

# Position Description Outline

The Episcopal Diocese of Newark

**Please Note: While the position is no longer posted on the OTM website, St. Elizabeth's Church will continue to accept candidates for its rector position.**

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Congregation Name **Saint Elizabeth's Episcopal Church**

Street Address **169 Fairmount Road**

City **Ridgewood** State **New Jersey** Zip **07450-1442**

Telephone: Area Code **201 / 444-2299** Fax: **201/ 444-0007**

E-mail address: [rectorsearch@stesridgewood.org](mailto:rectorsearch@stesridgewood.org) (for candidates to inquire or submit materials)

Website: **www.stesridgewood.org**

Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.): **Not Applicable**

## PARISH LIFE

### Worship

**The following group of questions is intended to give us a feel for your congregation's weekly worship experience.**

- What is the time of your Sunday service(s)? **8:00 & 10:00/ 8:00 & 9:30 in Summer.**
- How many people can you comfortably seat in your church? **280**
- What was your Average Sunday Attendance for this past year? **Adults and children 191 (214 excluding July and August)** For Easter? **595 at 4 services** For Christmas Eve? **552 at 2 services**
- How do you provide for music in worship? **Organ X; Piano X; Paid organist (pianist) X;**
- Do you have a choir?: **Every Sunday (except in summer) X;**
- Who usually assists the priest in the service? (check all that apply) **Associate Priest X** Deacon \_\_\_\_\_; **Lay Eucharistic Ministers X; Acolytes X.**
- Are your acolytes: Adults? \_\_\_\_\_; Young People? \_\_\_\_\_; **Some of each X (Adults at 8:00 and weekday services; young people at 10:00)**
- Is your church heated comfortably during the winter months? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_\_. Is it air conditioned in the summer? Yes \_\_\_\_ **No X (but Chapel and Parish Hall are)**
- Do Sunday school children join the congregation for the Eucharist? **Yes X (once monthly)** No \_\_\_\_\_
- Are services conducted in **English? X**
- Does your sanctuary show any structural problems, such as leaky roof, water damage; broken or missing windows, sloping floor, stress fractures in walls; falling plaster? Yes \_\_\_\_ **No X**

- **Nurture**

**The following group of questions is intended to acquaint us with your Christian education, membership development, stewardship and leadership development programs**

- Do you have a Sunday school for young people? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_.
- What is the average Sunday attendance of your church school? **52; 104 total enrollment**
- How many adult teachers of Sunday School do you have? **31 volunteer / multigenerational teachers, 7 Chapel Leaders, 2 paid staff. Sunday School is on a Trimester schedule, with 2 teachers per class changing every 12 weeks.**
- Are Sunday School pupils grouped by age in separate classes? **Usually, but recently several grades were combined. This year we had 5 classrooms for Pre-K through 7.**
- Do you have a youth choir? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_ If Yes, how many? **38 children in 3 choirs; Cherub (K-2), Junior (3-6), and Youth (7&8). They are led by the Associate Choirmaster and perform monthly at the Family Eucharist. Cherubs sing in the children's Chapel weekly.**
- Do you have a teen program? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_ If Yes, how many? **Youth Ministries consist of Young People's Fellowship (6-7th), Confirmation (8<sup>th</sup>) and High School (9-12<sup>th</sup>).** If "Yes", how many adults work with your teens? **23 volunteers, 4 clergy, 2 staff spread over the 3 programs.**
- Do you have an ECW? **Yes X** Men's club? **No X** Altar guild? **Yes X** or Any other group or guild **Yes X** **Friday Book Group, Needlecrafters, Outreach Committee, Moms' Group, Parenting Wednesdays, Music & Movement for Toddlers and Parents, Newcomers, Altar Guild, YPF, Teen Outreach Group, FaithWorks, Environmental Committee and StEP3 Committee (PACS-Paterson Partnership)**
- Have you had a confirmation class in the past 6 years? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_
- Do you have a regular adult education program? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_ If Yes, please describe:  
**Saturday mornings in the fall and spring there is usually a class led by the rector or other clergy. Topics have included medical/social ethics, Bible study, and historical context for Anglican liturgical and canonical practices.**
  - If "Yes," how many times did the program meet during the past year (check the appropriate answer)? Less than 5 \_\_\_\_ 5 to 10 \_\_\_\_ **More than 10 X**
  - How many adults on average attended your adult education programs? **10-12**
- Do you have a special Lenten program? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_ Give a brief description of your program:  
**4 Monday nights begin with a potluck dinner for 50, then either a film shown over 4 weeks or several short films with discussion following. The evening closes with Compline.**
- In the past year, did anyone from your church (clergy or laity) attend any educational programs, leadership conferences, congregational development programs offered by the diocese or another organization? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_
  - If "Yes," how many individuals attended? **6**
  - If "Yes," which programs did they attend? **Annual Diocesan Convention, District 10 clergy meetings, Annual Clergy Conference**

## Stewardship

- Do you have a stewardship committee? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_ . If yes, how many members? **3**
- In the past year, was any of the following part of the stewardship program?
  - An all member stewardship canvas: **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_
  - Small group meetings **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_
  - Letters to the congregation **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_
  - Pledge cards **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_;
  - Stewardship articles in the newsletter or Sunday bulletin **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_
  - Personal testimonials about stewardship **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_.
- Are new members asked to pledge in their first year? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_
- Is proportionate giving an important part of your stewardship program? Yes \_\_\_\_ **No X**
- Did you begin, conduct, or complete a capital campaign in the past two years? Yes \_\_\_\_ **No X**
- If yes, what was the purpose or goal of the campaign?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Did you use a professional firm to assist with the campaign? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

## Welcoming & Hospitality

- Do you have a membership committee? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_
- Are greeters assigned to welcome newcomers at Sunday services? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_
- Do you have a regular coffee hour after Sunday services? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_
- Are greeters designated to introduce newcomers during coffee hour? Yes \_\_\_\_ **No X**
- Are visitors added to your church mailing list? Yes \_\_\_\_ **No X**
- Do you hold dinners or other fellowship events at your church? **Yes X** No \_\_\_\_
  - If yes, what kind? **We have a variety of fellowship events, ranging from small gatherings like the Book Group and Needlecrafters (<12) to parish-wide gatherings of over 100 like the Annual Ingathering Brunch and the Outreach Auction. We also have mid-sized gatherings like the Advent craft dinner, Shrove Tuesday Pancake supper, Lenten potluck supper, senior luncheons (25-75).**
  - How many are you able to seat comfortably in your location for dinner?
    - 1-25 \_\_\_\_ 25-60 \_\_\_\_ **More than 60 X**
- Did anyone join a committee or take part in a ministry for the first time in your church?  
**Yes X** No \_\_\_\_ If Yes, how many? **unknown**
- Do any teens or young adults (ages 18-30) serve on your vestry or in some leadership role?  
Yes \_\_\_\_ **No X** If "Yes", how many? \_\_\_\_\_

## Outreach

- Which of the following outreach programs occur at your church? (Check all that apply)  
Soup kitchen \_\_\_\_; Food pantry \_\_\_\_; **Deliver food and clothing to the homeless X**;  
Thrift Shop \_\_\_\_; **Organized visits to hospitals, nursing homes or shut-ins X**; **Fund**

**raising for charities X**; English as a second language classes \_\_\_\_; Day care (or after school care) \_\_\_\_; **After School programs X**; **Seniors programs X**; Other \_\_ (please list )

- Please list the programs you support with volunteers, but occur off your premises: **Please see attached appendix with Outreach involvement.** How many parishioners contribute their time regularly to outreach done through or at your church? (check the appropriate answer) Less than 10 \_\_\_\_; 10 to 20 \_\_; **More than 20 X.**
- Does the congregation expect to start any new outreach ministries during this year? Yes \_\_ **No X**  
Please describe:

## **Buildings and Property**

What is the current state of your physical plant? **Excellent, considering their age. Rectory currently undergoing repainting and other maintenance in preparation for the next rector.**

What significant repairs do you anticipate needing in the next three years? **None that cannot be handled by current funds on hand to pay for all but catastrophic damage.**

Do you presently rent any part of your building? **No X** If "Yes", do you have a lease agreement? What rent do you currently receive? Does the rent include payment for utilities and property taxes?

## **Our Congregation's Goals**

Define the four most important ministry/mission goals your congregation hopes to accomplish in the next two or three years. Make sure they are **SMART** goals: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**greed upon, **R**ealistic, **T**ime framed.

- 1. Develop and implement a plan to promote the opportunities for individual spiritual growth and development within 2 years.**
- 2. Grow membership by 10% within 3 years.**
- 3. Increase membership engaged in volunteer activities by 10% within 2 years.**
- 4. Develop a systematic plan for internal and external communication with implementation within 2 years.**
- 5. Set up a comprehensive pastoral care plan for the church membership within 1 year**

How did you come up with these goals? (Check all that apply)

- **Survey X**
- Worked with consultant \_\_\_\_
- Community meeting \_\_\_\_
- **Focus (Small) Group X**
- **Vestry X**
- **Committee X**
- Other \_\_\_\_ (Please describe)

Does your congregation have a ministry plan? **Yes\_\_ No X**

A mission statement? **Yes \_\_ No X** If so, please attach either or both.

## What are the strengths of this congregation?

- **A clear sense of Anglican identity, reflected in our vibrant traditional worship and prioritization of spiritual development**
- **A multigenerational community that supports each other in our various goals and needs**
- **Financial stability and flexibility through Annual Giving**
- **A well-maintained church, rectory, and ADA-compliant modern parish house with room for membership growth**
- **An exceptional music ministry, which fosters the development of the musical gifts of children, youth and adults, and significantly enhances our worship services.**
- **An enduring commitment to parishioner-directed Outreach, consisting of time, material goods, and substantial financial aid.**
- **A well-structured and vibrant Children's Chapel and Church School program**

## What are the challenges that this congregation faces?

- **A need for an improved system for consistently attracting, welcoming and enfolded new members**
- **A need for an improved system for consistently engaging both new and long-term parishioners in active programs and ministry**
- **A dependence on a small number (12-15) of families for the majority of Annual Giving**
- **A need to improve our network of pastoral care by both clergy and laity**
- **A need to revamp and modernize our external and internal communication systems**
- **A need to develop a consistent programmatic approach to teens' church life**

## **Clergy Ministry Skill Areas & Responsibilities**

Using the following list of 16 Ministry Skill Areas, identify and rank the four most important areas and then list the duties the priest will perform to fulfill that responsibility.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. **Administration:** Ability to manage the affairs of the congregation, diocese, or other institution, including programs, organizations, finances, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. **Christian Education:** Ability to lead in the design and implementation of comprehensive programs of Christian Education.

**2** \_\_\_\_\_ 3. **Church Growth/Development:** Ability to reshape or restart existing congregations or to plant new congregations.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. **Ecumenism:** Ability in programs sponsored inter-denominationally or jointly by a number of churches.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. **Evangelism:** Ability to train and lead persons to proclaim by word and action the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to invite others into Christian fellowship.

**3** \_\_\_\_\_ 6. **Liturgics:** Ability to plan and conduct liturgical services of corporate worship.

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. **Music Ministry:** Ability to support congregational ministry through music, e.g. lead, inspire, perform, compose, train, and coordinate.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. **Outreach Ministry:** Ability to equip and serve the community of faith in ministry to persons in need within and beyond the congregation.

**4** \_\_\_\_\_ 9. **Pastoral Care:** Ability to care for people so that they are nurtured and equipped for growth within the community of faith.

**1** \_\_\_\_\_ 10. **Preaching:** Ability to preach with clarity and to make the Gospel relevant in people's lives.

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. **Social/Community Ministry:** Ability to enable persons within the congregations to become aware of and participate in community concerns.

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. **Spiritual Guidance:** Ability to lead and encourage others in the formation and development of a deeper spiritual life.

\_\_\_\_\_ 13. **Stewardship:** Ability to lead in the development and use of individual and congregational resources.

\_\_\_\_\_ 14. **Teaching:** Ability to help persons of all ages understand and live the Christian Faith.

\_\_\_\_\_ 15. **Home Visitation:** Ability to provide regular pastoral care through visiting church members in their homes.

\_\_\_\_\_ 16. **Youth Work:** Ability to inspire youth and incorporate them onto the full life and ministry of the Church.

## Clergy Ministry List of Duties

### Here is an example:

Skill Area: Pastoral Care

#### Duties

- a. Take communion to the homebound at Christmas and Easter.
- b. Visit members in the local hospital, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities once a week.
- c. Develop program to train a lay caring/calling ministry
- d. Be available for pastoral emergencies, wedding, and funerals.

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### 1. Skill Area: **Preaching**

#### Duties

- a. Have a comprehensive knowledge of the Bible and Christian theology, while also demonstrating a knowledge and respect for other religious traditions
- b. Apply this knowledge in preparing and delivering sermons based on the lectionary readings for the day, but in an understandable and engaging style

c. Use the Sunday Sermon, written devotions, and even casual conversation as an opportunity to prod, guide and otherwise engage the listener to navigate modern life as a practicing Christian.

d. Compose and deliver a monthly sermon for children at the Family Service that also carries meaning for adults

## 2. Skill Area: **Church Growth/Development**

### Duties

- a. In close consultation with the Vestry, prepare, communicate, and lead with both a short and long-range plan/vision, including an improved stewardship/pledging model
- b. Have the skills and abilities to increase attendance and involvement of the current membership and draw in new members to maintain the strong and vibrant life of the parish.
- c. Manage and inspire staff and parish with good people-management skills
- d. Promote Outreach within the parish and engage in local community issues, activities, and problems

## 3. Skill Area: **Liturgics**

### Duties

- a. Maintain traditional service liturgies from the BCP, reflecting our Anglican heritage
- b. Lead, train and support clergy, staff, and laity in conducting these services, both for their and the parish's spiritual growth
- c. Promote and support music and the music program as an integral part of worship
- d. Lead/Participate in Sunday services, Morning Prayer one day each week, special mid-week services for feast days and for healing, and help families plan weddings and funerals

## 4. Skill Area: **Pastoral Care**

### Duties

- a. Develop, support, and participate in a network for the delivery of a full range of pastoral services by clergy and laity to the homebound, hospitalized, and otherwise struggling parish members
- b. Further develop our program for teens to integrate them more into the life of the church
- c. Connect with all members of the parish, from 9 months to 90 years old, through exhibiting a personality which is intellectually curious, outgoing, and possessing a good sense of humor while demonstrating humility and kindness

## **Leadership Style**

Our next rector will be the newest member of our church family. The 20+ year tenures of our 3 prior rectors attest to our mutual affection. Each had different skills and strengths and built up different aspects of this parish. Our new leader will continue with those things essential to the values, character, style and identity of St. Elizabeth's, but with his or her own unique skills and strengths, the new rector will help the members of this parish grow "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ".

It is important for us to have a rector that leads by example, especially “seeking and serving Christ in all persons”. The rector should be a model of inclusion, especially for our children. For example, the Muslim Society of Ridgewood was invited to use our facilities until they had acquired their own worship center. The parish has a history of active participation in the annual MLK and Holocaust Remembrance services in Ridgewood, along with twice-yearly blood drives with Temple Israel and the Muslim Society.

In implementing any changes or new programs, we expect our rector to understand who and what St. Elizabeth’s has been and is today by seeking input from the Wardens, Vestry and other church leaders. Equally important, the rector should be transparent in motives as well as objectives to ensure the support of the parish.

Finally, the new rector will be charged with providing leadership to our staff of lay and clergy, to foster the cooperation and mutual support that currently marks this close-knit team. Our rector will help them experience their own spiritual and professional growth, inspiring them as they offer their ministries to the parish.

**CLERGY POSITION DESCRIPTION**

**We are seeking (please check one):**

**Rector**

**The Clergy will be employed in a (please check one):**

**Full time position**

**Proposed Compensation for New Clergy**

**Please see “Understanding Clergy Compensation” on our diocesan website for guidance.**

***We are committed to a competitive compensation package to meet the needs of our new rector.***

Starting minimum cash stipend	___Competitive_____
Housing	
Housing allowance (amount budgeted) <b>or</b>	___Housing is provided._____
Housing is provided _____	
Utilities (amount budgeted or spent last year)	___Utilities are provided._____
FICA Reimbursement (0.0765 of cash + housing + utilities)	_____
Housing Equity (if Housing provided)	_____
Church Pension Assessment	We meet the required pension contribution levels.
(18% of total cash stipend +housing+ housing equity+ utilities)	
Travel reimbursement (amount budgeted)	_____



Business expenses (amount budgeted) \_\_\_\_\_

Health insurance \_\_\_\_\_ Provided (family coverage)

Continuing education (amount budgeted) \_\_\_\_\_

Vacation \_\_\_\_\_

    How many days a year? \_\_\_\_\_

    How many Sundays? \_\_\_\_\_

    Time off after Christmas and Easter? \_\_\_\_\_

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

**Note: Before any congregation begins the transition ministry process, it must first provide the following:**

- **The prior 2 (two) years' audited financials**
- **The previous year's budget and actual results**
- **The current year's budget and the financial statements for the year-to-date period compared with the current budget.**

**The congregation must also demonstrate that its current diocesan pledge is at least 10% of its normal operating income or that it will submit a plan to reach this goal in 2 (two) years.**

### **Contact Information (Who may applicants contact for further information?)**

Name **Mary Wynn Seiter, Rector Search Committee Chair**  
**St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church**

Street Address **169 Fairmount Road**

City **Ridgewood**

State **NJ** Zip Code **07450**

Church phone: **201.444.2299** Mary Wynn's Cell **201.981.3774**

Fax **201.612.5201 (Attention Mary Wynn Seiter)**

Email address [rectorsearch@stesridgewood.org](mailto:rectorsearch@stesridgewood.org) with a cc to mwseiter@lawnj.com

I prefer to be contacted by: \_\_\_ phone                      \_\_\_ cell phone  
  \_X\_ email                                      \_\_\_ mail

## **NARRATIVE FOR POSITION DESCRIPTION**

### **1. Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.**

For more than a decade, the choir of St. Elizabeth's has performed a requiem on the Sunday before Palm Sunday. This late Lenten offering is a powerful worship experience for the choir and congregants in the pew alike. With leadership from our soloists, along with a short lecture by the choirmaster the week before, parishioners are given deeper insights and appreciation of the classical piece, the selections of which have ranged from Mozart to Wilberg. At the conclusion the choir recesses to the tolling of a bell.

In 2017, our choirmaster chose Rutter's "Mass of the Children." Although not often performed because the children's parts are difficult, the growing strength of our children's music program enabled our combined choirs to sing this rich selection. Many younger choristers have attended Royal School of Church Music summer programs as Scholars underwritten by our own Galletly Scholarship Fund, who return to serve as models and help strengthen the musical skills of the Youth and Junior Choirs.

For this piece, 30 members of the children's choirs singing the sections written for children's voices joined the Adult Choir. The sanctuary was filled with parents and family. Beyond the joy of hearing their voices soar in this piece, it was a moment for our church that summed up how we praise God through our traditions in music and worship, and pass on those traditions, and our faith itself, to our children.

### **2. Describe your congregation's liturgical style & practice. If your community provides more than one type of worship service, please describe all:**

The Book of Common Prayer is at the heart of our liturgy. With the Sunday bulletin as a guide, the congregation follows along in the BCP, whose words provide familiar comfort and a Godly connection to new and old parishioners alike. In our recent survey, the parish resoundingly confirmed its desire to continue at 10:00 the weekly rotation of different services from the BCP, those being Rite 1 Morning Prayer, Rite 1 Eucharist, and Rite 2 Eucharist. As a parish, we value the different worship experience each service offers.

St. Elizabeth's follows a style somewhere between "low", "broad" and traditional. The priest wears a stole rather than a chasuble, the congregation kneels for the Eucharistic Prayers, and there is no use of incense.

Music is foundational for our worship. From September through June, the Adult Choir usually sings an anthem at the Offertory, and further supports the congregation in singing the hymns, canticles, and chanting the Invitatory and Suffrages.

During the school year, children leave the sanctuary before the sermon to attend church school. Nursery care is provided. Family Sunday occurs monthly, when the children remain in the sanctuary for the entire 10:00 service. The Youth Choir (3<sup>rd</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade) and the Cherub Choir (kindergarten - 2<sup>nd</sup> grade) sing an anthem at this service, led by the associate choirmaster. The sermon is interactive and geared for children, with props used to visually illustrate the sermon (even dogs!). People look forward to this service, which is one illustration of our rich multigenerational community of faith.

### **3. How do you practice incorporating others in your ministries?**

St. Elizabeth's was founded by a group of individuals that were willing to undertake the effort to establish and promote a church in their neighborhood. We look to clergy and lay leadership to encourage our membership to continue this tradition and engage in the life of St. Elizabeth's, with both an inward and outward focus.

Children are encouraged to participate in worship services as acolytes and crucifers. They lead the annual Flower Sunday service by serving in all the lay roles, from usher to lector to preacher, as does the Confirmation Class at its own service. Beyond singing at the monthly Family Service, the Youth Choir joins the Adult Choir for some pieces in the Advent Concert.

Children participate in Outreach very early. Through Church School, children supply items for a birthday party (Birthday Bags), and purchase Child to Child Christmas gifts, all given to needy children. Teens can serve a meal at the Men's Shelter, volunteer with students in Paterson, and participate in other charitable activities. They also serve on the Outreach Committee, making visits to charities and determining grants.

Adults have many ways to contribute, both as lay participants in worship and as volunteers to help with various ministries. We are seeing a trend towards less adult volunteerism; in many cases, the priorities of family, especially sports schedules, preclude involvement. We look to our new rector to help us create a more engaged parish, focused on a God-centered life in spite of secular demands which impact this priority.

### **4. Describe your worshipping community's involvement in either the wider Church, the Diocese, or locally.**

Although located in a quiet residential neighborhood, the staff and volunteers of St. Elizabeth's have both gone out to engage in the work of the church and also welcomed the church beyond into our building. We have hosted Vestry University and Confirmation Retreats, among other diocesan meetings. Between 4 and 15 active and retired clergy living in the diocese come to the weekly Wednesday Clergy Group Morning Prayer.

Our clergy have taken leadership roles in various diocesan committees, such as chairing the Education Committee of the Committee on Priesthood of the Commission on Ministry. They have been members of the New Clergy Formation & Mentoring Task Force. Our Warden has served on the Finance Committee of the Diocese, and other parishioners have assisted in planning and running the Confirmation retreats and Confirmation itself, serving as chaperones, acolytes and lectors.

Locally, our clergy have been active in the Interfaith Religious Leaders of Ridgewood, which meets monthly and plans the annual Thanksgiving, Martin Luther King, and Holocaust Memorial Interfaith Services. Our choir participates in these services as well. Additionally, we support the local Soles for Souls shoe drive and the Interfaith Blood Drive.

Saint Elizabeth's members have carried our mission beyond our region and country. One works at the Anglican Seminary in Tanzania to educate about disabilities. A young person raised here spent a year at Lambeth Palace in London as a member of The Community of St. Anselm. Another has been ordained and serves as a chaplain in a Connecticut school.

#### **5. How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?**

A single drop of water on a still pond makes a small splash, but the ripples go much further. We hope St. Elizabeth's Outreach Ministry has a similar effect. Seeing all the resources of time, talent and treasure God has given us, we look for ways to meet the needs of others, and in doing so find our efforts can have a far-reaching effect, including on ourselves and our relationships with Christ.

Every week donations of food, clothing, and supplies clutter our hallways, waiting for delivery to various charities. It's a small ripple, but it starts our outward momentum.

In 2017 we distributed over \$140,000 to 28 charities that serve local, national, and international needs, funded from our budget, the proceeds of the Outreach Auction, the ECW, and Teen Outreach. These Outreach donations encourage our active "Faith Works" ministry, with volunteer efforts of parishioners who regularly serve meals at the local men's shelter, provide homework assistance to children in nearby Paterson, and support women and children who are the victims of domestic violence. The ripples of our impact grow.

We seek to nurture a passion for outreach in our young people by engaging teens in ongoing and one-time charitable projects. We encourage them to organize themselves and decide which tasks to take on, from hands-on service to fund-raising. The intent is to cultivate a lifelong habit of service. They then, in turn, will create ripples wherever they go, just as Jesus did in his ministry.

#### **6. Describe your congregation's stewardship program and how it shapes the life of your community?**

St. Elizabeth's parishioners have been very generous in their support of the church. Through their gifts they finance not only a staff that leads us spiritually and musically, but also a vibrant outreach program of grants to charities and a significant contribution to the Diocese.

Our stewardship program (called "Ingathering") operates by collecting pledge cards from member families in the fall to establish our budget for the following year. The Ingathering process takes about a month, resulting in the receipt of around 150 pledge cards. The remaining 60 trickle in over subsequent months. Annual pledges have made up approximately 95% of our income for the past 7 years, with the remainder from donations and modest investment income.

A subcommittee of Vestry members coordinates the pledge collection. They recruit 65 or more callers, whose job is to contact via phone or email member families to verify that they have received a pledge card in the mail and offer to pick it up. At no time does a caller suggest a dollar amount, nor do they know the amount someone pledged the previous year; each pledge is private. Callers explain the process, and invite members to an Ingathering Brunch to celebrate our collective commitment to the parish.

St. Elizabeth's emphasis has been on parishioners giving what "feels right" rather than a request for proportional giving. The philosophy has been that if everyone gives what he or she can, the church will have what it needs.

## **7. How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?**

To become the Church of the future, we must transition from passively waiting for people to find us to actively inviting people to join us from the neighborhood and beyond. There is much good here: our programs for children, for outreach, and our worship. We want to bring the joy of a closer relationship with God to others who may not even be aware that they are missing anything. We believe God has asked us to do this.

Many parents say their children brought them to St. Elizabeth's. The camaraderie formed tearing around the Parish Hall during Coffee Hour becomes the supportive friendships in adolescence and beyond. Relationships grounded in shared Christian values can surpass those of teammates or classmates. Our world values success yet struggles with the pressures of achievement. The emotional and spiritual tools young people find here can be life-long.

The secular world offers opportunities to be charitable with money and time. Yet without a spiritual connection, giving often ends with the gift. By joining with others who share that connection, who seek to "serve Christ in all persons", charity comes alive; our members receive so much more than they give.

When asked what kept them as members, a majority of parishioners said it was our traditional, formal style of worship and welcoming hospitality. We believe there are

others who would find our worship style fulfilling and spiritually nourishing. We want to invite them here.

We look to our new rector to help guide us in this mission.

**8. Do you have a ministry to children, youth, and/or young adults? If so please describe what you do.**

St. Elizabeth's has long recognized the importance of its ministry to children, reflected in our monthly Family Sunday service and our robust children's choir program. It is also evident in our child-centered approach to Christian education and fellowship in the Episcopal tradition.

Our Church School program is optimized to a child's age. Children in Preschool through 2nd grade attend Children's Chapel, a separate 30-minute service beginning at the same time as the main service. They sing Bible songs, pray and hear a Bible story, and then go to classrooms where volunteer teachers lead lessons from the Godly Play curriculum.

Older children join their parents in the main sanctuary, but exit for Church School before the sermon, where they are taught by volunteer teams of teachers. Clergy and lay people teach weekly 8<sup>th</sup> grade Confirmation classes, with field trips to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and a Gospel Church.

There is a monthly Youth Eucharist in the Chapel for all children in grades 3 and up. A priest conducts the service using a simplified Rite 2 liturgy, and children lead prayers, acolyte, and serve Communion.

Sixth and seventh grade students meet socially in the Young People's Fellowship (YPF), with 15 attendees at 6 annual events, such as a bowling night and a Halloween party.

Some 15-20 students attend monthly High School Group events. Their focus has been on active participation in Outreach, such as raising money, stocking shelves at a food pantry, and serving meals at a men's shelter.

**9. As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being?**

As a worshipping community St. Elizabeth's is focused upon inclusivity, both within and outside our congregation. Our two Sunday services provide scheduling flexibility and offer different spiritual experiences; the 8:00 Rite 1 Holy Eucharist, without music, is perhaps more individually focused and meditative, while the 10:00 with music is more interactive and family oriented. We have options for spiritual connection in our other varied worship services. In all of our worship, praying expressly for each other and those in our lives and communities knits us together spiritually.

Fellowship is a key part of how we emotionally support each other. While our festive events are popular, it is the smaller gatherings that foster the more personal connections between members. The weekly or monthly get-togethers where we see the same faces

become an important part of our lives; it is the bonds formed sitting in meetings and sharing meals that create a trusted network to which we can turn.

Physical well-being includes the care of people's physical needs as well as our beautiful church and property. We invested in a large generator so that our buildings – already a meeting place for neighborhood groups – can be a safe haven should the neighborhood experience a power loss. Beyond regular food drives for the needy, we offer meal delivery to parishioners when ill or requiring help. Our "Parish Fun Days," where parishioners gather to tend our gardens, polish brass, paint lines in our parking lot, and more, are as much about fellowship as building maintenance.

#### **10. What is your congregation's experience with conflict? How was it addressed?**

St. Elizabeth's received a bequest of over \$1.7 million several years ago from a parishioner – which was both a blessing and a challenge. How does God want us to use this gift? How do we ensure that this decision does not fracture us as a congregation?

The parish embarked on a thoughtful process to seek to understand what God's Will might be for this treasure. It involved forming a committee to discern the answer through conversations, surveys, small group discussions, parish-wide forums – and lots of prayer. Over time, what emerged was a fairly sharp division within the congregation. A large group favored using the funds to provide foundational and ongoing support to the Phillips Academy Charter School, which serves inner-city children in nearby Paterson. A second, smaller group sought to put the funds to use for various needs within the parish, including the Church's long-term savings.

While the committee felt strongly that God was leading St. E's to look outside our walls, as supported by a majority of the congregation, it was clear that God was also calling us to open our hearts and minds to a multifaceted approach with this gift - to designate the majority of the funds to seed a multiyear partnership with the school and its students, and to use a portion of the funds to meet internal parish funding requirements, including adding to the parish's savings. By listening to God and to each other, we resolved a contentious situation and remained a united community of faith.

#### **11. Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?**

The Parenting Group started a few years ago as a gathering for parents who were waiting for children in choir practice on Wednesday evening. The Cherub Choir rehearsal ends at 5:00, and the Junior/Youth Choir starts at 6:00, so in between we serve pizza for families, many of whom have children in both choirs. At 6:00 babysitting is provided so the parents can have time together as adults. Ranging from 4 to 10 attendees, both moms and dads come, depending on who is on for childcare at that time. Opening with prayer, conversation can be light-hearted or serious, reflecting issues of the day. It concludes with prayer, often including issues raised by attendees. This has become another means of drawing new members deeper into the church as they form relationships with other members of the same age and interests. It coordinates with the

Newcomers Group, in that many of the members are new to St. Elizabeth's. Here with other young parents they learn about various aspects of life in this parish, including other ministries. Cathy Quinn, our Associate for Family Ministries, is responsible for this ministry.

**12. What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?**

Our church is stable but not stagnant, has valued traditions but is not rigid. But at times it appears our leadership has unconsciously slowed implementation of some change. Our yearlong discernment process identified areas we are anxious to change. For some time, there has been widespread opinion that we need to address our dated website and lack of social media engagement. Rather than wait for our next rector to spearhead this change, we have commissioned gifted lay people to address this need. Like many congregations, we've seen youth sports on Sunday impact parish life. In the past, our rector encouraged families to prioritize Sunday morning church involvement, but it appears to have not had much effect. While changes to service schedules and even adding an evening service have been talked about, we see the need to move from mere conversation to specific planning and implementation of service changes, while reconciling what that means. A third area of change we have identified relates to pastoral care. Rather than relying on clergy, we are excited to develop a new systematic approach that would foster greater lay ministry involvement and hopefully improve the experience.

**Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community.** Spiritually vibrant, Scripturally faithful preacher, Relational, Visionary, Approachable, Committed to music to move people spiritually, Intellectually curious, Cross-generationally engaged, Open and honest, Approachable, Compassionate yet forthright, Sociable, Evangelistically motivated; A good Sense of Humor; a Story Teller who can relate her or his own experience, strength and hope to surrounding people; Down to Earth; Emotionally Mature

### **Additional Portfolio Resources**

**If you are interested in additional details, please email us for copies of our last annual report or other information.**