

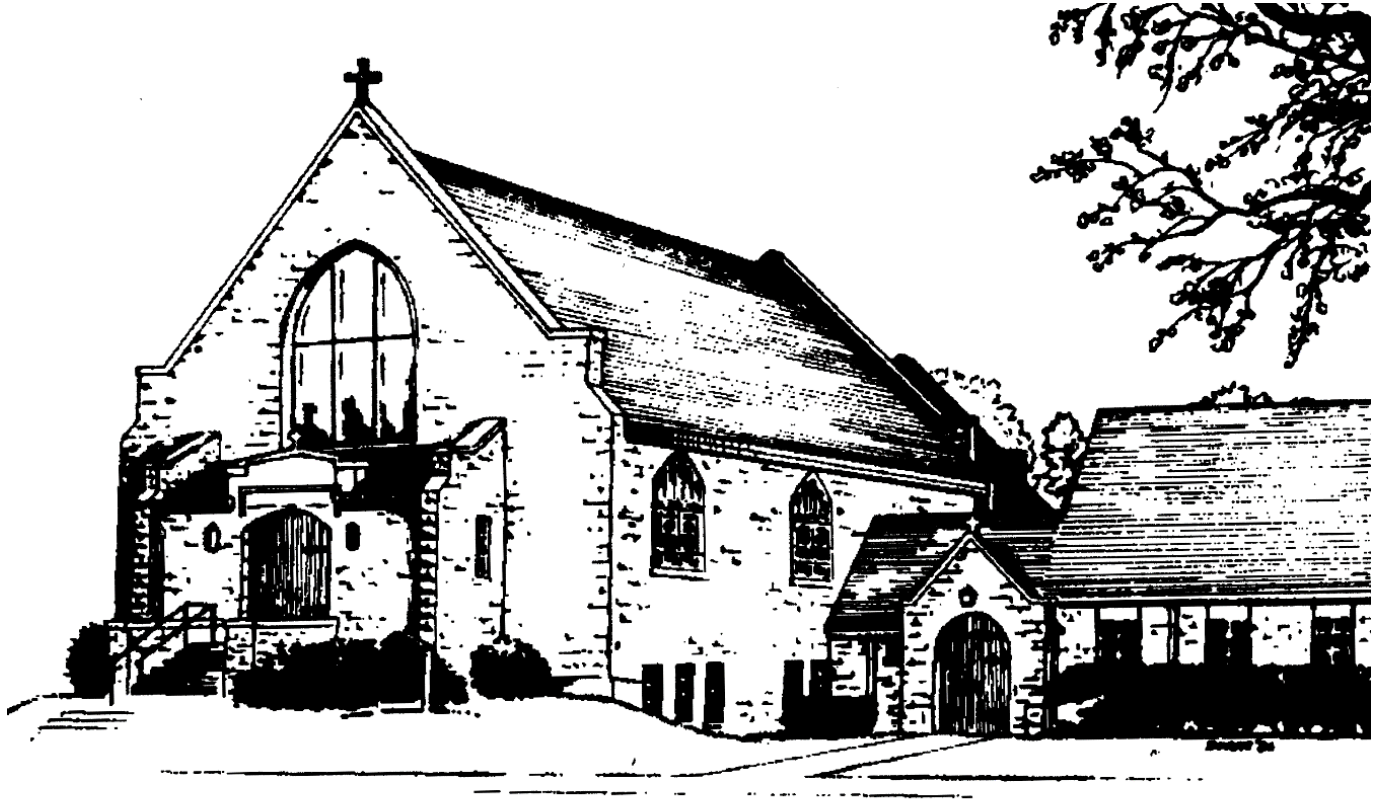
St. Paul's Episcopal Church

P.O. Box 2255

Batesville, Arkansas, 72503

Main Street at Fifth

870-793-2203



*The Mission of St. Paul's is to love God
and to love our neighbor,
sharing with gratitude and reverence the
Light of Christ.*

Parish Report for 2024

January 19, 2025

SENIOR WARDEN

This past year St Paul's has gone by quickly!

We have faced the challenge of being without a rector, by working together for a common goal. We have had many visitors to our parish pulpit this year and they have been welcomed and appreciated. Parish worship leaders have stepped up and led services. In the face of this challenge, we kept on keeping on!

We have accomplished much this year! From fellowship activities and prayerful worship together, to needed and unanticipated church repairs. With Soup Sale, Mardi Gras, Shrimp Dinner, church potlucks, Turkey, and Pie sales, we have celebrated the hospitality we love to share with others! We have worshipped together in our prayerful celebration of Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Advent, and Christmas. The choir has led us with beautiful music at 10:30 and we were even led in worship by the children during the 5:30 Christmas service! Our church has been kept beautiful by repairing the cracked beam in the sanctuary and repainting water damage in the sanctuary, so that we continue to have a contemplative and peaceful space to worship together. We also painted the Parish Hall with the help of student, faculty, and staff volunteers during Lyon College Service Day.

We had an immersion baptism this fall in Steve Stalker's pool, where we welcomed a new member into our parish with joy. We also welcomed new members by transfer from another church parish in the Diocese.

We represented St Paul's in the Batesville community by handing out information and water at the city Fourth of July Celebration, the Batesville Pride Event, and Lyon College Move in Day. We have started "branding" ourselves as the bishop puts it, by having new information cards made, St Paul's stickers, and new church T-shirts to wear when we represent our church in the community. Let's not forget Halloween on Main Street, where a multitude of little goblins, witches, robots, and fairies were greeted with smiles and candy as they trick or treated.

We have continued Outreach in the community with our Wednesday night Community meals, Blessing Box, and donations to Our Father's Table.

We have explored our faith in several ways. Adult Sunday School, Children's Sunday School, The Chosen series groups and EfM.

We look forward in 2025 to continuing college ministry at Lyon and expanding it to UACCB, and to continuing Outreach in our community by working with Our Father's Table.

I would like that thank all of you for your support and prayers this year. In the words of Bishop Harmon, I pray that we to look forward to growing together in Faith, not Fear.

With love,

Sarah Harmon, Senior Warden

JUNIOR WARDEN REPORT

We have a beautiful church and a great congregation. I can't tell you the number of times someone, even strangers passing by, have told me what a beautiful church we have. Or the times that someone has been to a service (wedding, funeral, Lenten study) at St. Paul's and commented on not only what a beautiful building we have but were complimentary of the welcome they received as guests.

But keeping up with a 107-year-old church, a 94-year-old rectory, a 72-year-old parish house, and 67-year-old Anglican Hall can be a challenge. In 2024, unexpected failures occurred which will, in the end, require over \$50,000 to fix. While about \$15,000 was covered by a grant and a special gift, the remaining work continues to put a strain on our parish finances.

In addition to the expected, routine, and mundane, major unexpected work this year included:

1. A cracked truss beam in the nave. Thanks to our architect Gary Clements and vestry member Nikki Bittle we were able to get a state historic preservation grant to cover 2/3 of the cost of this. The work was not as complicated as originally envisioned, and M&A Jones/Farco (and parishioner Arch Jones) got the work completed between Sunday services. Total cost: \$10,580 of which \$7053 was covered by the grant.
2. Air conditioner failure in the church. This happened the Saturday right before Easter. There were several causes, culminating in the failure of a rusted-out compression tank that had been improperly installed when the system was put in in 2008. It took six weeks for Harrison Energy to find a replacement tank, which they promptly (and properly) installed, along with other needed parts. Total cost for all repairs: Just under \$10,000. Thanks to a generous parishioner who wishes to remain anonymous for giving an extra \$5,000 towards this.
3. Brick wall failure on Anglican Hall. In July, parishioner Fuller Bumpers noticed bricks coming out of the west wall of Anglican Hall over his parking lot. While the building was re-roofed in 2023, water was leaking through the tops of the walls above the roof, where seals on the original tilework had failed. During stopgap work by Tracy Sweet to stop the leaks it was discovered the brick wall, which supports the roof, could be structurally failing. The office and choir room were moved into the undercroft space and the building was placed off limits. John Clark, a structural engineer from Searcy examined the problem, and determined the eastern side (office and choir room) were safe, and the rector's office, chapel, and conference were "probably" safe. Out of an abundance of caution, the western side remains off limits. M&A Jones/Farco is working out a plan to build a structural wall against the inside of the west wall so that the brick wall can be repaired without danger of the roof collapsing. Cost: \$1400 so far for waterproofing, including tarp (with Fuller's name and phone) to protect the brick. We're still awaiting an estimate of total cost, but I'll be surprised if it's under \$25,000. No grants are available, since this building is neither on the Historic Register nor in the Historic District.
4. Water damage in the Nave: In August, heavy rains resulted in water running down and damaging the interior wall of the nave, next to the door that leads to the bell tower. After Tracy Sweet repaired problems with the flashing in that area, the situation improved but didn't stop. Mid-Ark Roofing in Little Rock, who installed the roof in 2021, came and repaired problems with the drainage ("scupper box") on the bell tower roof under warranty, and the problem has not occurred since. Mason Pickens has repairs and repainting of the interior wall on his schedule for February. Total cost should be \$4000, 2/3 of which will be covered with leftover money from the grant for the beam. (Thanks to Clint Howard for donating his time and drone to get aerial photos.)

Other unexpected work included furnace blower failures in the rectory and parish house, a leak in the narthex caused by a faulty window seal, additional work on the church HVAC plant to correct operational problems, and failures of the dishwasher and ice machine.

Some of the above work is still in progress, and there is additional maintenance work which has been deferred, most notably tuck pointing in the western (church) side of the bell tower, which could qualify for a historic preservation grant, for which we'll need to come up with the matching money. (Trivia question: What color is the downspout on the church side of the bell tower?)

On a positive note, the interior of the parish house has been painted, and paneling will be put up in the "new" section (was it really 25 years ago it was expanded?). Thanks to Tammy Kipfer, Sarah Harmon, Bev Grigsby, and the Lyon College work day crew for taking this on.

The rectory was furnished for visiting priests to stay over Saturday nights, then "flipped" to St. Paul's Place Airbnb through the work of Fred Krug and his crew, whose report you should find elsewhere in this packet.

Thanks to Junior and Tammy Kipfer, Fred Krug, Mike Schmidt, Katie Janke, Brenda Bittle, Mike and Rhonda Mundy, Dwight Ford, Pam Baxter, Regina Cooper, Kirk Harmon, Susie Cummins, and Allan McSpadden for a variety of help and hard work.

Special thanks to Jon Healey for continuing to manage ongoing work on the roof after his term ended, for volunteering for additional work without being asked, and for his advice to a newbie Jr. Warden.

Most special thanks to Sr. Warden Sarah Harmon and the vestry for your hard work, support and encouragement during the last year.

And eternal thanks to my long-suffering wife Ellen for putting up with me when I was frustrated and offering me sage and logical advice, support, and love when I needed it most.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Massey

TREASURER'S REPORT

The church ended the year with a gain of \$52,698.73 against a budgeted gain of \$54,508.16. This is great news. While not having a Rector, our payroll expenses have been reduced allowing us to build reserves and prepare ourselves better financially to welcome a new Rector. Extraordinary expenses for the year included maintenance and repair costs for the Church, Anglican Hall, and Rectory and an increase in casualty/liability insurance. Please see the attached financial statements for the detail.

As of January 14th, pledges for 2025 total \$202,214. That is down by \$27,150 from 2024's total of \$229,364. Pledges are still being made, and we are hopeful to get close to the total we had last year. Because of the delay in receiving some pledges, the finance committee has not finalized a 2025 budget. We will begin work soon and present to the new Vestry in February.

If you have questions on this report or at any time during the year, please let me know.

Respectfully submitted,
Dwight Ford, Treasurer

*For YTD Statement of Activities & Statement of Financial Position for 2024, see attached.

CHOIR REPORT

2024 was once again another wonderful year filled with beautiful music glorifying God and singing his praises. Along with our regular Sunday services, each month we invite everyone to come to Choral Evensong as a wonderful conclusion of the day. We offer Evensong once a month and the feedback has been very positive on this service the choir offers. We had guest singers and instrumentalists for both our Easter and Christmas services. I would like to thank those who joined their voices and talents with us this year; Nick Czerwinski, Grace Huetson, Rebecca Little, Molly Magouyrk, Tyler Sarracino and Janet Thomas. We said farewell this year to Dr. Michael Oriatti, a long time choir member of St. Paul's as well as former choir director. We wish Dr. Oriatti all the best as he begins a new chapter. St. Paul's was also the host for the Batesville Choral Society, Christmas Lessons and Carols concert. Many of the choir members who are part of the community choir are also choir members at St. Paul's. After taking over as director/conductor I felt a need to involve the community as much as possible as well as having people of the community to come into our beautiful sanctuary. This community wide concert was ecumenical with persons involved being from many different denominations of faith. It was a very successful event and I thank all of those from St. Paul's for all of their help in making this event such a success. May we continue to make joyful noise unto the Lord in this upcoming year. Thank you all and may God bless.

-Kristian Ameigh- Organist/Choir Director

SUNDAY SCHOOL YEAR-END REPORT 2024

The first part of 2024 there were no changes made to Sunday School. You might take notice of the new footprints around our prayer circle and heading out the door. This represents our last lesson for Spring 2024 “Jesus Calls His Disciples” and sends them out into the world. (Thank you, Karis! ❤️)

Starting in the Fall of 2024, after surveying the kids, Nikki and I started Sunday School every other week. Vicky Crouch has been keeping our kitchen well-stocked with snacks! We continue to use Weaving God’s Promises curriculum, and incorporate music, lessons, crafts, puppet shows, activities in Sunday school. We also continue the handbells and boomwhackers to play with for music. We certainly miss seeing our kids weekly, but this seems to be working with everyone’s busy schedules. Anytime you need a dose of fun come down to the Undercroft and join us - all ages are welcome to our lively bunch. We were thrilled to be asked #1, and that our kids responded #2 to hosting a Children led Christmas Eve service. Karis, Lola, Cameron, Sam, Ray, and Dean slayed - we could not be more proud. And thanks to parents who brought them to practice! We already have a request for Christmas 2025... 😊

We want to repeat what we quoted last year because we know that this is what works.

A research group called Sticky Faith, <http://fulleryouthinstitute.org/stickyfaith>, studied the youth ministry practices of the nineties – the huge youth events to gather all the kids with bounce houses, fun, and youth parties. They found that these practices never nurtured a faith that would even survive adolescence. ...Most youth ministry professionals believe that the biggest predictor of a true meaningful lifelong Christian faith is not whether they have peers to go to church with, it is whether the youth have five significant relationships with adults of faith in addition to their parents. Put more simply: a would-be Christian needs people in their life with the authority to say “Yes, this is God, and He is working on you.” from “The Gospel According to Improv” by Les Carpenter (thank you Kristian for the Bible Study)

Our prayer is that we will continue to have an eclectic group of kids of all ages, talents, and interests who will regularly attend and that we will all have a meaningful, joyful time learning about our church, the Bible, the Prayer Book, and each other, and support each other outside of Church.

Love in Christ, Nikki, Vicky, and Suzanne

EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY (EfM)

During this semester we have 8 people. We have had a wonderful class this year. Everyone that joined has told me how much they enjoy the fellowship. Our semesters run during the same time frame as Batesville High School. We will start another semester that will start around August of 2025. This gives people time to think about joining. It is a four-year program, but you need not commit to all four years. The first year we study the Old Testament, year two is the New Testament, year three is History of the Church, and year four is Theology. If you’re interested, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Brenda Bittle, EfM Mentor

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Adult Sunday School is every Sunday at 9:30 am and has really picked up. We average about 5, but as of late we have gotten more people coming. We as a group decided to study out of the Bible. We have started with Matthew and read three chapters a week. During our time together, we discuss what those three chapters have taught us or what we believe is the meaning of them. The conversations that had evolved are wonderful. If anyone is interested, please join us.

Brenda Bittle

ALTAR GUILD

Mostly, the altar runs on auto-pilot. Volunteers know when they are to function and always show up or arrange for a sub. Not many volunteer groups can say that!

This year, we have received a couple of resignations for very legitimate reasons. I have been very encouraged that three new members have stepped up to be on schedule.

Serving on Altar Guild requires two hours on Saturday morning, twenty minutes in between Sunday services and thirty minutes after the 10:30 services. Assignments are for one month at a time and are shared between two people. Exceptions occur during Holy Week and before Christmas.

If this ministry interests you see Jo Cargill-Krug.

Notes of appreciation: to Kay Starling for her gift of a new Fair Linen and to Rhonda and Mike Mundy for a new Christmas tree.

Also, gifts of altar flowers are handled through Jo. We start a new schedule each January so please reserve your special dates ASAP.

Jo Cargill-Krug

ST. PAUL'S PLACE

St. Paul's Rectory officially became an Air B&B in September 2024 and was approved by the church's vestry to accept reservations in late October.

Since that time, we have taken in \$7,652 in rental income and achieved a Five Star Rating with Air B&B based on responses from our paying guests.

Our initial expense to furnish the house was \$3750 which included new beds and bedding for each of the four bedrooms as well as end tables, lamps, etc. Other items were loaned or given to us by parishioners.

Our goal was to bring money into the church's general fund while the rectory was vacant. It remains to be seen if our new rector will want to make the rectory their home. We will cross that bridge when we come to it!

Thanks to all of you who helped in any way to make this project a success

Fred Krug

ST. PAUL'S CHURCHMEN'S CLUB

The St. Paul's Churchmen's Club was able to host three events this past year. We hosted Mardi Gras Celebration, Shrimp Dinner, and The Holy Smokers Turkey Cook. We have great hopes of hosting all of these events this year. These events allow us to raise money to support our church and community services. With the support of our church members and community we were able to donate \$1,000.00 to Batesville Junior High School backpack program and \$1,500.00 to Christmas Brings Hope.

The Churchmen's Club meets each month that we do not have an event in that month to make preparation for upcoming events and to organize our spending from any request. We invite any member or non-member of our church to join any of these meetings or events. If you are not receiving our group emails and would like to be included in this club, please send me an email at fsmmaddog@aol.com and we will get you added to the list.

We want to thank each and every one that has supported this group. We look forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming events: Mardi Gras March 4th, Shrimp Dinner June 5th, and Holy Smokers Cook November 22nd.

Thanks,

Scott McSpadden

EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN (ECW)

ECW has continued to have our monthly luncheons at The River restaurant.

Projects for 2024 included a soup sale on February 10th and a pie sale on November 23rd. Soup sale profit: \$1,890; Pie sale Profit: \$700

ECW funds were used to start a fund for new choir robes, supply gifts for two children on the Christmas Angel tree and given to the St. Paul's general fund. All our finances are gifted.

Several ECW members from St Paul's took part in Arkansas ECW Summer Quest at Camp Mitchell, May 31st – June 2nd. The theme this year was "Seeds of Hope" and was led by Bishop Harmon.

Sarah Drake and Pam Baxter were St Paul's representatives for State ECW held at St Margaret's Episcopal Church in Little Rock on October 17th & 18th.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen Massey and Beverly Grigsby

COMMUNITY MEALS

During 2024 Community Meal program, we lost one team and that threw the schedule off a little. All the other teams came together, we worked that out and are moving right along. We average about 20 people on the Wednesday night Community Meal. Some Wednesdays are slower than others. For our Christmas Meal, Team Kipfer took on the task and it was a wonderful night. Thank you, Team Kipfer.

God bless you all,
Brenda Bittle

CARE TEAM

In 2024, the Care Team has done the following things to benefit our Church community:

1. Coffee Hour
2. Pub Theology
3. Choral Evensong
4. Sent cards to members
5. Brought food to sick members or grieving members
6. "The Chosen" Bible Study
7. Delivered communion to sick, hospitalized or shut in members
8. Trained new Acolytes

In 2024, the Care Team has done the following to benefit the community of Batesville:

1. Partnered with other churches in a Lenten series
2. Gave out water and information during Batesville's 4th of July celebration
3. Collected food items for distribution in the Blessing Box
4. Collected toiletries to be placed inside the Blessing Box
5. Stayed connected with Our Father's Table and the Ministerial Alliance to help better serve the homeless in our community.
6. Gave out information and stickers at Lyon College move in day, and began Lyon college lunch outreach once a month. (Bringing snack bags with info and goodies)
7. Reached out to UACCB to begin outreach there in 2025.

Submitted by,
Sarah Harmon