

# SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



*The Lord's Prayer—He Qi*

**The Second Sunday after Christmas**

**The Epiphany**

**January 4th, 2026**

**10:30 A.M in the Church**

The Rev. Stephanie E. Parker  
Rector

# Welcome to our Church

## WELCOME to St. Paul's Episcopal Church

We are delighted you are seeking God in this special place. We want you to know that wherever you are on the journey of faith, you are welcome to ask your questions here.

**Services are available:** Recent services are available on our website: <https://stpaulwilkesboro.org>

**Newsletters:** Sign-up today to receive our weekly electronic newsletter! Email the church office at [office@stpaulwilkesboro.org](mailto:office@stpaulwilkesboro.org) to have your name added. If you would like a printed copy of the newsletter mailed, please call the office.

We extend a special thanks today to all that have been so generous with their time and talents in making this service possible.

200 W. Cowles St., P. O. Box 95, Wilkesboro, NC 28697

336-667-4231

[www.stpaulwilkesboro.org](http://www.stpaulwilkesboro.org)

E-mail: [office@stpaulwilkesboro.org](mailto:office@stpaulwilkesboro.org)

**Pastoral Emergency Line: 336-482-6800**

### ONLINE GIVING QR CODE:



# The Gathering

## Prelude

## Three Swingin' Kings

Joe Utterback (b. 1944)

## Welcome and Announcements

*Please rise as you are comfortable.*

## Processional Hymn #324 Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Words: Liturgy of St. James; para. Gerard Moultrie (1829-1885). Music: *Picardy*, French carol, 17th cent.; melody from *Chansons populaires des Provinces de France*, 1860; harm. after *The English Hymnal*, 1906.

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# The Gathering

## Welcome and Announcements

# Opening Acclamation

Presider: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

**People:** And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

## Gloria

*Refrain*

Glo - - - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -

ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Words: French carol; tr. James Chadwick (1813-1882), alt. Copyright © by permission of Fleming H. Revell Company. All rights reserved. Used with permission. Music: *Gloria*, French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes (1887-1958)

## **The Collect**

Presider: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Presider: Let us pray.

O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

## **The Liturgy of the Word**

### **First Reading**

**Isaiah 60:1-6**

Arise, shine; for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

For darkness shall cover the earth,  
and thick darkness the peoples;  
but the LORD will arise upon you,  
and his glory will appear over you.

Nations shall come to your light,  
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Lift up your eyes and look around;  
they all gather together, they come to you;  
your sons shall come from far away,  
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.

Then you shall see and be radiant;  
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,  
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,  
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

A multitude of camels shall cover you,  
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;  
all those from Sheba shall come.

They shall bring gold and frankincense,  
and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### *Deus, judicium*

Give the King your justice, O God, \*  
**and your righteousness to the King's Son;**  
That he may rule your people righteously \*  
**and the poor with justice;**  
That the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, \*  
**and the little hills bring righteousness.**  
He shall defend the needy among the people; \*  
**he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.**  
He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure, \*  
**from one generation to another.**  
He shall come down like rain upon the mown field, \*  
**like showers that water the earth.**  
In his time shall the righteous flourish; \*  
**there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.**  
The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall pay tribute, \*  
**and the kings of Arabia and Saba offer gifts.**  
All kings shall bow down before him, \*  
**and all the nations do him service.**  
For he shall deliver the poor who cries out in distress, \*  
**and the oppressed who has no helper.**  
He shall have pity on the lowly and poor; \*  
**he shall preserve the lives of the needy.**  
He shall redeem their lives from oppression and violence, \*  
**and dear shall their blood be in his sight.**

## **Second Reading**

## **Ephesians 3:1-12**

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles-- for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

**Reader:** Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

**People:** **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand as you are most comfortable*  
**SEQUENCE HYMN #128 We Three Kings**

**Congregation & Choir**

*1. We three kings of Orient are,  
bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain,  
moor and mountain,  
following yonder star.*

**Refrain:**

*O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright;  
westward leading,  
still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light!*

**Choir Only**

*2. Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,  
gold I bring to crown him again,  
King for ever,  
ceasing never  
over us all to reign. [Refrain]*

**People & Choir**

**Refrain:**

*O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright;  
westward leading,  
still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light!*

**Choir**

*3. Frankincense to offer have I:  
incense owns a Deity nigh;  
prayer and praising,  
gladly raising,  
worship him, God Most High. [Refrain]*

## Congregation & Choir

### *Refrain:*

*O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright;  
westward leading,  
still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light!*

## Choir

4. *Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume  
breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
sorrowing, sighing,  
bleeding, dying,  
sealed in the stone-cold tomb. [Refrain]*

## Congregation & Choir

### *Refrain:*

*O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright;  
westward leading,  
still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light!*

5. *Glorious now behold him arise,  
King and God and Sacrifice;  
heaven sings alleluia:  
alleluia  
the earth replies. [Refrain]*

### *Refrain:*

*O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright;  
westward leading,  
still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light!*

*Please stand as you are able.*

## **The Gospel**

**Matthew 2:1-12**

Presider: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

**People: Glory to you, Lord Christ**

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

`And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Presider: The Gospel of the Lord

**People: Praise to you, Lord Christ**

*All are seated.*

## **The Sermon**

*The Rev. Stephanie E. Parker*

*A time of silence following the sermon.*

## The Decalogue

Presider: Hear the commandments of God to the people:

I am the Lord your God who brought you out of bondage.

You shall have no other gods but me.

**Amen. May it be so.**

You shall not make for yourself any idol.

**Amen. May it be so.**

You shall not invoke with malice the Name of the Lord your God.

**Amen. May it be so.**

Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

**Amen. May it be so.**

Honor your father and your mother.

**Amen. May it be so.**

You shall not commit murder.

**Amen. May it be so.**

You shall not commit adultery.

**Amen. May it be so.**

You shall not steal.

**Amen. May it be so.**

You shall not be a false witness.

**Amen. May it be so.**

You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

**Amen. May it be so.**

Presider: Let the love to which God calls us dwell within us and may that same love guide us into hope, joy and peace. **Amen.**

*Please stand or kneel as desired.*

## **Prayers of the People**

Leader      Merciful and mighty God, lead us by your great light into justice , truth, and hope.

**People      Shine in us Lord Christ.**

Leader      Hear our prayers for the unity and mission of the Church; strengthen the Church in faith, increase it in love, and preserve it in peace.

**People      Shine in us Lord Christ.**

Leader      In this holy time, the angels proclaimed the birth of the Prince of Peace, and the Wise Men journied to see his light. We pray for peace and justice on earth, for those who hold authority, for all who serve the common good. May we all seek truth and work for peace.

**People      Shine in us Lord Christ.**

Leader      We pray for those who suffer poverty, the helpless, those who are cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick, the lonely, the addicted, the aged, vulnerable children, and those of tender faith.

**People      Shine in us Lord Christ.**

Leader      In your great mercy, O Lord, we remember all those who rejoice with us, but whom we see no longer. May their light shine in our hearts forever.

**People      Shine in us Lord Christ.**

Presider     O Lord our God, may the Light and Hope of this time, and of your Son's epiphany, reassure our hearts that you are among us, and that you will be with us always, even to the end of the age. In the name of Jesus, we pray.

**Amen.**

*Remain standing or kneeling as desired.*

## **Confession of Sin**

*Please stand or kneel as you are most comfortable*

*New Zealand Prayer Book*

God has promised forgiveness  
as a gift of freedom and grace.  
Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Moment of silence observed.*

God of all mercy,  
**we confess that we have sinned against you,**  
**opposing your will in our lives.**  
**We have denied your goodness in each other,**  
**in ourselves, and in the world you have created.**  
**We repent of the evil that enslaves us**  
**the evil we have done,**  
**and the evil done on our behalf.**  
**Forgive, restore, and strengthen us**  
**through our Savior Jesus Christ,**  
**that we may abide in your love**  
**and serve only your will. Amen.**

## **Absolution**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins  
through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness,  
and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

## The Peace

❖ “*The Peace*” is a Christian tradition deriving its roots from Jesus himself who greeted people saying, “Peace be with you.” “*The Peace*” may feel awkward if you are new or an introvert or trying not to be noticed. We take this portion of our worship seriously as we live in a deeply divided world full of violence. These actions in God’s house model what we are called to do in the world.

Presider: The peace of Christ be always with you.

**People: And also with you.**

## Presider: Invitation to the Great Thanksgiving

## OFFERTORY ANTHEM

### The Work of Christmas

*Dan Forrest*

*When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the king and the princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins.  
To find the lost, to heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry, to release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations, to bring peace among others,  
To make music in the heart.*

# The Great Thanksgiving

***Please stand as you are able.***

*Eucharistic Prayer B, BCP page 367*

*Sing*

Presider *Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below. Praise God above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. A-men.*

Presider All things come of thee, O Lord  
**People** **And of thine own have we given thee**  
Presider The Lord be with you.  
**People** **And also with you.**  
Presider Lift up your hearts.  
**People** **We lift them to the Lord**  
Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**People** **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Presider It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

## Sanctus S-125

Music: From *A Community Mass*; Richard Proulx (b. 1937). Copyright © 1971, 1977 GIA Publications, Inc.

*Please stand or kneel as you are able.*

Presider *continues*

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from his mother Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

**We remember his death,  
We proclaim his resurrection,  
We await his coming in glory;**

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

In the fullness of time, reconcile all peoples to your grace and love, and bring us to that heavenly country where with our Patron, Paul, and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

**Our father in heaven  
hallowed be your Name,  
Your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in Heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil,  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. AMEN.**

## The Breaking of the Bread

### Fraction

(S-154)

*This setting is not used in Lent.*

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Christ our Pass - o - ver is sac - ri - ficed for us;

there - fore let us keep the feast.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Music: From *New Plainsong*; David Hurd (b. 1950). Copyright © 1981 GIA Publications, Inc.

## The Invitation to Communion

Presider: The gifts of God for the people of God...

**God's holy food for God's holy people.**

*This is the table of the Lord. It is made ready for those who love him and who want to love him more. So come, you who have much faith and you have little, you who have been here often and you have not been here long, you who have tried to follow and you who have failed. Come, for it is the Lord who invites you.*

You will now have three ways to receive communion:

**In one kind**--this means you receive only the bread or only the wine. Receive the bread by extending your hands, palm upward, when the presider comes to you and then leaving the rail or crossing your hands over your chest when the chalice comes to you.

To receive the wine only, cross your hands when the bread is presented and then drink from the chalice by gently assisting the chalice bearer by grasping the base of the chalice lightly to help guide it to your lips.

**Intinction (having the bread dipped in the wine and placed in your hand) is only done by the presider from the intinction tray. To receive communion by intinction simply keep your hands down by your sides as we have been doing. Then raise them to take intincted bread between thumb and forefinger.**

**In two kinds**--this is where you consume both the bread and the wine either by receiving the bread and then drinking from the chalice or by Intinction.

There is no intinction by multiple individuals from the chalice.

Gluten free wafers available upon request.

*Please stand or kneel as desired.*

### **Post Communion Prayer**

Presider Let us pray,

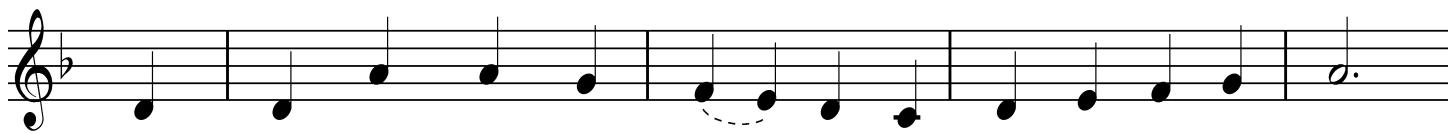
**Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, God, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

### **The Blessing**

May you, in God's holy mercy, increase in love for one another;  
May you follow Christ Jesus and learn how to live in God's ways;  
and may the Holy Spirit strengthen your hearts in holiness, as you move out into this beautiful and fractured world. And may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with this day and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*Please rise as comfortable.*

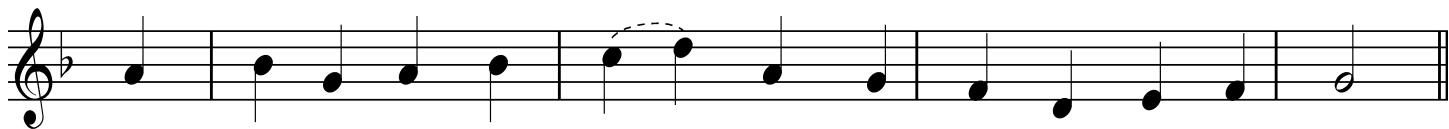
## Recessional Hymn #105 God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen



1 God rest you mer - ry, gen - tle-men, let noth - ing you dis - may;  
2 From God our heaven - ly Fa - ther a bless - ed an - gel came  
3 "Fear not, then," said the an - gel, "Let noth - ing you af - fright;  
4 Now to the Lord sing prais - es, all you with - in this place,

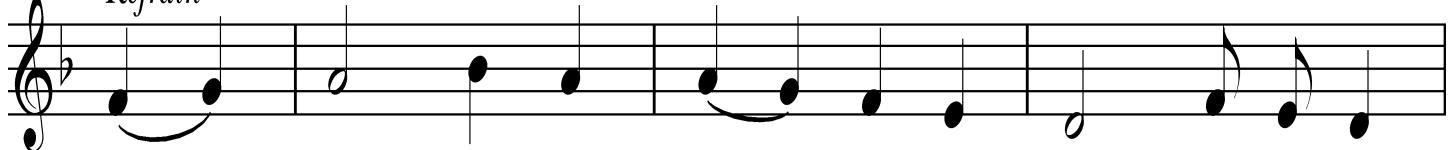


re - mem - ber Christ our Sa - vior was born on Christ-mas Day,  
and un - to cer - tain shep - herds brought tid - ings of the same:  
this day is born a Sa - vior of a pure vir - gin bright,  
and with true love and char - i - ty each o - ther now em - brace;



to save us all from Sa - tan's power when we were gone a - stray.  
how that in Beth - le - hem was born the Son of God by name.  
to free all those who trust in him from Sa - tan's power and might."  
this ho - ly tide of Christ - mas doth bring re - deem - ing grace.

### *Refrain*



O tid - ings of com - fort and joy, com-fort and



joy; O tid - ings of com - fort and joy!

Words: London carol, 18th cent. Music: *God Rest You Merry*, melody from *Little Book of Christmas Carols*, ca. 1850; harm. Charles Winfred Douglas (1867-1944). Copyright © The Church Pension Fund.

## **The Dismissal**

Presider: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia!

People: **Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

## **Postlude**

**Toccata in D Minor**

*J.S. Bach*

*Happy 70th birthday to our  
amazing Director of Music,  
Russ Stinson!*

*Join us in the Commons to  
celebrate!*

## PRAYER LIST

***Please remember in your prayers:*** All who are ill or unemployed and those who are on our prayer list.

### **Short-term**

The Albalil Family, Debbie Mckenzie, Jamie Tate, Rose Andrews

### **Long-term**

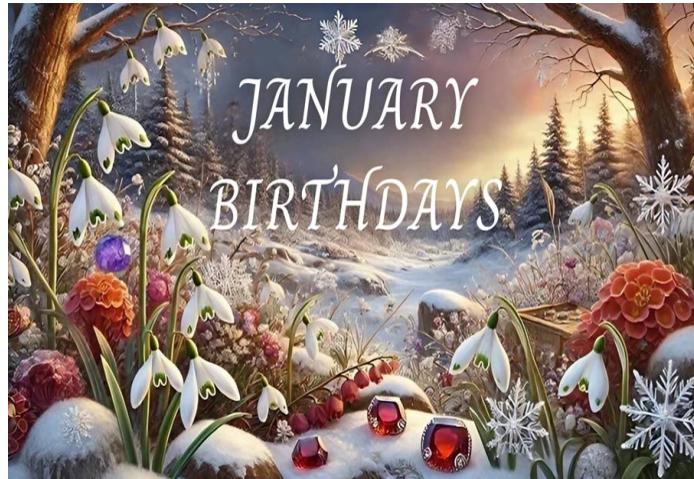
Aliza Grace Mabie, Cade Gibbs, Ray Call, Steve Jackson, Ken Asel, Shane Jenkins, Kaye Hall, Dot Beamon, Da'Shon Horton

### **Armed Forces**

Let us pray for the safety of **all our troops**, especially John Craine, Micha Duerk, Faith Lankford, Cole Griffith, Zach Necessary, Jason Westmeyer, and all others who serve throughout the world.

**Prayer requests can be submitted through the prayer request form by scanning the QR code below, or by contacting the office.**





January 5th—Russell Stinson

January 6th—Teri Ferree

January 8th—Ann Willardson

January 10th—Claudia Eller-Tobey

January 4th—Edward & Erin  
Southwell



Serving Today

**Altar Guild: Laurie Love, Kendall Forester, Reba Whittington**

**Reader: Robin Shumate**

**Acolytes: David Shupe, Linda Schneider**

**Usher: Ryan Minick**

**Bread Bakers: Mark Williams & Ben Staley**

**Vestry Lock-Up for January: Tana Myers**



**The Rt. Rev José McLoughlin**  
*Bishop of the Diocese of Western North Carolina*

**St. Paul's Vestry 2025**

**Jeff Beard**

**Chuck Forester, Jr. Warden**

**Ruth Harris**

**Julie Koch**

**Scott Jessee, Sr. Warden**

**Tana Myers**

**Diane Peabody**

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**Bill Harris, Secretary**

**Drew Mayberry, Treasurer**

**The Rev. Stephanie E. Parker, Rector**  
*rector@stpaulwilkesboro.org*

**Russell Stinson, Director of Music**

**Penny Farmer, Finance Administrator**  
**Robyn Setzer, Parish Administrator**