Dear Saint Paul's,

"They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor." — Isaiah 61:3

Step into our sanctuary, and you can feel the presence of history—wooden pews worn smooth by generations of prayer, sunlight filtering through stained glass that has witnessed both sorrow and celebration. Saint Paul's has stood through it all, a beacon of hope in the midst of Waco. Like the rings of a mighty tree, each decade of our life together tells a story of faithfulness, service, and displays of God's splendor.

These rings, layered in growth, are a sacred image of our time. Growth doesn't happen all at once. It happens year by year, season by season. Each ring testifies to a season of life—a time of drought or abundance, cold or warmth. Just like a tree, our parish has grown year by year, shaped by the stewardship of those who came before us.

Our theme for this year's stewardship season, "Rings of Renewal: Our Story of Growth," calls us to reflect on our role in this ongoing story. We are stewards of a living tradition—not only preserving what was built before us but nourishing it so that it may grow into what God intends next.

In this next season, Saint Paul's is being called into a new ring of growth. This parish is expanding into new offerings, formation, and community. But growth does not happen without care. Trees need sunlight, water, and rich soil. The Church needs the same through worship, leadership, and generous hearts.

As we look toward the future God is calling us into, we are not simply maintaining a legacy—we are extending it. We are planting the next ring.

The founders of this church could not have imagined where we are today. Yet they gave. They built. They believed. Now it is our turn to do the same, not only for ourselves, but for those who will sit in our pews decades and generations from now.

Let us tend this community with love and generosity. Let us be the stewards of this season's growth as our own ring takes shape.

With gratitude and blessings,

The Stewardship Committee

Jenny Howe Peel, Chair
Katherine Carpenter
Steve Dow
Felicia Goodman
Sarah Kathryn Ricci
The Rev. Samantha R.E. Smith, Rector, ex officio
The Rev. Gavin E. Tomlin, Associate Rector, ex officio
Sarah Martin, Dir. Communications & Membership, ex officio

OUR STORIES OF GROWTH

56%

56% of people who attend our in-person Sunday services also attend formation at the 9 AM Sunday School hour.

2,392

Volunteers gave 2,392 hours to support Sunday programming this year—an increase reflecting our expanding ministries and engaged church family.

TOP 7%

Our average Sunday attendance puts us in the top 7% of Episcopal churches.

This summer, I had the joy of completing Level I training in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. It deepened my awe for the mystery of God's presence in the child—and reminded me that in the stillness of the atrium, we are all invited to listen more closely to the Shepherd's voice.

Chloe St. Romain

150

Our Comfort Meals team has prepared 150 homemade dishes to provide care and nourishment for parishioners in need of a warm meal.

Since joining Saint Paul's a year and a half ago, we have not only found a church to attend on Sundays but a true family. From being married here to serving alongside others, we have felt welcomed, included, and deeply supported every step of the way.

Ben and Megan Koshy

Ah, a bowl of good hot soup can be good for the body and soul. When I was laid up with a broken hip and was home alone, this group provided me this blessing. Knowing Saint Paul's was caring for me was a spirit lifter.

Chuck Reeves

289

Saint Paul's supported 289 students at West Avenue Elementary School through our School Supply Drive.

I love that our church is both deeply local and wonderfully global. No matter where I travel, finding an Episcopal church with the same name feels like finding home.

Sarah Kathryn Ricci

We are all called to serve, and it has been an honor to serve as an acolyte for so many years—especially sharing that responsibility with my best friend, Daisy—and even my little brother, too!

Harper Peel

With over 50% of the budget funded by annual pledges and gifts, we have achieved remarkable progress and deepened our influence both within and beyond our parish.

Our income

Pledges

Pledge income is from members who have signed a pledge card and then make payments toward that pledge. We receive a majority of our income from pledges and it is also the most variable portion of our income. Increasing the overall amount pledged is the best way to increase our budget.

One-Time Gifts

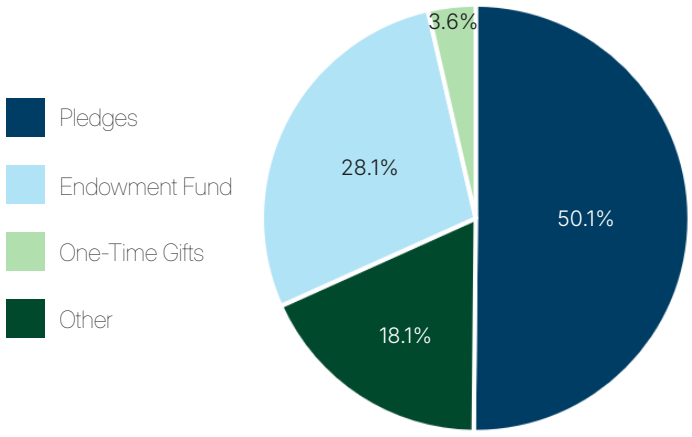
One-Time Gifts include undesignated plate offerings, one-time online gifts, and other independent, undesignated giving throughout the year.

Endowment Fund

The Saint Paul's Parish Endowment was established in 1932 to increase the financial sustainability of the church. Each year, we are able to take an annual distribution equal to 3.5% of the three-year average of the value of the fund. This distribution allows us to fund a portion of our operating budget while leaving a majority of the endowment to continue growing in investments.

Other

Our other income includes school maintenance reimbursements, the lease of the Jefferson plot, annual income from the Badger and Genovese Trusts, and interest income from our accounts.



Our expenses

Worship

Worship is at the heart of our community, and we always strive to create services where we can gather to worship and celebrate the Holy Sacraments together.

Formation

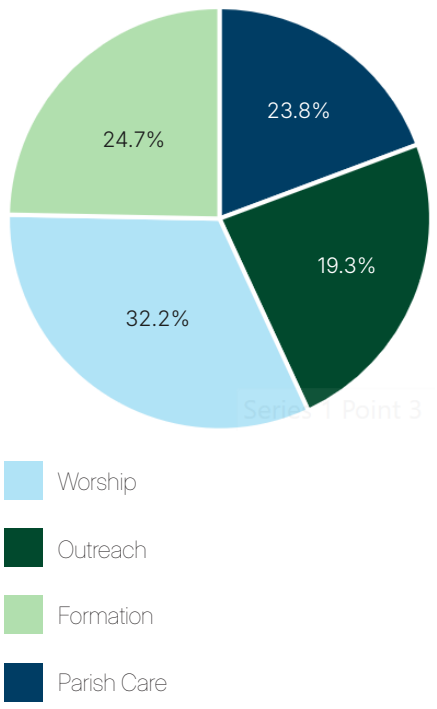
Formation is central to our mission of fostering spiritual growth and curiosity. Through Sunday school classes, special formation series, and regular formation groups, we hope to encourage a lifelong journey of learning.

Outreach

Supporting our community has been a longstanding value at Saint Paul's. Through donation drives, Church Under the Bridge Thanksgiving, volunteering in the community, and pastoral outreach, we are able to make important positive impacts for our mission partners and the wider community.

Parish Care

Part of our mission is to foster lifelong community in our congregation. We want every member to feel supported by the church and their neighbors, no matter their age. To help support this mission, we make pastoral care visits and support community-building efforts like parish gathering, retreats, and Comfort Meals.



Rings of Renewal: Our Story of Growth

SAINT PAUL'S STEWARDSHIP 2026