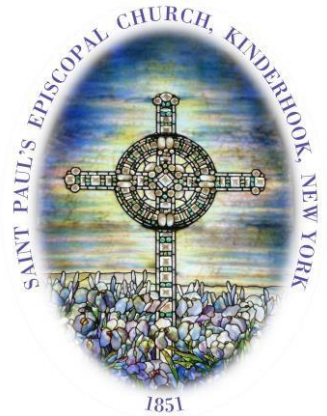


Saint Paul's Church

Kinderhook, New York

a parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany



Qualifications, Duties, and Expectations of Vestry Members

This brief overview was adopted by the Vestry of Saint Paul's to help prospective candidates discern whether they believe God is calling them to serve on the vestry.

The Vestry Handbook by Christopher L. Webber (Third revised edition; Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Morehouse, 2011) is a resource given to each vestry member. Anyone who wishes to use it in discernment may obtain a copy from the Rector. Previous editions are substantially similar.

The Vocation of the Vestry

Vestry members are the lay spiritual leaders of the parish. They lead by **modelling discipleship**, and serve by **identifying and making resources available** for **ministry, discipleship**, and **evangelism**. As a body, the Vestry:

- are elected by and from the eligible voters of the parish (see below);
- represent the interests of the parish as a whole, rather than of constituents or constituent groups.
- lead by learning, educating, informing, and persuading others;
- help the clergy hear members who may not be able to speak for themselves;
- help the parish understand the work of the clergy and pressures on the clergy;
- model bold faith;
- spend time in corporate worship, prayer, Scripture study, and fellowship in addition to regular attendance at public services;
- ensure that the parish's financial, structural, and spiritual resources are used to promote the mission of the church;
- identify individuals to fill positions of parish leadership and representation;
- help the Rector discern God's vision, vocation, and mission for the parish;
- promote the Diocese through attendance at diocesan events;
- by both word and example, encourage and help parishioners find their place in the parish's vocation;
- facilitate direct communication among parishioners, clergy, and staff;
- act as the official interface between the parish and the world in support of God's call;
- work within the laws of the church and the state;
- maintain confidentiality of sensitive issues brought before the vestry.

Qualifications for Vestry Service (same as qualifications for voting)

- age 18 or older
- member of the Episcopal Church through baptism, confirmation, or reception
- recorded in the parish register of baptisms or communicants
- has not transferred to another parish
- a record of faithful, regular attendance at worship on Sundays and other occasions of common prayer unless for grave reason prevented
- a record of regular, verifiable financial contributions greater than a token amount to the operation of the parish for twelve months prior to the election.

Spiritual Qualities of Vestry Members

To lead, Vestry members must publicly and visibly exemplify mature Christian faith and life as depicted in the Bible, creeds, and other formularies of the Church.

Qualities commended by Saint Paul are needed of vestry members:

patience • kindness • not envious • not boastful • not arrogant • not rude • not insistent on having one's own way • not irritable • not resentful • does not rejoice at wrongdoing • rejoices at the truth • forbearing • willing to take others at their word • hope • endurance (I Corinthians 13:4-7)

The fruits of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23 are also positive indicators for productive Vestry service: love • joy • peace • patience • kindness • goodness • faithfulness • gentleness • self-control

Expectations of Vestry members at Saint Paul's

Time commitments

"The man or woman who agrees to serve on a vestry takes on a job that, to be well done, must claim priority in time and energy."

(Vestry Handbook)

Among the activities that claim time and energy are:

- daily prayer, including daily Scripture study;
- attendance on Sundays and at other times of common prayer;
- attendance at the Annual Meeting;
- attendance at the monthly vestry meeting;
- attendance at emergency vestry meetings;
- attendance at vestry retreats (up to two per year);
- attendance at committee meetings;
- preparation for, or work resulting from, vestry and committee activity;
- counting the collection on scheduled Sundays;
- leadership training, including Parish Leadership Conferences;
- diocesan activities;
- congregational events;
- participation in Mutual Ministry Review.

Leadership in Stewardship

- advocate for, and personally contribute to, tithing of time, talent, and financial resources
- take a leadership role in stewardship campaigns.

Additional commitments

- Have your photograph, a short bio, and accurate contact information posted on the parish web site and listed in publications.
- Wear your Vestry name tag when attending events at Saint Paul's or where Saint Paul's is present.
- Be accessible and responsive within 24 hours by telephone, text, or e-mail.
- Participate actively in Vestry meetings. The Vestry meeting is a safe place to express ideas, wonder, question, and even argue (respectfully, speaking the truth in love).
- Outside the meeting, the Vestry speaks with one voice.