

Priest-in-Charge Report **Submitted January 22, 2023**

1. Taking Leave The best word I can use to describe my 18 months at St. Paul's has been "honor." I cannot help but wish that somehow 25 years ago I had known about this amazing parish as I am sure you would have had an additional application. I believe, with some ego involved, that we have accomplished a few things and we will leave with some regrets as well. That is the way of life and I am thankful. I am filled with gratitude as I consider the many folks who, for one reason or another, have befriended Marcie and I, and we thank you.

After Easter, I will no longer be your priest, a trust I have taken more seriously than almost anything in my life other than my baptismal, ordination and wedding vows. In that role, I was given the great honor of being with this parish at baptisms, weddings, confirmations, burials, anointings, blessings, confessions and one very special ordination. What a joy.

I am filled with gratitude that you forgave me when my emotions took me to places I should not go, and when I was just flat wrong. I am thankful you took my ideas when you may have thought otherwise, and I am so thankful for the beginning of a major systems change in the way the vestry communicates and cooperates.

The vestry is two people smaller, going on three than when I arrived and I hope that serves you, it does mean that each vestry member will naturally have more to do and less chance to say no. The policy work will serve you well if and only if you use it. If the policies are placed in a dark corner never to be opened, they will rot and be worthless. The more the vestry understands and helps the priest and the more the priest understands and helps the vestry, the more ideas, the more openness to the spirit and the happier you will also be.

I will have more to say in the March Epistle, but to each of you, thank you and bless you.

--Your Priest

By Diocesan Policy, as it currently stands, I am not permitted to attend any event, or have any contact with members of St. Paul's from Easter on. I cannot and I will not enter into any part of the life of this parish in any way. The only exception to this is at the decision of your new priest. For example, if someone wanted me to assist at a funeral, the family would need to ask the Priest-in-Charge first and he would then ask me. The answer would assuredly be "no" if a family went about that process any other way. The answer generally is "no" especially in the first few years, and that is as it should be.

We may see each other in a grocery store or at a restaurant and it is perfectly acceptable to say hello. Please do not call me for and tell me what your new priest is doing, or ask me what I would do as I am unable to communicate with you in that way, nor am I able to counsel you on any personal or private matter.

All of this comes to the place where your new priest needs your full support.

A final thought. Although this may sound harsh and it can be, it is very natural for a congregation to pass hugs and tears when a priest leaves and then speak horribly of him/her a few weeks (or days) later. I cannot tell you why this happens, but I think it is a form of grief that makes it easier for folks. Do not be surprised if I am the worst gravy snorting pig of all time by the time Memorial Day comes around. I am not saying this behavior is a good thing as it is not, putting-down any priest is putting down the

parish and the Church. I just want you to know that while unfortunate, it is typical. If you want to chat, please stop by the office in the days ahead and again...thank you. It has truly been an honor.

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2. Book I am in the middle of creating a book of sorts concerning all the electronics in the church. The book will contain all the login and password information as well as how to work our Google for Non-Profits account and many more. I will give copies of the book to the Wardens and leave a copy for George/Administrative Assistant to reserve somewhere.

3. Edythe Edythe will take on the task of posting and preparing vestry pages on our website beginning now. Please submit reports to her.

4. Address The rector@stpaulschurchflint address will belong to the new priest as soon as he arrives. It will also be on the Rector's cell phone 810-836-8727.

5. Finance I am pleased with the report of the Finance Committee. Please thank these good people for their work, and thank Jan for her willingness to take on a difficult and sometimes thankless position.

6. Administrative Assistant Please welcome Ms. Karein Russell as our new Administrative Assistant. Her first day was Tuesday, and she typically will be in the office on Tuesdays-Thursdays from 9-2.

7. Special Meeting When the Search Committee is ready to tell us the result of their recent work, I will call a special meeting of the Vestry for that purpose. The Vestry elects a new Rector, and commits to an agreement with a Priest-in-Charge. After a LOA (letter of agreement) is completed, the Vestry will have a final vote.

8. Tonight, I ask the Vestry to approve my appointment of an acting Junior Warden for the next six-months, if we do not elect a Junior Warden. The acting Junior Warden will:

- * be the convener (technically not the chair) of the Buildings and Ground Committee
- * Will submit reports to the Vestry.
- * Will attend Executive Committee Meetings, but not Vestry Meetings unless necessary.
- * The acting JW will not have vote nor voice (unless called upon) at Vestry meetings as a non-vestry member.
- * The acting JW would be added to the Vestry on-line group.

The appointment for six months is to keep the vestry accountable that this is a stop-gap measure, and an attempt not to bind the authority of a new priest-in-charge to my action.

The priest-in-charge would have the authority to terminate the position.

The position would be terminated on the election of a Junior Warden by the Vestry.

7. Vestryinfo There is a great deal of information (static) on the left column on the Vestryinfo page. This is the kind of thing you may need.

8. Wishlist At the most recent Executive Committee meeting we discussed the need of a "Parish Wish List." The obvious idea is that sometimes families wish to make a gift to the church in memory (as a memorial) to their loved one. Having a list of needed items from smaller to over the top makes sense. I have attached such a list in the hope that the Vestry may approve the concept.

An item cannot be placed on the wishlist without either the approval of the Rector. I find that discussing these things at a Vestry meeting leads to committee work and should be resisted. If a Vestry member has an objection to an item being on the list, then they should bring that directly to the Rector and then to the Vestry if the Rector pays them no nevermind. One should always remember that it is a list, and not the approval of anyone to actually purchase the item. I note also that it comes with a trust factor that if the family desires to give a snowblower, the funds given cannot be spent otherwise.

9. Zoom Zoom My thanks to all the members of the Vestry for being flexible in allowing us to meet via Zoom and at an earlier time. This seemed logical I think. I must tell you that making decisions to cancel services is really difficult. When the weather forecasting proves wrong, I have been blamed and even once got called-in to the Bishop's office. I will not cancel Sunday (principal) services, but when I think we can go with a different time and allow more folks to safely attend, I will do it. Ash Thursday here we come. Thank you for your support.

Blessings everyone,

Don

St Paul's Episcopal Church
Wishlist as of 22 February 2023

Item		For	Cost
Professional Dish Washer		Kitchen	\$10,000.00
Customizing Conference Room		Up or Downstairs	\$25,000.00
Lenton Array -paraments and vestments		Worship	\$30,000.00
Creche		Worship	
Cabinets for Sacristy		Worship	
Cabinet/locked desk for live streaming		Worship	

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