

Saint Paul's Church Kinderhook, New York

History and Tour

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Rector, Wardens, Vestry, and people of Saint Paul's Church, Kinderhook, a parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany, welcome you warmly in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Whether you have come to worship with us, or simply to view our church, we want you to know a bit about us, our 150 years of history, our community service, our faith, and the architecture of our beautiful church building.



When Christians say “church,” we mean several things. The **church building** is “the Lord’s house in the neighborhood.” The expression “Parish Church” comes from Greek: “parish” from *paroikos*, which means “house nearby,” and *kyriakos*, “belonging to the Lord.” This is quite literally God’s home with us on earth. It is set apart (“consecrated”) exclusively for worship. Its art and architecture symbolize and evoke the presence of God, raising our minds and hearts in prayer, praise, thanksgiving, confession, and petition.

By contrast, **the assembly of believers** is the church that is “not built by human hands” (II Corinthians 5:1), but, rather, “living stones, built up into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (I Peter 2:5). This is the living church, “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, to proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (I Peter 2:9), a family united by and through faith in Jesus Christ. God’s love and forgiveness are at work here, transforming us, despite our many failings, into a community where “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” prevail as the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22).

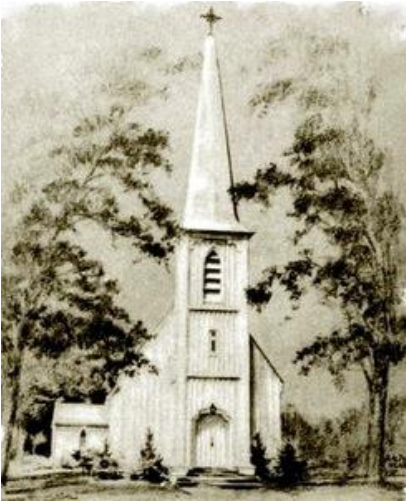
The people and buildings of the church exist

- **to glorify and worship God in Jesus Christ;**
- **to become disciples filled with the Holy Spirit; and**
- **to make disciples of all the world.**

HISTORY OF SAINT PAUL'S

Orchards and gardens for miles around bespeak bounty; well kept homes proclaim comfort and St. Paul's asserts heavenly treasures. A dark timbered nave with rich glowing slender windows, it is a place of symmetry where nothing mars the sense of beauty. One might travel far and not find so perfect a Church.

— Emily B. Gagney, in the *Albany Churchman*, 1931



Saint Paul's in Kinderhook grew from a small mission supported by the Diocese of New York and a generous New York City congregation, to become today a parish of the Diocese of Albany. Saint Paul's grew along with the village, the surrounding area, and the county.

The Episcopal Church has deep roots in New York State. Before the American Revolution, many residents were members of the Church of England and loyal to the Crown. With the establishment of the United States in 1789, they became members of the newly organized Protestant Episcopal Church. Local Episcopalians attended services in Hudson and Stockport. Around 1840, Bishop Onderdonk of

New York baptized the first Episcopalians locally, and in 1850, regular services in Kinderhook were held in the Dutch Reformed Church and other borrowed quarters.

On January 18, 1851, our parish was incorporated as "The Rector, Church Wardens, and Vestrymen of Saint Paul's Church in the town of Kinderhook in the County of Columbia." The Reverend Frederick T. Tiffany was called to be the first Rector, and ministered to the elected lay leadership (two Wardens and nine vestrymen), and 29 other members — 41 in all. The first parishioners, some of whom had come from the Dutch Reformed Church, were a diverse group, of Dutch, English, and French Huguenot ancestry.

The new congregation made plans for a church building on a lot donated by vestryman David Van Schaack on Chatham Street (U.S. Route 9) just north of the present Village Hall. The congregation selected Richard Upjohn to design the new church. Upjohn was the leading church architect of his day, a promoter of the Gothic Revival style, who had recently designed the then new Trinity Church at Broadway and Wall Street in New York City. The design of Saint Paul's closely followed drawings in his book of plans, *Upjohn's Rural Architecture* (1852). His designs for Episcopal churches in Columbia County include edifices in Clermont and Copake Falls.

The new church was completed at a cost of approximately \$8,000 and was consecrated on June 22, 1852, by the Right Reverend Carlton Chase, Bishop of New Hampshire, acting for the Bishop of New York. Trinity Church on Wall Street loaned \$1,000 in 1852 toward building expenses, renewed the mortgage in 1870, 1889, and 1909, and eventually forgave it in 1910. Before we became a parish (i.e., self-supporting), Saint Paul's was a mission of the Diocese of New York, dependent on diocesan subsidies to supplement the giving of generous parishioners. [Note: the Episcopal Church is not a confederation of independent congregations. Parishes (local churches), though distinctive in character, are local outposts of a Diocese, subject to a Bishop who safeguards doctrine, authorizes worship, ensures pastoral care, and maintains unity with the wider church.]

In 1857, a house and land on Silvester Street were purchased for \$3,000; the house now serves as the Rectory. A bell for the belfry was purchased and installed in 1857. Oil lamps to illumine the interior of the church were donated by the church women in 1859. Electricity was installed in 1904.

The village business district in the 1860's was a crowded place, and the church lot was small. When expensive foundation work became necessary in 1868-1869, it was decided to dismantle and reconstruct the church, at a cost of \$2,200, on newly purchased Rectory land. Upjohn advised the parish on the reconstruction. The rebuilt church differs somewhat from the original 1852 design. The tower was relocated symmetrically at the front end of the church rather than on the side. Inside, wood paneling and wainscoting were added, contrary to Upjohn's stated preference for plain, white plaster walls in his designs.

In 1868, the Diocese of Albany was founded. In 1870, all church pews were made free (previously, the custom in most churches had been to rent front pews to individuals and families for exclusive use). In 1900-1901, a two-storey addition, including a kitchen, was added to the Rectory with funds raised by the women of the church. Additional property, including a "sexton's house," was purchased on the north side of the church in 1904 for \$900. Last occupied by a sexton in the 1940's, it was sold in 2017 and is now a private residence.

To accommodate an active, growing congregation, a parish house was built in 1915 after an eight-month funding drive. It included a Rector's study, Sunday school classrooms, a library, choir room, gymnasium — and a bowling alley!

In 1961, the land south of the Rectory was purchased; it is now a parking area and lawn. In 1964, a Columbarium (burial ground for cremated remains) was dedicated on this part of

the land as well. In 1988-1989, the old parish house was demolished, and the present McNary Center was built through a major fundraising effort and the generous bequest of Lucy McNary. The McNary Center serves both the parish and entire community as a meeting place.

A TOUR OF THE CHURCH BUILDING

Saint Paul's Church is an outstanding example of Upjohn's rural churches: simply and honestly constructed of wood in the Gothic tradition. The Gothic Revival style directs the eye upward toward heaven, with vertical lines inside and out, arched windows, and a towering spire. Upjohn and other architects borrowed design elements from the Gothic cathedrals of Europe and adapted these to American churches large and small.

Familiar Gothic elements include a floor plan in the shape of a cross, with symmetrical transepts on either side of the nave. The church has a deep chancel; a wide, high roof; and a spire surmounted by a cross. Saint Paul's is faithful to Upjohn's specification of **vertical board and batten** outside, and wood cedar shakes on the **spire**. A cross was first installed atop the spire in the 1868-69 reconstruction; the present **bronze cross** was installed in 1897. The present **slate roof**, which dates from 1905, replaces earlier cedar shakes. The building is accessible via stairs or a ramp with wrought iron railings similar to the original design to meet current building codes.

You approach the tower and enter a small porch, or **narthex**, through double front doors, painted red in keeping with long-standing tradition. Passing through the dark-panelled narthex, through another set of double doors, you find a soaring ceiling with exposed beams. Resembling the keel and ribs of an inverted boat, this "**nave**" reminds us of the fishing boats of Jesus' first disciples. To your left stands the stone **baptismal font**, installed in 1880, along with icons, a prayer station, and the building's Certificate of Consecration.

Along the walls on either side are fourteen crosses, each accompanied by a recent icon showing a point in Jesus' passion, forming a *via dolorosa* from his condemnation to death by Pontius Pilate through his burial in a stone tomb. They remind us of what Jesus endured for love of us. During the season of Lent (40 days before Easter) we meditate on his love by praying in procession at these "stations of the cross." We hope you will join us.

The present plasterboard ceiling was installed in 1928 and replaced in the 1960's, covering the original chestnut plank ceiling. A portion of the original wood ceiling, with its dark blue paint flecked with gold stars, can be seen above the organ pipes. The **nave floor** is Georgia pine, and the **wainscoting** is black walnut; both were added around 1877.

Nine **stained glass windows** illumine the **nave** and **sacristy**. These windows, installed in 1931, were fabricated by Wilbur Herbert Burnham of Boston. The theme is the scriptural canticle, "O all ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord" (page 47 in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*). The verses are lettered on the windows and depict the entire canticle, beginning at the front to the left of the altar as you face it. The stained glass illustrates the order of creation, from angels, the heavens, and the seasons with their weather; the earth, with its green things, waters, and animals of sea, land, and air; then, human beings, Israel, the servants of the Lord, the holy and the humble. A sacristy window depicts priests of the Lord.

At the head of the aisle, called the **crossing**, two **transepts** branch out to the north and south. To the left (south) through a door is the wood-paneled **sacristy**. To the right, a space of equal size houses the Leonard A. Carlson **organ**. The brass **lectern** from which Sacred Scripture is read and preached (to the left as you face the altar) was added in 1888. Beyond the crossing, **choir pews** flank the aisle leading to the altar. The **chancel** encloses the altar, **sedilia** (seats for the ministers), and a **tabernacle** in which we reserve the Blessed Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood. It is surrounded by a **Communion rail** installed in 1890.

The chancel floor, previously covered in wood parquet, was tiled with plain, dark Victorian tile in 1892. In the 1960's the tile was removed, the floor built up, the altar rail extended toward the congregation, and the present red carpeting installed. Interestingly, in the 1850's Upjohn specified maroon carpet rather than tile or parquet in his churches.

The focal point of the apse is the carved marble **altar**, supported by three angels, given as a memorial in 1894 and consecrated by Bishop William C. Doane. The brass altar cross was a memorial presented in 1877, and the two brass **candlesticks** and **vases** in 1895. Two seven-branched **candelabra** were given in 1932.



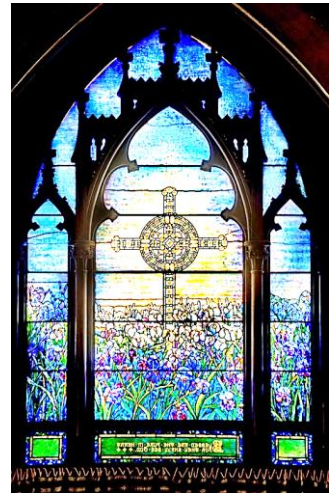
TIFFANY INSTALLATIONS

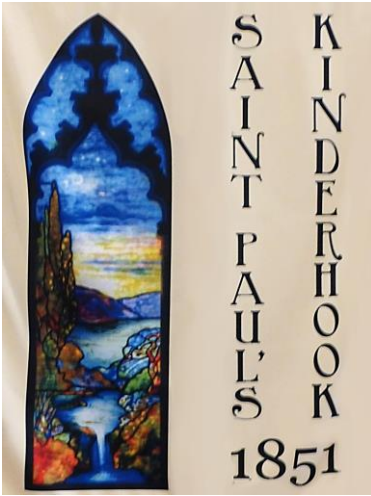
The stained glass window over the altar (see image detail on the back) is awash in irises surmounted by a Celtic cross against a dawn sky. This window, made and installed by Tiffany Studios of New York in 1913, was commissioned in memory of Adaline Elizabeth

Van Schaak Vanderpoel; the Vanderpoel family was deeply and generously active at Saint Paul's. This arched, topped window is almost ten feet tall and a little less than seven feet wide, with three lancets and tracery. The outer lancets are narrow, a foot wide and a little over five feet tall; the center lancet is three and a half feet wide and more than seven feet tall. From the interior, there appear to be eight tracery sections, but from the exterior only six are seen, as some tracery subdivision is imparted by interior decorative wood trim. The main mullions have decorative carved wood columns and capitals, and further castellated wood decoration up through the tracery.

The main foreground has a rising perspective, with the field of irises across all three lancets. In contrast to the later Burnham windows, Tiffany landscape windows describe the subject in a wide array of colored glass, without need of the traditional painted line. The floral elements are composed of a wide variety of colored streaky and textured opalescent glasses, individually cut and copper foiled into a complex band across the lower one-third of the window. The window can thus be read in both transmitted and reflected light. The sky background is created in large pieces of opalescent glass to provide contrast and thus to focus attention on the cross.

The irises symbolize faith, hope, and wisdom; the Celtic cross symbolizes Christ's sacrifice while reflecting the glory of eternity. The center lancet includes the verse, "Blessed are the pure in Heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). The perspective draws the viewer heavenward to the cross, which is mirrored in the brass altar cross below, a reminder that the dazzling victory of the glorious cross, bathed in light, was achieved only by the steadfast, self-emptying love of Jesus Christ for all humanity. Although the fault line between wickedness and righteousness runs through the middle of every human heart, nevertheless Jesus was willing to undergo his wrenching passion even for rebellious, compromised souls, reflecting the love of his Father who is "kind to ungrateful, evil people" ([Luke 6:35](#)). His sacrifice on the dark cross of Calvary testifies that God's love makes up for our deficit of love. His resurrection proves that the life he lives and enables us to live is stronger and more enduring than death itself.





The four stained glass windows in the chancel were also fabricated by Tiffany Studios and installed in 1917. They depict the four seasons, featuring, by turns, a lake, mountains, and sky in winter; morning; noonday; and night. Each contains a subtle hint of realities greater than those of nature; one, for example, features the faint outlines the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God (Revelation 21:2). This window is featured prominently in our parish banner (left).

Bronze plaques on the side walls of the nave and chancel, also commissioned from Tiffany Studios, memorialize the contributions of past congregants and clergy. Of special note

are those commemorating the ministry of the Reverend John Carl Jagar (Rector from 1912 to 1931), and the Reverend Canon Glyn Thomas (Rector from 1942 to 1954). The remains of Canon Thomas are interred beneath the altar, while Father Jagar's body lies at rest beneath the sanctuary.

Learn more about Saint Paul's, its history, heroes, and its treasures, including views of all the stained glass windows, at
<https://www.saintpaulskinderhook.org/about-us.html>

Dating from the middle of the nineteenth century, a modern rural church that approaches an unearthly beauty, a hallowed ornament, having the distilled essence of spiritual aspiration. It is, without exaggeration, a gem. From its open door on the calm of a summer morning is beseechingly visible its alabaster Altar; and one is again reminded of the Prayer Book's consonant language in the Collect for the day, 'and be made partakers of Thy heavenly treasure.'

— Emily B. Gagney, in the *Albany Churchman*, 1931

A BIT ABOUT WHO WE ARE AND WHAT DO AT SAINT PAUL'S

Sunday Masses: 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

Past services may be viewed on demand
on our YouTube channel.

Other services as announced.

For info, schedules, and news visit our Facebook page
or our web site, <https://www.saintpaulskinderhook.org/>

Sign up to subscribe to our Weekly newsletter.

Classes and Bible Studies Wednesday afternoons

Share the Wool textile ministry (knitting, crocheting)
Tuesday mornings

Sisterhood of Serenity women's fellowship and study
first Saturday of the month

Brotherhood of Bacon men's fellowship and study last Saturday of the month

We participate in and support *the Valatie Food Pantry* and *Healing a Woman's Soul*,
a ministry to women escaping domestic violence

Alcoholics Anonymous: Open meeting, Fridays at 8:00 p.m.

Our space and facilities are available for gatherings and events at nominal cost.



6 Silvester Street / P.O. Box 637, Kinderhook, New York 12106-0637
office 518-758-6271 • *pastoral emergencies:* (518) 755-9716
saintpaulskinderhook@gmail.com

The Very Reverend Tom Malione, *Rector*
Cathy Morris, *Director of Music Ministry*
Pat Armstrong and Dave Malsan, *Wardens*

Wendy Bopp, Ella Brice, Roger Leithead, Jennifer Moore, Karyn Watt, Joan Yannacone, *Vestry*
Karyn Watt, *Treasurer*
Mary Theresa Julien, *Office Coordinator*