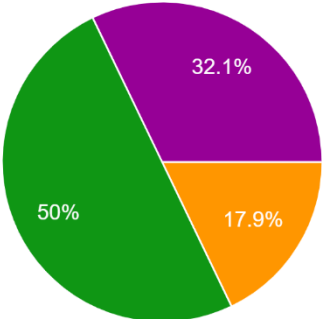


St. Mark's Parish Survey November 2023

Age

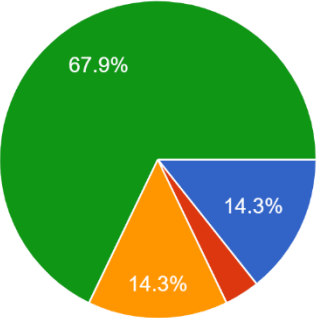
28 responses



- Under 18
- 19-30
- 30-50
- 50-70
- Over 70

How long have you been a member of St. Mark's?

28 responses

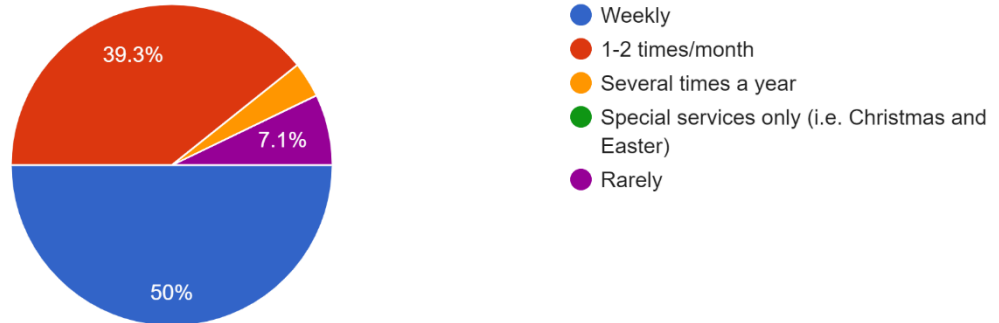


- Under 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 5-15 years
- Over 15 years

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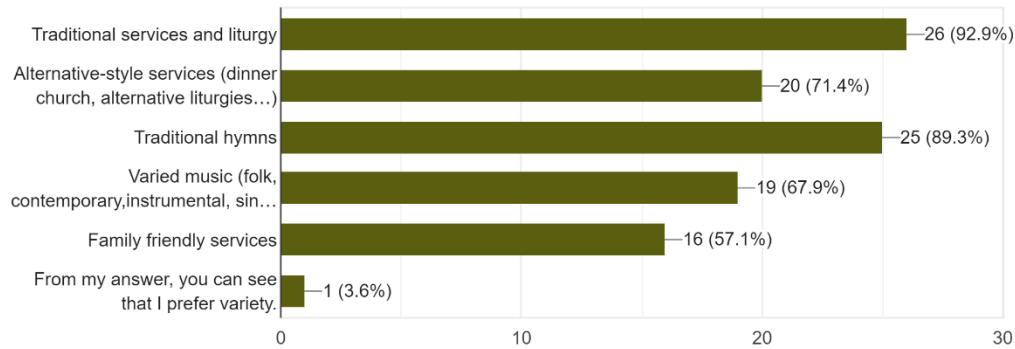
How often do you attend services?

28 responses

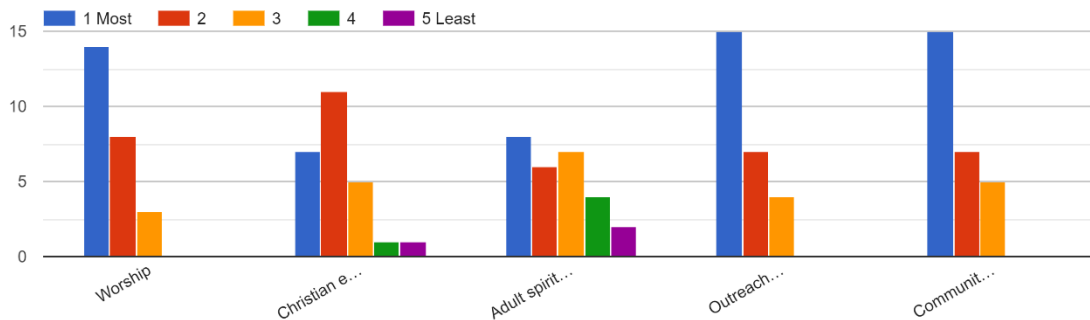


Which worship options do you enjoy? Select ALL that apply

28 responses

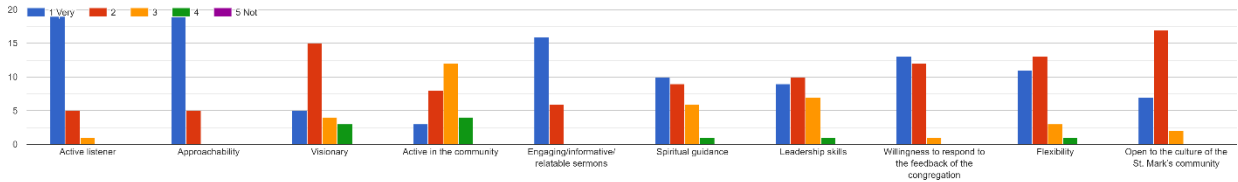


What do you value about the St. Mark's community? (1-most important to 5-least important)

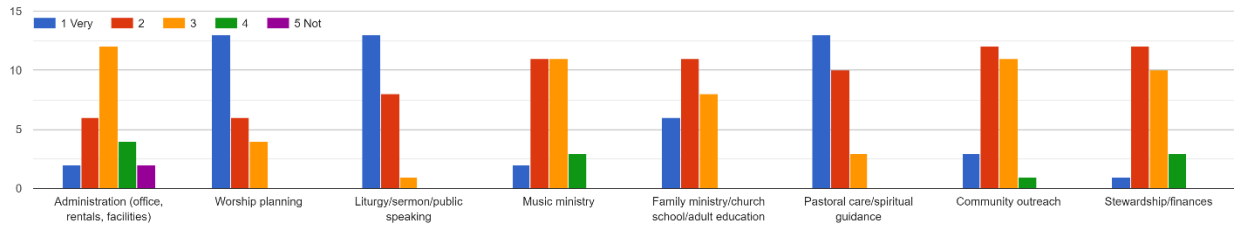


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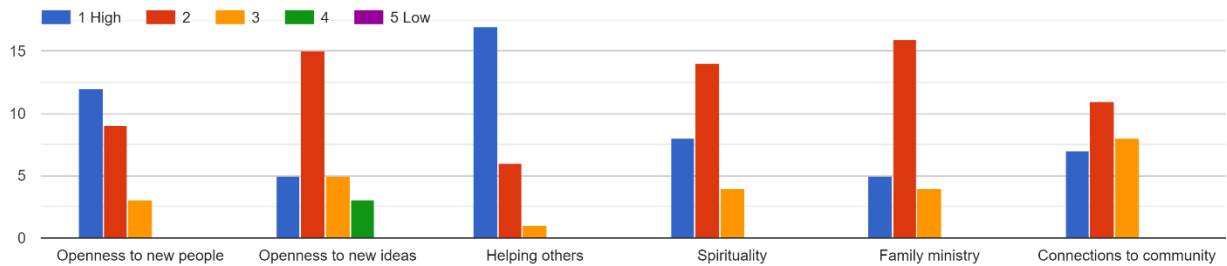
What character traits are important for our new Rector? (1 = very important to 5 = not important)



Please rate how important the following roles are for the next part-time rector for St. Mark's. (1 = very important to 5 = not important)



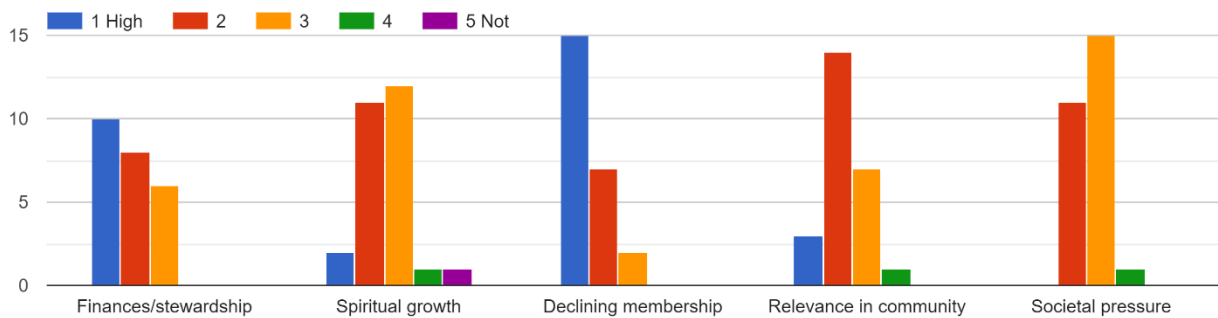
What do you believe are the strengths of the St. Mark's community? Please rate (1= high strength to 5 = weakness)



- Our willingness to help each other.
- We love each other!!!
- In response to Openness to new ideas, I feel as though there are many who are open to try new things, and several who are uncomfortable with change.
- Everyone is kind and welcoming, no questions asked about your previous church "experience" Congregation is small but open and generous.
- I feel a great presence of God here. I don't know how to attribute this. It is present even when the pastor changes. AND the organist is outstanding. Very musical.
- St. Mark's does Outreach really well. I value the Episcopal liturgy and traditions at St. Mark's, but I've also been impressed by the willingness of this faith community to try new things, such as Dinner Church.
- Historic ties to the community
- Outreach in multiple ways
- outreach, high education level, long history in community

- St. Mark's is very active in outreach activities which provides a lot of opportunities for helping others
- For a small parish I think we have done a good job with our outreach efforts - Chocolate Festival, St. Paul's meal and other individual outreach efforts during the year.
- I think St. Mark's needs to do a better job of connecting to the community in order to help local people understand who we are and to entice them to give us a try.

What are your concerns about St. Mark's? Please rate (1= high concern to 5 = not an issue)



- We have too much to do and need to streamline even more. We are not drawing people in because we are not seen as offering something folks and families are looking for? Who are we?
- Concerns about the dwindling size of the congregation and also about the average age of the congregation. Younger people are needed to keep the church going in future years, and relationships with God and the church begins in youth. I dont think this problem is unique to st marks, churches everywhere are struggling.
- We need to be open to new ways of viewing the church if we want to attract the younger generation and keep our community strong.
- Currently, I straddle two residences, so I admit that I rarely make it to church at St. Mark's. I am part of the problem of declining attendance in Worship and participation in programs. I fear that many others who have one residence in Westford/Groton and a second residence elsewhere (be it the Cape, NH, Maine, or CT) tend not to be in Westford on weekends and may be leaving St. Mark's permanently. I worry about attracting new parishioners, especially young people (be they single, couples, or parents with young children.)
- If the church engages in politics it will further drive away members and limit the potential for new growth
- Attracting younger people
- Like to see more community involvement
- Need to do better at integrating new young families into ministries including Outreach
- The concerns are not just what is happening at St. Mark's but society in general.
- With most of our congregation over the age of 60 (us included) concerned about where St. Mark's will be in 10 or so years if our membership continues to decline.

- Several of these areas are related, but I think that declining membership is the most concerning, and directly related to both relevance in the community and finances.

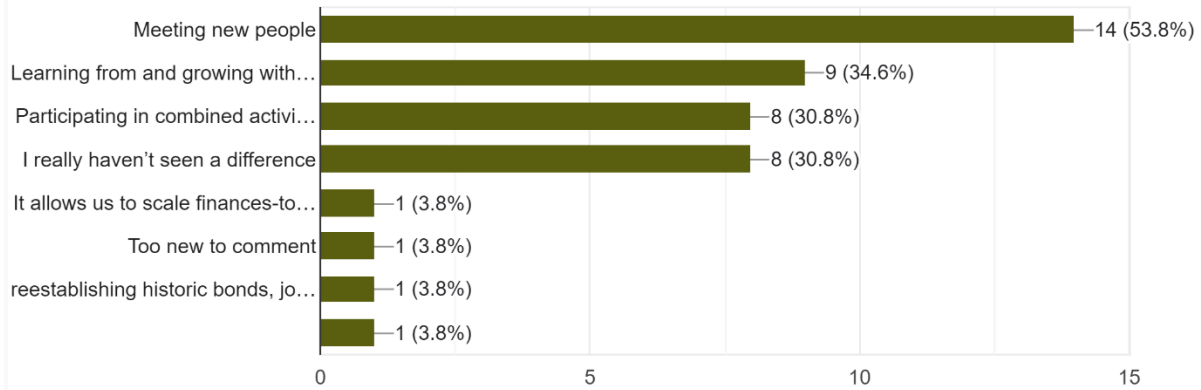
- **Please add your comments about the future mission and purpose of St. Mark's and its ministries:**

8 responses

- We need to meet the spiritual needs of our community. That may require doing things in new ways to meet people where they are.
- I love all of our outreach activities. Going to Bridges by Epoch is so powerful. I love that we work with so many other small organizations to do the Soup Kitchen ministry and there are many small ways to help. I love the Dinner Church-it is even better than coffee hour for getting to know people.
- Focus on the youth and families, maybe offer summer camps? Maybe invite the families of the preschoolers to the church, maybe some people think that you have to be episcopal to join? Or maybe you do? I'm not even sure 😊
- The next generation views organized religion in a negative light. The loudest and most common narrative they hear about religion focuses on intolerance, authoritarianism, sexual abuse, and patriarchy. Pastors of giant churches flying on private jets and stealing money. Hate spewed on LGBTQ+ and other marginalized groups. Not welcoming migrants or others seeking asylum. We need to make the case that our church (along with many others) is different in that we offer a supportive, kind, loving community grounded in the teachings of Christ. And our outreach efforts make a difference in feeding the hungry in our midst.
- Spiritual reset and source of support not a divisive political branch
- I'd like to see the return of youth ministry and involvement
- Relevance needs to be tied to spiritual formation/meaningful, inclusive worship and Outreach
- One concern about St. Mark's is that the same people seem to be doing most if not all of the work, and often with little thanks or acknowledgement. Part of that is probably because membership has declined pretty significantly. But it's hard to keep people if they're feeling overworked and underappreciated. I know I experienced that personally a couple of years ago, which is why my attendance has dropped off. It just didn't feel to me like the same church it had been for many years. Part of that is probably due to COVID, but not all.

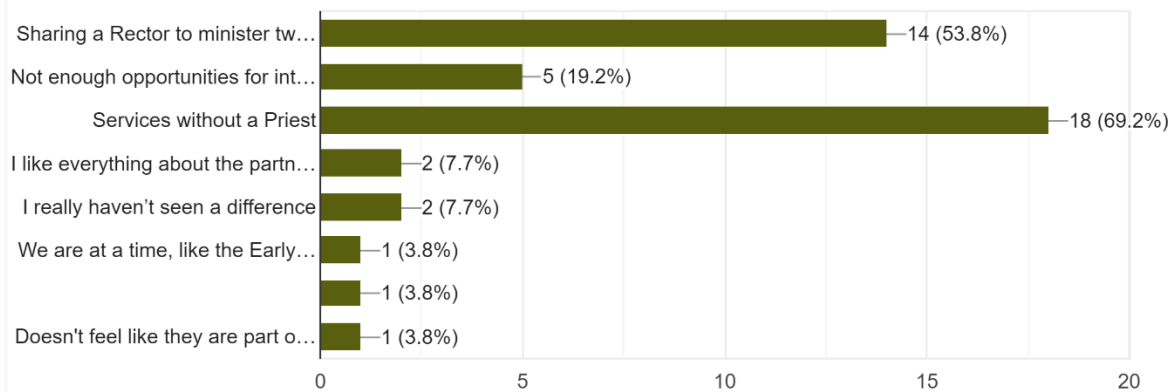
What do you like best about the St. Mark's-Trinity Chapel partnership?

26 responses



What do you like least about the partnership?

26 responses



- more communications and shared events.
- Hmm. Not sure. I would like to attend one of their Bull Run events, or Mystery events-sounds fun. I would personally like to be a better leader.
- Can't really comment on this.
- Partner with a church that is closer to Westford
- More joint adult spiritual formation, more joint gatherings
- more interaction
- I much prefer sharing every other Sunday like we have been doing recently than one priest trying to do both churches in the same day.
- Maybe more opportunities to interact together. I really liked the joint service we had on Oct. 29 over at Trinity.

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- Wish minister could be more available to us but Trinity needs som help. So if minister can try and help to see if they are open to some suggestions, that's progress but if they are more negative to help, intervention needs to come in and assist.
- I honestly think Trinity is too small of a parish to be maintained on its own. I think some hard decisions will need to be made about potentially folding it into another parish (like St. Mark's) because the current model seems to be hurting both parishes.

Other comments

- We have had a hard time finding folks to step up for regular volunteer activities in the service or hosting coffee hour. People travel or have other commitments. We need more bodies in the Services! Folks who volunteer can't do more-I don't want people to burn out.
- I wonder if we could also leverage out partnership with St. Andrew's in Ayer? I have never been there but they are close by.