

St. Paul's Church in Nantucket

Discernment Committee Report to the Vestry

September 2020

Discernment Committee members:

**Ken Beaugrand – chair, Bob Felch – co-chair, Mark Beale, Susan Coffin, Andrew Cromartie, Stephen Kelly, Jenny Paradis, Yvette St. Jean, Stacey Stuart and Father Max Wolf**

**Diocesan consultant – Stephen Mascoll**

**Introduction**

Since June 2018, St. Paul's on Nantucket has been blessed with the presence of The Reverend Max Wolf as our Priest-in-Charge. When Max was called as Priest-in-Charge in the spring of 2018, it was for a three-year period with the understanding that during the third year of his ministry at St. Paul's he and our congregation would undertake a discernment process to determine whether Max should become St. Paul's next Rector.

The objective of the discernment process following our engagement of Max as our Priest-in-Charge, was to assess after two years:

1. Whether our congregation believes Max is the right person to lead our congregation as Rector
2. Whether Max wishes to continue to lead the parish
3. And through the formal discernment exercise, whether the congregation and Max have a shared vision for the future.

In fact, St. Paul's has been involved informally in a discernment process from the start of Max's ministry. However, it was important before our congregation and Max reach a final decision that we undertake a more deliberate process with the appointment of the Discernment Committee, the role of which is to make a recommendation to the Vestry on the call of the priest-in-charge as Rector.

As part of this process the St. Paul's Discernment Committee has developed a profile of St. Paul's Church that provides:

1. An overall picture of St. Paul's Church,
2. An articulation of our core values derived from a survey of parishioners,
3. And an assessment of St. Paul's strengths and goals all of which serve to inform St. Paul's vision or long-term goals and, in turn, its call of a new Rector.

St. Paul's Discernment Committee was formed in January 2020 and met at least monthly through the detailed process as outlined in the published Guidelines for Parishes served by a Priest-in-Charge – Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.

The Discernment Committee has convened a total of 10 meetings during the formal discernment process. Stephen Mascoll has met during the full discernment process six times, including five times virtually during our formal committee process in 2020.

In February we started the process of creating a new **Parish Profile**. We used the template from 5 years ago and re-wrote the profile over a 7-month period. The final profile is now stored in a PDF and will be loaded on St. Paul's website. It is being submitted with an electronic version of this report.

In early May 2020, we conducted a congregation-wide **Parish Survey** (see [Executive Summary – appendix A](#)) and received 91 responses. Respondents included 46 females and 45 males with a split of 49 year-round attendees and 42 summer attendees. The results were positive and uplifting.

In May through June this year, committee members worked on an evaluation of each member's perspective of the roles for and objectives of ministries at St. Paul's. The results of the **Mutual Ministry Review** (see [appendix B](#)) were instructive and rewarding. Each committee member, including Father Max, worked independently to complete the assessment of all church ministries. We then gathered in June and July to review where we had consensus, where differences arose and how we would recommend handling the differences.

As a final step we asked Father Max to complete his **Priest-in-Charge Narrative** (see [appendix C](#)) in July speaking to his experiences and impressions of our congregational life here at St. Paul's and in the broader community.

In addition, we have developed a template for social media and email communications with members of the congregation during the pandemic in the form of a virtual newsletter.

## **Our Mission**

*The mission of  
St. Paul's Church in Nantucket  
is to make the love of God  
more widely known.*

## **Our Core Values and Vision**

### **Our values and vision are embodied in our new Parish Profile:**

As we enter a new decade (January 1, 2021), we want to continue to build on the growth and positive changes we have experienced in recent years. In the concluding decade we have retired our mortgage and completed a successful capital campaign that has provided the funds to renovate and upgrade our facilities for the next generations. We have encouraged a more unified and informed parish community by improving communications, and we have strengthened fellowship by combining services in the winter and hosting a variety of off-season events.

St. Paul's is committed to being open and inviting to all people: members and visitors, rich and poor, old and young, gay and straight. We have talented and dedicated wardens, vestry, staff, and lay leaders. Our experience in taking on big challenges has strengthened our resolve and taught us to trust in God's grace.

### **So how do we accomplish this?**

By a congregation that is ready to Love, Serve and Sustain.

#### **Through these behaviors:**

By being magnetic, enthusiastic, and welcoming, through the use of our liturgy, our music, our altar as an open table, and by being fully inclusive.

By being unique in our way of embracing families no matter how constituted, and by providing broad spiritual, pastoral and educational support and hope.

By growing our numbers, managing our finances, sustaining our campus and devoting creative efforts to stewardship.

Our four commitments and goals, as we enter the third decade of the 2000s, are outlined in the conclusion of our Parish Profile:

**Spiritual and Educational Enrichment** – strengthening our Christ-centered lives as individuals and as a congregation through worship, preaching, teaching, learning, music and service.

**Servanthood through Service and Outreach** – expanding our commitment to the many social, spiritual, and educational needs of the Nantucket community by developing innovative programs that use the physical and intellectual assets of St. Paul’s to meet unmet community needs.

**Music Ministry** – supporting our expanded musical and choral offerings that enrich our worship and enhance the lives of our congregation, the larger community, and visitors from around the world.

**Children and Youth Initiatives** – finding new ways to better serve and to inspire the participation of younger people, individuals, and families within our parish life and from the broader community.

### **Our History**

St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Nantucket has enjoyed more than 150 years of ministry to our island community with worship, education, events, fellowship, and outreach. God has blessed us with remarkable members. While our attendance swells and our activities peak during the summer and early fall, we have a resilient core congregation and exuberant fellowship gatherings in the cold of winter. We have a legacy of gifts we share with all whom we meet in order to further establish the Kingdom of God.

Many regard our church building, located steps from Nantucket's Main Street, with its magnificent Tiffany, Connick and Willet stained glass windows, its Richardsonian Romanesque architecture, and convenient location as very special. We believe that our remarkable building reflects the spirit of the people who worship in it.

## **Our Community**

Nantucket has a year-round population of more than 15,000. There are vibrant public and private schools, a newly built hospital affiliated with Massachusetts General Hospital, a wonderful public library, museums, and a flourishing arts and cultural scene. Here, the traditional New England town meeting is alive and well.

Nantucket is only 17 miles long and a few miles wide, but it is an island of contrasts. Seasonal shifts in the population and economy result in two distinct “rhythms” of living. Summer is a crowded, bustling paradise when the population swells to above 50,000. In winter we can be an outpost, separated from the mainland by storms. Many beautiful summer compounds overlook the water, and more than half the island is preserved as open space, yet there is a constant need for more affordable housing, and some depend on the Food Pantry to make it through a lean winter.

The island has been ethnically diverse since the days of the whalers. Today, a new international population is settling and raising families on the island. They live and work alongside multigenerational natives and growing numbers of retirees.

Living on Nantucket requires one to be resourceful, resilient, and independent; you can’t always get to the mainland even when you must. At the same time, our isolation ensures a strong sense of community and responsibility for one another. In times of need, the Nantucket tradition is to step up and help with a generosity of spirit that defines us and binds us together.

## **Our Staff**

St. Paul’s Church in Nantucket benefits from the leadership and services of a small staff of employees as well as the volunteer leadership of the Vestry and Committee chairpersons. Presently, the staff consists of our Priest in Charge, The Rev. Max Wolf, Music Director Joe Hammer, Parish Administrator Christine Borneman, volunteer Verger Curtis Barnes, and part time bookkeeper Becky Mack.

## **Our Vestry**

The Vestry and Executive Officers of St. Paul’s Church are Wardens Lou Gennaro and Pam Goddard, Treasurer Martin McKerrow, Clerk Susan Coffin, and Vestry members

Kirk Baker, Peter Barnes, Beverly Hall, Robert Inglis, Sandy Keys, Lucy Leske, Malcolm Macnab, Jay Riggs, Phil Smith, Yvette St. Jean, Libby Tracey, and Scott Widmeyer.

## **St. Paul’s Committees**

The various committees and ministries of St. Paul’s Church that contribute to our shared Christian endeavors are:

1. Altar Guild, led by Dottie Gennaro
2. Mission Committee, (formerly called Outreach Committee,) co-chaired by Bob Felch and Frank Robinson
3. Music Committee, chaired by Malcolm MacNab
4. Fellowship Committee, led by Penny Macintyre
5. Stewardship Committee, chaired by Peter Barnes and Patsy Wright

6. Buildings and Grounds Committee, led by Robert Inglis
7. Finance Committee, chaired by Sandy Keys
8. Long Range Planning Committee, chaired by Ken Beaugrand

## **Our Worship**

On Sundays in normal summers, two services are offered: an 8am service for congregants who prefer Rite I, and a Eucharist at 10am, varying between Rites I and II, with the singing of our volunteer choir, led by our excellent Music Director, Joe Hammer, who also plays organ and piano. Soloists, often young people of high school or college age, are featured. This year, since July 26, we have an 8am Morning Prayer outdoors, socially distanced, and broadcast Morning Prayer service at 9:30, enlivened by a small group of young singers and a visiting summer parishioner who plays flute.

Father Max maintains a balance between the dignity of the Episcopal tradition and a light, friendly touch when, in the announcements, he singles out birthday celebrants and welcomes those who are visiting the island.

It is important to mention here that during this year of pandemic and disruption, Father Max moved quickly to make sure that our Sunday service, our Music Mondays by Joe Hammer, and even our Bible Study have been moved online – Facebook, Zoom, YouTube – so that no one in the congregation had to feel that our Church was absent in this trying time. And most importantly, Max and Olly put together an online Compline service – Prayers from the Attic – that radiates warmth and comfort during the evenings it is broadcast.

## **Our Music**

The music program at St Paul's is welcoming and broad based. During non-COVID times we have, under the leadership of Music Director Joe Hammer, a volunteer choir and a youth choir both of whom perform during regular Sunday services. On some Sundays we invite instrumentalists to perform with the organ and additionally with the choir. During the current pandemic Mr. Hammer has rehearsed and then led soloists for the Sunday service and on Monday nights hosts and plays a variety of different concerts.

St Paul's is committed to having the church used as a venue for many programs both secular and religious. Several examples are hosting one of the concerts for the fall Organ Crawl and making the church available for concerts by students and faculty of the Nantucket Community Music Center. Another community outreach program under the guidance of the Music Director is having the organ and piano used for teaching and practice.

## **Our Formation Programs**

Father Max offers a Bible study every Thursday morning from 11:30 to 12:30. The group concentrates on the passages of Scripture that will be read in church the following Sunday, so there is a good variety in the readings from the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament Gospels and Epistles, and the Psalms. Since

the pandemic, the group has gone online by Zoom, Facebook, and conference call, and so more people can participate. No doubt the Bible study will have an online component even after we are able to come together in person. Over the past year, Father Max offered an Inquirer's Class and a Lenten Series.

There are other activities, of course, including parish dinners at the nearby Ship's Inn, bingo nights and potluck suppers. The annual July Summer Fair, which has occurred for over a century, is a fun event (resuming in 2021 for sure) of children's games, sales of crafts and antiques, a silent auction, and a book sale. Another planned activity, when the parish can safely come together in person, is a Quiz Night.

### **Our Mission Programs**

The work the St. Paul's Mission Committee on Nantucket follows the teachings of Matthew 25: "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Acting with a spirit of God's love and compassion, we seek to bring about meaningful change, one person and community at a time. We provide non-denominational support to alleviate suffering, enhance wellbeing, and provide comfort, on Nantucket and beyond. We do our work by granting or expending outreach funds and, importantly, by volunteering as workers in the communities we serve.

Our current initiatives consist of the following:

**"Laundry Love"** – Begun at St. Paul's in November 2017, our Laundry Love program provides free monthly washing and drying to some of those who need financial help to do their family's laundry. Historically, our choice has been to meet our patrons at the Island's sole laundromat, mingle, and procure laundry cards to pay for their laundry. Since March 2020, we have been mailing laundry cards to our registered patrons monthly and have suspended our preferred personal service at the laundromat, due to COVID-19.

**Nantucket Food Fuel and Rental Assistance** - St. Paul's is a member, and Father Max is the president, of the Nantucket Interfaith Council, an ecumenical association of the Island's faith groups. The primary activity of the NIFC is the operation of the Food Pantry, its Fuel Assistance program and its Rental Assistance program. The Committee donates to the NFFRA to support these programs. Before March 2020, St. Paul's collected food and funds once a month to support the Food Pantry. For the past several years, the pantry has distributed more than 16,000 bags of groceries to approximately 1,700 hungry neighbors, reaching a high of 20,000 bags in the past year. Several members of our congregation volunteer there.

**Fairwinds - Nantucket's Counseling Center** - Our committee is providing bi-monthly gift cards from various restaurants to the 20+ staff members at Fairwinds who are so valuable to the Nantucket community. Our congregation also prays for the staff daily.

**Free Meals** - In partnership with the Community Foundation for Nantucket (CFN) that funded, and Nantucket Catering Company that produced, the food for a seven-week program which ended June 24, 2020, the Committee distributed about 100 meals to around 40 families each

week. CFN created this program and others like it to help sustain the island's restaurant and catering industry during the pandemic. Our Mission Committee is planning to revive this feeding ministry this fall.

**Cuba:** On hold.... Cuba is a good example of our preference for hands-on support ministry and sharing the love of God by aiding the people of Vertientes, Cuba, a rural community, with the installation of a water filtration and purification system. We have obtained a grant, and our members have their bags packed, to assist with construction of a new church building when the necessary permits are obtained.

### **Our Stewardship**

St. Paul's approaches stewardship as a year-round activity, and this year the pandemic created new challenges to that practice. For while our doors might have been locked, our church was not closed. Despite new restrictions on personal behavior and in the midst of great economic uncertainty, our parishioners continued to give of their Time, Talent and Treasure to help us fulfill our mission: "To Make the Love of God More Widely Known" in Nantucket. We have been blessed that parishioners have maintained their pledges and made many gifts.

Following a successful campaign in the fall last year that saw a record amount of funds pledged in a year, this August the Stewardship Committee began its annual process of discussing ideas and goals for its 2021 fall campaign. Communications about it will start going out to church members in old ways and new in the coming weeks, as we plan for St. Paul's future. We pray we remain good stewards of our wonderful and strong parish, with the resources it has been blessed to receive and the gifts it has been blessed to deliver. At this time, we remember those who need God's love now more than ever.

### **Our Finances**

St. Paul's has been fortunate in 2020 to be able to strengthen its financial position. Several factors have led to this positive condition:

1. The most important of which is a strong Stewardship campaign that increased pledging.
2. Meaningful increases in unrestricted gifts made in response to our appeal for support.
3. The proceeds of a Paycheck Protection Program loan
4. A reduction in our operational expenses due to the closure of buildings on our campus.

These gains have been partially offset by lower plate offerings because of the COVID closure of the church. Moreover, we have been unable to hold some of our traditional fundraising events, such as our Summer Fair and Parish dinners. However, graced with a strong stock market, our long-term investments have maintained their value.

Like many churches we may face significant financial challenges in the coming months but believe our financial strength will allow us to weather whatever storms come our way.

### **Our Church Campus**

**St. Paul's Church** is blessed with a campus that includes four buildings: the church, a parish house, a rectory, and a small cottage. They are adjacent to one another on Fair Street in the heart of Nantucket's Historic District. There is parking for about 10 cars between the parish house and the church.

**The parish house** holds the church's and the rector's offices. There is a small conference room and a kitchen on the first floor and a choir rehearsal room and office space on the second floor. A full basement is used during our Christmas Stroll Market and Summer Fair and has ample storage. The building's yard provides space for a patio and a small play area.

**St. Paul's Church**, consecrated in 1902, was a gift of Caroline L.W. French, and is located to the north of the Parish House. The church is in the Romanesque style with a pink granite exterior and detailing in brownstone. The interior is based upon a basilica style, with a central aisle and two side aisles. The nave leads to the semicircular apse that houses the choir stalls and altar. The interior of the church is largely in oak with ash trim; carved wooden pillars support the roof. Wonderful, stained glass windows combined with the fine details make St. Paul's a handsome church. Most notably, there are five Tiffany windows with scenes of Nantucket plants in the apse and a large Tiffany "Water of Life" window at the west end of the central aisle. The Tiffany windows date from the church's founding. In 1955, 16 stained glass windows were commissioned from the Connick Company to decorate the side aisles of the church and the narthex. These windows depict scenes from the life of Christ. In 1968, the Willet Glass Studio designed 12 "I Am" windows for the clerestory. At about the same time, they designed a set of more contemporary windows for the chapel, which had originally served as the sacristy and choir room.

While the building has been upgraded over time, in 2011 the vestry decided to undertake a significant capital investment in the church. Our 2012-2014 Capital Campaign raised in excess of \$2 million from parish members, friends of the church, and public sources. This renovation included the construction of a matching stone addition – the Daume Entrance – whose elevator makes St. Paul's fully accessible. In addition, we renovated our sacristy and robing room and refinished the floors, the pews, and the kneelers in the nave. Our organ was dismantled, sent to Andover Organ for a full renovation and expansion, and was reinstalled in mid-2014

Gardner Hall, the undercroft of the church, was also renovated - an old kitchen was replaced with a modern, stainless steel, commercial kitchen, and the lavatory facilities were replaced and are now fully accessible. Finally, an oil-fired heating system was replaced with a high-efficiency propane system.

**The Rectory** was originally constructed in the late 18th century. It was connected directly to the church until 2001. At that time, the building was moved to an adjacent lot on Fair Street and extensively renovated, with a two-story addition for a kitchen, master bedroom, and bath. At the same time, the historic character of the building was preserved with exposed beams and wide-board flooring.



The rectory is sunlit and airy. The first floor has two living areas, a center hall, a large kitchen with an eat-in area, a dining room, and a utility room. The second floor has four bedrooms and baths, and the third floor has a large room with a half bath. There is a full basement with a full bathroom that can be used as an office, a work area, or an apartment.

**The Jelleme Cottage** is an additional building located in the rear of the church garden and rectory. This carriage house was renovated in 2003 by a committee with funds from a generous donor. The cottage has two bedrooms and one bath upstairs and the first floor consists of a kitchen and living space. Currently the cottage is used as housing for our Director of Music.

### **The Memorial Garden**

The Memorial Garden is located between the church and the rectory. In addition to an area for interment, the garden is used for receptions, events, and now outdoor small services. It has become a garden to be enjoyed by our parish, as well as the entire Nantucket community.

The garden was funded by generous memorial gifts from close to 100 of St. Paul's Church's friends and families. This created a sacred space where we can celebrate the lives of loved ones who have died. In this natural setting, we can emphasize the Easter message of hope and new life. As the garden has evolved, many parishioners, island landscape professionals, and amateur gardeners have contributed their time, ideas, and gardening expertise

Although originally the names of those interred in the Garden were engraved on the walls above the Garden, now names are engraved on a granite plaque that is adjacent to the Garden/bronze plaque in Gardner Hall near the Daume Entrance.

### **Our Communications**

Now with hundreds of followers, St. Paul's sends, out almost daily, church photos and messages on our Facebook page. Our priest emails a weekly parish update to our parish list, which includes Sunday's service bulletin and music notes, and periodically prints and mails that message to those whom we know have no computer to receive emails. Our Stewardship Committee creates brochures and now quarterly newsletter mailings that further describe our expanding ministries. Our staff and Vestry call on or phone members to check in on them, especially during this pandemic when we are not able to gather broadly.

We broadcast live services of Compline or Morning Prayer on Facebook, Zoom, YouTube and conference call every day except Saturday. We continue to work on upgrading our website and have invested in equipment to greatly improve the quality of what we broadcast from the church, soon to be broadcast on Nantucket TV Channel 18. We mail thank you notes from both our Treasurer and priest for gifts received.

### **Diocese and Deanery**

In spite of our isolated location, St. Paul's Church in Nantucket remains active in the Diocese of Massachusetts and benefits from regular communication with – and the support of – our Bishops, the Canon to the Ordinary, our Regional Canon, and the Dean of the Cape & Islands Deanery. Our priest meets weekly (currently remotely) with our deanery clergy, and our parish delegates and alternates faithfully participate in Diocesan Convention.

We meet our financial commitment as we fund the Diocesan assessment at \$50,000 annually.

Our convention delegates are Marshall Keys and Libby Tracey with our alternate delegate being Frank Robinson

### **The Parish Survey, conducted in May 2020, highlights our strengths and goals**

1. Survey respondents appear supportive, upbeat, and positive about our Priest-in-Charge, almost without exception.
2. The sense of a community of friends on a spiritual journey together is highlighted.
3. There is parish-wide support for the excellent quality and focus of pastoral care.
4. Inclusiveness and nonjudgmental acceptance of all is appreciated.
5. Parish leadership by clergy, staff and lay leaders has improved over the past two years.
6. Music and the organist are admired and viewed as important assets for St. Paul's.
7. Father Max is praised for his ministry in the broader Nantucket community.
8. The total worship experience is good but not considered an attraction for outsiders. Opinions have a broad range and are "very" personal.
9. Spiritual development and educational resources are not well understood or effectively advertised.
10. The Outreach strategy – more than the activities – needs to be strengthened and communicated.
11. During the pandemic and in the future, technology is a critical resource for St. Paul's with parishioners applauding early initiatives.
12. In broad terms parishioners have deep concerns about St. Paul's inability to attract new young families and develop a solid youth program. There appears to be need for a more concerted effort to engage the community at large in St. Paul's-centric activities and to reorganize the Sunday school focus back to volunteer leadership.
13. Parishioners are also concerned about long term financial matters and the idea of extending Stewardship beyond Stewardship Sunday is suggested.

For the 5 final questions requiring a narrative response, here are the key conclusions:

1. Max and Olly, as a couple, are a gift to St. Paul's and the desire is for them to continue through the 2020's.
2. The people and St. Paul's "strength of community" are major attractions for parishioners.
3. Music is steadily improving into a showcase for St. Paul's.
4. There is greater transparency from the Vestry and the past two years have been healing years for the parish.
5. Concerns about the lack of a growing family and youth presence along with future finances appear to be parish-wide anxieties.

6. In general, expanding membership, growing outreach for its own benefits and using outreach to attract new people from the broader community, along with continued improvement in Stewardship strategy and tactics are all desired foci in the coming years.
7. The most common answer to the final question about “what would you change”: “Nothing.”

Our Priest-in-Charge summarized his take-aways:

From the overwhelmingly positive parish survey I conclude that:

1. We will continue to explore additional avenues to communicate more effectively both within and beyond our parish. This will include further staff training and will be supplemented with assistance from newly developing technologies.
2. There is a need to restructure our parish’s Christian Education programs for all ages.

### **Recommendation**

**The Discernment Committee of St. Paul’s on Nantucket, appointed by the Vestry and charged with making a recommendation regarding the calling of The Reverend Max Wolf, its Priest-in-Charge as Rector, after prayerful deliberations has concluded that the parishioners of St. Paul’s along with Max, clearly have a mutual sense of mission, core values and goals for St. Paul’s as reflected in this Parish Profile and this report which support calling The Reverend Wolf as Rector of St. Paul’s.**

**Accordingly, the Discernment Committee at its meeting on September 3, 2020, voted unanimously and enthusiastically to recommend to the Vestry the calling of The Reverend Max Wolf as the next Rector of St. Paul’s Church.**

### **Appendices to the Discernment Committee Report:**

- A. Parish Survey executive summary
- B. Mutual Ministry Review summary
- C. Discernment Narrative of Priest-in-Charge

## **APPENDIX A**

### **St. Paul's Church on Nantucket – Parish Survey – May 2020**

#### **Executive Summary**

The survey was implemented in May 2020. Eighty-four active parishioners participated during the one-week time frame allotted for the process.

#### **Purpose**

1. Working toward the completion of the third step in the discernment process for our parish and our Priest-in-Charge.
2. Complete an assessment of the various elements of parish life at St. Paul's as viewed by a statistically meaningful cross section of the congregation.
3. Examine the life of the congregation to determine perceptions of strengths and weaknesses in these key areas of parish life:
  - Community – belonging and welcoming
  - Worship
  - Spiritual development and Educational services,
  - Clergy and lay leadership
  - Outreach
  - Pastor Care
  - Family, youth and children engagement
  - Music
  - Lay activities, volunteerism
  - Stewardship and financial management
  - Social engagement and fundraising events
  - Technology uses and needs

#### **Key Findings**

Based on an analysis of the survey data, key findings are identified as important conclusions.

From the 12 multiple choice questions and answers the following ideas emerged:

1. Survey respondents appear supportive, upbeat and positive about our Priest-in-Charge, almost without exception.
2. The sense of a community of friends on a spiritual journey together is highlighted.
3. There is parish-wide support for the excellent quality and focus of pastoral care.

4. Inclusiveness and nonjudgmental acceptance of all is appreciated.
5. Parish leadership by clergy, staff and lay leaders has improved over the past two years.
6. Music and the organist are admired and viewed as important assets for St. Paul's.
7. Father Max is praised for his ministry in the broader Nantucket community.
8. The total worship experience is good but not considered an attraction for outsiders. Opinions have a broad range and are "very" personal.
9. Spiritual development and educational resources are not well understood or effectively advertised.
10. The Outreach strategy more than the activities need to be strengthening and communicated.
11. Technology is a critical resource for St. Paul's now during the pandemic and in the future with parishioners applauding early initiatives.
12. In broad terms parishioners have deep concerns about St. Paul's inability to attract new young families and develop a solid youth program. There appears to be need for a more concerted effort to engage the community at large in St. Paul's-centric activities and to reorganize the Sunday school focus back to volunteer leadership.
13. Parishioners are also concerned about long term financial matters and the idea of extending Stewardship beyond Stewardship Sunday is suggested.

For the 5 final questions requiring a narrative response, the following is discerned:

1. Max and Olly, as a couple, are a gift to St. Paul's and the desire is for them to continue through the 2020's.
2. The people and St. Paul's "strength of community" are major attractions for parishioners.
3. Music is steadily improving into a showcase for St. Paul's.
4. There is greater transparency from the Vestry and the past two years have been healing years for the parish.
5. Concerns about the lack of a growing family and youth presence along with future finances appear to be parish-wide anxieties.
6. In general, expanding membership, growing outreach for its own benefits and using outreach to attract new people from the broader community, along with continued improvement in Stewardship strategy and tactics are all desired foci in the coming years.
7. The most common answer to the final question about "what would you change": "Nothing."

### **Suggested Areas for Action**

The next steps are up to the Priest-in-Charge and the Vestry in conjunction with engaged parishioners to continue to uphold and enhance the strengths which are highlighted in this survey. St. Paul's should energize areas of needed attention through engagement of parishioners into a "what can St. Paul's do for me AND what can I do for St. Paul's" mode.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **St. Paul's in Nantucket - Mutual Ministry Review**

#### **Summary:**

#### **May 30 – June 15, 2020**

All nine members of the Discernment Committee received the outline of church ministries and tasks taken from the Mutual Ministry section of the Priest-in-Charge booklet and were asked to fill in for each task who or what group(s) should have oversight.

Eight lay members and Father Max gave individual responses over a period of a week. Some were interviewed for technical reasons.

The entire committee met on June 11 for two hours and reviewed the results of the exercise. We compared and discussed the 8 lay responses against Father Max's responses for each task.

Below are the conclusions by task. It is evident that there is consistent agreement on who is responsible for which task. In a few cases lay committee members were uncertain about the task and in rare cases who should oversee the task. "Agreement" means almost all response were identical whereas "general agreement" indicates the majority agreed.

One of the benefits of this exercise is it fosters discussion about and highlights strengths and areas of needed attention at St. Paul's.

#### **Areas of concurrence (and viewed as strength):**

- **Liturgy and Worship**
- **Governance**
- **Outreach**
- **Pastor Care**
- **Spiritual Wellness**
- **Diocesan**
- **Stewardship**
- **Building and Grounds**
- **Communications**
- **Hospitality**

#### **Areas of divergence (or viewed as needing improvement):**

- **Oversight of Volunteers – recognition more frequently**
- **Oversight of Newcomers process – better coordination**

- **Management of all technology matters – need to strengthen our presence, improve the website and educate parishioners on access of our offerings**
- **Christian Education – currently under restructuring**
- **Finances – more transparency and understanding is needed on who has oversight and what the activities are for non-Stewardship elements**

## 1. Liturgy and Worship

- A. Preparation and celebration of Sunday and midweek liturgies
  - 1. Rota preparation [rotating assignments such as flower guild]
    - **Conclusion – general agreement**
  - 2. Sermon preparation
    - All said priest
    - **Conclusion - agreement**
  - 3. Bulletin preparation
    - **Conclusion – general agreement**
- B. Preparation and celebration of baptisms, funerals, and weddings, and other special services, including supplies for special services (candles, etc.)
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- C. Preparation for Bishops’ visitations
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- D. Scheduling of guest preachers
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- E. Arrangements for supply and sabbatical clergy
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- F. Consultations with Music Minister/Organist on music and oversight of choir
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- G. Training and oversight of acolytes, lay readers and LEMs, ushers, greeters
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- H. Training and oversight of altar guild
  - **Conclusion – general agreement, though lay members are uncertain about roles**
- I. Oversight of flower guild or flower rota
  - **Conclusion – general agreement**
- J. Oversight of sanctuary use for special events or outside groups
  - **Conclusion – lay members think the priest should have oversight**
- K. Oversight of worship committee
  - **Conclusion – lay members think priest was charged with oversight**

## 1. Governance

- A. Preparation and leading of vestry agenda and meetings
  - **Conclusion – agreement**
- B. Meeting with wardens/ admin committee
  - **Conclusion – general agreement**

- C. Preparation for and conduct of Annual Meeting
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- D. Oversight of vestry subcommittees and other parish committees and groups
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- E. Strategic planning
  - **Conclusion – general agreement though lay members thought Wardens, Vestry and priest have joint oversight**

## 2. Administration

- A. Hiring, termination, supervision and performance management of staff
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- B. Reports, record keeping (parochial report, weekly and special service records)
  - **Conclusion – agreement though lay members did not understand Verger’s role**
- C. Mail, telephone, email
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- D. Office organization, maintenance, and supplies
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- E. Preparation of Annual Report
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- F. Organization and maintenance of file Volunteer appreciation
  - **Conclusion – lay members are unaware of volunteer acknowledgement and group agreed volunteer recognition should be re-introduced**
- G. Recruit, encourage and coordinate logistical support of volunteers
  - **Conclusion – lay members are uncertain of oversight of volunteers**
- H. Maintenance of data base
  - **Conclusion – lay members felt this is currently a weakness due to a lack of inhouse skills**
- I. Technology oversight
  - **Conclusion – same as for H above - lay members felt this is currently a weakness due to a lack of inhouse skills**

## 3. Outreach and Community

- A. Oversight of parish outreach efforts, social justice work, etc.
  - **Conclusion – general agreement though more/continued education on role and activities would help.**
- B. Participation in local clergy and/or interfaith group (s)
  - **Conclusion – agreement**
- C. Attendance at and participation in local civic events
  - **Conclusion – general agreement**

## 4. Pastoral Care

- A. Visits to shut-ins
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- B. Hospital visits
  - **Conclusion - agreement**



- C. Crisis care and counseling
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- D. General counseling
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- E. Parish calling (in person, by phone, or increasingly by email)
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- F. Welcoming of newcomers
  - **Conclusion – general agreement though there is a sense that a more formalized oversight and coordination of newcomers would help**
- G. Intervention and mediation in parish conflicts
  - **Conclusion – agreement**

## 5. Spiritual Wellness

- A. Prayer
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- B. Daily Office
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- C. Scripture Study
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- D. Retreats Exercise
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- E. Reading
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- F. Spiritual Direction
  - **Conclusion – agreement**

## 6. Diocesan

- A. Attendance at and participation in diocesan events
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- B. Clergy Conference and Clergy Days
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- C. Deanery and Clericus meetings
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- D. Fresh Start
  - **Conclusion – uncertain what this is**
- E. Diocesan Convention
  - **Conclusion – agreement though some uncertainty about roles**
- F. Special liturgies and events – ordinations, resource days, learning events, etc.
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- G. Participation on diocesan committees
  - **Conclusion – agreement**

## 7. Christian Education & Formation

- A. Recruitment and training of Church School Teachers

- **Conclusion – this function is in transition**
- B. Supervision/ oversight of Church School
  - **Conclusion – this function is in transition**
- C. Preparation and leading of Confirmation Class
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- D. Preparation and leading of Adult Education and formation classes, Bible Study, etc.
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- E. Scheduling of guest speakers
  - **Conclusion – function is in transition**
- F. Field education student and/or intern supervision
  - **Conclusion – function is in transition**
- G. Raising up prospects for ministry discernment
  - **Conclusion – function is in transition**

## 8. Stewardship and Finances

- A. Oversight of parish budget, investments, and other
  - **Conclusion – agreement with some uncertainty with whom has oversight**
- B. Oversight of annual pledge drive
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- C. Oversight of ongoing stewardship efforts
  - **Conclusion – agreement but need for better focus on pursuit of bequests**
- D. Capital planning
  - **Conclusion – general agreement though no lay members mentioned Stewardship Committee**
- E. Grant writing
  - **Conclusion – general agreement**
- F. Oversight of fund-raising events (fairs, auctions, yard sales, etc.)
  - **Conclusion – general agreement though lay members are uncertain who has oversight**
- G. Oversight of capital campaigns
  - **Conclusion – general agreement though no lay members mentioned Stewardship Committee**

## 9. Buildings and Grounds

- A. Maintenance and improvement of buildings and grounds
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- B. Management of tenant's use
  - **Conclusion – agreement, non-issue**
- C. Opening/closing of church
  - **Conclusion – agreement (no Sextant)**
- D. Approval of building use
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- E. Maintenance of grounds of rectory if applicable
  - **Conclusion – agreement though oversight person is unclear**

## 10. Communication

- A. Preparation and mailing of special letters (Easter, Christmas)
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- B. Preparation and maintenance of website
  - **Conclusion – general agreement though an area needing improvement**
- C. Preparation and mailing of newsletter
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- D. Email broadcasts to congregation
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- E. Communication in emergencies, snow days, and other special circumstances
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- F. Advertising, press releases (newspapers, etc.) for services and special events
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- G. Bulletin boards, outdoor signage, graphic design and branding
  - **Conclusion – agreement**

## 11. Hospitality

- A. Oversight of Coffee Hour arrangements
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- B. Oversight of and participation in parish social events (potluck suppers, etc.)
  - **Conclusion - agreement**
- C. Greeting and welcoming of newcomers
  - **Conclusion – general agreement though understanding of whom has oversight and coordinates the effort is unclear**
- D. Incorporating newcomers
  - **Conclusion – general agreement though understanding of whom has oversight and coordinates the effort is unclear**

## APPENDIX C

### Priest-in-Charge Discernment Narrative

My wife Olly and I have felt so warmly received into St. Paul's parish family and into this island community over these past two years. We feel right at home. Although the congregation had experienced some consecutive years of staffing challenges and loss, they have greeted us with a spirit of hopefulness and optimism. Together we sense that this is a time of parish renewal and growth, and that enthusiasm is expressed in a variety of ways, including in expanding financial support.

With the tireless assistance of Penny Macintyre and the parish Fellowship Committee, our first year here was focused primarily on welcoming, hospitality, and community-rebuilding events which included organizing various socials, a network of winter dinners in parishioners' homes, and barbecue & bingo in Gardner Hall. These efforts were very effective and have only been temporarily halted due to the pandemic. We also hosted with Pam Goddard a series of successful teen concerts in the church with pizza on Friday nights, to be resumed when able to gather safely.

St. Paul's has long had a strong commitment to a quality music program, and our music ministry is exceptional. Our Music Director Joe Hammer is creative and collaborative, and he supplements our choristers with guest instrumentalists and Jazz musicians. He is organized, plans well ahead, and is very cooperative with staff.

Our Christian Education offerings have had mixed success attracting participation, with a dozen people attending our Lenten Series and six generally coming for weekly Bible study. That number has increased dramatically since we began broadcasting our Bible study on Facebook Live, Zoom and conference call, and we will continue to explore virtual participation for Christian Education/Formation even after we regather in person.

With the myriad of restrictions caused by the current pandemic, we have had to furlough our Sunday School Director. We will not be able to regather the children safely for probably another year, and our current parishioner children are not interested in Zoom or online lessons. Sr. Susannah made a heroic and faithful effort, but certainly serving and incorporating children and young families remains a challenge for St. Paul's and for most churches now. The pandemic has also forced us to have our Parish Administrator Christine Borneman work less office hours but to be available at flexible times, even on weekends. This arrangement is working out well as we address the changing needs of this new reality. Our Verger Curtis Barnes continues to serve with great faithfulness, and is a daily help to my ministry.

When speaking with Connor - the new manager at Murray's Toggery Shop - recently, he said, "You know, Father Max, as scary and sad as these times are, we are having now to be so creative, and our customers are being so loyal, that I feel truly blessed." Connor's experience resonates with me. Since

Bishop Gates suspended in-person worship on March 16, parish staff and leadership has sought to connect, comfort and encourage people using many means. By broadcasting nightly Prayers from the Attic & Compline, Music Monday, Thursday Bible study and Sunday Morning Prayer, we are more than ever fulfilling our mission “to make the love of God more widely known.” Blessedly, through technology we are reaching many more island residents and are also staying much more connected with seasonal parishioners. Since March 18th and as of mid-July, St. Paul’s has had over twenty-five thousand views on Facebook, plus hundreds on Zoom, YouTube and listening on conference calls with our various offerings as we explore ways to be Church in a new age. It has truly been an honor for Joe, Olly and me to be able to bring solace and hope to so many during these challenging times. Even after regathering, we will continue to broadcast nearly daily.

The expanding work of St. Paul’s newly reorganized Mission Committee is an area where we feel the Holy Spirit bringing new vitality and purpose to our parish. With new Co-Chairs elected by an enlarged, compassionate, and fully committed committee membership, it is exciting to see where our labors will take us in meeting the needs of the community. We are continuing our Cuba mission, and blessedly expanding what we do on Nantucket - much to the delight of parish members.

St. Paul’s is blessed with gifted Wardens, Vestry and committee leadership with a high level of skill and expertise. For instance, our Finance Committee decisions are informed by members who are knowledgeable professionals. We continue to seek to bring a diversity of perspectives and voices to the table, and to respond to these times of dramatic change and challenge.

At our ordination, clergy are commissioned by the Bishop presiding to participate in the councils of the Church and of the community. I am honored to represent our parish in serving in various local posts. I am an active member of Nantucket Cottage Hospital’s Patient and Family Advisory Council and Ethics Committee, the Nantucket Genetic Mice Steering Committee, Fleet Chaplain at Nantucket Yacht Club, newly elected President of Nantucket Interfaith Council, and now a member of the Board of Directors of Community Foundation for Nantucket. Within the Diocese, I participate in weekly Clericus (clergy discussions) with my colleagues in the Cape & Islands Deanery.

The parish and I are indeed blessed that my wife Olly is such a dedicated partner in ministry. The outpouring of love for her from the parish and wider community - both during normal times of celebration and when she faced a recent health scare - is an indication of how much Olly is appreciated. We both feel so blessed that God has called us to serve in such a loving parish family in such a precious part of God’s Creation.

Father Max Wolf

July 17, 2020