

St. Paul's Rock Creek

SPRC Rector Job Description

Saint Paul's Rock Creek Church is a welcoming and affirming Episcopal parish church, located in the heart of a thriving, diverse urban neighborhood in Washington, DC. The oldest parish in the diocese, St. Paul's campus includes one of the most important historic cemeteries in the city, and we share our grounds with an independent Christian Montessori school. We have a full-time grounds manager and team as well as a cemetery manager and staff to support sales of cemetery plots. Our small but close-knit parish community is racially and culturally diverse, like the surrounding neighborhood, and we seek a compassionate and dynamic rector who can guide us on a path of radical hospitality as we work to grow our parish family and better serve the community that surrounds us.

Qualifications

- Priest in good standing in The Episcopal Church
- Minimum 5 years of parish ministry experience, including pastoral care/counseling, Christian education, and coordination of lay ministry volunteers
- Inspired and inspiring communicator in both preaching and liturgy; joyful, compassionate and creative
- Collegial management style; team builder with strong commitment to developing lay leadership
- Embrace and model for others a solid path of continuous personal spiritual exploration, growth and development
- Willingness to take risks, learn from successes and setbacks, course correct, and move forward with grace, humility, and good humor

Responsibilities

Worship

The rector will be responsible for planning liturgy and worship services for our weekly Sunday services, Ash Wednesday and Holy Week observances, parish weddings and memorial services, and at the annual Service of Remembrance for all those buried within the glebe during the previous year. They will share preaching, presiding, and celebrating eucharist with associate and visiting clergy, and will build new pathways for participation in the liturgy by congregants of all ages.

Pastoral Care

The rector will conduct and coordinate pastoral visits to the members of our community who are sick, grieving, or otherwise in need of spiritual comfort and support, and will guide the development of a lay ministry for pastoral care, to include recruitment, training, and licensing of lay eucharistic ministers. They will be responsible for providing the spiritual counseling required for those wishing to receive the

sacrament of marriage or exploring the path of ordination, and will assist individuals, couples and families in crisis or facing stressful life transitions. In collaboration with fellow clergy and lay leaders, develop and implement pastoral education activities such as prayer writing workshops, Lenten devotions, or Advent retreats.

Congregational Education

Working in collaboration with associate clergy, the Vestry, and lay leaders, the rector will be responsible for developing a program of Christian education for individuals of all ages. We wish to build a clear path to discipleship for the members of our faith community and are seeking a charismatic teacher who is committed to meeting people wherever they are on their faith journey and guiding them on the path of Christ. The rector will also collaborate with the teachers and administrators of Holy Family Christian School to provide Christian educational programming to their students as requested.

Parish Management

The rector will carry out the administrative leadership of the church, working collaboratively with the wardens and vestry, and with other lay leaders. Day to day operations of the cemetery are the responsibility of the Glebe Manager (not yet hired), who leads a team of administrative, sales and maintenance specialists, and who reports to the rector and the wardens. Additionally, the rector will encourage faithful stewardship practices amongst all members of the parish community and will partner with lay volunteers on the implementation of an inspiring program of stewardship education grounded in the principles of our faith. We seek a candidate who develops relationships across the Glebe; including the cemetery, the Montessori School, and the gatehouse).

Ministry Beyond the Parish

The rector will be actively involved in the diocesan community, working closely with the Bishop and with fellow clergy to expand the ministry and mission of the larger Church. Additionally, we seek a candidate with a strong commitment to social justice, who can help the parish discern opportunities to better serve our surrounding neighborhood, and welcome strangers, seekers, and skeptics to our church home.

Community Ministry Portfolio

SECTION II: Compensation Housing & Benefits

Cash Stipend: Yes

Cash Stipend Detail: \$83,088 -128,000

(based on 5 – 15 years of service, and column E. Housing is in addition to the above)

Housing / Rectory Detail: Base on the neighborhood / location chosen. Review with Rev Robert Phillips.

Utilities: N/A

Utilities Detail: N/A

SECA reimbursement: Yes

SECA reimbursement option: Full

SECA reimbursement details: 7.65% full reimbursement

Compensation Available for New Position: per EDOW guidance column E.

Negotiable: YES

Additional Compensation Note: The St Paul Rock Creek Parish spend policy allocates funds for the Rector and Church maintenance in addition to plate and pledge.

Housing Available for ____ Persons: No parish provided housing is available.

Person Plan: Yes (We are in compliance with CPF requirements)

Healthcare Options: Clergy +1

Dental: Yes

Housing Equity Allowance in budget: None or N/A

Annual Equity Amount: N/A

Vacation Weeks: One month, including 5 Sundays

Continuing Education Weeks: 2 weeks

Continuing Education Weeks Funding in Budget: \$500 - \$1000 /year

Sabbatical Provision: Yes

Travel / Auto Account: No

Other Professional Account: No

Comments: None

SECTION III: WORK HISTORY & SKILLS:

(previous three rectors)

Rev. Robert Trache (Interim)

Date Begun 01 2022:

Date Ended TBD 2024

Rev. Allan Johnson-Taylor, Rector St. Paul's Rock Creek Parish

Date Begun 12 2011:

Date Ended 01 2022:

Rev. Rosemary Sullivan

Date Begun 06 2006

Date Ended 11 2011:

Rev. Geoffrey Price

Date Begun 05 1987 or 1988:

Date Ended 11 200? (2006?):

Church School:

Name of school: Sunday School – Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Number of teachers/leaders for the children's school: 3

Number of Students for children school: 35 on roster with average weekly attendance of 10

Number of teachers/leaders for teen/young adults school: n/a

Number of students for teen/young adults school: n/a

Number of teachers/leaders for adults school: n/a

Number of students for adults school: n/a

Christian Family Montessori School

Day school: (please check next to the appropriate box)

A. Pre-k

B. Kindergarten

C. K-6

D. K-12

E. Other: Pre-k through grade 6

Number of students for day school: 102

Number of teachers for day school: 4 lead Montessori teachers plus 2 Catechists

Number of total staff for day school: 18

Notes:

In 2011, we began a lease to Christian Family Montessori School. Founded in 1981, CFMS is an AMI-accredited program paired with the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. CFMS serves children age 3 to grade 6 with plans to extend to grade 8. CFMS is a welcoming, affirming school grounded in the principles of inclusivity, equity, and social justice. While the school is an independent non-profit, there is great potential and enthusiasm for deepening the school-parish partnership and shared ministry.

Section IV: Narrative

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

The congregation wanted to learn more about the Episcopal liturgy, and in the Spring of 2023, Father Robert Trache answered the call to explain why we worship the way that we do. Over a month, St. Paul's RCC celebrated the Eucharist according to the traditions of various traditions around the globe – including those of the Anglican Church of Kenya and New Zealand, the Iona Community of Scotland, the Lakota Sioux Native American service and the Anglican service from the 1789 Book of Common Prayer.

After each one of the services, Father Bob led a discussion about what was different, what was the same, and how it moved us. Also, did we want to include aspects of the service into our own?

This exercise taught us through illustration and participation how our service has evolved and changed throughout the world since the 1789 Book of Common Prayer. And, it showed how our particular church has a unique worship style that includes some high church Episcopalian, along with more modern elements that includes music from various traditions including African American spirituals, American gospel, traditional Charles Wesley hymns, and weekly gifts from our very talented music and choir director.

2. Describe your liturgical style and practice. If your community provides more than one type of worship service, please describe all:

SPRC holds two regular worship services weekly: Sundays at 8 and 10:30 am. Both are Rite 2 services, with the 8 o'clock being smaller and more intimate, and the 10:30 also including children from Sunday school. Overall, ours are progressive and multicultural services, with both Gospel and traditional music prominently featured. Our hymns are drawn largely—but not exclusively—from the 1940 hymnal and LEVAS, and our 10:30 service boasts an exceptional choir.

Our two associate priests have different preaching styles; and under our interim rector we have also incorporated prayers and liturgy from around the Anglican communion into some services. These were very well received, and the congregation has signaled an interest in continuing to explore alternative liturgies.

3. How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

Our choir is composed of volunteer and professional singers. It is open to all who express interest in joining. The Lay Readers ministry functioned right through the covid pandemic as we turned to online services. The Altar Guild offers another path to ministry. We have an acolyte ministry and provide training to the acolytes. The opportunity to be an usher for church services is open to all. Volunteers manage the computer system that provides access to those attending service online. This is a vital ministry. We hope to revitalize our Lay Eucharistic Visitors, which has been dormant for a few years. We offer nursery services during the 10:30am Eucharist and assisting with the nursery is a ministry. Service on the vestry is another path to participation in the ministry at St. Paul's. Volunteering to assist with the community events we host, such as the Strawberry Festival and Halloween party are other ways to minister. St. Paul's is a member of the Partner Council for Samaritan Ministry and is also a member of the Compass Rose Society. Volunteering for either of these organizations through St. Paul's provides an opportunity to be a part of ministry on a global level.

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

We are the type of community that loves to come together for a project. Whether the project be the Halloween party, Strawberry Festival, pilgrimage to Israel, or traveling with the Compass Rose Society, we come together to share with each other and the greater community. We also come together to share in our Bible study after the 8:00 service and share with the Crazy Christians' group meeting once a month. We read books, watch movies with the entire congregation and community and pray to enrich our spiritual lives.

5. Describe your worshipping community's involvement in either the wide Church or geographical region?

Our members have a long tradition of supporting and participating in, activities of the Wider Church and in our surrounding community. With respect to overseas ministries, the parish is a member of the Compass Rose Society. We have responded to specific needs by donating to parishes in Genoa, Italy, US Virgin Islands and Nicaragua. We have provided comfort to the many parish and non-parish families who use our cemetery by offering wreaths and Memorial Day flowers for placement at gravesites. Every person whose burial service was held at our church during the prior year is remembered during our annual All Saint's Day service. For over 150 years, we have welcomed the community to visit our Glebe during the annual Strawberry Festival and more recently Halloween Spooktaculars and movie nights. Our church has participated in the neighborhood Celebrate Petworth events including a booth manned by our children to raise funds for the Capital Area Food Bank from the sale of handcrafts and to distribute literature about our church.

6. How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

St. Paul's Rock Creek (SPRC) is a historical cemetery and a place of beauty. Many beyond our congregation enjoy the tours, grounds and burials. In the past SPRC has extended its pastoral care to various nursing homes and institutions.

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

Our "Crazy Christians" small-group ministry, named after Presiding Bishop Curry's book, was launched just before COVID-19. This women's small-group aimed to strengthen relationships with each other and with Christ. Amid the pandemic, we shifted to Zoom, sharing our personal stories and exploring our country's history from a fresh perspective in the face of present-day injustices. In response to our country's racial reckoning, the Crazy Christians organized an online film series on racial injustice in America. We watched six films including "I Am Not Your Negro," "When They See Us," and "13th" and engaged in meaningful discussion with our wider community. Most recently, we read and discussed Pauli Murray's "Song in a Weary Throat" highlighting a positive change maker in history. The following Crazy Christians can be contacted about this: Royan Miller-Morgan, Chandra Lewis, or Jael Anker-Lagos.

8. How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

When you think about the future of the church, you may feel that it will always be there to welcome followers; but when you walk into the sanctuary and view the attendance. It is like where are they? We know the pews will not always be full on any given day, but we need to prepare for a new vision of Church.

We came to the realization that we must find ways to connect our church to our existing congregation, new members, and visitors. During the challenging times of the COVID pandemic, we stayed connected by establishing church services through Zoom and Live Streaming on our website. Most churches have noticed a dwindling number of in-person fellowship due to COVID and the increased use of technology. We have to utilize it to our benefit by finding new and inventive ways of connecting with the community and welcoming members. St. Paul's Rock Creek Church already has a diverse congregation, and we have incorporated the use of technology. We will need to adapt to: 1. Spiritual needs of a more diverse community, beliefs and backgrounds. 2. Create an open dialogue within the congregation and community. 3. Adapt to the needs of younger generations. 4. Expand the use of social media.

9. What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

SPRC has greatly benefited from the generosity of our parish ancestors, whose creation of the glebe, and contributions to the parish endowment, have helped to ensure our financial stability. Unfortunately, decreased weekly attendance coupled with changes in our pastoral leadership have taken a toll on our stewardship efforts, and while a committee has begun to make inroads, a more robust education effort is needed.

Our stewardship efforts have focused on a fall mailing campaign, and while we had hoped to incorporate stewardship “moments” in our Sunday services, with pledging members sharing their spiritual journey of stewardship, we have not yet done so. We hope that, as we build our congregational ministries and outreach, and further develop our educational programming, we will be explicit in naming the stewardship of our human and financial resources as an underpinning of all that we do at SPRC. We seek a rector who can educate and inspire us to live into our obligations to give freely and with gratitude for all that we have received as individuals and as a community of believers.

10. What is your worshipping community’s experience of conflict? How have you addressed it?

Unfortunately, our parish has recent experience with conflict. In the fall of 2021, the Vestry made a very difficult decision to remove our Rector. The problems that led to this action were largely focused on the Rector’s management of the staff, meaning it was a weekday problem more than it was a Sunday problem. As such, many parishioners were unaware of the growing issue, and were surprised and angered by the Vestry’s action. There were hurt feelings all around. Although those hurt feelings are less raw now, it is probably too optimistic to say that our parish has entirely healed from this conflict.

But, from the start we have been deliberate in our attention to healing. Shortly after the Rector’s departure, we organized several opportunities for congregational conversations about the decision, and the path forward. We were grateful for the support of the Diocese during our early conversations, which were designed to allow grievances to be aired, but also to steer the church towards the future. We are all eager to continue moving St. Paul's forward with a new Rector.

11. What is your experience leading change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? What did you learn?

In the past, we saw a congregation that was turned against itself, had little to no recent outreach to the local community, and a suffering relationship with organizations on our campus. We are now a congregation that welcomes the growing relationship with the on-site Montessori School

and looks for additional opportunities to open its doors, go out into the community, and share the message of Jesus Christ.

The Vestry, congregation, the Diocese, including Bishop Mariann, and outside consultants and lawyers worked to get the church through those difficult times.

We need to move forward — taking with us our unique history and culture but leaving the hurt and division of the past. We look forward to welcoming a Rector to help us along this journey to fulfill our mission as a congregation within the Petworth community, and as individuals on our walk with Jesus.