



ST. MARY'S
Episcopal Church

St. Mary's Episcopal Church Profile 2019

A report to assist the Bishop
in the procurement of a Priest.
Prepared by the Search Committee
under the direction of the Bishop's Committee.

Table of Contents

OUR COMMON VALUES	3
The Mission of St. Mary's Church "Together we will serve the Lord."	3
Our Motto	3
The Affirmations of St. Mary's Church	3
ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH	4
WE SEEK A PRIEST WHO...	5
OUR CONGREGATION	6
HOW WE WORSHIP	7
Sunday Morning Worship	7
Worship Music	7
Fellowship	8
OUR FAITH IN ACTION	9
Food & Care Coalition Ministry	9
Community Garden	10
The Noisy Bucket	10
Angel Tree	11
University Students	11
Shrove Tuesday	11
Community Events	11
Community of Christ	12
Twelve-Step Programs and other Support Groups	12
OPENING OUR RED DOORS	13
The Community Music Outreach Program (CMOP)	13
Advent, Lessons and Carols, and Christmas Eve	15
Lenten Season & Holy Week	15
LEADERSHIP	16
Clerical Leadership	16
Lay Leadership	16
Bishop's Committee	16
Finance Committee	17
Stewardship	17
Lay Ministry	17
Centering Prayer	18
Christian Education	18
The Blessing of the Animals	19
Altar Guild	19
ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCES	19
OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY	20
OUR HISTORY	22
CONCLUSION	24

OUR COMMON VALUES

The Mission of St. Mary's Church "Together we will serve the Lord."

Our mission at St. Mary's is to love others as God loves us, through offering our love unconditionally, sharing our God-given gifts and talents with our mission church and community, affirming the various ministries that so richly feed us and our neighbors, developing an ongoing life connected with the members and friends of St. Mary's, and encouraging a variety of spiritual journeys within the broad tradition of the Episcopal Church.

Our Motto

"Nourishing souls and saving lives in Provo since 1892."

The Affirmations of St. Mary's Church

Our life as a congregation is formed by the Baptismal Covenant we make with God and with one another:

- ✠ To continue in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.
- ✠ To resist evil, and whenever we fall into sin, to repent and return to the Lord.
- ✠ To proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ.
- ✠ To seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves.
- ✠ To strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.

In particular, St. Mary's Church is guided by five core affirmations:

WORSHIP We are committed to worship that expresses the depth of God's love for us and the transcendence of God's grace for us.

ACCEPTANCE We accept others, by honoring differences of opinion and by accepting one another regardless of who we are or where we come from.

SANCTUARY We are a sanctuary for those who are searching, grieving, hurting, lonely, or in recovery, and we are a place where people can heal and be equipped to live as God intended, in peace and love.

CARING We care about the communities in which we live, and we seek, as individuals and as a congregation, to reach out to others carrying with us the good news of Jesus' love for us.

ROOTS We are rooted in historical Christianity, particularly as it is expressed in the Anglican tradition of scripture, tradition, and reason.



ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

St. Mary's Church is a safe place for people who are in transition or who are hurting. We will continue to provide an alternative vision of worship and practice to those who are seeking a faith community. St. Mary's Church is uniquely situated as a missionary outpost of the ministry of the Episcopal Church in Utah. We are more and more enriching and changing the life of the Provo community (and Utah County) by our presence and ministry, as we are "nourishing souls and saving lives in Provo since 1892." Sometimes we refer to our congregation as a refugee church—most of the newer members coming from other faith traditions are leaving situations where significant trauma and rejection may have occurred. Significant additional time and care must be taken to encourage and support these as they try to re-envision a life with God, hopefully in the Episcopal way.

St. Mary's is the only Episcopal Church in Utah County and is located at 50 West 200 North in Provo, Utah, one-half block west of University Avenue (US 189) and two blocks north of historical Provo Center Street. Immediately south of the church is the downtown core, which has grown to be more active in the last five years. The anchor in the revitalized downtown district is the LDS Provo City Center Temple. Officially, St. Mary's Church is just outside the

downtown business core, which begins on the south side of 200 North. To the east is residential housing, with some small commercial zones, reaching to the foot of the mountains. Within six blocks north, one has entered the BYU housing zone, and businesses largely cater to that community. To the north, and to the west, the population is substantially Latino, and there are numerous Latino-owned businesses within three blocks of the church..

WE SEEK A PRIEST WHO...

St. Mary's has been enriched over the years by pastoral care from priests of diverse backgrounds and leadership styles. As our congregation looks ahead with joy at the prospect of adding to a happy succession of priests, we have sought out the perspectives of our parishioners to better understand which aspects of clerical leadership they believe are most crucial as we move forward.

WE SEEK A PRIEST WHO IS A TRUE DISCIPLE OF JESUS, who by life and word manifests the presence of Christ. By reflecting the love and compassion embodied in Jesus, our priest can rally us in offering spiritual refuge for all who come through our doors. St. Mary's must continue to be a safe haven for those who need a safe space to heal. Many of us have come bearing spiritual wounds; we have known the pain of feeling unworthy or unwelcome in our former faith communities. Because of our past experiences, we long to see ourselves as whole and worthy of God's love. Many of us are still learning to accept the embrace of a radically compassionate God. A priest who reflects that kind of compassion can be an instrument in bringing God's healing grace to each of us. A priest who models God's love can inspire all of us to pattern our own lives after Jesus.

WE SEEK A PRIEST WHO PUTS LOVE FIRST. Our parish acknowledges the importance of scripture, tradition, and reason to our spiritual well-being, but foremost among our priorities is charity. St. Mary's has become known, for example, as a place where those who identify as LGBTQ+ are embraced in full fellowship. We have become a stronger congregation for our association with and acceptance of our LGBTQ+ friends and allies and for our commitment to allowing them space to grow into their identities. Among those who worship among us are BYU students and others who are officially members of other faiths which may be less welcoming—or even hostile—to non-traditional forms of gender expression and sexual orientation, but who would risk significant academic, social, and professional consequences if they formally “join” our ranks. We also believe our priest must foster effective interfaith relationships within the wider community, including between our Latter-day Saint friends, to address the needs of the hungry and homeless, and other vulnerable populations. In



summary, at St. Mary's we seek to love one another as Jesus loves us and we want our priest to reflect and inspire that same kind of love.

WE SEEK A PRIEST WHO HONORS OUR PROUD HERITAGE and helps us respond to contemporary issues without sacrificing our liturgical integrity. For well over a century St. Mary's has endured, thrived even, in the midst of another predominant religious tradition and culture. Our congregation draws strength from St. Mary's historic roots and its established patterns of worship. Even members of other faiths join with us for Christmas or Holy Week or other traditional services because the richness of our liturgy can be found few other places. In this spirit, we want a Priest who will continue our commitment to employing highly-skilled organists and in supporting vocalists and choir members as they contribute to an excellent and comprehensive musical program, including our highly celebrated Community Music Outreach Program.

WE SEEK A PRIEST WHO LIVES AMONG US AND SUPPORTS US. As a congregation, we believe that only by living in Utah County would a Priest be able to provide the pastoral care that we desire. The congregation is spread over nearly 40 miles, north to south; living in the midst of our "flock" would lend a vital sense of cohesion and unity and allow for more responsive shepherding. Another important element of pastoral care that we seek is someone who reaches out in simple but personal gestures to express support for us as individuals and families.

OUR CONGREGATION

A remarkably diverse group comes together for worship each Sunday. We find unity in Christ across social, geographic, educational, and economic lines. Of the sixty or so persons present for worship on a typical Sunday, the following characteristics are representative:

- More than a dozen of the adults will have college degrees, including some with their Ph.D. Six will be on the faculties of Utah Valley University, Brigham Young University, or the University of Utah.
- About four of the adults will be unemployed and another six underemployed.
- Ten of the adults will have retired from the active workforce.
- About five college students will attend. Some are visiting from local universities to satisfy requirements for comparative religion courses. Others attend Brigham Young University and, as members of the LGBTQ community, are seeking an alternative place to worship where they feel safe.
- One third of the congregation will be comprised of those who have been members for two years or less. Another third will have worshipped with us under ten years. The final third will have been associated with St. Mary's for more than ten years, including a few seniors for whom St. Mary's has been a spiritual home since they were children.
- Many in attendance will have experienced significant personal trauma in their lives.

- Most congregants will have traveled from various communities across Utah County. Only about ten will reside in Provo City. Another ten make their home in the neighboring city of Orem.
- A few members of St. Mary's having significant mental, learning, or physical disabilities will be present and actively engaged in one or more ministries.
- Half a dozen children ranging in age from six months to eighteen years will be among us. Those in elementary school and above are worship ministers, serving as acolytes, readers, and ushers.
- About two adults will have moved into Utah County as Episcopalians in the past year and will have joined our numbers. Changes to employment and college status account for most of those who leave.
- Periodically, we will be host to ten or twenty young persons who reside at one of the several local adolescent rehabilitation facilities.

HOW WE WORSHIP

Sunday Morning Worship

The single most important ministry at St. Mary's Church is Sunday worship. As the former (retired) Priest-in-Charge has said, "The goal of Sunday worship is to have worshippers leave church knowing that God loves them." In enacting the charge, "Right worship means right service," St. Mary's seeks to feed the souls and minds of the congregation to go forth and serve as Jesus modeled for us. The gathering around the Lord's Table, and then the tables of fellowship, are the motivating center of parish life. The congregation is far-flung—we have active members from four counties—and it is difficult to get a group together during the week. Worship is participative and intergenerational—regular worshippers range from six months to ninety-two years old. Visitors consistently remark about how much they feel accepted at St. Mary's.



Our Sunday Morning worship inspires us to to make God's love more fully visible in the world. As we strengthen our faith life, we serve our fellow brothers and sisters with greater joy. After receiving the Eucharistic bread and wine, we stand and say, "and now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do." This, we understand, is how God asks us to worship: in word *and* deed.

Worship Music

The music program for Sunday morning worship continues to grow and is firmly based on the tenet that music enhances the worship. For the most part organists at St. Mary's are undergraduate or graduate organ students from Brigham Young University (BYU). Dallin

Baldwin is the Church Organist and Music Director, and he programs music for our entire liturgical year, including music especially spiritual in verse and sound for our worship during Advent, Lent, and Easter seasons and a number of Evensong services and Good Friday

concerts. The Chancel Choir--6-8 regulars, 3-4 of whom are paid section leaders (college students from the two local university music programs)--meet to rehearse and perform on the 1st and 3rd Sundays, from September through May. St. Mary's is very proud of their organ--a celebrated tracker organ installed in 1970, and their lovely Kawai grand piano, which both enhance the worship every Sunday and bring the joy of music to our souls.



Fellowship

During extending Peace and announcements the congregation is invited to continue the worship service with the [Fellowship \(Coffee\) Hour](#) in the Parish Hall, immediately following the service. The Fellowship can range from a pot-luck on the first Sunday of each month, to a special offering, like Three Kings' bread or Soul Cakes made by the children, or to individuals who provide a tasty treat of their culinary expertise. Fellowship Hour is a great time for the visiting (often hungry!) college students to meet socially with church members and gain further understanding of the Episcopal tradition, and it has afforded the time for some who are seeking other spiritual guidance to make tentative explorations into what being an Episcopalian can offer.

The annual [St. Mary's picnic](#) has been a tradition for years, where the parishioners gather in beautiful Provo Canyon at South Park to revel in the beauty of Nature in that geographically diverse and spectacular area of the Wasatch Range and to partake



in the delicious grilling expertise of Jim Meador with his "Meador meat," jokingly referred to as whatever road-kill he can find! With potluck side dishes brought by others, this repast welcomes far-flung family members and canines, with creek wading and frisbee playing as added attractions for all!

[The Annual Meeting](#) is another time for the congregation to meet with a good meal and review of the year and a look forward. The Annual Meeting is usually held in late January or early February, but significantly before an Ash Wednesday that can occur in early February.

OUR FAITH IN ACTION

Food & Care Coalition Ministry

Striving to fulfill our mission to “love others as God loves us,” members of St. Mary’s contribute an average of 60 hours or more each month in volunteering with Utah County’s Food & Care Coalition. St. Mary’s began this ministry in 1973 when about eight members of the congregation opened up a Sunday morning cafeteria for hungry persons. With a whole community behind us now, those humble beginnings have grown to include a non-profit facility that prepares three meals a day, seven days a week; hosts a mental health clinic and medical clinic; provides showers and laundry facilities and computers; and offers transitional housing for dozens of persons in dire circumstances. We are pleased to be able to serve. For a congregation so modest in size, our level of involvement represents a significant commitment—but those involved feel as if every hungry mouth fed, every cold body clothed amidst “the least of these my brothers,” is an act of devotion done as if to the Lord himself.

Under the direction of Ministry Co-Coordinators, twenty-two or more volunteers serve lunch on the second Sunday of each month, and in addition a special BBQ meal is prepared for the guests on Pioneer Day in July. Deacon Sandra Jones is responsible for any pastoral needs and for general welcome.

Other donations from the congregation include fresh green salad items every month and food items, such as a special Christmas meal and goodie bags, funded by donations from the congregation, and other small gifts (e.g., roses on Mother’s Day, the second Sunday of May). The children and youth of St. Mary’s embrace their part of this ministry by organizing a weekly collection of personal care items (e.g., shampoo, toothpaste, etc.), which has amounted to over fifty pounds of donations presented to the Coalition by the children monthly. One significant project was when the children and their parents and other adults in the congregation donated a number of twin-sized quilts they had constructed to support the transitional housing clients, which they then would take with them to their new homes, a reminder of God’s love from St. Mary’s. Some special collections of the Noisy Bucket or Reverse Advent change collection have also been earmarked for purchase of much-needed utensils for the kitchen.

Community Garden

Many St. Mary's parishioners put stewardship into practice by hosting one or more of the garden boxes each growing season. With a challenge grant from the diocese, St. Mary's has been able to build and maintain this tidy community garden, which graces the large expanse of lawn west of the church. Each parishioner who sponsors a box makes a small donation towards



soil amendments and commits to donating not less than 90% of their garden's harvest to support our local Food and Care Coalition and their initiative to serve fresh, in-season fruits and vegetables.

The Noisy Bucket

Children like making a noisy sound and our St. Mary's children eagerly support their own ministry each month with their Noisy Bucket, so named for the racket loose change makes when dropped in the galvanized steel pail! The children learn the action of caring with the wonderful service they give with their change (and paper tender). Collected funds are matched by an anonymous gift of a parishioner. The Noisy Bucket fund has earned more than \$2,000 per year since 2011, with the monies forwarded to Episcopal Relief and Development for development projects. The children of the congregation have a firm and thoughtful voice in helping to select the projects and causes to which the monies are directed within ERD. At times monies from The Noisy Bucket have been earmarked for special project for local charitable work, including funding



of store-bought quilts and fabric and materials for 10 twin-size quilts made by some avid quilt makers in the congregation and aided by the expertise of two local LDS Relief Society groups and an Ogden Lutheran Women's group. These quilts were presented and gratefully acknowledged by the Food and Care Coalition for their transitional housing clients, who will take the new quilt with them to their acquired housing. Other special projects funded by monies from The Noisy Bucket have been collections of over \$500 that are matched by the Diocese for Souper Bowl of Caring, aiding children caught on the web of homelessness, and most recently gathering household items and \$350 for bedding and bath items for a family of

one mother and four small children at the Orem Center for Women and Children in Crisis for their first transitional home.

Angel Tree

The Christmas tradition of bringing gifts like the Three Wise Men is lovingly enacted by St. Mary's in their support of the Angel Tree. For 15 years Taran Bhagat has coordinated this gift-giving effort of collecting presents for children with an incarcerated parent. Taran and St. Mary's members have faithfully stepped up in a big way for our small number, this year serving 12 children from seven families with three gifts apiece.

University Students

Students in comparative religion courses at Brigham Young University and Utah Valley University frequently visit St. Mary's to gain an appreciation for the area's religious and liturgical diversity. Parishioners so warmly receive them and engage them in dialogue during our fellowship hour that more than a few return of their own accord as they may find themselves seeking new or more inclusive spiritual communities.

Shrove Tuesday

Not loaves and fishes, but sausage and pancakes! Shrove Tuesday at St. Mary's is an anticipated event, where we feed hungry college students, people walking in from the streets, and many more.. Several of the men of St. Mary's don an apron and take cooking the perfect pancake quite seriously, especially having mastered the art of the Mickey Mouse shape, much to the delight of children. The congregation's annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper in 2018 became a multi-faith community event as we partnered with the PCUCC and St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church—the two other churches along with St. Mary's that started the soup kitchen in Provo that became the F&CC (see Food and Care Coalition)—to re-envision the event as a fundraiser with proceeds to benefit the F&CC. Parishioners from all three congregations, as well as guests such as F&CC Director Brent Crane and Provo City Mayor Michelle Kaufusi, joined together to host for the traditional pre-Lent indulgence. The event earned over \$500, which was donated to the F&CC alongside funds donated through the Souper Bowl of Caring event. Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at St. Mary's has been a regular tradition for many years, anticipated by a growing number of local residents as well.

Community Events

Special services like Lessons and Carols and Evensong provide for the community some of the most moving and spiritual feeding of the soul possible. From a more practical view, which we don't over-rate, they provide good public relations. Fortunately, St. Mary's is committed to serving the beauty of God's word and the gathering of souls in His name with offering events like Lessons and Carols and Evensong, and on a much larger scale an event like our joining

together with Brigham Young University's Neal A. Maxwell Institute of Religious Studies in presenting 500 Years of the Reformation Evensong and Concert in the fall of 2018. St. Mary's was asked specifically to host the concert, but it grew in numbers too large for the church and was presented at the Provo Community United Church of Christ (PCUCC), preceded by a special invitation dinner, hosted by the Maxwell Institute. Religion Scholars from venerable educational institutes lectured and attended the Evensong (presenting liturgy from the Book of Common Prayer from 1549) and the concert which encompassed music from Luther's time to Anglican masters like Ralph Vaughan Williams. More Evensongs and hopefully Compline services are planned on a quarterly occurrence, as well as hosting other large community musical events. (See Community Music Outreach Program, CMOP.)

In addition, St. Mary's has been host to Habitat for Humanity's Annual Day of Prayer services for several years and participates in the Pride Celebration in Provo. St. Mary's clergy and Senior Wardens are also members of the Utah Valley Ministerial Association and the Coalition of Religious Communities (CORC) which works for and sometimes against the legislature in providing a voice for the marginalized, and St. Mary's has also been represented at Provo City Council meetings and at Chamber of Commerce meetings as well as interviewed by the local newspaper, *The Daily Herald*, in relation to our community involvement..

Community of Christ

For the past few years, The Community of Christ has used the St. Mary's facility to meet two Sundays per month in the Parish Hall for worship services and meetings. The Community of Christ is a Christian religious organization with origins in the Latter Day Saint movement, but which in 1860 separated from the larger body of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the predominant religion in Utah, also known as the Mormons). Like St. Mary's Church, this congregation includes many former-LDS individuals and families and serves an important role in the religious fabric of Utah County. We are very happy to welcome our friends in the Community of Christ, not only because they pay us \$100 per month for the use of the facility, but because we feel it important to build bridges and enable people in their paths with God.

Twelve-Step Programs and other Support Groups

For at least two decades St. Mary's Church has offered congregation's facilities to one or more Twelve-Step Groups (e.g., A.A.). In 2010 ten different groups were using the facility on a weekly basis. In 2018 this number had grown to 21 different groups using the church's facilities, with over 300 people a week going through the church's doors for meetings. The groups include A.A., Al-Anon, Narcotics Anonymous (the largest groups, which can have an average attendance of 100 each), Sex-aholics Anonymous, SA-Anon and adult LGBT support groups, as well as a PFLAG group that meets monthly. The regional N.A. coordinating council holds its bi-monthly Saturday meeting at St. Mary's, and the District A.A. Coordinating Council meets monthly at the church. The groups usually give us a donation after each of their meetings,

which helps defray a part of the cost of facility operation. We estimate that the difference is around \$9,000 per year, which we see as a part of our outreach budget. (Note: as is appropriate, parishioners are not directly involved in this ministry. However, the Priest, the Parish Secretary, and Facility Manager have had regular contact with group leaders and are often found in informal conversation with them before and after meetings.)

OPENING OUR RED DOORS

The Community Music Outreach Program (CMOP)

While Outreach is serving the community in the ways that Jesus taught us, producing God's work in concrete action, Evangelism might be said to be reaching the community through worship and communication. Music is a marvelous tool of evangelism, and it is in this vein that Community Music Outreach Program (CMOP) seeks to communicate to the greater population of Provo and Utah County. Being also blessed with incredible acoustics, widely acknowledged in musical circles to be wonderful, St. Mary's has been a viable crusader in bringing the community in through the red doors to find comfort in the warmth of the brick and stained glass and lay down their burdens for a respite in musical splendor. Audiences have been as small as 15 to standing room only and overflowing, each performance bringing both to the listener and to the performer a sense of sanctuary and beauty. And through these performances--theatrical, musical, and evangelical--people are reached and welcomed by an embrace housed in the varied imperfect bricks and the strains of fledgling violin students to the supreme talents of some of the best--all which combine to become a superlative evangelist of God's love and acceptance and of beauty through the arts. People walk in, unaware of the unique beauty of the surroundings, and leave, remembering their experience, many to return again for more art and music and spiritual experience on many levels.

In the winter of 2015 St. Mary's Church formally began the CMOP with the hiring of Serena Kanig Benish to be the first Program Coordinator. Her responsibility is three-fold: to manage the schedule of the individuals and groups that use the church building for musical performance; to promote the CMOP in the community, and especially to the two universities; and, to coordinate with the Organist and church music program to provide special worship events and special music for regular worship. The supplemental Diocesan grant provided to St. Mary's Church during 2015 to expand ministry has been welcome and useful. The CMOP is not fully self-sustaining yet, but there are still funds from the original grant remaining that can keep the program running through 2019 and 2020 while it strives to become fully self-sustaining. The program thus far does run in the black, however.

Beginning in winter of 2015, with the first CMOP-sponsored performance being UVU Opera performance of *Suor Angelica*, Puccini's opera set in an abbey, and the subsequent acquisition of the 6'2" Kawai grand with funds from the Richard Weissert Memorial Fund, the ministry was quickly set up to a successful start. Along with college student recitals, film groups enamoured

with the setting, these are some of the impressive highlights of CMOP performances, both sponsored and hosted:

- *Suor Angelica* by Puccini–UVU Opera
- *Hélène* by Camille Saint-Saens–UVU Opera
- The Sacred Jazz of Duke Ellington–Chancel Choir and guest musicians
- UVU Opera Workshop scenes
- *Crucifixion* by Sir John Stainer–Chancel Choir and guest musicians
- In On the Joke Improv Group
- Lessons and Carols services, 2015-present
- Reformation Evensong and concert of music of Luther and Anglican masters, Vaughn Williams, Stanford, Perry, in collaboration with BYU Neal A. Maxwell Institute of Religious Studies conference of 500 Years of the Reformation
- *The Passion and Resurrection According to St. Mark* by Dr. Christian Asplund
- Aspen Winds 150-year celebration in music of the Golden Spike
- *Quartet for the End of Time* by Messiaen–BYU Honors Quartet
- Avant Vespers–monthly series begun in September 2018, voted as “Best in Utah” for Alternative Worship
- UVU/BYU Young Composers concert March 2019
- Lionharp Celtic Music group April 2019

St. Mary’s was awarded a \$2000 Celtic Cross grant from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, California, which was combined with some other memorial funds to be put toward lighting that enhances the back of the Chancel (for better lighting for reading for clerics and the “stage area” for performances) and for enhanced lighting possibilities for the many productions that CMOP hosts. The effects are quite wonderful and have helped immensely. The



coordinator is applying again for the grant to couple with the memorial gifts given in memory of the late Priest-in-Charge, Reverend Dr. Peter Van Hook, who was himself the vision behind the development of CMOP. It is hoped that the monies will be able to fund subtle but necessary lighting to illuminate at night the exquisite stained glass windows from the outside so that their warmth and beauty shines inside the church for services and performances.

While the primary goals of the CMOP are to exercise good stewardship of the physical resources of the congregation and to provide a mid-sized venue for musical performance to members of the community, it is also an unobtrusive way of inviting many people into the church building who would otherwise not consider entering an Episcopal church. We can not

predict what kind of response we will get, but our previous experience with inviting musicians (and their friends) into the church has been positive.

Advent, Lessons and Carols, and Christmas Eve

Advent begins with special music each Sunday and the lighting of the Advent wreath. Usually parishioners who have not made an Advent wreath for their personal home use are invited to “design” one during Fellowship Hour, and it is always delightful to see the enthusiasm when people learn about the traditions of lighting the candles and observing the lesson. An insert in the Order of Worship gives historical and Scriptural readings for the week for families and individuals to ponder when they light candles at home. Children in the parish have made Advent wreaths for some elderly parishioners or others who are shut in.

Lessons and Carols has grown into a special tradition in the last four years and is an eagerly anticipated event during the second week of Advent. Comments from attendees attest that this special service is on the level of professional performances at big cathedrals. The nine lessons in the Anglican liturgy, paired with choral and solo music, highlight the essence of the Advent season leading to the celebration of Christmas.

Christmas Eve services, one at 7:00 pm and one at 11:00 pm, begin with 15-minute congregational carol singing, followed by splendid services with candlelight and beautiful music and liturgy. The services are fully attended and annually attract many LDS people wishing for more expression of celebrating the birth of Jesus.

Lenten Season & Holy Week

Lent and Holy Week provide opportunities for us to gather and pray together. To begin Lent we have a pancake supper on Shrove Tuesday, which is always popular, followed the next day at Ash Wednesday services with the Imposition of Ashes. There are Lenten Studies that continue during the weeks of Lent, led by the Priest. Holy Week has grown into a profound and beautifully spiritual experience that continues for the



entire week, beginning with Palm Sunday, which includes the jubilant entrance to the church with palms and song and continues with an always moving and spiritual congregational reading of the one of the Passions. Daily evening services with musical and Scriptural meditation are held on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, and Maundy Thursday includes



the traditional foot-washing and stripping of the altar. Good Friday service is at noon, and in the past two years, the Chancel Choir and other soloists have performed concerts in the

evening, presenting Sir John Stainer's *Crucifixion* and Dr. Christian Asplund's (BYU professor and composer) *Passion According to St. Mark* to full capacity crowds. A solemn vigil on Holy Saturday is a short service before the Altar Guild prepares the church for Easter Morning! In 2018, the conclusion of Dr. Asplund's oratorio, *The Resurrection*, was performed early in the morning, followed by an always exuberant and musically uplifting Easter Sunday service.

LEADERSHIP

Clerical Leadership

While we are saddened by the recent passing of the Reverend Dr. Peter J. Van Hook—who led us so skillfully over the past several years—we continue to benefit from his legacy of helping us develop our own capacities as lay leaders. Father Peter, given the charge to help solidify the ministries of St. Mary's and be able to manage them themselves, encouraged the flourishing of lay-led ministries, while also exhibiting the wisdom and strength that comes from ordained clergy.



As a result of Father Peter's commitment to cultivating lay leadership, our congregation has licensed Eucharistic Ministers, Eucharistic Visitors, a Catechist, a licensed Lay Preacher, and a trained facilitator for Education for Ministry curricula.

We have been blessed by four outstanding deacons, two of which are transitional deacon mentees of Rev. Van Hook--Father Tim Yanni, Chaplain of Ogden Regional Medical Center, and Copeland Johnston, eagerly awaiting his appointment as a priest by summer. Our congregation has been blessed with the guidance, humor, compassion, and experience of Deacon Sandra Jones, a vocational deacon.

With the passing of Father Peter, Bishop Scott Hayashi has watched over our congregation as a loving shepherd while we search for a priest, visiting our congregation several times and ensuring that supply priests from throughout the diocese have been on hand to lend strength and allow us to celebrate the Lord's Supper.

Lay Leadership

Bishop's Committee

The congregation is led by a Bishop's Committee, which meets monthly and corresponds frequently via email to meet the fiduciary responsibilities of the parish and to help guide the direction of the ministries and programs of St. Mary's Church. Members serve for a period of three years and must cycle off the committee for at least one year before being re-elected to

the committee. The Committee includes a mix of members that vary by age, sex, education level, and time in affiliation with the Episcopal Church, and in this way they reflect the overall demographics of the congregation as a whole. Many of these committee members wear multiple hats at St. Mary's, where they also work in other ministries and provide much-needed leadership throughout the organization. The Committee typically has a retreat shortly after the annual meeting where new members of the committee are elected to train, pray, envision, and plan the coming year's work. The Committee works hard to manage responsibly the finances of the church and to keep the congregation's programs and ministries responsive to the ways we feel God is calling us to be and do in Utah County.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is an important component of our leadership. Appointed by the Bishop's Committee, it is working to refine the congregation's stewardship of its financial resources, as well as human and physical resources. The Finance Committee is now meeting regularly and has been pivotal in helping the congregation stay afloat in our transition period without a Priest.

Stewardship

In the spring of 2017 four persons attended the annual meeting of The Episcopal Network for Stewardship (TENS) in Minneapolis. Of those 4 only two remain in the parish (a move and a death have diminished the number). Initially these attendees were working on developing a model for a year-round stewardship education program in the congregation. However, thus far they have helped give sermons on Stewardship and have given suggestions to the Bishop's Committee, but they remain poised to develop a year-round stewardship committee when it can be addressed.

Lay Ministry

We have vibrant and expanding lay ministries. Among the parishioners are three who are licensed Eucharistic Ministers, two Eucharistic Visitors who take Communion to the homebound, and one licensed Catechist, and a few of those who participate in Education for Ministry. One person has also been trained and received accreditation to be an EfM mentor, and St. Mary's will begin holding EfM at St. Mary's, starting in the fall. One of our members has trained in Community of Hope as a Lay Chaplain, and currently attends Circle of Care.

While our need for growing lay leadership continues, St. Mary's has benefitted from a strong and capable core of lay leaders and others actively expressing our core values and enacting our sacred commission as Christians. In coordination with our Priest this form of lay leadership has worked effectively for our congregation.

Centering Prayer

For parishioners interested in contemplative practices, St. Mary's hosts a monthly Centering Prayer service following Fellowship Hour. This practice was first introduced to our parish and interested community members by our vocational deacon in a series of weekly midweek classes and continues as a monthly event with the support of a small but consistent group of laity.

Christian Education

The Christian education programs at St. Mary's Church are small and are focused on Sunday morning worship and fellowship. Since 2010 an informal but organized children and youth education program has been offered. Since the children are included as worship ministers each week, and the style of worship takes the children into consideration, a formal separate education program has not been called for. For adults, a Spiritual Journey discussion group has met for many years before Sunday worship. The group is lay led, small, but enthusiastic and persistent, their discussions ranging from the Bishop's Read the Bible in a Year Challenge to book studies. There is always a significant Lenten Study Series. For example, in 2015 an introduction to the Catechism in The Book of Common Prayer was offered which has spun off a continuing group meeting on Tuesday evenings at a restaurant in Spanish Fork, a location selected to accommodate many of the congregants in the south part of the county.

Children's Sunday School can vary between one or two regular families to a larger number, depending on attendance. Children's Sunday is usually the first Sunday of the month where the children read the Scripture lessons and Prayers for the People and pass the Noisy Bucket, a specific ministry that is geared to the children. (See Noisy Bucket in Serving the Wider Community section.) The children have in the past presented a pageant during Epiphany--complete with dress ups from a remarkable stash of costumes gathered over the years and sometimes a real baby--and have made Three Kings' Cake for the congregation for Fellowship. They have made Soul Cakes the Sunday before All Saints; have made Advent wreaths the first Sunday of Advent; have decorated eggs in the Ukrainian/Russian Easter tradition before Palm Sunday; have made Communion bread with expert bread makers from the congregation; have had end-of-school picnics with the congregation; and have had special Lenten lessons. Some of the teenagers have also attended Camp Tuttle expeditions in wonderful Big Cottonwood Canyon, being able to hike in the Fall or snowshoe and ski in the winter and have the general camp experience. There is funding for attendance at Camp Tuttle and also for attendance at the Episcopal Youth Event (EYE) convention with Episcopal youth from all over the nation.

More participation in children's activities depends on the number of children in the congregation.

The Blessing of the Animals

"All God's creatures got a place in the choir!" On the Saturday closest to the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the community is invited to bring their animals for a short service and a blessing on their animal(s)--horses, cats, dogs, rabbits, a white dove have received blessings! Typically, this has been done by our Priest or Assisting Priest, but in 2018, with permission and encouragement by Bishop Hayashi, we had a parishioner lead the service and bless the animals. It is a nice, informal service that allows people outside of St. Mary's, along with our own congregants, to gather and participate in a service that blesses creation and recognises that animals are important to God and each of us.

Altar Guild

A faithful few so lovingly dress and prepare the altar every week in such a beautiful and complete way that the need for more members of the congregation to help with this important ministry is muted. Although completely successful, this is one ministry that could have more help.

Welcoming Committee

The Welcoming Committee is small but warmly open to the visitors who attend St. Mary's as well as new parishioners. One aspect that is charming to children is that during a child's birthday month, he or she can choose an unwrapped present from one of four boxes, depending on the child's age. Birthdays are so important for children, and it is a way for St. Mary's to help children feel welcome and important to our congregation.

Communion Bread

Baking communion bread is a special ministry for a few members of St. Mary's. Our special recipe makes six round loaves of unleavened bread. The baked loaves are kept frozen until Sunday morning, warmed and then served during Communion. A couple of times a year, one of the bakers will meet with children on a Sunday morning to teach how to bake the communion bread, rendering Fellowship Hour redolent in wonderful scents of spices and of the warmth of community.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCES

The Bishop's Committee, Finance Committee and Licensed Lay Ministers form the basis of congregational leadership.

St. Mary's Church has been gathering each week in Provo for over 125 years. In some ways, the level of funding required in the 21st century to keep the church in operation would have undoubtedly astonished our early church planters and sustainers. We have looked over our

revenues and expenses carefully and prayerfully as we have tried to estimate how we will be responsible stewards of the offerings of our congregation as well as the grant funds from the Diocese. For the 2019 operating budget, we have planned a 10% reduction in grant funding, and anticipate an overall 7% reduction in revenues from the 2018 budget. To make sure our expenses do not exceed our revenues, we are also reducing our expenses significantly so that the budget balances. This reduction in expenses will likely be alright in 2019 because we anticipate having some portion of the year without a priest and so we will save in salary expense. However, this reduced budget will likely be unsustainable in 2020 and beyond.

Simply put, to operate in a paradigm of reduced Diocesan financial support, we will either need to increase revenues and/or find ways to further reduce expenses. On the expenses side, the aging facility and ongoing increased expenses in required and fixed expense categories (ex.: utilities, insurance, rising costs of labor, etc.) have already caused reductions in program expenses and other "nice" things that improve congregational experience and attract new membership. This has the potential of being a vicious cycle, as reduced program expenses usually make it harder to attract new members (and consequently new revenue sources) to cover all the fixed expenses. At a baseline it takes around \$45,000 per year just to pay for facilities expenses, not including special maintenance for something that breaks or fails. These costs will rise over time and cannot be eliminated. Personnel expenses are the other huge expense, and the amount of labor will have to be carefully reviewed to meet demand for clergy, administrative, maintenance, janitorial, and music services.

OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

The population of Utah County will likely grow about 25% by 2020 (to about 600,000), but the overall demographic character of Utah County will change little, as the percentage of members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, (commonly referred to as Mormons or Latter-day Saints) will remain about the same. The exceptions are that there will be a greater percentage of Latinos and a general increase in the student population at the two universities. The dominance of the LDS culture in Utah County creates both difficulties and opportunities. It is very difficult for members of the Mormon church to leave it, especially when they remain in the same community. At the same time, St. Mary's Church is comfortable with people being a part of congregational life who are not necessarily formal members. St. Mary's Church is particularly well-placed to provide an alternative worship experience and a different church community experience. St. Mary's Church will be a place of sanctuary, hospitality, and caring for those in transition, those in recovery, and those who are seeking a rooted and holy worship experience.

Utah County boasts some of the highest economic growth in the nation at 4.9%, which outpaces the State of Utah (3.3%) and the national average (1.7%). This growth has been sustained since 2011, with 45 months of growth over 4%. The county's employment expansion is broad-based, as nearly every major industry (except government sector) showing growth. Private education (BYU and some smaller technical colleges) and healthcare (Intermountain

Healthcare, MountainStar Healthcare, Steward Healthcare) are the largest industries in the county, but the technology industry is rapidly expanding at 14% annually thanks to a concentration of tech industry companies such as Adobe, Domo, Flash Technologies, Vivint, Qualtrics and many others making up the so-called "Silicon Slopes". The unemployment rate is exceptionally low in Utah County at 2.9%, and wage growth is strong at 4.8% (13.1% in the technology industry). Housing availability is low in desirable areas, and remains a challenge throughout the Wasatch Front for affordable housing options due to such large and sustained population and economic growth. (Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services Labor Market Information <https://jobs.utah.gov/wi/data/misstats/lmi/>). The trailing spouse desiring professional work would likely have many job opportunities open to him or her.

Geographically, Utah Valley is the center of Utah County, with the Wasatch Mountains on the east and Utah Lake and desert on the West. Before World War II Utah County was entirely agricultural. During the war, in order to create space from the Pacific Coast and a perceived Japanese threat of attack, a steel mill was located in Geneva, pretty much the center of Utah Valley. By 1985 the steel mill had hit hard times, and by 1995 it was closed. Since then there has been a marked "suburbanization" of the county, as the northern part has divided into numerous small cities with nearly continuous California-like tract housing. Most of the residents in the north county work in Salt Lake County, making the commute on Interstate 15 arduous. (Mean travel time to work is over twenty-three minutes, longer during 2015 due to the reconstruction of the freeway over Point of the Mountain.) Most of the residents of the southern part of the county work in agriculture, service industries, government, or one of the two universities. The estimated population of Utah County is 575,200, most of them living in the Utah Valley, with a decennial growth rate of 26.5%.

- 93% of the population of Utah County reports themselves as "white." 12% of the population reports themselves as "Latino or Hispanic." Of the twenty-plus eating establishments within a block of historic Provo Center Street only a few offer American menus; all the rest are "ethnic restaurants."
- 89.9% of the population of Utah County claims membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. 0.05% identify as Episcopalian.
- In 2016 the median income in the United States was \$57,617; in Utah County it was \$64,321; in Salt Lake County it was \$64,601. Wage rates are rising due to a rapid influx of tech industry jobs in the north part of the County near the point of the mountain. Income levels in Provo City have grown much more slowly.
- Utah County is one of the three most generous counties in philanthropic donations in the U.S., based on an article in Giving USA 2003 (the other two were San Juan County, Utah, and Madison County [Rexburg], Idaho)—undoubtedly driven by the tithe of most Mormon families. However, the rate of given to community (i.e., non-religious) organizations is among the lowest in the country.
- There is no residential shelter for the temporarily homeless in Utah County; such has been prohibited by both city and county governments. Of the unofficial homeless population of 400, approximately one hundred of those are students living in their cars.

Less than 25% of the homeless population is transient; that is, all the others can be considered citizens and residents of Utah County. On Sundays at the Food & Care Coalition the demand for lunch has grown from an average of forty to about one hundred.

- Within easy driving distance from St. Mary's Church, that is within the boundaries of Provo City and Orem City, there are three hospitals (Timpanogos Regional in Orem, Orem Community Hospital, and Utah Valley Hospital, Provo), three private psychiatric facilities, the state psychiatric hospital, and numerous drug and alcohol programs, some of them specifically designed for teens. There are two large universities, Brigham Young University (BYU) and Utah Valley University (UVU). BYU is an institution of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and is considered to have one of the finest music programs in the western U.S. UVU is now the largest institution of higher learning in the state of Utah with a current enrollment of 30,000 students.

OUR HISTORY

Founded in 1892, St. Mary's Episcopal Church has provided a home for Utah County parishioners for generations and has been hailed as "a jewel of ecclesiastical architecture." The people of St. Mary's are proud of their history, with the fortitude it took the first cleric to find a creative way to be a formidable presence in the the shadow of the largely-followed religious faith and for the subsequent generations to provide that same acceptance and strong voice of God's love in the evolution and growth of Provo and Utah County. The mere physical beauty of St. Mary's touches all who come in the red doors, and the mottled bricks with their fabled story of imperfection being a way of acceptance, along with the exquisite beauty of the stained glass windows, all create the further message that St. Mary's has a history of being a voice of Jesus, serving the community as Jesus would have us do, and following the ways that God has outlined for the love of one's brothers and sisters.

The following excerpt from Mary Allen Redd's "The Centennial History of St. Mary's Church" documents the origins and architectural character of our historic church.



In 1907, when gas was 6 cents per gallon and a car cost \$500, work was begun on the Washington National Cathedral, the grandest Episcopal church in the land, our national house of prayer, while in Provo, Utah, the vicar of a small Episcopal mission hitched up his horse and wagon each Friday to retrieve defective bricks to build his church. On September 12, as the Lusitania pulled into the New York harbor after a record five-day crossing, The Right Rev. Franklin Spencer Spaulding, Bishop of the Episcopal Missionary District of Utah, consecrated St. Mary's.

The Episcopal Mission of St. Mary's was established in the 1890s and probably met in 1892 in a storefront on Center Street in Provo, The Rev. George Townsend, vicar, the first resident Episcopal cleric in Provo, was a colorful character who recited poetry in a rough Irish brogue. His vision and energy in gathering the discarded bricks--corners chipped off, cracked, or rejected for any reason--made the building project possible, on land purchased for \$500 at 50 West 200 North, close to the center of town. The church was paid for by donations from eastern parishes and the proceeds of luncheons conducted by the Episcopal women of southern Utah.

The architecture of St. Mary's, in keeping with the Episcopal tradition of the English Gothic arts and crafts style, follows a central design with no credit given to an architect. The structure is a traditional, long axis parish plan with a single-aisle nave and sanctuary...The compact original structure, 1200 square feet, seating 150, resides on a stone foundation. The damaged bricks used for the church also more than fulfilled a requirement based on a medieval custom that any human structure should evidence a flaw, acknowledging that only God can be perfect. Members of St. Mary's have noted that while the individual bricks of the church may be imperfect (as all of us are), when joined in a whole, their aberrations in shape and color are lovely.

A beloved parishioner, the late W. Nelson Abbot, has written about St. Mary's distinctive stained glass windows.

St. Mary's has without doubt the most beautiful stained glass windows in Utah County. On each side of the nave are twelve separate panes, based on Biblical subjects. Three are Old Testament events....and the other nine panes depict subjects in the The New Testament.

....The Reverend John Howes was the Rector from 1937 to 1949....and It is said that [he] ordered the windows for one side of the nave without much planning by the congregation. But as soon as he got the money pledged to pay for them, he ordered the windows for the other side. It is believed that these windows were made in France and that when the last two were received, they needed repair. This [repair] is verified by two small glass inserts at the bottom [of these two windows] that reads "A. Michaud, Chicago." Plexiglass protects the windows on the outside and they are also well-insured. There is no record of the how much the windows cost, but an expert has estimated that they are probably worth as much as the rest of the building.

In addition to these exquisite side windows, there are several smaller ones that were given to St. Mary's as memorial gifts.

CONCLUSION

Tradition is the living faith of those who have died, and not the dead faith of the living.

~ Jaroslav Pelikan

At St. Mary's we seek to embrace the strengths of the pioneering spirits so often associated with the settlement of Utah, including very early on the establishing of the Episcopal Church in Utah 150 years ago. At the same time, we honor the spiritual food of the liturgy of long-ago scholars and teachers like Jesus and bring their lessons to life in our modern day. We cannot ignore the teachings of the past; instead we must bring them forward with us as we meet the demands of the present and continue with faith in our future. We at St. Mary's hope to continue our small but faithful and strong efforts to make an impact in Utah and in our own worlds.

"BE the church you want it to be."

~ the late Reverend Dr. Peter J. Van Hook, last sermon, June 24, 2018