the church, which have passed their end of useful life. This is an item budgeted in the capital campaign.

The Holy Eucharist will be celebrated on at 10am on November 27,
Thanksgiving Day.

Vestry Candidates for Election at the Annual Meeting November 16



Chris Asmussen



Julia Bates



Paul Richaud

Vestry Service at St. Mark & St. Paul (Fall 2025)

Vestry members serve three-year terms starting January 1, and must be out of office at least a year before standing for election to another full term.

The formal qualifications for Vestry members are :

- Confirmed member in good standing of the Parish of St. Mark & St. Paul. (Clergy are enrolled members of their diocese, not a parish, and thus aren't eligible.)

- At least 16 years of age
- Regular in worship attendance
- Have made and are fulfilling a pledge in the current year
- Not an employee of St. Mark & St. Paul or another organization or institution of the Diocese of Tennessee
- Complete a background check by the Diocese of Tennessee

Informal qualifications are important, as well:

- Committed to the Christian life and ministry of this parish
- Approach the work prayerfully
- Work well in a group, listening openly and respectfully to points of view that differ from their own
- Speak their minds straightforwardly during deliberations while supporting decisions the Vestry reaches as a whole

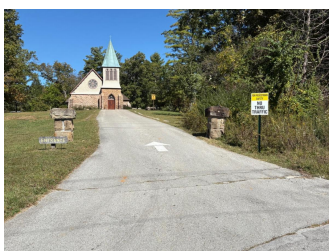
What do Vestry members do?

- Complete "Safeguarding God's People" online training
- Disclose any potential conflicts of interest
- Prepare for and attend monthly regular meetings and any called meetings
- Stay up-to-date on parish communications
- Participate in an annual retreat
- Help envision the ministry and needs of the parish in the present and future
- Be on duty about once a month for the early service and between services, or for the late service and after church.
- Serve as a Teller (counter of offering) about once every two months
- Act as chair of, or liaison to, a particular committee or ministry area
- Adopt the annual parish budget and monitor parish finances
- Deliberate and decide important issues in the life of the parish
- Enjoy the privilege of serving the people of God at St. Mark & St. Paul

The **Nominating Committee** customarily consists of the Vestry members completing their terms and not eligible to run in 2026: Robin Bates, Dorothy Gates, and Mary Priestley. You may contact any member of the Nominating Committee to recommend yourself or someone else (with that person's permission).

Constant Contact Newsletter Email: When you get to the bottom of your email you may see "[Message clipped] [View entire message](#)". To see the full newsletter click on "View entire message."

Pictures of a busy church . . .





The Parish Work Day on the first Saturday of the month resulted in new traffic control signs and a new speed bump by the church to increase pedestrian safety. Church doors received a new coat of varnish and the cellar doors were repainted. The crew also trimmed back bushes and trees to make our campus look neater.



We celebrated Phebe Hethcock's 90th birthday at a special coffee hour.



Deacon Becky Wright, Rob's Old Testament professor 1991-92, served here October 5



On Thursday, Oct 23, youth ministers from around the diocese gathered at St. Mark & St. Paul for a retreat day led by Christy Beesley. The day began with Holy Eucharist. Deacon Betty Carpenter offered words of encouragement to the group. Paul Richaud (not pictured) and Jeannie Babb were participants from this parish. After lunch at Shenanigans, the group



Work continues on the storage shed for the Sewanee Children's Center even as the



Our Children's Choir is a lively and energetic

outdoor classroom is all
but ready for students.

group of approximately
25 students rehearsing
every Wednesday.

walked to the cross,
toured All Saints'
Chapel, and made plans
for diocesan-wide youth
gatherings. One of the
gatherings will take
place next November in
Sewanee.

Christian Formation

By Jeannie Babb, Director of Christian Formation
formation@stmarkstpaul.org 423-255-6479 cell

Upcoming Book Studies - Psalm for the Wild-Built

In November, Julia Bates will guide us in discussion of [Psalm for the Wild Built](#) Tuesday in November from 5:30-6:30pm.

Book studies are held in the Brooks Hall dining room. People are encouraged to read the book (or read it again) but you will enjoy the discussion even if you haven't. Light refreshments are served. Bringing a dish or snack to share is invited but not required.

Rite-13 & Journey to Adulthood

This fall, we welcomed six youth into the Rite-13 group (grades 6-7), and two new youth have joined the J2A group (grades 8-10). It's been fun getting to know our new members, and watching youth ministry at St. Mark and St. Paul grow by leaps and bounds. The J2A group reported to the parish about their mission trip this summer, and shared how meaningful the work was for them. This fall break, sixteen youth and four adults will travel to Dollywood for a weekend of fun and fellowship in the mountains.

Any youth in the community in grades 6-10 who wishes to join is invited to do so. The Rite-13 group meets from 3-5 every Sunday, and the J2A group from 4-6. Both groups meet in Brooks Hall. Any interested youth should reach out to Hilary Bogert-Winkler (hmbogert@sewanee.edu) for more information.

Youth Ministers Retreat

On Thursday, Oct 23, youth ministers from around the diocese gathered at St. Mark & St. Paul for a retreat day led by Christy Beesley. The day began with Holy Eucharist. Deacon Betty Carpenter offered words of encouragement to the group. Paul Richaud (not pictured) and Jeannie Babb were participants from this parish. After lunch at Shenanigans, the group walked to the cross, toured All Saints' Chapel, and made plans for diocesan-wide youth gatherings. One of the gatherings will take place next November in Sewanee.



Nursery Notes – Help wanted

Nursery services are offered during church services, and during Sunday School and choir practice as needed. We meet mostly on the playground. We also use a children's classroom downstairs in inclement weather.

Children are usually brought into the church during announcements to participate in Eucharist with their parents. Please communicate with staff about this at drop-off. For more information, talk with our nursery coordinator Cara Kitzrow.

We have openings for additional Nursery staff for the 2025-2026 school year. Please share the word, and contact Jeannie Babb or Cara Kitzrow to apply or inquire.



Please register your child for Nursery online:

<https://onrealm.org/StMarkStPaul/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=ZDk4ODBiZWQtNWQxOC00NjM0LWJhMmUtYjA1MzAwZmY1MTdi>

Please be sure to sign in on the Nursery clipboard, and indicate whether you'd like your child brought into the church during announcements to participate in Eucharist.



Sunday School for All Ages

Additional adult volunteers are needed for our Sunday School classes. All volunteers participate in online training and a background check. Please see Jeannie Babb to find out more.

Godly Play 1 is for children aged 3 to 5. The basic Godly Play stories are introduced and considered. Learning is enhanced with art, music, and play. At times, this class will be combined with Godly Play 2.

Godly Play 2 offers children in grades 1-3 an opportunity to learn enrichment lessons and go deeper into the story. This classroom has the same structure as Godly Play 1 – story, wondering, work, feast, and sometimes a romp on the playground.

4th/5th Class takes children in grades 4 and 5 beyond Godly Play. This class meets in Brooks Hall to read and talk about books, applying Scripture to fictional situations and their own lives. The schedule also includes time for food, fellowship, and fun with art, Legos, etc. The first book for this year is Maniac Magee by Jerry Spinelli. Class leaders are Julia Bates and Matthew Mitchell.

Youth Sunday School offers middle schoolers and high schoolers a time to encounter God and get to know one another. Paul and Andrea Richaud led the class in 2024-2025 with a fresh, relational style based on teachable moments.

Help Wanted: We are seeking additional teachers to lead or assist the class on a rotational basis (you can specify once or twice a month) so all the teachers can continue their own formation as well.



You can also register your child for Godly Play online using this link or QR Code. Your registration helps us protect and care for your child.
<https://onrealm.org/StMarkStPaul/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=NWZjNjY2MTEtODJhZi00MTVkbTlmM2ltYjA1MzAwZjk4Zjh>
[h](#)

Sunday Forum 2025.

The Sunday Forum theme for 2025-2026 is from Micah 6:8 which tells us to do justly, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God. The Christian Formation Committee has scheduled a slate of speakers to help us apply this call to our own context. Gerald Smith opened the series with a session of poetry and reflection called "Two Rules for These Times." Please see the flyer for a list of upcoming sessions. The full semester schedule is on the website.

Tuesday Lectionary Class

The lectionary class meets Tuesdays from 3:30-4:30 in Brooks Hall. The class begins with a brief prayer and a reading of the Gospel lesson appointed for the coming Sunday. Then there is a rather freewheeling and far-ranging discussion of issues and questions raised for the participants as they heard the Gospel read. Led by the Rev. Scott Lee, this class is open to everyone in the community. It's a place to consider the lesson more deeply and reflect on it together.

Centering Prayer

Mondays at 7pm with Jennifer Michael
Tuesday afternoons at 2:30pm with Scott Lee

Centering Prayer is a method of silent prayer through which we consent to God's presence and action within us. Those who practice it do so not in place of corporate worship and service, but rather as a necessary complement to those modes of engaging with God and with neighbor. With chairs encircling a candle at the front of the nave, we have a brief check-in about our prayer practice and anything else going on in our lives, and then we have a meditation session (what we call a "sit") together. For more information, contact Jennifer Michael jmichael@sewanee.edu.

Education for Ministry

by EfM Mentor Wendy
Prothro Howard



EfM is a four year program of study which explores a wider concept of ministry by examining life through a theological lens. Participants from all four years, divided by their topic of study (Year 1- Hebrew Bible, Year 2 -New Testament, Year 3-History of Christianity, and Year 4- Contemporary Theology) reflect upon various concerns from their readings, the relationship of those themes between each of the four years, and the implications of the theme in today's world. Reflection on these themes is perceived through four different perspectives- experience, culture, tradition (Episcopal Church), and personal beliefs. The goal of EfM is to deepen faith and to discover expressions of that faith in service to others.

Registration for 2025-2026, including a newly revised curriculum celebrating 50 years of EfM, is taking place now. Classes begin after Labor Day. Please contact

All Voices Choir

Every other Tuesday a group of adults from Grundy County arrive to sing in the All Voices Choir. All are mentally challenged and most have other disabilities but that does not stop anyone from singing! I want to tell you a story about Lisa who has come for many years and for all of that time she paced and stomped all over Kennerly Hall. She was angry and refused to participate in any of our activities. I hate to say it but I was a little bit frightened.

Recently she joined the group and seemed to enjoy the music. I handed her one of the percussion instruments and she did not refuse. It fell out of her hand and when I reached down to pick it up I noticed she had hearing aids. This past Tuesday she participated, smiled and joined in! All of those years she just couldn't hear and now she can. I admit I had tears in my eyes when I saw Lisa's joy of music for the first time. It was a moment when the Holy Spirit filled the hearts of our volunteers and the caregivers who bring them...it was glorious!



CAC Information

The Community Action Committee (CAC) is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM. Neighbors are able to visit the office during this time to pick out groceries in the pantry and inquire about assistance with utility bills. The work of CAC is not possible without the support of the Parish of St. Mark & St. Paul.

CAC Community Meals

Mark your calendars for the November Community Meal! We will gather together on Friday, November 21st at 12:00 PM in Kennerly Hall for a Thanksgiving lunch. The Community Meal is an opportunity for all to join in fellowship with one another while enjoying a free and delicious meal. We hope you will be able to join us!

Thanksgiving is Around the Corner!

CAC is gearing up to prepare Thanksgiving meal boxes for our families this season. We are finalizing the "fill a box" shopping list, so please be on the lookout for that information in the coming weeks. We are aiming to create 100 food boxes this year, and we know the wonderful parishioners of St. Mark & St.

Paul can help us get there!

CAC Partners with Sewanee Elementary School

The Community Action Committee is working with Sewanee Elementary School to recruit reading buddies who can help out during library time for our young students. This partnership requires consistent volunteers who will read with students and help select books, while overall fostering a love for reading and providing support for the library program. If you are interested, please contact Sarah at cac@stmarkstpaul.org to see how you can get involved.



Shop at Kroger? Support the Community Action Committee with Every Purchase!

Kroger is committed to giving back to the communities they serve—and you can help just by doing your regular shopping. Through the Kroger Community Rewards program, a portion of your everyday purchases goes directly to local organizations like the Community Action Committee.

Getting started is simple: Just link your Kroger Shopper's Card to the Community Action Committee, and every time you shop and swipe your card, Kroger donates on your behalf.

Contact Sarah at cac@stmarkstpaul.org for the instructions and helpful hints to get set up!

No extra cost. No extra effort. Just everyday shopping that makes a difference!

CAC Needs You!

The Community Action Committee is in critical need of food and monetary donations to keep their programs functioning. The food pantry and emergency assistance programs offered through CAC are serving more neighbors than ever before, and welcoming over 20 new families each month. The food pantry is in consistent need of: individual snacks and granola bars, protein drinks (Ensure, Boost, etc.), household cleaning supplies (dish soap, laundry detergent, etc.), paper towels, toilet paper, and personal care products (shampoo, soap, etc.). In addition, be sure to view the specific needs each month that are posted for Pantry Sunday, which is the first Sunday of each month. Financial contributions can be made anytime through the CAC website: www.cacsewanee.org, or checks can be made payable to "Community Action Committee." CAC thrives due to the community support it receives. Let us continue to lift each other up in these difficult times.

Thank you for your continued support of CAC and our work in the community!

If you are interested in learning more about CAC, and how you can help, please contact Sarah at cac@stmarkstpaul.org.



Cub Corner

This fall, Sewanee has a new Cub Scout Pack! Pack 152 is up and running, with St. Mark and St. Paul serving as the charter organization. This family pack (all children are welcome, not just boys) provides a chance for young people to learn about being good citizens of their community--meaning both Sewanee and the natural world around them. In our first meeting, we learned about the six essentials all Cub Scouts need to bring on hikes. Our second meeting will involve going on a hike and learning about what we see.

The Cubmaster is Grady Wells, a professor in the biology department, and the committee chair is Hilary Bogert-Winkler. Anyone with a child interested in joining the Pack should email sewaneepack152@gmail.com for more information. We meet the first and third Fridays of the month from 3:15-5:00 in Kennerly Hall. Keep an eye out for the Cub Corner every month to learn about what our scouts are up to!



COFFEE HOUR – HOSTS NEEDED

Get your service power through coffee hour!

As one of the church's oldest methods of fellowship, coffee hour serves an enormous purpose.

We need HOSTS to continue this fellowship flow.

No need to bake a cake or shop until you drop for this - simply provide a small snack to serve with coffee after the 11am service in Kennerly Hall. *EVEN if you forget* to bring a snack, St. Mark & St. Paul always has your back with extra snacks you can utilize if necessary.

Coffee is simple to make in the coffee maker. The parish provides the coffee.



A Note from your Altar Guild

We wish to extend a warm welcome to our new parish members and a continued “thank you” to those who have been around a while.

The Altar Guild ministry is open to everyone – including men, as you may have noticed in the weekly bulletin listing those serving each Sunday.

Some families like to get involved and that is certainly encouraged. We like to utilize everyone’s particular skills. Some like to polish brass/silver while some like to wash linens for the Eucharist. I personally like the satisfaction of seeing the altar setup for the service – everything in its place and ready for the ministers to use during the service.

Like everything else, altar guild service is not for everyone. We welcome you to try it out for a month or two to see if it is as fulfilling for you as it is for those of us currently serving. We promise we will be there to walk you through everything and we utilize checklists, post photographs or diagrams of altar setups and provide manuals to help us all remember what to do.

What type of time commitment is involved? For our regular services we schedule 2 members a Sunday. They usually meet on Sat. morning to polish and get the vessels setup for Sunday. On Sunday morning, one person comes prior to the 8:30am service (around 8:00am) and sets out the prepared items. After that service both members clean what was used and resets for the 11:00am service. After that service the second member cleans and puts everything away. Of course there are special services such as funerals or seasonal services where we all pitch in according to our availability.

Interested and/or have questions? Please let Dan Amundson know in the church office at 931-598-5926 and we will contact you in a timely manner.

Lynda Gotko and Dorothy Gates – Co-chairs of Altar Guild

Giving to the Parish of St. Mark & St. Paul

Bill Pay from Your Bank Website

Use the Bill Pay service provided by your bank. If your bank offers online bill pay services, follow their setup directions to add the church as a payee, and add recurring automatic payments. Use the name and address below for the payee:

Parish of St. Mark & St. Paul
P.O. Box 267
Sewanee, TN 37375
(931) 598-5926

By Mail

Mail us a check, or place cash or check in the offering plate on Sunday. If you

are giving toward a pledge, please write "Pledge" on the memo or envelope. If mailing, send to us at the above address.

Online Giving

Convenient and secure -- You can make a one-time donation or set up a recurring gift. Choose credit, debit or bank account payments. If you already have a login for our Realm software, you can either **Give Now** or text "Otey\$75" (or any amount) to 73256. Follow the prompts and manage your account. **More information regarding Realm below.**

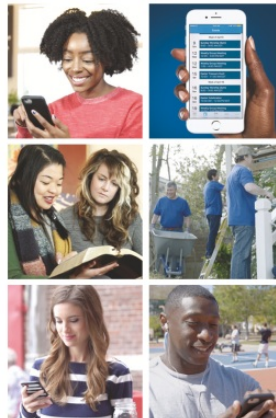
Get Connected with Realm

Let's get connected. ✨

Download our Connect app today.

- 📝 Update your personal information
- 🗣️ Communicate with groups & teams
- 📅 Follow church announcements
- 🔍 Look up members
- 💰 Manage giving
- 📅 Create and join events

Let's be the church... together.



Our church management software has expanded capabilities to help parishioners get connected and stay that way. You can easily update your personal information, see the status of your giving, and set up online one-time or recurring electronic giving. As always, we are still able to receive gifts by check.

Interested or have questions?
Call the Church Office at 931-598-5926.

Prayer Requests: Duane, Steve Butler, Corky Carlisle, Karen Davis, Sophie Geraghty, Mike Jones, Anita Larson, Erika Lewis, Mike Mattei, Julian Price, Leah Rhys, Isaiah Shelby, Evelyn Taylor, Freddy Tucker, refugees, and the people of Gaza, Israel, Lebanon, Sudan, Syria, and Ukraine those killed or harmed by the shooting in Cleveland.

Office Hours for 2025

9:00am-4:30pm Monday,
Wednesday & Friday

9:00am-1:00pm Tuesday &
Thursday

The Parish of St. Mark and St Paul
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