



Parish Profile 2017



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ST. GEORGE’S PARISH SEARCH PRAYER

Heavenly Father, our guide and protector, help us to be true to our task in the search for a new rector. We seek a person of faith, filled with the Holy Spirit and able to embrace us as we continue your ministry at St. George's.

We ask this in the name of your son Jesus.

Amen





Dear Clergy Colleague,

I have only been at St. George's for three months as I write this letter. Two of those months have been during what is often called "the summer slump" so I may not have a "full picture".

This is a small church with a big heart! It is filled with active dedicated members who love the Lord and not only talk the talk but walk the walk! Attendance hovers around 35-40. The budget is quite healthy for such a small congregation! The parish is very generous with the space. A Korean Church meets here on Sundays following our worship and meets some during the week. There are several AA meetings and several ESL classes. There is a Family Focus facility on site meeting the needs of families with very small children.

When I came, there were two services: 8 and 10:30. In the summer, they are accustomed to doing only one. With the consent of the vestry we are going to continue with one service at 10 until such time as the numbers (at least 75) warrant a second service. For those who prefer a service with no music, I have said we will do a quiet service once every two months. We have a faithful organist and a lively praise group. I try to have the praise group once a month. In short, I am trying to "be all things to all people" which we all know is impossible! But with God all things are possible!

The computer system has many challenges. There are different systems depending on the computer and they don't communicate with one another well. It has been frustrating. The parish administrator is a gem – very efficient and easy to work with! She too gets frustrated with the systems when her computer and mine do not function well together. New computers are in the process which will be a blessing to each of us!

According to some, the previous rector "did everything for us". The leadership is learning to take some responsibility for themselves. Sometimes that means the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing! We need to work on better communication and in a more timely fashion – improving on the "last minute" details!

For the size of the parish, it is financially stable and healthy. We are working on being more collaborative when it comes to expenses so that the vestry is made aware of improvements before rather than after the fact!

We have what large churches want. Large churches break into small groups for intimacy and companionship. We ARE a small Spirit-filled group that has challenges and changes but also benefits and bonuses. You could not ask to serve a more faithful and thoughtful congregation. If you are called to lead them, you would be blessed not only by God, but also by the people in this charming little parish.

I am happy to entertain any questions that you might have. I can be reached at church or on my e mail: kvprice11@aol.com or on my cell phone 240-538-1704.

Faithfully,

The Rev. Dr. Kathleen V. Price

PARISH HISTORY

In the late 1950's, Stoneybrook Estates developed in the largely rural western end of Newport News, near Fort Eustis and the Yorktown Naval Weapons Station. There was no Episcopal presence in the area at the time. However, from 1959 to 1962, with assistance from the Vestries and Clergy of St. Andrew's and St. Stephen's, Episcopal services were held at the Stoneybrook Club, a neighborhood recreation facility.



The current church building and attached administrative wing were constructed in 1962, primarily by parishioners. In 1964, the congregation petitioned the diocese for parish status, and in February 1965, that petition was granted at the 73rd meeting of the Annual Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia.

Since its founding in 1959, St. George's has prospered, welcoming 12 rectors and interim rectors. The demographics of the neighborhood have changed dramatically. The early rural isolation of Stoneybrook Estates has been replaced by the bustling four-lane Route 60 (Warwick Boulevard).

There is an outdoor sports complex, Stony Run Park; the Boys' and Girls' Club; and a new community center, as well as apartment buildings, shopping centers, and commerce of every type.

Additionally, the neighborhood served by St. George's exhibits cultural diversity ranging from the original established families of Stoneybrook Estates to new military families to refugees who have resettled in this country.

St. George's celebrated its Fiftieth Anniversary in 2009 with a January dinner and toasts, a June Eucharist, Confirmation and visitation by the Bishop; and a burning of the mortgage for Gravely Hall, our parish activities building. Newport News City Council recognized St. George's fifty years of service in the Denbigh/Stoneybrook neighborhood of Newport News!





DIOCESAN PROFILE



St. George's is part of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia, which is headquartered in Newport News.

The diocese is home to 103 Episcopal congregations stretching over 200 miles from the Virginia/Maryland border on the Eastern Shore, west to Danville and Chatham, and northwest to the portion of the Richmond metropolitan area located on the south side of the James River. Altogether, about 30,000 persons worship in the diocese.

Originally carved out of the Diocese of Virginia in 1892, the Diocese of Southern Virginia is now one of three Episcopal dioceses in the state. The diocese has roots in the earliest decades of American history, going back four centuries to the English settlement of Jamestown.

In 1607, the Rev. Robert Hunt, chaplain to the Jamestown settlers, celebrated the first Anglican Holy Communion on these shores. The Church of England, the forerunner of the Episcopal Church in America, was the established church in Virginia for the next 173 years.



Photo: David K. Hazzard



AREA DEMOGRAPHICS



Photo: David K. Hazzard

Newport News lies on the southern side of a peninsula that runs from Richmond to the Chesapeake Bay, a land mass shared with the cities of Hampton, Poquoson and Williamsburg, and the Counties of York and James City. The population of the Peninsula is almost 400,000, and together with the south side of Hampton Roads (Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, Norfolk, and Portsmouth) forms a very large urban area.

Water has played a significant role in our history. Access to the James River from the Chesapeake Bay facilitated the settlement of Jamestown. Hampton Roads is a natural deep-water harbor that abuts Newport News, Hampton, Norfolk, and Portsmouth. It was accessible by large sailing vessels, which contributed to the development of commerce and drew many people to the area. As commerce expanded, the need to repair, build, and service ships became apparent, and numerous small shipyards and repair facilities developed. One of those facilities ultimately became Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company.

While proud of its heritage, the diocese looks forward. Under the leadership of the Rt. Rev. Herman "Holly" Hollerith, who was consecrated tenth Bishop of Southern Virginia in February of 2009, the diocese is pursuing a bold vision for the future.



Congregational development, the raising up of new generations of leaders, ordination reform, creative approaches to stewardship, clergy wellness, the planting of emerging congregations, and the development of bold mission endeavors comprise but a portion of the vision for the diocese. Perhaps you will have a part in bringing forth this vision.





They employ more than twenty thousand people building and servicing nuclear submarines and aircraft carriers for the United States Navy.



Photo: Virginia Department of Historic Resources

The shipyard is not the only major employer. Nearby, NASA-Langley is a research and development facility that played a major role in the development of the U. S. space program. Today, it engages in more conventional research, pursuing such matters as safety improvements in aircraft. It is joined by The Jefferson Laboratory nuclear particle research facility, a world-class scientific effort funded by the United States government, and engaged in the most sophisticated nuclear research in the world today. There are many smaller business activities which support the shipyard, Langley and Jefferson Lab. These provide a strong and stable employment base for the community which has not been significantly affected by the economic slow-downs.

The military is also a major part of the community. Ft. Eustis, Langley Air Force Base, Yorktown Naval Weapons Station, and Yorktown Coast Guard Base have homes on the Peninsula. On the Norfolk side of the water is Norfolk Naval Base, the largest naval base in the world. Newport News has a

continuing military presence and the entire community—including St. George's—supports our servicemen and women.

We are fortunate to have excellent public and private schools, and these are supported by an exceptional level of post secondary education. Hampton University, a traditionally black university, is located nearby, as are the College of William and Mary, Christopher Newport University, Old Dominion University, Thomas Nelson Community College, and Tidewater Community College.

The abundance of water provides extensive opportunities for relaxation and recreation. History buffs can enjoy Williamsburg, Jamestown, Ft. Monroe, and Yorktown. Fishermen can choose from freshwater fishing in reservoirs, surf-casting, and deep-sea fishing. Golfers have access to numerous courses, including the world-class courses in Williamsburg and New Kent County. Norfolk offers an exceptional opera, as well as the Virginia Symphony; Broadway and world-class performers from every artistic discipline come to area venues every year.



The Ferguson Center for the Arts, located in midtown Newport News, is a cultural leader in the community. Opening 11 years ago, the venue offers a broad range of world-class performances providing the area with Broadway shows, concerts, orchestras, magicians, and more.



Sentara Careplex and Bon Secours-Mary Immaculate have added state-of-the-art orthopedic centers; Riverside Regional Medical Center has the largest open heart center in Virginia and is a Trauma II center; and the Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters treats children.



WHO WE ARE TODAY

We are a group of committed Christians who are proud of our parish, and we work hard to keep that spirit alive. There are always volunteers available for special events and outreach projects. Parishioners arrange and participate in special parish-wide meals, including the annual Easter brunch, a birthday party for Jesus at Christmas, and the Cursillo-sponsored Agape meal on Maundy Thursday. The men's group, St. Ralph's, sponsors a well-attended oyster roast, and they also host a monthly breakfast.

We have a presence on social media with a webpage that is updated weekly with the Weekly Word posting of events, and are in the process of adding audio links to each week's sermons. Our Facebook page is updated with diocesan postings, parish events and celebrations, and special worship service announcements.

Many of us have aged and are now retired, which allows us to devote more daytime hours to serve the church. Many members belong to area civic organizations which gives our parish many opportunities to serve the broader community. In a true ecumenical spirit, we have welcomed many refugees from Myanmar, Burundi, Sudan and Cambodia who immigrated to this country through the assistance of Catholic Charities and various resettlement programs, then found their way to St. George's. We provided a much-needed loving and supportive church family. We are known because we care. We have an open church family that welcomes all races and walks of life to God's house of worship.





PHYSICAL PLANT/FACILITIES

The parish's facilities are a complex of three older buildings and a newer Activities Building/Parish Hall. The two original buildings were constructed in 1961-1962, and the "old" Parish Hall was added in 1967. The new Activities Building was completed in 1999, and the mortgage was retired in April of 2009.

The church property is on the corner of Thorncliff Drive and Warwick Boulevard in the Denbigh/Stoneybrook/Fort Eustis area of Newport News. Warwick Boulevard is one of the five major arteries of travel on the Lower Peninsula. The buildings and associated parking lot cover approximately 2.5 acres and the remainder of the property is wooded. Our lot is approximately 5.8 acres.



The two original buildings include our chancel, which seats approximately 130 people and our office/support complex (Rector's office, Secretary's office, Sacristy/Vesting Room, Choir Room, and a meeting room). The "old" Parish Hall is approximately 2,200 square feet, with a serviceable kitchen and a gathering space, currently used by



Photo: Rosser Bobbitt

the Bon Secours/Mary Immaculate Hospital Foundation for one of their Family Focus Programs, 9 AA meetings, and an Al-Anon group on Sunday evenings.

The Activities Building (aka Gravelly Hall) totals about 5,250 square feet, approximately half of which is a large Parish Hall. The balance of the building is a modern kitchen, library, 5 classrooms, and support facilities including bathrooms and storage areas. A storage shed/garage was added behind the Parish Hall to store lawn mowers and other equipment.

WORSHIP/MUSIC/LITURGY

The St. George's family comes together on Sunday mornings for traditional worship. The Holy Eucharist is the central act of worship; Rite II is the primary form of worship; Rite I is generally used during Lent, Advent and other penitential occasions. There is a Children's Sermon every Sunday. Services are conducted at 10:00 am (with music and about 40-45 in attendance).



A majority of our worship music comes from the *The Hymnal 1982*, supplemented by *Lift Every Voice and Sing II*.

Many parishioners expressed a desire to "liven up" Sunday mornings with more contemporary worship music. A praise band was formed, made up of talented parishioners playing guitars, keyboard, flute, and clarinet. They lead us during worship with joyful and spirit-filled music once a month, which has been well-received by the congregation.

Lay participation in worship is a cornerstone of our parish life. Lectors and Lay Eucharistic Ministers are licensed and trained and serve with the rector each Sunday.



Each week, a trained Lay Eucharistic Visitor takes communion to a designated home-bound parishioner. Children and adults fill the roles of crucifer and acolytes. We have a dedicated group of parishioners on the Altar Guild who ensure the Lord's Table is ordered and well supplied for the service. Ushers and Greeters make sure that everyone feels welcome and ready to participate in worship. Visitors are encour-





aged to fill out information cards located in each pew and sign the guest book. The Greeter lifts newcomers' names in prayer during the Prayers of the People. Newcomers also receive a personal note of appreciation for worshipping at St. George's as well as a personal note from the Greeter and the rector. When current parishioners were asked what drew them to St. George's, the overwhelming response was "the warm welcome and friendliness of the people."

We joyfully proclaim and serve Christ through our corporate worship!

MINISTRIES

Through Christian Formation, St. George's seeks to provide ongoing religious education opportunities to all who desire to continue their Christian journey. Adult Christian Education follows an independent curriculum throughout the Sunday School year. By dealing with a variety of topics, some biblically based and others not, the Adult Christian Education class provides an opportunity for all over the age of eighteen to continue to deepen their faith. Frequently, topics are related to current events and discussion is focused on how our faith teaches us to address different issues.

Presently, school-age children meet one Sunday evening per month for activities on and off campus.

"Responding to Racism" is our monthly meeting to discuss issues relating to social justice and racism and the current events that surround them. This is an important discussion group and is well attended by a diverse group of people seeking answers to difficult issues.

For the past 2 years we have hosted a community gathering service of Repentance, Reconciliation, and Healing. Attendees came from many denominations and the police department to worship and praise God together.

Cursillo, a spiritual development movement within the Church, is strongly supported by the Diocese of Southern Virginia and members of St. George's. Twenty current members of the parish have participated in Cursillo weekends, and many are actively involved in Fourth Day activities (Ultreya and grouping).

Every Wednesday, several parishioners travel to the Virginia Oncology Associates cancer treatment center in Port Warwick to serve lunch and snacks to the patients, staff, and doctors. We provide sandwiches, chips, fruit, crackers, cookies, and drinks for those having chemotherapy treatments and doctor appointments, as well as their professional staff. Our volunteers offer not only food, but support and encouragement to the patients.



The Daughters of the King, an order of women who are communicants of the Episcopal Church or churches in communion with the Episcopal Church pledge themselves to a life-long program of prayer, service and evangelism. The St. George's Chapter is active within the parish and the diocese.

Specific faith instruction is provided to those seeking baptism, confirmation and marriage.

ACTIVITIES AT ST. GEORGE'S

St. Ralph's, the men's fellowship group, meets the second Saturday of each month for Morning Prayer, and a 7:30 a.m. breakfast. The Prayer Shawl Knitters meet regularly, while the Quilting and Sharing Group meets the second and fourth Saturdays of each month.

St. George's provides many social opportunities through activities such as luncheons, oyster roasts, suppers, a Christmas Bazaar, an Easter Brunch, a Ladies Out to Lunch Bunch, and other occasions where we break bread and enjoy fellowship.

St. George's hosts a Giving Tree each year to benefit the children of the Cypress Terrace Housing Community, an economically disadvantaged community that is located in close proximity to the church. Gifts are distributed at their annual Christmas party. We have conducted services outdoors at the Boys and Girls Club near the church to bless the children in our neighborhood at the end of the school year and to pray for a safe summer. We also conduct a yearly Blessing of the Animals.

People Offering Resources Together (PORT) is an ecumenical program offering meals and shelter to the homeless during winter months. St. George's parishioners volunteer at the various shelter sites to prepare





a hearty dinner and breakfast, help with guest check-in and out, and “keep watch” during the night hours.



The second Sunday of each month, members are encouraged to provide non-perishable food and related items for distribution to THRIVE, Peninsula Food Bank or Menchville House Ministries, to benefit disadvantaged families and individuals.

Another ministry we are involved in is collecting contributions and delivering sports equipment to Boy's Home in Covington. We also support Episcopal Relief and Development with monetary donations for disaster relief, providing clean drinking water to people in underdeveloped countries, and purchasing farm animals that help to provide needed income to poor families.

St. George's facilities serve as a meeting place for Alcoholics Anonymous, Girl Scouts and Family Focus, a parenting program sponsored by Mary Immaculate Hospital and several English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Our buildings serve the community 7 days a week as we strive to serve local organizations with a safe, pleasant meeting place. As a parish community, our influence extends well

beyond the confines of the parish. We believe that faith begins not when we come to church but when we walk out the door and into the community. We are known for the work we do.

STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE-BUDGET

Stewardship is the act of returning to God a portion of what He has given us. The remembrance of that responsibility is strong and vital to St. George's continuation. While not all parishioners pledge, most do, and all are encouraged to. A stewardship campaign, conducted in the Fall, calls upon members of the parish to share their thoughts on stewardship during Sunday morning worship. Additionally, regular reports are included in the parish newsletter. It is the individual sense of shared responsibility that motivates our parishioners to contribute generously at a level we have maintained for a number of years.

The concept of giving, however, involves more than the simple act of writing a check. It involves the giving of time, both for the expressed needs of the parish, as well as for the work Christ calls us to do. Our stewardship begins in our parish—but it is actively



involved in the community in which we live and worship.

WHAT DO WE WANT IN A RECTOR?

The new rector should be well-educated, committed to the wide body of The Episcopal Church, and willing to embrace the needs of the diocese, as well as his/her own parish. Good preaching skills are essential.

A good rector needs to interact with his/her parish. Visits and pastoral care, at home or in the hospital, are a vital help and source of encouragement to parishioners. In less serious moments, the rector needs the ability to laugh and relax in church social settings.

At all times, the rector needs to maintain a good sense of humor—for his/her own sake. Teaching is a part of ministering, and every parish needs a rector who can teach a variety of topics while remaining open to views that differ from his or hers. It is during this time that laughter is frequently called upon to provide relief.

Finally, a rector needs to be a good—not brilliant—administrator and be willing to consult with leadership in the parish on matters of importance; manage—not micro-manage—parish life; and be committed to fulfilling the needs of a diverse group of Christians.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE PARISH

Our Town Hall meeting gave the parish family an opportunity to share their dreams and hopes for the future. The responses fell into four major categories: growth and development, variation in worship, and continued service to the community, all of which will stimulate growth. The fourth was



a desire for St. George's to maintain its friendliness, family-like atmosphere and diversity.

Most members share a love of the Episcopal liturgy, but would like to mix traditional with contemporary and non-traditional elements in the services.

There is hope that the above actions will result in attracting youth and young families to St. George's. Growth is not limited to numbers, but broader age ranges, ethnicities, talents, resources and levels of participation. This requires programs that will attract and retain a diverse assortment of all God's children.





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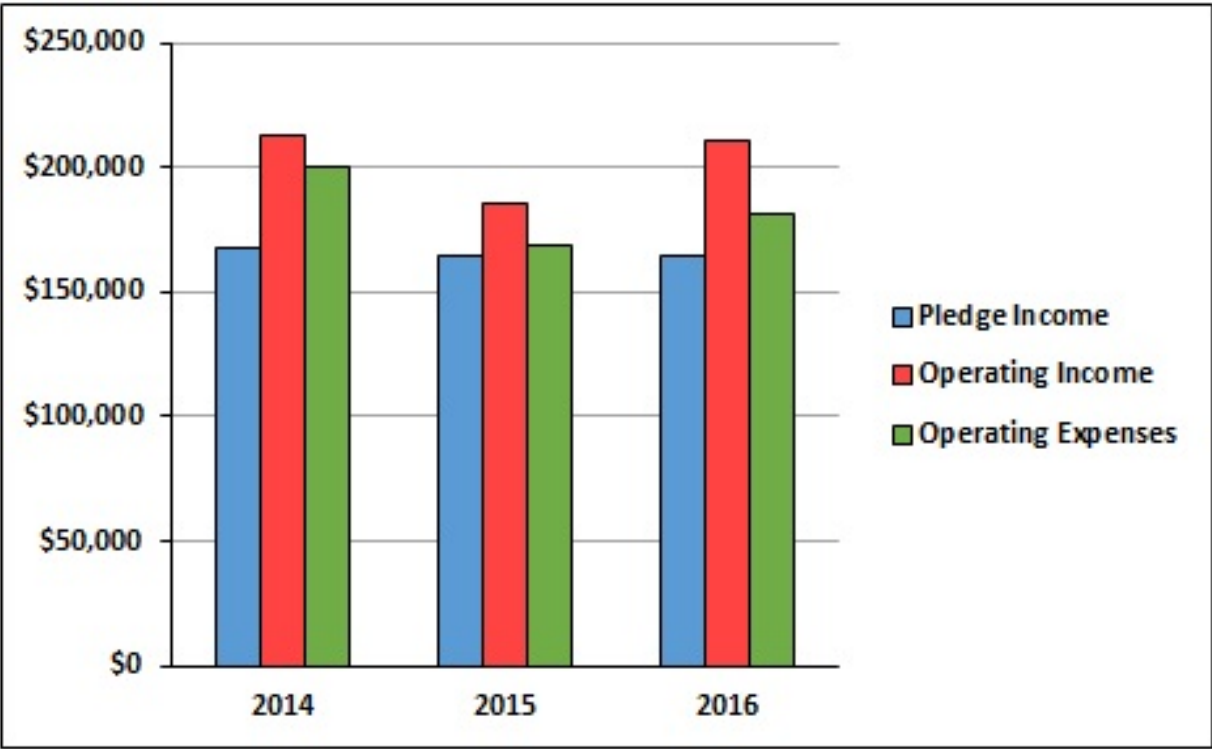
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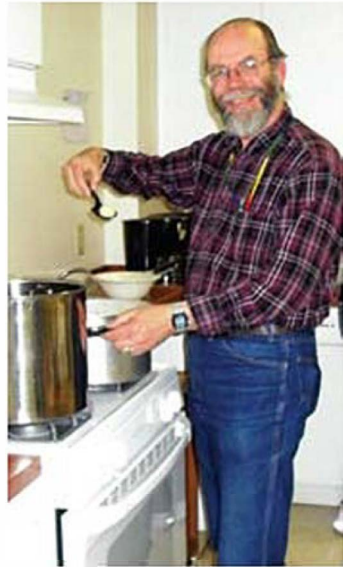
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SELECTED DATA FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

	2014	2015	2016
Membership			
Active baptized members	84	74	72
Youth in good standing (under age 16)	7	5	6
Church School children enrolled	7	10	8
Average Sunday attendance	51	47	45







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