St. Paul's
Episcopal Church

December 2026 Newsletter



St. Paul's Christmastide schedule is on page 15



DECEMBER AT A GLANCE

SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:00 A.M. Rite I Holy Eucharist
9:30 A.M. Rite II Holy Eucharist (9:30 A.M. is livestreamed to YouTube)
2nd & 5th Sundays Morning Prayer at 8 A.M. and 9:30 A.M.

CHURCH OPEN FOR PRAYER & REFLECTION
Wednesdays 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

WEDNESDAY JOY and FELLOWSHIP GROUP
Wednesdays, 12:00 PM **(see page 16)**

ADULT FORUM on ZOOM
Wednesdays -7:00PM **(see page 5)**

HOLIDAY STROLL
Friday, December 4- 4:30PM – 8:00PM **(see page 12)**

ST. NICHOLAS DAY/COVENANT TO CARE TREE DECORATING
Sunday, December 6 **(see page 3 & 13)**

VESTRY MEETING
Tuesday, December 8– 7:00 PM

HOLIDAY FOR GIVING (see page 14)

CHRISTMASTIDE 2026 AT ST. PAUL'S (see page 15)

DEADLINE FOR THE JANUARY NEWSLETTER IS TUESDAY, December 15 by NOON

******SAVE THE DATE for these JANUARY events*****

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5 (see page 7)
Annual reports due to parish office by NOON

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10 – 5:00 P.M. (see page 6)
Saecula Cantorum will offer its first Compline service at St. Paul's

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24
Annual Parish Meeting after the 9:30 service

A gentle reminder to please be in touch with the parish office to advise and request dates and times for any activity or meeting that will be taking place at St. Paul's. It is important to make sure events are on the calendar to avoid any potential overlapping dates! Thank you in advance for your help with this important task!

Preparing

This is a busy time of year. We are all preparing in some way. The word “advent” refers to the preparation for some important visit. The secular use described the city-wide preparation for the visit of some important person. We are doing that very same thing. The surrounding culture may not be religious, yet we are all still making ourselves ready. We expect many meetings of friends and family. Children look forward to Santa. Store look forward to sales. We bake and decorate and get back in touch with old friends.

In church, we await the arrival of the baby Jesus. We celebrate the first arrival of Jesus. We love the old carols. We love the decorations with baby Jesus in the manger. We celebrate the new life we see in the birth of a child. We also celebrate the new thing that God has begun in us. We look forward as we look back and remember how God has entered our lives.

The season of Advent also looks toward the final arrival of Jesus. We believe that Jesus will return and establish a new heaven and a new earth. We anticipate a time of judgment as a righting of wrongs and a restoration of good things. The prophets warn us not to think this will be easy for us. We will discover much that we have done wrong. However, we are a people of hope. As we consider our sins and failures, we also trust in the grace and mercy of God.

We are surrounded by expectations this holiday season. We worry about getting everything right. We worry about our feasting and our presents. Our faith reminds us that Jesus came the first time as a newborn child. He came as an unexpected gift and at the time, no one knew what to make of him, except to worship him. This is the way we can get ready. We can seek to encounter Jesus who expects nothing but our love and our joy.

Greg+

Covenant to Care Tree



The organization, Covenant to Care, aids families in need throughout the year. At this time of year, they ask for decorated Christmas trees to give to families who cannot afford one. On Sunday, December 6, we will decorate a tree as part of our Saint Nicolas celebrations.

Please bring in a Christmas tree ornament to share as we decorate the tree. You need not go out and buy a new one. In fact, it will be more of a heartfelt gift if you choose one from the decorations you already have. We need to decorate a 5-foot tree. If you have one you could donate, please contact Rev. Welin.

St. Paul's Parish Directory

We have been working on a parish directory for some time now. The good news is that we already have one! You can access it through our website. There is a link to a form to update your information: https://app.onlinememberdirectory.com/login

If you have used the website directory before, you can connect yourself and update your information. You will be able to upload a new picture and make any corrections.

There is also an app you can download and use the directory on your phone. All of this takes time and the struggle to remember or reset your password. However, whatever time you put in is still far less than setting up a program to have an outside vendor set up times to take everyone's picture. The directory they create is outdated as soon as we get it shipped. Instead, we can create one together and keep it updated. All it takes is for everyone to keep it in mind.

Vestry Update

At the November Vestry meeting, we looked back over the year and prepared to budget for 2027. Ted Hartsoe, our long-serving treasurer, reports that our finances are in a similar place to last year, and we are in good standing, despite having some larger expenses this fall for building repair and upkeep. Those repairs to the rear wall are already complete and work continues along the south wall, where a new guardrail will be installed and some window work is ongoing. A light has been installed over our new handicapped ramp, and the work was blessed (with gratitude shown to Dan Lyon who created the original design).

Our liaisons to various groups and activities around the parish reported out to the full Vestry about the nursery school, which is working on a big playground renovation, the success of our fair, and the potential of music groups coming through. We celebrated the success of the terrific joint service with St. Luke's on November 1st, and both churches look forward to continuing that relationship. There are some additional music groups who are interested in using our space for performances in the coming months, which is another exciting opportunity to invite more people into our beautiful church.

As our annual pledge appeal has officially wrapped up, we would like to thank everyone who generously gave with their whole hearts (and remind folks that it is not too late to get your pledge in if you forgot to do it earlier). Having a strong estimate of our pledges helps us to plan for another joyous year of worshipping together at St. Paul's. As we go through the Advent and Christmas seasons, let's all give thanks for what we have built together as a community and dream big about our new year.

Kristin Liu, Senior Warden
Art Sousa, Junior Warden
On behalf of the Vestry

Adult Forum – Loving Our Neighbor

In Matthew 22, Jesus is asked which of the commandments is greatest, and his response is:

> You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matt. 22:37-40)

This November and December the Adult Forum will focus on the second half of this, the Great Commandment. Through short biblical readings and weekly discussions, we will consider questions such as: What does it really mean to love our neighbor? Who is our neighbor? When is it a challenge to love our neighbor? What does Jesus show us about loving our neighbor? What do the law and the prophets say about this? And, perhaps most importantly, how can and do we demonstrate this love in our own lives?

The Forum meets via Zoom on Wednesday nights at 7:00 pm. This session will run through December 23. Feel free to try this out—join anytime! Reach out to Amy Foster with any questions (foster9092@gmail.com). The Zoom link is https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84046492740?pwd=eWlWZ0tuZGVZejM5Rng1ekZvV0hSZz0 and the passcode is 390706.

Developments in the Music Program



There's a lot happening in the music program at St. Paul's, and we're excited to share a few developments!

First, we're delighted to welcome Cara Phelan as our newest Choral Scholar! Cara is a freshman at Southington High School and also studies at the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts. She's off to a wonderful start with the choir, and we're very happy to have her joining us.

Our Choral Scholar Program gives young singers the opportunity to

(continued next page….)

sing alongside our adult choir, developing their musicianship while participating in the musical life of the church. Choral Scholars receive a stipend for their participation and contribute to our worship through a wide range of choral music. We're hoping to welcome one more young singer into the program soon.

We're also excited to announce a new musical partnership with a wonderful local choir! Saecula Cantorum is an intergenerational chamber choir bringing together professional musicians and singers from the Elm City Girls Choir. The ensemble specializes in sacred music from the Anglican tradition, with a particular emphasis on Gregorian chant and Renaissance polyphony. Its repertoire and approach to worship are especially well suited to St. Paul's, and we're excited to have opportunities to experience this beautiful musical tradition in our own church.

The partnership brings together several longstanding connections between St. Paul's and the musical organizations founded by Tom Brand. Tom, who served as music director at St. Paul's many years ago, founded the United Girls Choir, Elm City Girls Choir, and Saecula Cantorum, and leads these ensembles alongside his wife, Rebecca. Over the years, members of our parish have sung with these choirs, and both the Elm City Girls Choir and Saecula Cantorum have previously performed at St. Paul's.

As part of this arrangement, Saecula Cantorum will become St. Paul's Artists-in-Residence. This means that the choir will make St. Paul's its rehearsal home, using our facilities at no cost. In return, the ensemble will offer several Choral Compline services throughout the year. Compline is the traditional service of night prayer, featuring beautiful choral music and an atmosphere of quiet reflection. There is also the possibility of collaborating with our own choir for a future Evensong service. In addition, concerts organized by Tom and his wife, Rebecca, at St. Paul's will be open to parishioners free of charge. We hope to welcome the United Girls Choir for a concert sometime this spring.

Saecula Cantorum will offer its first Compline service at St. Paul's on January 10 at 5:00 p.m. We look forward to welcoming these singers and sharing the musical life this new partnership will bring to our parish! -- Jay Lindsay, Music Director

CHURCH SCHOOL



Church School has had a wonderful fall! We had a successful Harvest Fair table and loved sharing and selling our sweets and treats with the community. Thank you to everyone who donated, volunteered, and supported us!

A special thank-you goes out to our wonderful volunteers who make it possible for us to offer two church school classes each week. Your time, dedication, and enthusiasm allow us to provide meaningful, age-appropriate experiences for our children, and we are so grateful for you!

We are also looking ahead! We would love to hear from any children who may be interested in participating in a Confirmation class. Please reach out if you would like to learn more.

And, of course, we are excited to begin planning our Christmas pageant! We look forward to bringing our church community together to celebrate the joy and wonder of the Christmas story.

Thank you for continuing to support our growing Church School community!

Warmly,

Becky Scalesse

Annual Reports due January 5, 2026

Reminder that all annual reports must be submitted to the church office by Tuesday, January 5, 2026, by NOON.

Treasurer's Report

St. Paul's Church

Treasurer's Report
October 2026

	This month	Budget	Difference vs Budget	Last Year	Difference vs Last Year
Income					
Pledges	164,480	150,000	14,480	144,234	20,246
Other Donations	6,780	10,500	-3,720	10,992	-4,212
Other operating income	22,882	24,100	-1,218	23,578	-696
Group contributions	1,401	1,000	401	1,100	301
Investment income	67,477	67,490	-13	67,221	256
Total Income	**263,020**	**253,090**	**9,930**	**247,126**	**15,894**
Expenditures					
Salaries	117,538	120,183	-2,645	112,210	5,327
Fringe Benefits	54,167	56,360	-2,193	52,250	1,917
Property Expenses	64,751	61,168	3,584	58,459	6,292
Utilities	16,825	14,850	1,975	14,136	2,689
Other Expenses	18,826	25,530	-6,704	19,484	-658
Common Mission Suppor	27,860	27,860	0	27,860	0
Total Expenditures	**299,967**	**305,951**	**-5,984**	**284,399**	**15,568**
Surplus/Deficit	**-36,947**	**-52,861**	**15,914**	**-37,273**	**326**

Annual Convention recap

Every fall the Diocese of Connecticut convenes a convention of clergy and lay delegates from 153 member churches to pass a diocesan budget, vote on candidates for those who will serve on various governing boards as well as delegates to General Convention and to consider resolutions on a variety of issues impacting our collective mission. This year its 242nd Annual Convention was held in Bristol CT on October 23rd and 24th. St. Paul's was represented by Father Greg, Patti Cullen and Brian Sahlin.

The 2027 ECCT Budget totals $7.8 million which is an 8% increase over 2026. 62% of its funding comes from member churches and 29% from a draw on endowed investments. Most expenditures go back to funding the mission of both the diocese and national church along with funding ECCT's staff of 27 full-time employees.

Consideration of next year's clergy compensation schedule always follows the budget resolution. A COLA increase of 4.15% was approved.

Seven other resolutions were also approved:

Resolution 3- Revisions to Diocesan Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policy- The EEO policy needed to be updated to reflect changes made to protected classes based on CT State law. Additionally, this policy falls under Human Resources, which Mission Council should be approving, rather than convention. This resolution both updates the EEO policy to include victims of domestic violence and victims of human trafficking and enables Mission Council to update the policy moving forward should additional classes be added.

(continued next page….)

Resolution 4- Amendments to ECCT Canon VIII- The amendments resolve a challenge that the Mission Council has experienced in the past with maintaining its full membership. Additionally, these changes will add representatives of our Cathedral and of Camp Washington.

Resolution 5- ECCT will make a proposal to the 82nd General Convention that they encourage use of specific resources that relate to the work of social justice and advocacy for the poor and marginalized.

Resolution 6- Establishment of a Diocesan Clean Energy Task Force- a prior General Convention of the Episcopal Church adopted a resolution calling on all congregations to achieve net zero emissions by 2030. The Task force will identify the resources needed to make this shift to support parishes in this work.

Resolution 7- Standing in Solidarity with Palestine- ECCT will submit a resolution to the 82nd General Convention

Resolution 8- Designation of Reparations Sunday- The Sunday closest to Juneteenth (June 19) of each calendar year will be recognized as Reparations Sunday

Resolution 9- Investing in and Empowering Young Adults for the Mission of God- ECCT will invest $40,000 to establish a Young Adult Ministry Council to nurture and develop young adult leadership throughout the Diocese.

To view the annual Bishop's Address or for more information about the 2027 ECCT budget, results of the elections, and an in-depth description of the approved resolutions, please see the Episcopal Church of CT website- (episcopalct.org)

HARVEST FAIR 2026



It takes a Parish Village to make the Harvest Fair a success. The Village came out and the Harvest Fair was truly a success. By 10:00 a.m. Wilkinson Hall was filled with people. Our 17 vendors were ready. This year we welcomed some vendors who were giving back to our community: "Animal Haven", the no-kill shelter for dogs and cats; "Eva's Blind Adventures", the blind dog whose owner donates her profits from dog treats to shelters to encourage the adoption and foster of blind dogs; and Lena Marks, a children's author from Wallingford whose book "Barry the Bumblebee", tells a story about kindness and friendship. Both Eva and Lena will be doing a special program with our nursery school after the holidays. We had many new vendors and our "token" vendors returned, who always say "this is the best organized and fun-filled church fair" in the area. Many of our vendors said this was their best year ever at St. Paul's – some of them selling out. And speaking of "selling out", our luncheon sold out!! All we had left at the end were a few hot dogs and a spoonful of meatballs.

The amount raised from the 2026 Harvest Fair was over $5,100. A special thank you to everyone who had a part in making this year's Holiday Fair such a fun-filled and successful event -- whether it was buying supplies, making pies, setting up tables, wrapping baskets, selling raffle tickets, cooking and serving lunch, or simply coming to the fair to have fun and supporting our church. And a special thank you to the Henry family and Blue Hills Orchard for donating the many bushels of apples. We made a total of 262 pies in three days and donated 15 to Master's Manna. The amount raised from the 2026 Harvest Fair was over $5,100.



Holiday Stroll: Friday, December 4th

The Holiday Stroll is Friday, December 4 from 4:30-8 PM and St. Paul's will be open. Cookies or other holiday treats are needed along with volunteers to welcome visitors into our church. A sign up sheet is on the easel in the back of church. A carol sing is scheduled at 6:30 PM. Please contact Carole Ireland 203-988-7405 for additional information.



Christmas Memorials

Christmas is a special season to remember your loved ones. And what better way to honor their memory than with a Christmas memorial flower. If you would like to make a donation to the Christmas memorials, please submit a form with the names of those you would like remembered along with your check payable to St. Paul's Flower Fund in the amount of $40.00. Forms can be found at both entrances. You may place your form in the collection plate or drop it off at the church office on Wednesdays or Fridays between 11:00 and 2:00. **The deadline is SUNDAY, December 13th.** Please be sure to include your name, address and phone number. If you have any questions, please contact Sharon Rogalski at 203- 678-4824 or srogal156@comcast.net..

CELEBRATE SAINT NICHOLAS SUNDAY – DECEMBER 6TH



Is Santa real? Yes. Santa Claus is real. But he didn't go by the name Santa Claus. He was known as Nicholas. Saint Nicholas, the patron saint of children, was a Christian bishop who lived hundreds of years ago in the ancient Greek city of Myra, what is now Turkey. He was left with a considerable inheritance after his parents died, which he used to care for those in need. One story tells of how he helped a man with three daughters who couldn't afford their dowries. On three different occasions a bag of gold appeared in their home, secretly tossed through an open window by Nicholas, and landing in a shoe left by the fireplace.

On December 6th we will celebrate the generosity and traditions of St. Nicholas. Our 9:30 service will be a special children's service. Before coming into church, children will leave their shoes downstairs in Wilkinson Hall by the Christmas tree. As was a tradition of St. Nicholas, the shoes may be filled with small gifts, like gold coins, candy and oranges, signifying the generosity of St. Nicholas, which led to the celebration of Santa Claus on Christmas Day today. At coffee hour we will share the traditional St. Nicholas gingerbread and sugar cookies with cocoa (and coffee). And on this Sunday we will share moments of kindness and generosity by bringing an ornament to hang on the Christmas tree in the Hall. This tree will be a part of our Covenant of Care, and the decorated tree will be given to a family who may not have money to get a Christmas tree. This Sunday will also be the last day of our Holiday for Giving – please be sure to take a wish ornament off the tree in the back of the church and bring back a toy or gift card for a child.

St. Nicholas you brought the joy and generosity of Christmas to people all year round. Fill us also with the spirit of Christmas and inspire us to share that spirit with others every day of the year. We hope you all will wear your favorite Christmas sweater to church on December 6th and join in this celebration.



HOLIDAY FOR GIVING 2026

St. Paul's will once again be partnering with Wallingford's townwide **"Holiday for Giving"** to help those in need in our community have a wonderful holiday. Because Thanksgiving is late this year, the St. Paul's Christmas Giving Tree is already up in the back of the church and decorated with "wishes" ornaments. This will give everyone wanting to make a donation the opportunity to take advantage of the sales over Thanksgiving weekend. We are asking for donations of new toys for children ages 2-12 and gift cards for Walmart, Target, and grocery stores.

Please take a "wishes" ornament and bring back an unwrapped gift to place under the tree. We ask when you take a "wishes" ornament off the tree, you hang a shiny ornament on the tree so it will stay decorated throughout the Christmas season reminding us of the warmth and joy we brought to others this holiday season. **This year the deadline for delivering gifts is December 12th.** Gifts may be placed under the Christmas tree through Sunday December 6th. You may also leave gifts by the office during the week of December 7th thru 11th. Gift cards may be given to Pat Sousa or Sharon Rogalski.



Christmastide 2026 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Thursday, December 24: The Eve of the Nativity

4:00 PM	Family Pageant Service with Holy Eucharist
9:30 PM	Choral Prelude with St. Paul's Choir, flute & string quartet
10:00 PM	Candlelight Service with Choir & Carols & Holy Eucharist

Friday, December 25: The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Single service at 9:30AM Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 27: The First Sunday After Christmas

8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist, Rite I and
9:30 AM	Holy Eucharist, Rite II
	No Nursery or Church School.

Sunday, January 3: The Second Sunday After Christmas

8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist, Rite I
9:30 AM	Holy Eucharist, Rite II
	Nursery & Church School resume.



Joy And Fellowship Group

Our group will continue to share prayer at NOON in the Chapel on Wednesdays. We tend to be a little rowdy, with friendly competition, teasing and laughter. God has truly blessed us with joy and closer relationships. Bring along a simple bag lunch and drink. We meet from 12 noon to 2PM. Contact Sharonturlis@yahoo.com to be added to our text chain for reminders and information.

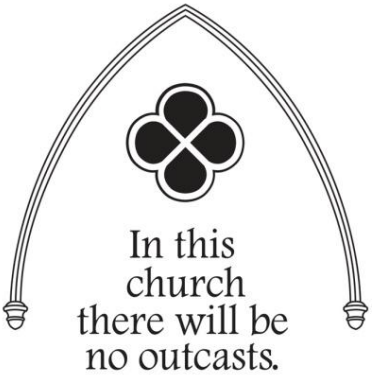


The Church will be open Wednesdays from 10:00 am to 1:00pm for prayer & reflection.

Contact information for Rev. Dr. Greg Welin

You may reach me in the office on most Wednesdays and Thursdays. It would be best to make an appointment to see me if you can. My email is rector@stpaulswallingford.org . In the event of an emergency, you may call my cell phone at 203 206 4802. Please add my number to your contact list!

The Parish Office Hours The parish office is open to the public on Wednesdays and Fridays from 11AM-2PM. Please email or call the office at (203) 269-5050 to arrange any additional times to meet during the week. Calls, emails and other matters will generally be addressed during business hours of 9:00-3:00 Tuesday-Friday.



The parish office can be reached at (203) 269-5050.
E-mail – office@stpaulswallingford.org
Fax – (203) 269-3813
Web Site – www.stpaulswallingford.org
If we are not in the office, please leave a message.

The Rev. Dr. Greg Welin, Rector
rector@stpaulswallingford.org

VESTRY

Senior Warden, Kristin Liu
Junior Warden, Art Sousa
Treasurer, Ted Hartsoe
Clerk, Claire Minneman
Zac Boulier
Stephanie Crump
David Desjardins
Karen Hlavac
Jennifer Oquendo
Karen Rowe
Larry Stowe
Sharon Turlis

Please advise us of

- **change of address or telephone numbers**
- **illness, hospitalizations, deaths**
- **requests for baptisms, weddings, etc**

Times for St. Paul's Sunday Service
Comcast Cable Channel 18
Frontier Channel 99
www.WPAA.TV - WPAA on the Internet
Sunday - 5:00 PM
Monday – 12:30 AM, 1:00 PM, and 11:00 PM

Click here to sign up for email blasts and text messages.

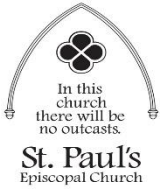
St. Paul's is on YouTube & Facebook!
Please follow us and "LIKE" us:

YouTube **CT Church Saint Paul's Episcopal**

Facebook **St. Paul's Episcopal Church Wallingford, CT**

Thank you for pledging!
We appreciate your faithful giving.

You may give online by scanning the QR code or by going to stpaulswallingford.org and clicking the "Donate Now" button, mail your gifts into the parish office or place your offering in the basket during Sunday worship.
It's all good! Thank you.



St. Paul's Episcopal Church
65 North Main Street
Wallingford, CT 06492