

## **FORWARD – WHAT IS OUR CHURCH?**

St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Blackstone, Virginia is an energetic and spirited church located in Southern Virginia searching for a rector to lead, promote, and model spiritual growth among our members. We are a parish comprised of local established families, new arrivals to the community, retirees and singles. We truly are a church family that cares and supports one another.

## **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

To live in unity with God and in service through Christ

## **PRAYER FOR THE SEARCH COMMITTEE**

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a rector for St. Luke's that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## **WHERE ARE WE NOW?**

### **Strengths**

At St. Luke's we see our strengths with our community and outreach ministries, as well as our strong lay participation for both Holy Eucharist and Morning Prayer services.

We have been active in supporting the local food pantry, volunteering for the community's summer reading program for children, and sharing our church facility with the Seventh Day Adventist congregation. Our outreach monies are identified for local community needs, such as fuel assistance or meal assistance for students at school, as well as expands to areas beyond, such as for the Southside Center for Violence Prevention, Camp Chanco, Episcopal Relief and Development.

Our lay participation for all of our services is comprised of dedicated leadership including lay readers, Eucharistic ministers, acolytes, and the altar guild. When we are in absence of a priest this leadership insures we continue to have service each Sunday.

### **Challenges**

The challenges we face are like many of the churches today; a general decline over the past several decades in membership and attendance. The average age of our congregation is now middle aged to elders. Because we have few

families with children, our youth programs are no longer regularly active. The decline in our numbers has challenged us to depend on part-time clergy.

### **WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?**

- Build on our strength of community and stewardship
- Strengthen Christian formation programs
- Expand outreach activities
- Improve facility security
- Facilitate the experience of our more senior members to act as guides for younger families

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RECTOR WE SEEK**

- A good listener
- Ability to maintain peer and community relationships
- Does crisis care and makes routine hospital calls
- Call regularly on shut-ins
- Promotes and models spiritual growth among all members of the church
- Develops Bible study and prayer groups
- Provides spiritual and moral direction for the congregation
- Provides pastoral care to the elderly
- Preaches Biblical sermons that apply the word to our lives
- Challenges people to examine their faith
- Provides stability in worship style in the Anglican tradition
- Able to see that both work is accomplished and persons are valued
- Fosters lay leadership and ministries by nourishing relationship

### **HISTORY**

The Nottoway Anglican Parish was founded in 1748, forty years before the founding of Nottoway County (whose boundaries approximate those of the parish). From 1795, when Dr. John Cameron left, no Episcopal Church existed in the parish for a period of sixty-one years. In 1856, the Reverend Churchill J. Gibson, Rector, Grace Church Petersburg, by request, preached at Nottoway Court House. Through his efforts, interest in the Church was renewed. In the winter of 1856-57 a subscription for the erection of a church was opened and the contract for the church was made by the building committee. The building was accepted and finally paid for in the month of February 1859. It is said that the name of St. Luke's was selected on account of the large

number of physicians in the congregation, seven having been among the original contributors. St. Luke's Episcopal Church, subsequently, came into being and was consecrated on November 7, 1859 by the Right Reverend John Johns.

On March 31, 1882, a meeting of the vestry of St. Luke's took place and Dr. E. G. Booth and others were appointed as a committee to purchase a lot on which to build a new church. The lot was purchased from Mr. McCulloch for the sum of fifty dollars and was paid for "by subscription among the vestry members of the congregation and citizens". It is on this site, the corner of Church and Main Streets, which St. Luke's Church now stands.

With the outbreak of WWII in 1941 Camp Picket training camp was established and with this it was found that the St. Luke's building was inadequate and plans were made to remodel. By the year 1950 the remodeling was complete, a new organ had been installed, and carpet was purchased. With all those that helped with the remodel no debt had been incurred.

During the years of January 1967 until May 1973 the previous remodeling done during WWII was again remodeled and enlarged, making classrooms for the Sunday School, a social room (The Anderson Lounge), the Helen Lord Memorial Library, and the rector's study.

## **WORSHIP**

Typically our worship is traditional – Rite II with music from the Hymnal. However, the style of worship has been subject to the preferences of the Priest. We have Holy Eucharist with music most Sundays at 10:00 am with the exception of Morning Prayer held one Sunday a month. Evening prayer is held every Thursday evening at 5:30 pm. We will use other rites during special seasons of the Church calendar including services during Lent, Holy Week, Advent, and Christmas Eve.

We have a strong lay ministry, and the strength of this has supported our times when we have had to depend on the availability of supply clergy. Several of our congregants serve as Eucharistic Ministers, worship leaders, altar guild members, acolytes, and ushers. We offer the ministry of healing prayer for any who desire to receive prayer for themselves or someone else. A Prayer minister is available at the back of the church during communion.

## **CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER**

Pastoral Care is provided by our rector and/or a trained lay person to provide home, hospital, and care facility visitation. A member of our vestry also has the charge of pastoral care and is responsible for communicating to the rector the need of those who request to be prayed for.

Fellowship is an important part of St. Luke's. Refreshments in the parish hall follow every Sunday service for a time of togetherness and fellowship. The pancake supper is a well-established, annual community event on Shrove Tuesday at St. Luke's. We have opened our doors to the Seventh Day Adventists to use our facilities for their Saturday worship and fellowship, and we have our parish picnic in conjunction with them.

In remembrance of St. Francis of Assisi's we have the blessing of the animals in October which is open to the public.

Christian Formation is typically held during special seasons or when the current priest has agreed to lead a special series.

## **CARING FOR OTHERS**

Helping Every Life Prosper (HELP) is the outreach ministry of the Blackstone Ministerial Association. Members of our church are active in managing and volunteering with food distribution.

We provide financial & spiritual support to various community organization and school programs.

Two years ago family members to honor the memory of Pearl Mayne and her son Larry Mayne established The Mayne Family Scholarship Fund. An award of \$1,000.00 is given to a qualifying graduating high school senior preparing to enter a four year or two year degree program.

## **COMMUNICATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION**

We currently employ our part-time vicar John Maxwell Kerr, S.O.S.

Our vestry meets once a month and is comprised of six members. Each vestry member has a charge of responsibility, and it is the vestry which manages the everyday business of the church along with our treasurer.

We have a monthly newsletter sent out to members and friends of the church in addition to any email communications that need to be sent out.

## **BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS**

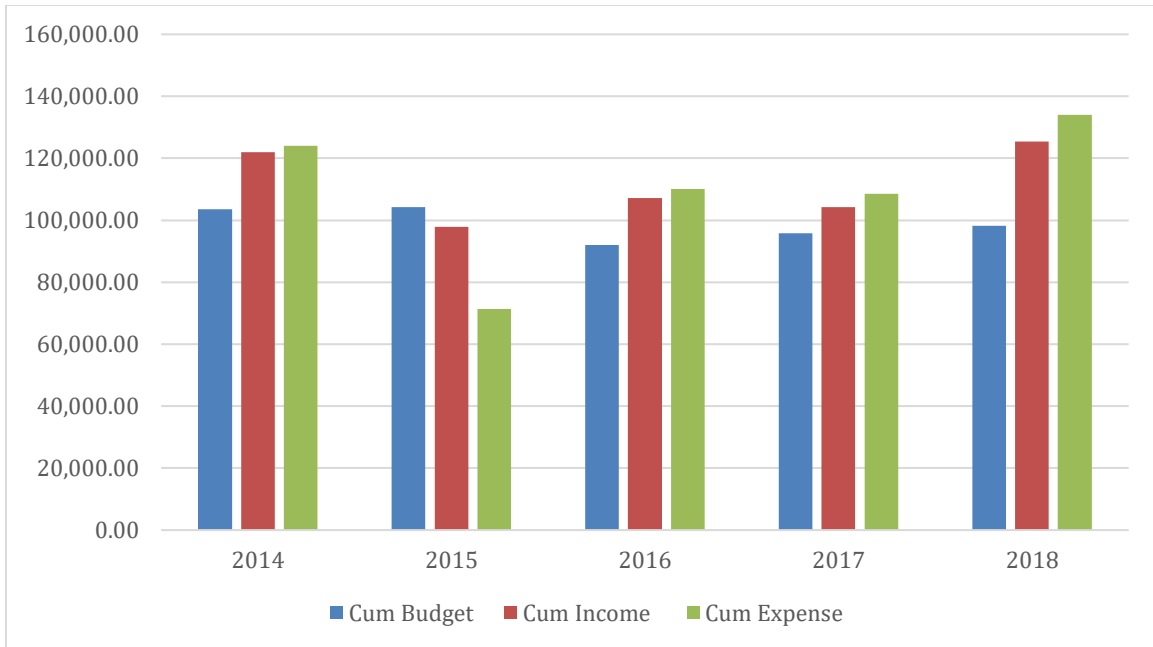
Our church facility includes our sanctuary, sacristy, fellowship hall, kitchen, and an educational wing which includes the rector's office, three classrooms, a nursery, a library, a lounge, and other rooms for various needs of the church.

Over the past several years we have upgraded our heating and air conditioning system. We made physical repairs to our educational wing including new flooring and ceiling tiles, new paint applied to several rooms, replacement of several baseboard heaters and window air-conditioning units, electrical updates done to replace damaged wiring and receptacles, and new sump pumps installed. Water and heat sensor equipment has been installed by our insurance company for alerts if water or temperature issues are detected. This was done after cold weather affected our pipes causing water damage. The upgrade of our Anderson Lounge has been completed to provide families a source of gathering and privacy in times of need. The entire size of the church is approximately 7500 square feet. The outside grounds include a paved parking lot and handicap accessibility to the church to allow access to the three levels of the building.

The church is used by a variety of community groups, including Weight Watchers, Three Arts Club, and an exercise group. The church also has a full basement, which has been used in the past by the local Boy Scout Troop.

## **FIVE-YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

	<u>Cum Budget</u>	<u>Cum Income</u>	<u>Cum Expense</u>
2014	103,486.00	121,905.19	123,999.97
2015	104,150.00	97,808.67	71,340.55
2016	92,000.00	107,143.19	110,059.90
2017	95,796.00	104,183.22	108,528.11
2018	98,225.00	125,328.70	134,086.80



Our financial stability is sound and we have no debt.

## **DIOCESAN INFORMATION**

The Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia includes approximately thirty thousand Episcopalians in 104 congregations between the Dan River and the Eastern Shore. The Diocese is divided into 9 convocations each with its own Dean. Parishes in the Diocese range from small (under 25 ASA) to large (over 300 ASA). The office is located in Newport News, Virginia

### **The Rt. Rev. James "Jay" Magness, Bishop Diocesan Pro Tempore**

The Rt. Rev. James B. Magness accepted a call to serve as our Bishop Diocesan Pro-Tempore, effective January 1, 2019 and until such time as the 11th Bishop of the Diocese of Southern Virginia is consecrated.

Bishop Magness is the retired Suffragan Bishop of the Armed Forces and Federal Ministries. Magness was elected by the House of Bishops as Bishop Suffragan on March 24, 2010. Previously, Magness served as the Canon for Mission and Diocesan Administration in the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia and in parish and diocesan ministry. He retired from the U.S. Navy in 2003 in the rank of Captain, serving as command chaplain of U.S. Joint Forces Command and fleet chaplain for the U.S. Fleet Forces Command. Prior to those assignments, from 1997 to 2000 he was on the Navy Chief of Chaplains' staff as personnel manager of the Navy Chaplain Corps.

## **WHERE ARE WE?**

The Town of Blackstone is located in the heart of southern Virginia in Nottoway County. Downtown Blackstone is listed on the Virginia Historical Register and boasts interesting architecture, buildings over 100 years old, and charming iron-fronts.

We are located just 35 miles southwest of Petersburg and 50 miles south of Richmond, and 50 miles north of Lake Gaston which borders the Virginia and North Carolina state line. Lynchburg is 80 miles to the west and Washington D.C. 150 miles to the north.

Adjacent to the town of Blackstone, and located in Nottoway County, is Ft. Pickett. Once an active U.S. Army base, it is now home to the Virginia Army National Guard. In May 2014 the U.S. Department of State selected Fort Pickett as the site of their Foreign Affairs Security Training Center, which will train 8,000 to 10,000 students a year, many of them diplomats.