

Bishop's Mission for Disaster Resilience Partners with St. Paul's Healdsburg

St. Paul's Church has a long tradition of ministry within and to the communities surrounding Healdsburg by caring for those who are short on everyday needs. The congregation hosts a thriving shower ministry, where those who are unhoused can clean and refresh themselves in a safe environment. During the pandemic, the shower ministry has continued, but with necessary safety protocols to allow for social distancing and upgraded cleaning and sanitization between guests.

The pandemic has also caused many local food resources in the community to disappear. Those in need of showers are also in need of food. Unfortunately, the kitchen at St. Paul's is aging and inadequate to meet the needs of the parish. The need for an upgrade is urgent.

As we know, our diocese is no stranger to fire, flood, earthquake, tsunami, hazardous materials release, or any other disaster we might imagine. Through their shower ministry, St. Paul's Church has stepped up and stretched its capabilities each time something happens in their part of the state. "We are the gathering place in time of emergency," says their Rector, the Rev. Sally Hubbell. The church has opened its doors to provide overnight safety and warmth for the vulnerable when the temperature drops, as well as serving as the gathering point for evacuees in time of fire and flood. Because of this ability to respond to meet the needs of a community in crisis, Mark Dibelka, Missioner for Disaster Resilience, made a visit to see the church in action.

Inspired by those impacted by the shower ministry, Mark began working with Rev. Sally to determine strategies for St. Paul's to grow its ministry of caring for and feeding those in need.

As a first step, St. Paul's needs to redesign its existing kitchen to meet health code requirements and enable them to expand services. If you, or somebody you know, has experience with kitchen design and are willing to work pro bono or at a discounted fee, please let us know. Housing is available when working on location.

Once plans are completed, the Mission for Disaster Resilience will provide seed funds to get started, and it is expected that community engagement will provide funds to make these changes a reality.

St. Paul's, Healdsburg and the Mission for Disaster Resilience are excited to work together to improve the capacity of this vital ministry. Together, we can strengthen and expand this important work.

For more information, please contact:

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