Stratford Anglicans

St. James' St. Paul's St. Stephen's

An Amalgamation Vision

This document is intended to share a vision of what an amalgamated parish might look like and how it might be experienced by parishioners. Nothing in this document is set in stone because of the nature of the situation with so many unknowns. We will inevitably have to adapt and adjust things until we get it right.

Worship

We will gather for worship on Wednesdays and Sundays throughout the year. On Sunday there will be an 8 am a said BCP communion service, a 9:30 am BAS Holy Eucharist with contemporary music, and a 11:00 am BAS Choral Eucharist with the organ and traditional music. The 9:30 am service may be conducted in the main church or upper parish hall, depending on preference. Worship planning for the contemporary service will be done in consultation between the clergy, musical leadership, and a liturgy committee. Each Wednesday there will be a said BCP communion service. In addition to the weekly worship, there will be monthly Choral Evensong services and bimonthly Jazz Vespers services. For special services there will be an All Souls memorial service at the beginning of November, a Lessons and Carols service, Christmas Eve services at 4, 7, and 10:30 pm, Ash Wednesday services at 10 am and 7 pm, and Holy Week services, daily, from Palm Sunday through to Easter Sunday. Other weekday feasts and celebrations may be added from time to time. Preaching responsibility will be shared between the Curate and Rector and, upon the completion of her maternity leave, the Vicar too. Deacons will preach occasionally.

Pastoral Care

The clergy team will work collaboratively to ensure that parishioners are cared for, supported, and attended to. The clergy team will visit homes, seniors residences, hospice, and hospital, and will be available at the church too. They will provide sacramental ministry where appropriate, prayer, and listening ears. The lay pastoral care team, will continue to add to the care provided by the clergy, with a special focus on the members of the congregation that are unable to make it to church regularly.

Administration
Prior to the effective date of the amalgamation a Transition Council will be formed of the Wardens, Lay Delegates, and Treasurers of the three parishes. This council will advise on matters of collective interest and guide collective decision making. The council will work to get everything ready for an initial Vestry Meeting creating a slate of nominees for the new parish council and other committees and parish organizations, developing a short list of potential parish names, and consolidating the parishes' financial resources. The nominees for the new parish council will be made up of people from all three parishes, including the wardens team, the lay delegates, alternate lay delegates and regular members of parish council. Once the amalgamation has been completed. The new parish council will operate as usual administering the common life of the amalgamated parish. The Rector will chair Parish Council meetings.

Outreach
We hope to be able to turn the St. Paul's building into an outreach centre. The St. James food bank will move to St. Paul's continuing to operate on Tuesday mornings, while the St. Paul's food bank continues to operate on Friday mornings. The Connection Centre will continue in the basement. The breakfast programme will continue in the gym. Twelve Step groups will continue to meet. Building management and maintenance will be undertaken by a building supervisor employed by the parish.

Parish Activities/Ministries
We would offer regular Christian education opportunities in varying formats, continuing with dinner groups, on-going Bible studies, and sacramental preparation (as needed). We will incorporate the START social/recreation group from St. Stephen's for parish activities. The ACW will continue its work. We hope to develop ministry for children and youth, including Sunday programming for young children, faith formation for teens, and social gatherings for young adults (22-40). We also hope to develop a youth choir ministry.

St. James Site

The Grow in Grace campaign is underway to pay for the necessary building renovations and off-street parking at the St. James site. The tower work will be completed by October 2025. The final phase of work on the south face of the church roof is set to begin in spring 2026. The intention is to borrow the money for that project from the St. James Endowment fund and pay it back over time as money comes in through the Grow in Grace campaign. We will charge ourselves the published diocesan interest rate and pay that interest into the operating account so that we maintain our operating income. All other trust funds will be maintained as they are with the interest from them being used for their usual purposes.

Staff

- Priests – Rob Lemon, Allie McDougall, Tianna Gocan
    - Rob paid ¾ by Diocese, ¼ by Parish
    - Allie paid by the parish after maternity leave
    - Tianna paid by parish and with grant from the Diocesan curates fund
- Deacons – Tom Patterson, Stephanie Donaldson
- Musicians – Ian Sadler – paid monthly, Neil Young – paid by the service
- Office Admin – Kelly Strasler paid by the parish
- Other Active Clergy – Nancy Adams, Tim Elliott, Elaine Clark Siberry, Tanya Phibbs