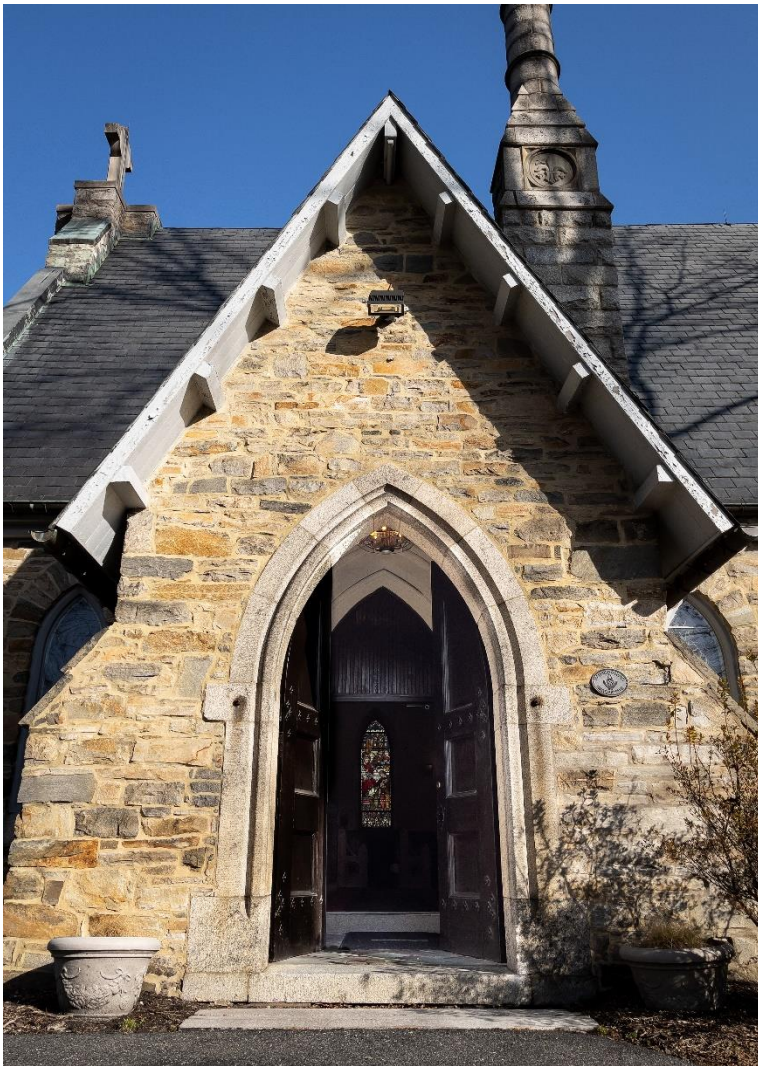


St. Mary's Episcopal Church

*1 St. Mary's Church Road
Abingdon, Maryland 21009*



LETTER TO APPLICANTS

We, the Vestry and Transition Team for St. Mary's Episcopal Church, are excited to announce that we have an open position for rector at our church in Abingdon, Maryland.

The process for exploring who we are as a congregation and shaping our future was an arduous process, but ultimately we achieved our goal. The pandemic vividly reminded us of our commitment to each other as a community. It challenged us to be creative as well as honest about where we are as a church and the realities of the world around us.

St. Mary's is a diverse congregation with many different perspectives but with a unified desire to serve the communities in our region. We aspire to become a community where faith transforms, worship engages, ministry empowers, and tradition grounds us. We are looking for a clerical leader that can facilitate and guide us in that journey.

To review our Ministry Portfolio please contact The Rev. Stuart Wright, Canon for Transitions swright@episcopalmaryland.org.



OUR IDENTITY STATEMENT (WHO ARE WE):

St. Mary's is a diverse, Christ-centered, resilient, and evolving community of devoted people with grace filled hearts, searching minds, loving hands, and peaceful souls.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT (WHY WE EXIST):

Saint Mary's **exists** to be a:

- **beacon** of Christ's love guiding us to discover and live our best lives
- **gathering place** for community where all will be welcomed at God's table
- **sanctuary** for all seeking comfort, guidance, refreshment, and renewal

OUR VISION STATEMENT (WHAT WE ASPIRE TO BECOME):

Saint Mary's **aspires** to be a church where:

FAITH TRANSFORMS
WORSHIP ENGAGES
MINISTRY EMPOWERS
TRADITION GROUNDS

OUR CORE VALUES (WHAT WE TREASURE)

In all that we are, say, and do, we reflect Christ; therefore, these are our Core Values:

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

We actively seek to live a generous spiritual life and nurture our Christian beliefs through intentional worship, prayer, dialogue, continual study, and service to those around us.

WORSHIP

The center of our shared life is Eucharistic worship, the sacrament where we experience the living Christ. We open our hearts and minds to glorify and listen to God through liturgy and music that embodies the dynamic heritage of the Episcopal Church.

HOSPITALITY AND ENGAGEMENT

We welcome all to join us in worship, fellowship, and service in the way that Christ calls each of us to find our place at the table.

BEAUTY

We recognize that God is the source of all the beauty and joy that is our blessed inheritance. We treasure our historic church and grounds as a perfect setting in which to glorify all God's creatures and creation.

FELLOWSHIP

We gather often to celebrate and nurture one another, share the joy and sorrow in each other's lives, and to be one in heart as a faith community. We value the fellowship and deeper relationships that come from gathering and living together.

STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION *Giving Back to God That Which is God's*

The future of our parish and community, and therefore our planet, rests in our genuine dedication as faithful stewards of our God-given resources. We work generously for the loving care and sustainable use of our planet. We also feel compelled to generously commit to sharing our individual resources for the benefit of our parish and God's community. We uphold the biblical tithe as the ideal measure for giving and work diligently toward that goal.

HERITAGE

We value our historic church and the countless souls touched by heaven over the generations. We value being a global church--the Anglican Communion--and its unique way of being Christian with open minds, open hearts, and open arms. We value our beginnings in the Oxford movement with its emphasis on the centrality of the Eucharist, the Sacraments, and a faith lived out in action and social justice. We value the courage of past generations of our congregation, their success and failure in planting new Episcopal congregations in Edgewood and Joppa. We value and embrace the changing roles within the church and the adaptability of the prayer book and hymnal. We value the faithful leaders - clergy and lay - who have guided us through the years and who will guide us forward for future generations.

OUR CORE PRACTICES (WHAT GUIDES US)

PARISH COVENANT

Saint Mary's Episcopal Church, Abingdon, aspires to be an intentional learning community that desires to practice what we preach. We seek spiritual transformation and evolution through the cultivation of open minds, hearts, and wills, and through our commitment to these spiritual practices:

LISTENING

We practice self-awareness and intentional listening in order to better understand each other. We learn more about ourselves when we truly hear others and listen to different perspectives. We are attentive to the movement of the spirit in ourselves and others.

HUMILITY AND GRACE

We accept that there is an opportunity for plenty of growth within ourselves. We acknowledge that we are flawed, and accept and extend God's grace.

LOVING KINDNESS

We respect the values, needs, and convictions in one another by acknowledging Christ in the other, which manifests in a generous and forgiving spirit towards each other's failings.

HONEST AND LOVING SPEECH

We speak to each other from a place of respect, love, and truth. We honor confidentiality and speak directly to one another rather than involving a third party.

HOSPITALITY AND INCLUSIVITY

We choose to welcome with curiosity every person and inquire about and nurture their well-being without judgement.

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

We value one another and being together as a community, therefore we gather often to deepen our relationships.

GENEROSITY

We choose to share our gifts and our resources (attention, creative energy, skills, and money) for the benefit of our congregation and the community, responding to their needs, both physical and spiritual.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We believe in accountability: taking ownership and accepting responsibility for what we do from beginning to end (and everything that may fall in between). We take ownership of what we think and say. We use "I" statements.

COMMUNICATION

We practice full, open, honest, and loving communication with all people. We value transparency in everything we do and say as a church.

CREATIVITY

While we value our past, we believe the only way to build on it is to look to the future. We strive to find new ways to improve ourselves, our church, and our community so that we can adapt to our ever-changing world.

TAKING INITIATIVE

We choose to be proactive instead of reactive by addressing issues when they arise.

MERCY AND FORGIVENESS

We offer mercy and forgiveness not just to others, but to ourselves. We strive for reconciliation and understanding between ourselves and others when disagreements arise, and people are hurting.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AND RECTOR EXPERIENCE-FIVE PRIORITIES

	Opportunities	Challenges	Rector Experience
Fellowship	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fresh start for fellowship. 2. Rebuild relationships, form new ones. 3. Creativity 	Valuing diversity while building community around common ground.	Ability to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivate relationships broadly with the congregation. • Initiate new and diverse fellowship programs. • Collaborate and listen.
Outreach	Develop deep and intentional outreach driven by Saint Mary's mission	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Organizing outreach. b. Finding direction. c. Empowering people to act. d. Connecting gifts with ways to serve. 	Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiating/developing intentional outreach programs. • Connecting congregation and community. • Discovering/ responding to community needs.
Congregational Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a congregation that reflects the diversity of the community around Saint Mary's 2. Build understanding of congregational development 3. Train and adapt the church to engage the world <i>(continued)</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reenergize and organize our congregants. b. Develop a plan to deepen our pool of leaders. c. Become proactive instead of being reactive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience and skills in congregational development. • Education and training in congregational development. • Willingness to seek further education to bolster skills. Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with a Congregational Development team. • Strategic planning. <i>(continued)</i>

	<p>as it currently exists, not as it once was.</p> <p>4. Be authentic while adapting.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict resolution/ mediation. • Change management.
Stewardship	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build on current streams of revenue and explore new opportunities to add to our revenue. 2. Enable congregation to live into Vestry Stewardship Statement 3. Develop a deeper understanding of Stewardship. 4. Start a legacy giving society 	Moving away from investments for operating costs.	<p>Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educating the congregation to gain a deeper understanding of stewardship. • Discovering, developing and deploying the skills of the congregation. • Developing a legacy giving society. • Experience/interest in fostering the stewardship of creation.
Formation/ Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Huge opportunity to revive/rebuild/reorganize our formation/ education efforts. 2. Create new affinity groups. 3. Reach out to the wider community. 4. Use technology that allows us to connect with each other regardless of the distance between us. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Diminished program. b. Willingness to embrace/adopt new ways of thinking. c. Reengage/ encourage current congregation to return to formation programs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encouraging congregation participation with formation events/small groups. 2. Planning/organizing formation events

DESIRED, BUT NOT ESSENTIAL SKILLS/EXPERIENCES

Bilingual/Conversant- Spanish
Engagement with the diocesan staff and Harford Region
Ecumenical/interfaith partnerships
Singles ministry
Technology savvy

Understand/use demographic data.
Flexible
Innovative/Creative
Transparency and openness
Sense of humor (OK, *this is essential*)

CAT CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY

In the fall of 2019, at the beginning of our discernment process, we conducted a survey of church members using Holy Cow Consulting's Congregational Assessment Tool.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

86 persons were invited to participate; of these, 75 persons responded. A summary of that report is provided below.

Overall, approximately 34% of our members are clearly satisfied with things in the church. This, along with other information, indicates that members can imagine a church with a higher level of vitality than they are currently experiencing and are searching for a pathway that will lead them to a stronger church.

Not every question is of equal importance to members. When asked how satisfied they are, members tend to focus on the issues addressed in the questions below. When they feel more positive in these areas, they tend to feel more positive overall.

- **Our church provides opportunities for education and formation in a variety of ways so that I can find one that fits my complex lifestyle.**
- **Persons who serve as leaders in our church are representative of the membership.**
- **A friendly atmosphere prevails among the members of our church.**
- **In preaching, our Interim Rector engages people with a message that enriches their lives in the world.**
- **The worship services at our church are exceptional in both quality and spiritual content.**

In comparison to other churches, three goals that are unusually strong for our church are

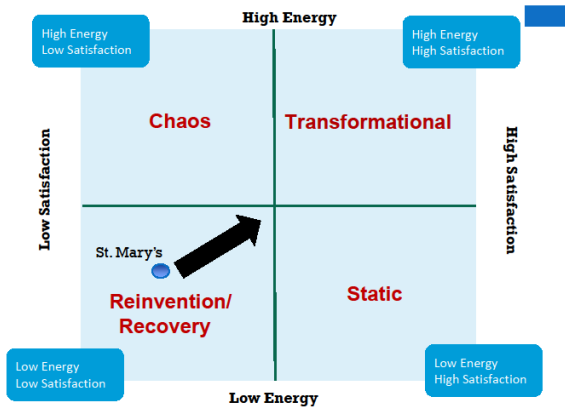
- **Expand outreach ministries that provide direct services to those living on the margins of society. (i.e. homeless, immigrant, transient persons)**
- **Strengthen the pastoral response of the church in serving people with special needs.**
- **Work to renew and revitalize the community around the church by building coalitions with partners that share this vision and commitment.**

As members look to the future, their top four goals are

- **Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.**
- **Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.**
- **Expand outreach ministries that provide direct services to those living on the margins of society. (i.e. homeless, immigrant, transient persons)**
- **Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.**

Conversely, when our members feel less positive about the areas above, they tend to feel less satisfied with their experience in the church overall.

Every church exhibits patterns in its life that contain strengths and potential weaknesses. Our church has potential strengths related to stability and clarity of belief. Potential weaknesses include a tendency to become tradition-bound and conflict-prone.



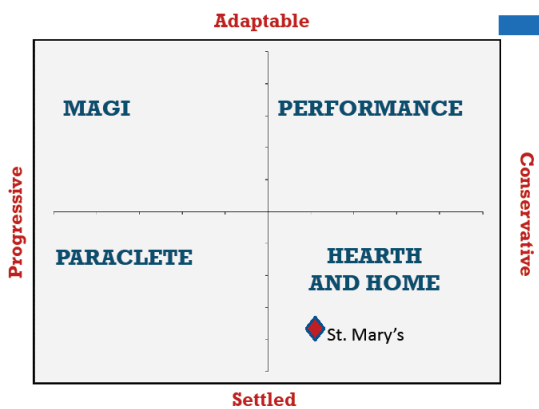
Based on these Satisfaction and Energy results, St. Mary's falls in the *Reinvention/Recovery* portion of a map classifying church systems based on low to high Satisfaction and low to high Energy levels. We are in a low energy/low satisfaction quadrant which motivates us to want to move, to make a change. The question becomes where do we move?

PRIORITIES

The CAT indicates we have the following three top priorities, two related to growth and one related to ministry:

- Growth: strategy reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
- Growth: Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth.
- Ministry: Expand outreach ministries that provide direct services to those living on the margins of society. (i.e. homeless, immigrant, transient persons)

It is important to note that we have a significant number of other items that were only slightly less of a priority for us. We have many different priorities, depending on age group, which makes it difficult to know where to put our energy.



THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

The CAT asked a number of questions to evaluate the degree to which the congregation holds conservative or progressive views on theological issues.

Our results show that our theological diversity is **Very High** compared to other similar churches. In other words, people in our congregation look at theological issues in many different ways and we will require clergy that can speak to all these areas.

LEVEL OF FLEXIBILITY

Based on these Theological Perspectives and Levels of Flexibility, St. Mary's falls in the *Hearth and Home* portion of a map classifying church systems based on scales of progressive to conservative Theology and adaptable to settled Level of Flexibility. We are in the more conservative/settled quadrant.

The positives about a *Hearth and Home* culture are:

- Ultimately concerned with a clearly defined faith that is lived out in a community with structure and stability.
- Common to hear folks talk about issues from a Biblical perspective that is more literally interpreted.
- The line between right and wrong is usually bright and easily articulated. Where a Biblical mandate is perceived, members of *Hearth and Home* cultures provide services to those in need, often with remarkable perseverance.
- Straying members of the church family are welcomed back with open arms and ready forgiveness. This is family.

A *Hearth and Home* culture also has some drawbacks:

- Ability to lose sight of missional focus due to a tendency to focus on the concrete side of things.
- May be resistant to change due to the feeling of guardianship over traditional understandings and practices.
- May become detached from contemporary issues if the intellectual side of faith is not adequately explored.
- A lack of tolerance with one other, due to a break on core issues, may leave a vulnerability to demoralizing conflict.

WHAT WE LOOK FOR IN OUR NEW RECTOR FROM THE CAT SURVEY

We are looking for a priest who has interest in the following:

- Appreciative of a variety of theological perspectives but intellectually resonant with a moderate perspective
- Is knowledgeable regarding the dynamics of pastoral-sized churches and affirming of the distinctive opportunities for ministry that they offer
- Energized by the style of ministry that characterizes a regionally focused rather than a community focused church
- Attracted to books, articles, and resources that offer effective strategies and tactics for a church culture characterized by stability, traditions, and Biblical clarity

The successful candidate would be comfortable with the following aspects of our congregation and surrounding community:

- A regionally based congregation where over 40% of the members live more than 5 miles away from the church building
- A church where the community within one mile of the church has a population that has been slowly increasing over the last three years
- A church where the income in the neighborhood within one mile of the church has increased at the same rate as the larger community over the last three years
- A theological perspective that tends to be moderate on the whole with a number of persons in the congregation with more conservative and more progressive views
- A culture that values stability, tradition, and time-tested truth
- A church that is struggling with lower energy and satisfaction, and requires a significant effort to recover a sense of purpose and well-being

- A Christian community where the rate of giving is average as a percentage of household income. Financially there is some room to grow given the right approach and commitment.

We need a spiritual leader with the ability, either through their own skills or by developing those skills in others, to help us deal with critical issues and move us forward toward important goals:

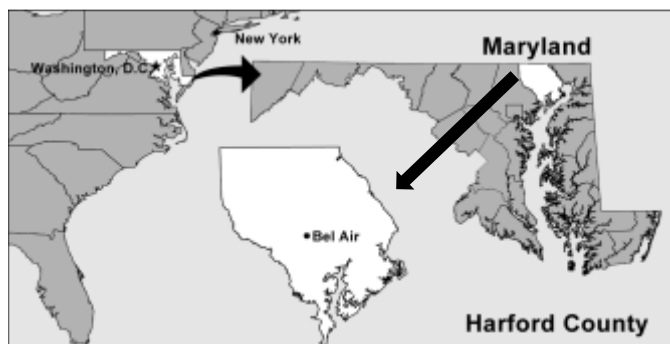
- An ability and interest in reshaping the ministries of the church to reach others and incorporate them into the life of the church
- An ability and interest in excellent preaching
- An ability and interest in creating a family life ministry that is effective in attracting parents, children, and youth
- An ability and interest in creating a governance process that appropriately involves the members of the church in decisions
- An ability and interest in expanding or creating ministries that serve those living on the margins of society
- An ability and interest in creating a welcoming and caring community that helps give meaning to life
- An ability and interest in creating ministries in the church that work to heal those broken by life circumstances
- An ability and interest in directing the energies of the congregation toward renewal of the community in which the church is located
- An ability and interest in developing a church that honors the historic roots of the faith
- An ability and interest in developing the financial generosity of members in their giving to the work of God

We believe a leader with the following leadership style would best support our church:

- Leads by delegating authority, assigning responsibility, and recognizing the contributions of others. Often is required to provide many of the programs with minimal support
- Makes changes very slowly by working patiently to insure ownership of the final result

A priest who is a good fit for our church will be one who can stay motivated over the long term. This means that he or she must be motivated by playing a central role as a solo practitioner and providing a range of services to a church and to the community the church serves and enjoys multiple tasks and the freedom of being self-directed.

OUR COMMUNITY



St. Mary's is physically located in the Abingdon/Bel Air area of Harford County, Maryland but we draw parishioners from throughout the county.

Harford County has a population of more than 255,000 residents and 95,600 households and is part of the Baltimore metropolitan area, strategically located on I-95, mid-way between Baltimore and Philadelphia. MARC train commercial

rail service and excellent highway systems connect Harford County with all the rich sports, family entertainment, and historic locations and events in Baltimore, Philadelphia and Washington D.C.

The northern part of the county is largely agricultural with many family farms and over 56,000 acres under preservation. But Harford County also offers immediate proximity to premier research institutions such as the U.S. Army's Aberdeen Proving Ground, Johns Hopkins, and the University of Maryland. Coupled with a business-friendly environment and highly skilled regional workforce of more than 1.5 million, Harford County supports a vast array of companies and industry sectors. The county's largest employers are the Aberdeen Proving Ground and the Upper Chesapeake Health system that is affiliated with the University of Maryland Medical Center and has two centers in the county. It also is home to distribution centers for many national companies and is part of the Chesapeake Science and Security Corridor. Its location is ideal for commuters into Baltimore, as well as Washington DC and Wilmington, Delaware. (<https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/OCED>)

Harford County Public Schools offer an excellent education for students from kindergarten through high school at 34 elementary schools, nine middle and ten high schools, and two alternative education center (<https://www.hcps.org>) along with a broad selection of private schools. Harford Community College offers more than 80 affordable degrees and certificate programs to nearly 6,100 full and part-time students, including a manufacturing and STEM program supported by the National Science Foundation, as well as a wide variety of noncredit continuing education courses (<http://www.harford.edu/about.aspx>).

Harford County also offers boundless opportunities for sports and entertainment (<https://www.visitharford.com/>). The county offers 6919 acres of protected open space and 6,622 acres of state parkland. Rocks State Park, Susquehanna State Park, and the Ma and Pa Heritage Corridor Trail provide well-kept trails for biking and hiking as well as many opportunities for kayaking, canoeing, and other boating activities.

Arts and entertainment districts in our incorporated cities provide a wide range of entertainment and educational opportunities and our extensive agricultural community supports a wide variety of seasonal farm stands, farmer's markets and local breweries and wineries. Sports fans can enjoy watching the Ironbirds, a minor league baseball team that plays on their home field at the Ripken Stadium in Aberdeen. We have several public and private golf courses appropriate to all skill levels and local recreational councils sponsor a variety of programs for children (<https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/2604/Recreation-Councils>).

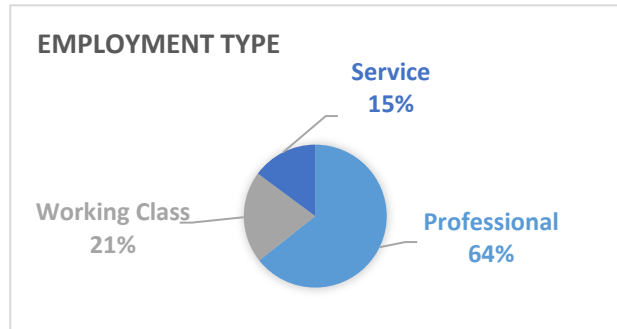
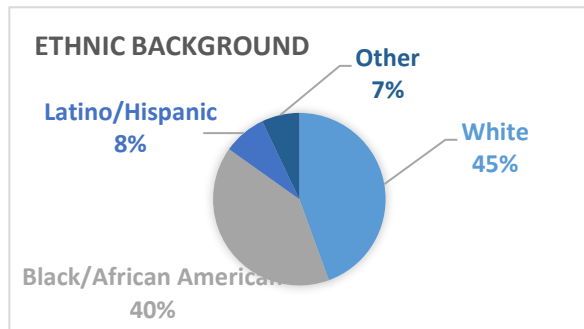
The historic town of Havre de Grace is home to the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum, the River Walk, and the Concord Point Light House where the Susquehanna River joins the Chesapeake Bay. The local Ladew Topiary Gardens and the Liriodendron Mansion offer beautiful landscape walks along with nearby historic Longwood Gardens and the Winterthur Museum. The theater on the Harford Community College campus offers a wide variety of national and regional live productions (<https://www.harford.edu/community/Live-at-HarfordCC.aspx>).

These advantages along with an excellent quality of life, our proximity to the Chesapeake Bay, and low cost of living make Harford County one of the most desirable locations of the East Coast.

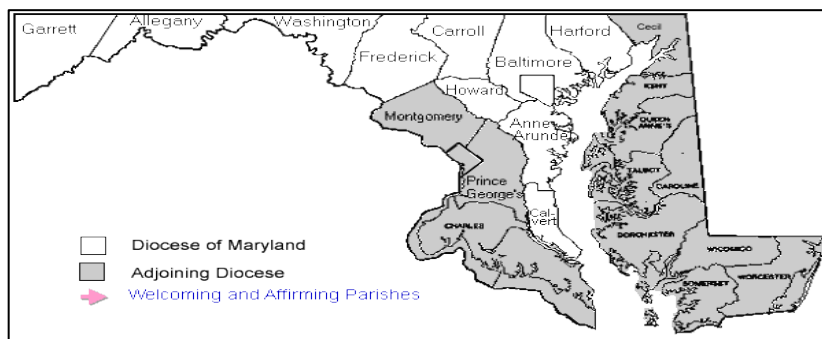
COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

Within a 15-minute drive of St. Mary's is a population of more than 25,000 with an annual growth rate projected at 0.3%. It consists of 9,000 households with an average size of 2.8 people and 58% with at least some college or more and 33% with at least a high school diploma/GED.

Almost half of the immediate community is Black/African American. Over a third is single under 35. These provide potential missional opportunities for Saint Mary's.



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND



St. Mary's is a congregation in the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland. The Diocese spans 10 counties in western, central, and southern Maryland and includes more than 100 congregations and 23 schools. It supports more than 100 active ministries through the Bishop's Appeal and actively

collaborates with ecumenical partners advocating for Gospel justice and hosting groups and events at the diocesan center and the Claggett Center.

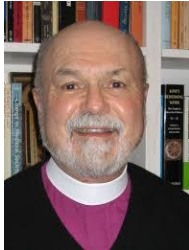
The Episcopal Church in Maryland is as old as the first English settlements on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay in the 1630s. From 1780 on, concerned laymen and clergy began the process of creating the Diocese of Maryland and uniting with churchmen in eight other states. The bishops for four of these dioceses were consecrated in Great Britain. They revised the Book of Common Prayer and Canon Law, and were incorporated as the first non-British Anglican Church. In 1792 Thomas John Claggett of Maryland was the first bishop to be consecrated in America.

The diocese has a long history of growth with church membership reaching over 12,000 in 1868. At one point, the diocese consecrated 70 churches in just 15 years and the diocese was then divided, establishing the diocese of Washington in 1895.

With the tumults of the 20th century, the diocese grew with new ministries in social service especially during the civil rights era and the Vietnam War. Bishop David Leighton led the diocese into contemporary culture through revisions of the Prayer Book and Hymnal and the ordination of women. In the new millennium, the diocese worked to face the issues of racism and how the Maryland church faces its history of being embedded in slavery, Jim Crow and the continuing aftermath.



The current bishop, **The Rt. Rev. Eugene Taylor Sutton**, was elected in April 2008. Bishop Sutton is a frequent leader of retreats and conferences on spirituality and prayer. Formerly the Canon Pastor of the Washington National Cathedral and Director of the Center for Prayer and Pilgrimage, he has served as a college chaplain, parish priest and professor in homiletics and liturgy at Vanderbilt University Divinity School



The Right Rev. Robert Ihloff, 13th Bishop of Maryland, serves as assisting bishop to the Right Rev. Eugene Taylor Sutton, our diocesan bishop. He serves as second bishop in an appropriate ecclesiastical capacity, as staff liaison to Commission on Ministry, as primary bishop for western Maryland, and as staff liaison for the small church movement. He will visit congregations on Sundays to celebrate, preach and confirm as well as perform other episcopal functions, such as ordinations, seasonal confirmations, and celebrations of new ministry.

(<https://episcopalmaryland.org/>)

ST. MARY'S: A BRIEF HISTORY



St. Mary's was founded in 1848 and on March 25, 1851, the Gothic Revival style church was consecrated and the Reverend William Brand became its first rector. Father Brand was a Tractarian and St Mary's Church reflects many aspects of the 19th century Oxford Movement. Over the years, stained glass windows by the English architect William Butterfield were added as well as mosaic walls. Framed paintings and a carved lectern and pulpit were added, all created by the Reverend Johannes Adam Oertel, the unofficial assistant to Dr. Brand.

In 1902, Dr. Brand's home located on his farmland near St. Mary's was destroyed by fire, along with most of the original records on the early life of the church. A new church rectory, designed by Dr. Brand, was built nearby and survived until the land was redeveloped in 2006. Dr. Brand served as the rector of St. Mary's for 59 years until his death in 1907, leaving an indelible legacy in what once was a small country church. He is buried in the church cemetery.

In 1937, a new rectory was built on the church grounds. In 1973, on the 125th Anniversary of its founding, St. Mary's was named to the National Register of Historic Places.

In addition to on-going renovations required of a centuries-old church, St. Mary's has actively engaged in changes occurring in the larger Episcopal community and in the secular world that surrounds us. In the 1960's St. Mary's planted two churches in nearby communities that combined to form one church in 1966. In 1962, St. Mary's voted to allow women to serve on the vestry with the first woman elected in 1967. The first folk mass was celebrated at St. Mary's that same year. The first healing services were held in 1969, and the church became a haven for spiritual renewal. St. Mary's encouraged teenage involvement in the church, inviting teens to meetings with the vestry and lowering the voting age to 18 in 1971. Girls could become acolytes and young people could be lay readers beginning in the early 1970's.

Replacing the 1928 Book of Common Prayer with the new one in 1979 also caused some issues. The 1928 prayer book was very meaningful to a small group of parishioners. So, until August 2018, the 1928 Prayer Book was used at the Sunday 8:00 am Eucharist.

The 1990's was a time of tremendous growth in Harford County and St. Mary's was able to offer many opportunities that appealed a growing population. We initiated an acolyte training program that included acolytes from the surrounding area. In 1992 we began fund raising to expand our parish hall building to include an education wing that would accommodate the 140 children enrolled in Sunday school. In 1998 we celebrated our sesquicentennial (150 years since our founding) with a series of celebrations that included burying a time capsule in the church yard.

The new century ushered in an era of changes. The first woman to serve a Warden was appointed in 2000 and the first woman priest was appointed assistant in 2005. We also hosted a county-wide acolyte festival. In 2008, we began to plan for the current rector's retirement after nearly 40 years of service to St. Mary's. In 2010, an official calling committee was created. The outgoing rector retired in May of 2011 and the new rector was installed in November of that year.

Unfortunately, transition from a long-serving priest to a 'new hire' is difficult and St. Mary's decision to replace the retiring priest without allowing for an interim period made the transition more difficult. Ultimately, the new priest was terminated in 2018. Because there was an active Title IV investigation by the diocese, the congregation could not be told everything about why he was suspended from his duties. That lack of information created a divide within the congregation. The leadership of the church, including our senior warden and interim rector, helped the congregation work through the conflict using a series of parish meetings where parishioners could ask questions and express their concerns about the situation. The parish also went through an intentional period of healing prior to beginning the transition process.

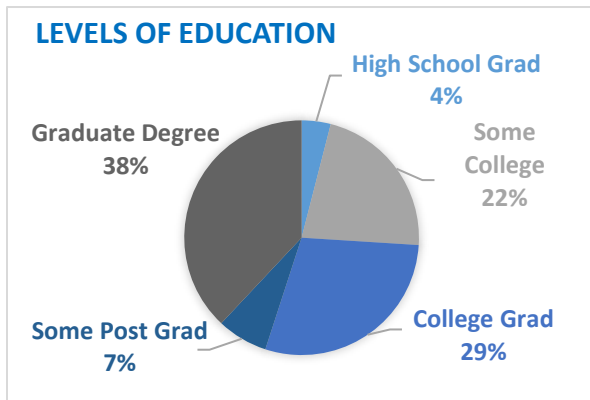
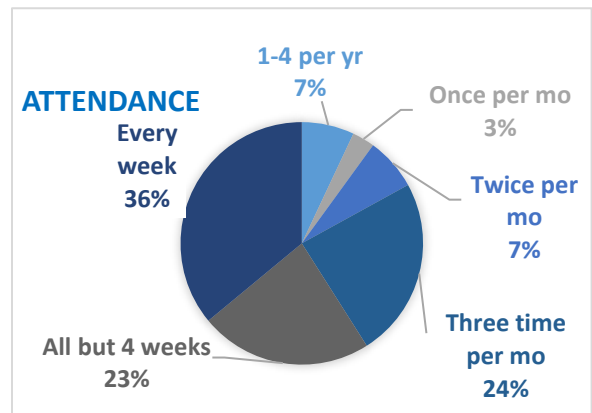
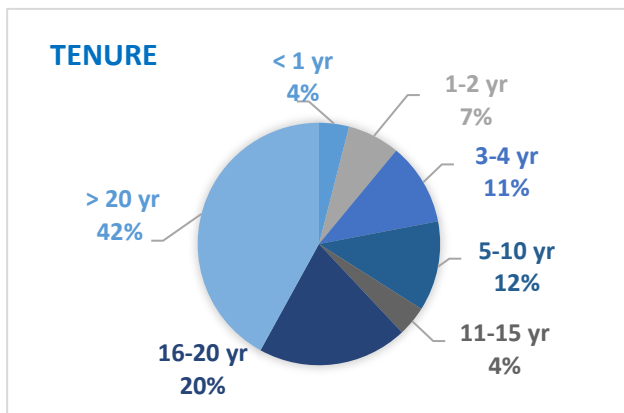
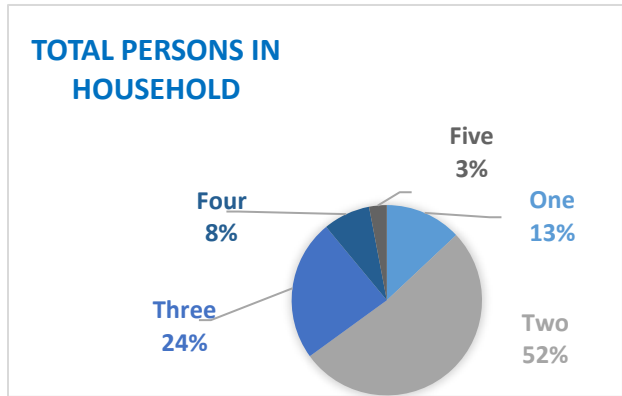
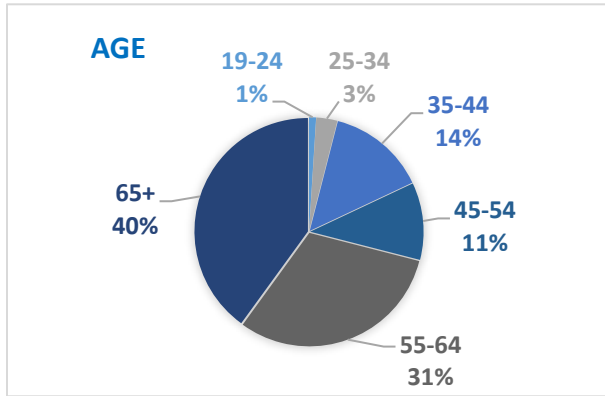
Our leaders have held us together as a church family by reminding us of our shared experiences and showing us how we could navigate our situation and come out stronger on the other side. In May of 2019, St. Mary's began our discernment to prepare for calling new clergy with the formation of a Transition Team. We conducted a parish-wide survey in November. The pandemic has impacted us in many ways, including delaying the transition process, while we learned to conduct our church life remotely. We live-streamed our services on Facebook and YouTube along with morning prayer, evening prayer and Compline. We conduct vestry meetings, transition meetings, children's formation, and multiple all-congregation meetings via zoom along with weekly Bible study, monthly women's group meetings, and our treasured Lenten lunches. In the summer and fall of 2020, we were able to conduct in-person services at reduced capacity by creating a reservation system for available seating, as well as reader, usher and cleaning schedules. We celebrated parking lot Christmas Eve and Ash Wednesday services with communion, with some receiving for the first time since March 2020.

We are a very connected church, so not being able to see each other and work together has been very difficult. However, we have stretched our imagination and really grown throughout the process.

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

The following represents demographic data for the members of the congregation that participated in the Congregational Assessment (CAT). Among the highlights:

33% of respondents live within 4 miles of the church while 66% live more than 5 miles from the church and 83% attend three or more times a month.



SAINT MARY'S PROGRAMS AND GROUPS

CURRENT CLERGY

The Reverend Julian Eibin has been the interim rector of St. Mary's since September of 2018. Fr. Julian is an intentional interim trained by the Interim Ministry Network. As a retired Episcopal priest, he works part-time and is assisted by long-term supply priests – Mother Meredith Kefauver Olsen and Mother Anjel Scarborough.

STAFF/ADMINISTRATION

St. Mary's paid staff consists of a full parish administrator and part time sextant, childcare provider, and organist/choirmaster who work diligently with a dedicated staff of volunteers in finance, technology, Christian Formation and on the Vestry.

WORSHIP

Like most churches during the pandemic, our ability to gather as a community has been severally limited. But, throughout its 170+ year history, St. Mary's has adjusted the number, timing, and types of services to meet the capacity requirements of the sanctuary (our capacity is about 125 congregants), the needs of the congregation, and current practices of the Episcopal Church.

Just prior to the pandemic, on Sundays St. Mary's had an 8:00 am Rite I Eucharist with music and a 10:15 Rite II Eucharist with choir. Between services, time is dedicated to Christian formation for children and adults as well as social time. We also have a Wednesday morning Eucharist in the Chapel of the Visitation (which was created in 2019 and dedicated by Bishop Sutton) as well as Eucharist on special feast days and Taize' and other special services.

During the pandemic, we have been fortunate to be able to live stream a slightly abbreviated 10:15 Sunday service. The service includes organ, a Lay reader, clergy and camera manager. In the late summer and early fall 2020, we were able to return to two 25%-capacity services, one at 8:00 am and one at 10:15 am with live stream, with Rite II for both services except the first Sunday of the month when we conducted a Rite I service. However, we had to pause those in-person services when infection rates became too high again. We are currently live-stream-only at 10:15 for our Sunday and Wednesday mid-day Eucharist. We follow Rite 1 on the first Sunday of the month and Rite 2 on other Sundays We conducted a Drive-In Christmas Eve service with Eucharist. It was so successful we are planning drive-in services at 10:15 once a month until we are able to return to the sanctuary in person once again.

In the past we have provided "Ashes To Go" to the community in the afternoon on Ash Wednesday in addition to three full services, but this year we were limited to drive-in Ash Wednesday services only.

MUSIC

Music plays a major role in our worship. Prior to the pandemic, we had an adult choir made up of 10-12 talented volunteers that practiced weekly. Since the configuration of our sanctuary doesn't lend itself to a procession that includes the choir, choir dress is casual, other than the organist/choirmaster. The adult choir season runs from September through mid-June and they perform an offertory anthem as well other special songs and hymns throughout the service depending on lectionary. We use the 1982 Hymnal as well as other approved sources for service music. For accompaniment we have a two-manual Allen Quantum Digital Organ and a

paid professional organist/choirmaster who often creates new arrangements of familiar anthems to add interest to the service. The choir also performs on non-Sunday feast days and other designated special services.

LAY MINISTRY

In addition to the choir, Saint Mary's has the usual liturgical ministries found in most parishes. We utilize Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, lay readers and acolytes in processions and at the altar. Both children and adults serve as acolytes.



When conditions allowed during the pandemic, our ushers helped manage safe distancing and crews of cleaners helped sanitize our space between services. The Altar Guild at St. Mary's prepares the Altar for services each week and any special activities during the week - weddings, funerals, etc. They work in teams, with each team assuming responsibility for one week a month with the exception of Christmas and Easter when all are involved.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Christian education plays a significant role in the life of our church family. Our members understand that we have a spiritual responsibility for life-long learning. 90% of the respondents in our congregational assessment believe they can find educational opportunities that meet their needs at St. Mary's. Along with providing opportunities for members to socialize, we come together at 9:15 am between services for Adult and Children's formation. We also have three small groups which meet weekly along with many other opportunities to participate in learning and discussion.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULTS

Our congregation is very thoughtful, inquisitive, and questioning, and they benefit from opportunities to thoroughly understand and discuss issues and changes. Our adult programs encompass a wide range of opportunities. We may have someone from the community provide us with information on community needs. At other times, we may have a Rector's Forum that offers an opportunity for a more facilitated in-depth discussion on topics such as the historical aspects of an upcoming lectionary, or a current St. Mary's, Episcopal or a larger community issue. Just prior to the pandemic, we offered a monthly speaker, a lectionary discussion, an enquirer's class and short-term classes to provide options to our parishioners on Sunday mornings. St Mary's Café offers parishioners a conducive space for informal conversation.

During the pandemic, we have held some online Zoom forums to support each other in uncertain times. In the run up to the election we discussed insights gained from completing an online course "Civil Conversations in Uncivil Times". We've also looked at understanding the differences between Traditions, traditions, habits, and norms so we can sort through all the different aspects of a church as old as St. Mary's.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Sunday School was held weekly during the school year at 9:15 a.m. between our two Sunday services. All youth from pre-k through high school are invited to participate. The Sunday School classes regularly participate in outreach programs throughout

the year including: Feeding Hearts and Bellies through Blessings in a Backpack to provide meals to students in Harford County experiencing food insecurity, the "Eggstra Special Easter Bagskits" through the We Canerve Movement, Inc. that provides Easter baskets to hospitalized children, and The Harford County Humane Society.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Sunday School has continued online during the periods of time when in-person Christian Education has not been possible. The older grades have met via Zoom and the parents of the youngest students have been provided e-materials from their children's teachers. We are also hoping to be able to resume our Vacation Bible School program this coming summer.

SMALL GROUPS

Prior to COVID-19 there were three study groups that met regularly at St. Mary's. The Monday Night group met weekly at 7:00 p.m. on most Mondays throughout the year. This group was originally started as a young adult group but has expanded to a broad range of ages and theological backgrounds. The group has met at various locations, but most recently at the homes of parishioners in the group. A second evening group has recently been created following the same model as the original group with meetings on Tuesday nights. These groups have studied topics like *The Path*, a condensed study of the whole Bible, and N. T. Wright's *The Day the Revolution Began*.

We also have a Thursday Noon traditional Bible study that studies individual books of the Bible including 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, Jeremiah and Isaiah. This group has continued to meet via Zoom since March 2020 as much as possible. All groups are led by members of the congregation.

Just prior to the pandemic we were organizing to encourage the formation of additional neighborhood-based small groups.

PARISH LIFE



We are a church community that comes together frequently over food. In the summer, we meet after service with "Lemonade on the Lawn" under the trees outside the church.

In non-pandemic times, the Men's Group meets for a monthly breakfast and fellowship followed by maintenance and repair tasks. Currently they have continued to take on necessary repairs even though they have had to forgo sharing a meal.

The Women of St. Mary's (WoSM) provide a large number of opportunities for fellowship and undertake numerous activities and projects within our church and community. They support our college students with treat boxes on special occasions, sponsor families at Christmas time, coordinate Christmas stocking donations for the Salvation Army, support a large number of recurring and one-time congregation-focused events, and participate in outreach activities. During the pandemic, they have managed to continue to meet monthly via



Zoom meetings and have continued to coordinate congregational contributions to community organizations serving the needs of the less fortunate.

The WoSM support their activities through an annual rummage sale that encourages community contributions and provides a fun weekend of shopping for the neighborhood.

We have a long tradition of holding lunches during Lent that include outside speakers on various topics. We are continuing that tradition this year by holding Zoom lunches as we discuss the book *Poustinia: Encountering God in Silence, Solitude and Prayer*.

OUTREACH

St. Mary's contributes in many ways to our surrounding community and Outreach is one of the four pillars of this year's strategic plan.

We make our facilities available to multiple community groups. Alcoholics Anonymous is one of the largest users, providing services to over 200 people a week. We also support a Boy Scout troop and have provided a temporary home to a growing non-denominational church as they search for a space of their own. We also partner with Clean House Recycling which provides collection and redistribution of used clothing and shoes. Community associations and other organizations regularly use our space when they needed to provide large-group training or seminars and we are currently in conversation with a cooperative nursery school looking for new space for their State approved educational program for children aged two through four.

In the last several years we have been growing an arts outreach program. It first involved talented artists and musicians from within the congregation and is expanding to community members through arts and crafts shows and organ and instrumental performances. We hope we can resume this fledgling ministry after the pandemic.

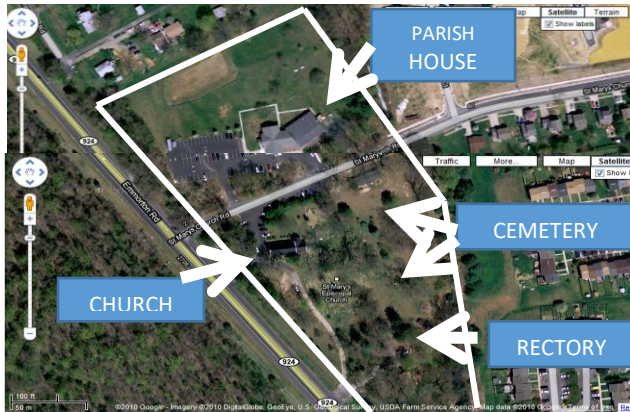
In 2019, A "Little Free Library" was established to provide reading materials to the community.

In addition, we make monetary and service contributions to a number of community organizations, including:

- Harford County Family and Children's Services - gift support for families at Christmas.
- Harford County Educational Association - school supplies and funds to support technology needs.
- Harford County Community Action Agency - seasonal 'Stuff a Truck' collections of groceries and monetary donations for families in need.
- Habitat for Humanity Susquehanna - service and monetary support for this organization since 2007.
- Welcome One Emergency Shelter - monthly meal prep, periodic food and monetary collections for this homeless emergency support center.
- Reading Camp Harford - coordinate a summer reading camp with other congregations and two local schools to identify and encourage early elementary students struggling to read.
- We Cancerve - labor and materials for this youth-run organization that supports children in crisis, either in foster care system, a healthcare crisis, or simple summer fun for kids without resources.
- Mann House - Thanksgiving altar bounty and monetary gifts to support people in addiction recovery.

- Monetary contributions to - Found in Faith, Harford County Fuel Fund, SARC (Spousal Abuse Resource Center), Sleep in Heavenly Peace (makes and delivers beds for children), Luna’s House (Animal Shelter in Edgewood), and CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates).

FACILITIES



The parish is located on either side of St. Mary’s Church Road at the intersection with Emmorton Road in Abingdon, Maryland. The church, rectory and cemetery along with some parking are on one side of the street and the main parking lot and parish house on the other of St. Mary’s Church Road. Beginning in 1948, a series of new buildings, improvements, and expansions occurred to properly house Church School and provide meeting space.



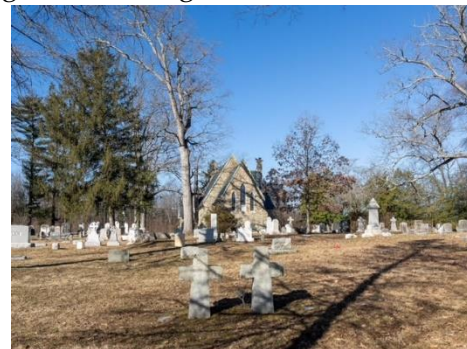
The current parish hall building was built in 1958 on property across St. Mary’s Church Road from the church building and was substantially expanded in 1996. It is a two story frame structure with a large meeting hall and associated kitchen, administrative offices, a small weekday chapel, library, choir room, nursery, and classrooms. It also has several spaces for casual



gathering, including the Saint Mary’s Café, and elevator and ramp access to all levels.



The current rectory was built in 1938 in the Georgian style. It has a living room, dining room, kitchen, den, three bedrooms and one and a half bathrooms. It was substantially updated in 2010 and 2020.



The cemetery lies between and behind the church and rectory.

ST. MARY'S STEWARDSHIP

Following a day of retreat filled with prayer and discernment, the vestry and wardens adopted the following **Stewardship Statement** to define stewardship at St. Mary's.

WE BELIEVE

That all things come from God

We are stewards of God's treasure.

God takes joy in us, and

We will pray for God's guidance us as we seek to become more faithful stewards.

With God's help through prayer, **WE COMMIT** to

- Have open dialogue amongst the Vestry and with the congregation about giving and financial decisions
- Contribute our time our time, talent, and treasure towards the mission of the church
- Consider our individual pledge with respect to proportional giving, moving towards a goal of a 10% tithe.

WE INVITE you, together with the Vestry, regularly to

- Devote your time
- Contribute your talent
- Share your treasure with our parish

2021 BUDGET

For 2021, we have 37 pledging households, down about 1/3 in number from the previous year. But, of those pledging, individual pledged amounts are more than in previous year. Our campaign follows The Episcopal Network for Stewardship's annual theme and uses their resources for things such as logos and worship bulletin inserts. Parishioners share "Stewardship Moments". We use both paper and online forms of stewardship communication and intake pledges through both physical cards and an on-line pledge form.

Our 2021 operating budget is \$426,224, higher than past years due to one-time items like allocations for transition expenses and increases for full-time clergy salary, benefits, and expenses, and commitments to Congregational Development. This year's budget includes \$46,500 in support of the Diocese of Maryland.

St. Mary's has an endowment of \$2,600,000 invested in a professionally managed stock portfolio and includes some restricted funds dedicated to capital improvements (\$100,000), vocational discernment (\$50,000) and congregational development (\$200,000).

\$172,000 will go toward the support of the operating budget in 2021. The parish applied for and received a PPP loan of \$30,000 which will reduce our draw on investments.

HOW TO APPLY

Submit your resume, CDO portfolio and any other materials to:

The Rev. Stuart Wright

Canon for Transitions and Director for Human Resources

Diocese of Maryland

4 East University Parkway

Baltimore, MD 21218

swright@episcopalmaryland.org

Diocesan Phone: 410-467-1399 (Please be aware diocesan staff are currently working remotely)