

Annual Report 2019 - Rector

From The Very Rev. Paul J. Kane

I want to take this opportunity to tell you how grateful I am to be serving as the seventh Rector of St. Paul's! 2019, my fourth full year serving as your rector, was truly a memorable one. It is an incredible joy and privilege for Irene and me to be a part of this loving, welcoming, and active parish family.

This report highlights some of the many wonderful events, initiatives, and programs of 2019 as seen through the framework of our Vision 2020 Strategic Plan. It also includes reflections on stewardship in 2019, an update on clergy and staff, an update on campus safety and security, and a few thoughts as we look ahead to 2020 and beyond.

Vision 2020 Strategic Plan

In 2019, we continued implementing and living into our Vision 2020 Parish Strategic Plan (available to read at: www.stpaulsdelray.org). Our Strategic Plan is a living, transformative document that is helping to guide us through the intricacies of our common life as a parish family. Here is a look at 2019 through the framework of our Vision 2020 Strategic Plan:

1) **Growth in Membership:** Through initiatives like our *Icons in Transformation* installation, our ever-deepening involvement in the Delray Beach Interfaith Social Services Committee (which is chaired by two members of St. Paul's, Judy Fenney and Kathleen Megan), the creation of a partnership with the Delray Beach String Quartet, the welcoming of the Delray Beach Police Department to our Day School and Sunday worship, the creation of a film series partnership with the Delray Beach Public Library, the hosting of a premier showing of the documentary "So Flo Floods" to support Bahamas hurricane relief, hosting a regional "Poets for Peace" gathering, creating a partnership with the United Way of Palm Beach County to more effectively respond to relief and recovery needs in the Bahamas after Hurricane Dorian, and the sustaining of partnerships with the South County Recovery Residence Association, Habitat 4 Humanity South Palm Beach, the Palm Beach Recorder and Early Music Society, CODA, Off the Avenue Book Group, CROS Ministries, Family Promise of South Palm Beach County, Episcopal Charities of Southeast Florida, and others, St. Paul's continues to raise its profile in the wider community.

In 2019, we had eight people confirmed, three people received into the church, 22 people were baptized, four new households transferred into St. Paul's, and 28 new households made a pledge to support our common life!

2) Enhancing Our Spiritual Vitality: We began 2019 with the *Icons in Transformation* installation. This inspiring artwork, and the various workshops and programs that were connected with the installation, not only enhanced our worship environment in the church and throughout the campus, but it also attracted hundreds of visitors, some of who have made St. Paul's their church home.

For the first time, we had a good, old-fashioned hymn sing in January, giving people of all ages a chance to celebrate around sacred music! On the Sunday before Lent we celebrated a special choral evensong service. Our Seekers young adult ministry introduced the Alpha program as part of its ministry of Christian education. We celebrated seasonal Yoga Masses, further enriching our opportunities for alternate forms of worship. During Holy Week, in addition to our other services, we celebrated a reconciliation service, led by the late Reverend Tom Graf. On the First Sunday after Easter, we once again had our Blessing of the Elders at all services. On October 12 and 13, we had a particularly inspiring weekend during which we welcomed the gifted Dominican preacher and teacher Rev. Dr. Kevin Goodrich, who preached at all services. In the late fall we celebrated two special services: a Choral Evensong for All Saints Day and an Advent Lessons and Carols service on the Second Sunday of Advent.

3) Increasing Opportunities for Fellowship: In 2019, we introduced the Women's Dinner Program, a vibrant fellowship ministry that gathers monthly for dinner, speakers on a variety of spiritually and socially relevant topics, and a commitment to supporting outreach efforts. We also introduced a ministry sponsorship model for our 10 am coffee hour. This model allows for a greater variety of people and ministries to be involved in this vital fellowship ministry of hospitality. At our 10 am coffee hour, ministries are now sharing information about themselves, inviting others to get to know them and possibly get involved in their ministries.

Our summer family fun offerings were an outing to the newly renovated Norton Museum and a Marlins game. St. Paul's also sponsored "teams" who attended quarterly "Love Delray" events, the Hustle 2 End Hunger, and a benefit softball game at Miller Field.

4) Outreach to Those Broken by Life Circumstances: In 2019, we trained two new Stephen Ministers and we added two new Lay Eucharistic Visitors. The growth of these two important ministries means that more people in need are receiving Christian care.

St. Paul's also is a leading congregation in the Delray Beach Interfaith Social Services Committee, formed in 2018 to provide needed social services to the poor, hungry, and homeless in our community. This ministry oversees the mobile shower truck, which provides hot showers, clothing, and hygiene kits every Friday at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church.

In response to the devastation brought to the Bahamas by Hurricane Dorian, St. Paul's has contributed \$17,343 to date, supported a shipment of relief supplies, and partnered with the United Way of Palm Beach County and a Delray Beach-based initiative to assist those suffering the impact of Hurricane Dorian, both in the Bahamas and here in south Florida. In 2019, we continued to sustain the growth of our core outreach ministries like Paul's Place, CROS

Ministries, Family Promise, and the South Florida Haiti Project, our mission partnership with Bon Samaritan Episcopal Church and School in Bondeau, Haiti.

5) Strengthening Our Christian Education and Spiritual Formation: At the beginning of 2019, as part of our *Icons in Transformation* installation, we had a week-long icon writing workshop, a poetry workshop, and several presentations on art, church history, and faith related topics. Our Children, Youth, and Family Ministry once again hosted a spirited and engaging Vacation Bible School during the first week of June. In the summer and early fall we had a Sunday Forum on Richard Rohr's "Universal Christ", led by Deacon Helen Trainor. In the fall, we had a seven-part Sunday Forum series on the Episcopal Church and public policy issues. We concluded 2019 with a couple of Sunday bible studies and small group discussions on spirituality and giving, as part of our stewardship program.

2019 Stewardship

Critical to the success of parish ministry are the financial resources to sustain flourishing ministries and fund new, critically needed ministries. To that end, in October of 2019, we reconstituted the St. Paul's Endowment Fund Board. This Board will help to grow this important resource for expanding and sustaining the good work of St. Paul's for generations to come.

In 2019, our Real Estate Task Force (RETF) continued its good and important work of advising our Vestry on the best and most effective use of our property located to the west of our main campus. I want to thank the RETF for helping us to be good stewards of the property resources that we have been blessed with at St. Paul's.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our parish members and friends, the good stewardship practiced by our Vestry, the visionary and prudent guidance of our Budget and Finance Committee, and a Diocesan-wide assessment relief for December, we ended 2019 with a modest budget surplus of just over \$40,000. With the Burch Fund (a significant gift received several years ago and designated to funding on-going capital improvements) virtually exhausted, the Vestry voted to put our 2019 budget surplus into our Capital Improvement Reserve Fund.

As we look ahead, we are hopeful that our 2020 pledges will meet our goal of \$695,000. This pledge income, together with our other budgeted income sources, will provide the financial resources we need as we add a part-time youth minister, a part-time administrative assistant, and the Sunday morning law enforcement security detail to our other active ministries in 2020.

Clergy and Staff

In 2019, we mourned the passing of The Reverend Thomas Graf. Tom's primary ministry was as Director of Pastoral Care with Bethesda Hospitals East and West. Tom served at St. Paul's as our Honorary Assisting Priest, a non-stipendiary position. We continue to keep Fr. Tom's widow Isabel, who has relocated to the Jacksonville area, in our prayers.

In 2019, Barbara Clifford, our faithful church member and beloved former full-time volunteer, suffered a significant health challenge that necessitated her stepping away from her volunteer work in our parish office. As we continue to pray for Barbara and her on-going recovery, we recognize that she is truly irreplaceable! Recognizing Barbara's incredible contributions to our parish as an office volunteer for many years, we have renamed the Volunteer of the Year Award. That recognition will now be known as the "Barbara Clifford Spirit of St. Paul's Award". The recipients for 2019 were Judy Fenney and her late husband Nick, who passed away suddenly on July 29, 2019. Judy and Nick, together with Kathleen and Charlie Megan, were instrumental in leading the good work of the Delray Beach Interfaith Social Services Committee in 2019, including the shower truck initiative.

The greatest asset of any parish is its human resources, and at St. Paul's we are blessed with outstanding staff members and dedicated volunteers who serve our parish and community with distinction.

Safety and Security Task Force Update

Using a training protocol recommended by law enforcement, this past year our Safety and Security Task Force (SSTF), formed in 2018, trained over 70 church members in active shooter and other emergency response procedures. The Vestry approved adding a law enforcement officer on duty on Sunday mornings to further provide security to our community at worship. As places of worship continue to be targets of violence, we are committed to doing everything we can to make St. Paul's as safe and secure as possible.

Looking Ahead

I'm happy to say that our 2020 Budget includes the addition of two new, critically needed ministry positions. One is a part-time youth minister. The person we hire will work with our terrific youth ministry team in ministering to our junior high and high school youth and their families. The other is a part-time administrative assistant, who will do many of the things that our beloved Barbara Clifford had been doing as a volunteer over the past several years.

As we look forward to 2020 and beyond, we do so confident that God is faithful and walks with us at all times. This year, our Diocese of Southeast Florida celebrates its 50th Anniversary. St. Paul's has been, is, and will continue to be a significant part of the story of the Church in southeast Florida. My prayer for our parish family is that we will continue to live into our call to be the Beloved Community that God calls us to be.

In Christ, our Hope,

Paul+

The Very Rev. Paul J. Kane

7th Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church