

Greetings!

Welcome to St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Waterville, Maine. We are a parish of two hundred and forty-five members from a broad geographic area of Central Maine. The search for a new rector has begun and we have had the opportunity to view the story of the parish from past through present and into the future.

Many have helped; over half the parish members responded to a thorough survey to help determine who we are and where we want to go. Parishioners have also responded through a suggestion box, surveys of formal organizations and groups within the parish, and a "future vision" portion of annual meeting. The Wardens and Vestry brought forth a Statement of Mission and formed the Search Committee. The Committee, representing the parish family, diligently created a parish profile. Facts and figures were assembled; the narrative was created and written. Emotions were tapped - laughter and tears, anger and forgiveness. Memories flooded forth.

We'd like you to look at St. Mark's through our windows, both clear and stained glass. Look in from outside the church into who and what we are. Look out into our greater world. We trust you will see St. Mark's clearly.

The mission of St. Mark's Episcopal Church is

- * to celebrate with joy the full extent of worship and prayer in the Anglican tradition;***
- * to foster in young and old spiritual growth through education and fellowship;***
- * to recognize and respond to human needs and responsibilities within and beyond our parish;***
- * to direct our Christian love to all people.***

The view through our rose window

St. Mark's was organized as a mission in the winter of 1875; less than three years later, members were worshipping in their own building in downtown Waterville. In 1946 Bishop Loring determined that the mission was ready, willing and able to assume the status of a parish. The small stone church on Center Street - with various additions and annexes - served as the church home for a full century.

Urban renewal came into Waterville in the late 1960s; the Congregational Church was displaced and the future of St. Mark's on Center Street came into question. Also, the Center Street location had no parking (we used the Sears lot) and our population was growing. Urged on by Bishop

Loring and encouraged by The Reverend David K. Montgomery, the parish approved investigating the possibility of building; in 1967 land on the corner of Eustis Parkway and North Street and a house on Johnson Heights that immediately became the rectory were purchased. By the 1970's the Center Street church showed significant signs of wear and it had become too small. The location - next to Sears, across from the busy fire station, and surrounded by houses - was unsuitable for expansion. It was decided to move, and led by The Reverend David C. Glendinning, we put together the monies to build. We shared space with our friends at the Congregational Church at the other end of Eustis Parkway until our new building was completed. When the Bishop came and deconsecrated the old church, parishioners, one by one, carried reminders of the past into the future: the altar, the lectern, the wooden pews, linens, crosses, patens and cups, the hymn board, vestments and the 13th century baptismal font, a gift from St. Mark's Church in Lincoln, England, were moved to our new home. The round stained glass window which was over the altar on Center Street became the light into the new sanctuary on Eustis Parkway. A tracker action organ, rebuilt in 1977 by the Stuart Organ Company, was installed. The new church, with its many windows to the outside of the world, melded past, present and hope for the future. It was consecrated in 1979.

Concurrently came the changes of the 60s and 70s in the greater Anglican communion: the free standing altar, the new prayer book, the ordination of women. For the parish, major changes, too: after the move to the new location, David Glendinning's divorce and departure brought about the search process that culminated in a change to the intellectually-based leadership of the Reverend Peter Igarashi. This dramatic swing changed the make-up of the parish. The loss of young families and children was felt deeply; three mothers created a Christian education curriculum and sat on the floor to teach their children and others, but there were few others. Honest discussion, debate and struggle during the interim that followed created an atmosphere of trust and commitment that became legacy.

That legacy was celebrated during the past decade with The Reverend C. Perrin Radley as Rector. Our population grew and stabilized; new families came; an addition was built for an expanded kitchen, a music room, and a now much-needed separate nursery. We were able to retire the mortgage. We sold the rectory. We were urged and prodded to take ownership in worship and developed strong lay leadership.

Outreach suppers, work at the Homeless Shelter (an example set by Perrin and his wife, Laurel), the Evening Sandwich Program and the Food Bank were all taken on by many. Ministries expanded: children's sermons by laity and clergy, St. Francis Day, an Agape meal to celebrate Ascension, seasonal Services of Lessons and Carols, acolyte trips to Washington and New York, and more. Perrin's sabbatical took us farther; we missed him, but in his absence we became stronger and further unified. The Reverend John Miller substituted for Perrin, and with his wife Barbara as Deacon, we began a lay Eucharistic ministry. John and Barbara helped us through Bishop Chalfant's resignation. Perrin and Laurel returned and continued their ministries: we created a garden, had stained glass windows designed and installed over the altar, moved Christmas Fair proceeds to Outreach, and heightened worship with services of Tenebrae, Evensong, Ember Eves, Quiet Days, and more. After a very rich and fulfilling ministry for us, Perrin retired from St. Mark's and from parish ministry.

The current interim period with the Reverend Holly L. Antolini includes celebrations, challenges, new initiatives, and a time for reflection and decision making. What is emerging is a vibrant parish rich in lay leadership and committed to love God and do God's will.

The view in through our outside windows

The church building and grounds occupy a two-acre corner lot in a primarily residential area across from one of the hospitals to the north and a playground with playing fields to the west. The single-story building is handicapped accessible. Inside the oak doors are a welcoming sanctuary, two attached offices, a fine kitchen, a large and frequently-used parish hall with movable partitions, a smaller comfortable room for more intimate meetings, a nursery, music space, and boiler room/storage space. The new garden behind the sanctuary welcomes those needing or wanting respite from the active world around.

With a limited endowment to its credit, St. Mark's is primarily dependent on annual pledged income to meet operating expenses and fund ongoing programs. Forty-four parishioners canvassed this year to ensure the continuing work of the church. The staff consists of a full-time rector, a part-time administrative assistant, a part-time music director, a part-time organist, and a part-time sexton. Happily, we currently are assigned Melissa Post van der Burg as Deacon. Volunteer help is there - in the office, for care of the building, for outreach suppers and more. However, there is a delicate balance of giving time, talent and treasure as we work together; people give to the best of their abilities and as they are available. More about that in our strengths and challenges! Lay leadership consists of not only the Vestry and its Wardens but also many active and vital committees.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Waterville, is a close, stable parish which serves diverse communities within a twenty mile radius of the city. Over half the parish responded to the search survey! Below are some facts and figures compiled from that survey.

Our current financial picture

St. Mark's relies on the financial dedication of its members. It has enjoyed a steady and moderate growth in pledging over the last five years. Pledge income has increased from \$103,619 in 1996 to an estimated \$121,733 for 2000. Pledges increased from 1999 to 2000 by approximately \$3,000 and this during a year of transition! Pledging units have averaged 120 per year, but that does not include people who give generously each year but do not fill out pledge cards and it does not reflect the changes in the population of the parish.

A very important part of the ministry of St. Mark's is outreach. St. Mark's conducts suppers raising money for local charities. In 1999, we raised \$2,500 for the Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter and the Evening Sandwich Program. We have \$7,500 from the Christmas Fair to be disbursed by the new

Outreach Committee. Our UTO offerings from 1999 were \$1,700 and the Presiding Bishop's Fund received approximately \$2,000 for the year 2000.

St. Mark's has accomplished much in the last few years. We put an addition on the building, added stained glass windows to the sanctuary, and created and built a garden. In the year 2000, for the first time, we are fulfilling our commitment to contribute 1% of our budget to theological education. We do not have any outstanding loans or long-term debt.

The vestry is thinking of the future. In 1998 and 1999 we had surpluses; a majority of those funds has been designated to a capital improvement account and a cash operating reserve account for a total of \$12,000. We also sold our rectory; it had not been used in ten years and was increasingly expensive to maintain. The proceeds from that sale have been placed in an investment account to help fund the rector's housing allowance. We are funding a deficit budget for 2000 but have faith that our 2001 pledge campaign will result in full funding of the 2001 budget. Aggressive work to increase pledging will also allow us to maintain our commitment of putting Christmas Fair proceeds toward outreach and not toward the operating budget. Finally, we are developing a program for stronger planned giving.

St. Mark's strives to be fiscally responsible and to share God's blessing with all.

Looking out our windows

Maine is a large state with a small population spread far and wide. St. Mark's is in Waterville, Maine, located approximately halfway between Maine's major cities of Bangor (northeast) and Portland (south). Waterville is approximately one and one-half hours from both the rocky coast and the mountains, and it is surrounded by several chains of lakes. The state capital, Augusta, is twenty minutes away. Waterville has minimal public transportation; a reliable vehicle is a must.

Waterville's population is 18,000, but this small city serves the greater needs of a rural population, too. Employment opportunities have changed in recent years from manufacturing based to more service oriented; five area colleges, a regional medical center, a community hospital, retail stores, state and local governments and two large and several small manufacturers are the employer base. Demographics include large numbers of Lebanese and French Canadian families whose grandparents came to work in the mills; a mobile professional community; the changing college communities; the retired and the young. Religious diversity includes Roman and Maronite Catholic, Jewish, Mormon, Quaker, and a variety of other Protestant denominations.

The community supports a wide variety of educational and cultural resources. Colby College, Unity College, Thomas College, the University of Maine at Augusta, and Kennebec Valley Technical College provide a variety of offerings, from the opportunity to take courses to musical and theatrical performances, art, natural and historical exhibits, and libraries. The turn-of-the-century Waterville Opera House hosts both community and traveling productions of theater, music, dance, and comedy.

Railroad Square Cinema offers alternative films and Waterville hosts the Maine International Film Festival in the summers. The Maine State Museum and Library in Augusta, the L. C. Bates Museum in Hinckley and the Redington Museum in Waterville provide reminders of natural and cultural histories.

Recreation abounds. There are the accessible and affordable city pool complex, nature and cross country ski trails in the city and on campuses. For those who can travel, there are the lakes, mountains, and the ocean. School, college, and community sports programs provide ample opportunity for participation or watching. The University of Maine men's hockey teams and women's basketball teams, both nationally recognized, aren't too far away. Summers are full of fairs around the state, from the Skowhegan State Fair with its midway to the Common Ground Fair with its natural foods and Maine artists and lifestyle exhibits.

The Waterville area is full of contrasts. It has elegant homes and subsidized housing, country retreats and down-at-the-heels mobile homes. Many residents spend summers at the lakes; for others, the unique Harold and Bibby Alford Youth Recreation Center (a combination of a YMCA and Boys/Girls Club - the first of its kind) serves families of all financial backgrounds by offering affordable recreational activities. For the less fortunate members of the community, there are a Homeless Shelter, a Family Day Shelter and several meal programs. Maine General Medical Center and Inland Hospital provide residents of the area with up-to-date care and staffs of high caliber.

School systems in the greater Waterville area have individual identities and strengths. Both college preparatory and vocational technical training are available to those of high school age. There are a variety of religious-centered independent schools and Montessori schools. A number of children are home schooled.

The Episcopal Diocese of Maine gathers at St. Mark's in Waterville frequently for committee meetings, clergy days, and more. Parishioners travel up to an hour to be at church, to go to work, to help in the shelters and food programs, and to play. It was at St. Mark's Waterville in December of 1997 that The Rev. Canon Chilton Knudsen gathered for the first time with the clergy of the diocese after her election as Bishop of Maine. Waterville is a true regional community.

The view from the sanctuary

+Worship+

The Holy Eucharist is the center of worship at St. Mark's and we traditionally are a Sunday-centered parish. Currently Rite I is used at the spoken 8 a.m. service; Rite II with a choral Eucharist is used at 10:15 a.m. The latter service is family-oriented and includes a children's sermon. The children participate fully in that service monthly: ushering, singing by the Choir of Young Voices, leading the psalm, bringing forth the elements, and attending the entire worship service.

On the first Sunday of each month prayers for healing and other special prayers are offered in the sanctuary after the service. Laity-led Evening Prayer or Evensong is Sunday at 5 p.m. This year, the Order of Compline, led by our Deacon, was sung in the Colby College chapel and is planned at St. Mark's for the summer.

Other opportunities for communal worship include laity-led Morning Prayer on Fridays, the Holy Eucharist and prayers for healing on Wednesday morning, four Ember Eves, occasional Quiet Days, Lessons and Carols for Christmas, Advent, or Eastertide, and currently offered by our interim, a once-monthly Thursday 5:15 p.m. Eucharist celebrating lesser feasts.

St. Mark's is a well-educated parish that responds to well-crafted and inspirational sermons. The focus on lessons and their relationship to daily life, contemporary issues, mission and outreach motivate and challenge the congregation to gain a clearer understanding of their faith. Short, informative children's sermons given by our priest and members of the congregation teach children the heritage of their faith and the ministries of all people.

A very high percentage of adults and children who attend St. Mark's participate in lay ministries that enhance our worship, including but certainly not limited to chalice/oblation bearers, lay readers, ushers, altar/flower guild, choirs, and acolytes. Lay readers and lectors have accepted ownership of some portions of the services; special petitions and prayers as well as intercessions included on behalf of the congregation are a meaningful and sacred part of every service. Lay Eucharistic ministers take communion from the services to shut-in parishioners on a regular basis.

Music is an important and fulfilling aspect of life at St. Mark's. We have two skilled individuals on staff: a music director/choral conductor and an organist. The tradition of good choral music at St. Mark's continues, and the Adult Choir and Choir of Young Voices are dedicated and committed to enhancing worship experiences through the variety of Anglican music. Organ music provides not only music for meditation and celebration and accompaniment for the choirs but also support for full participation by the congregation. Special services, concerts and recitals are offered for the parish and the community.

+*Christian education*+

Most of the education programs occur Sundays. At the 10:15 service, young people attend the first portion of the service through the children's sermon. They then attend classes led by eight to ten volunteers in the following groupings:

pre-kindergarten and kindergarten;
grades one and two;
grades three and four; and,
grades five through eight.

Monthly and on feast days, classes are suspended and young people participate in the entire service. The Youth Group, designed for children above sixth grade, has various programs on Sunday evenings and goes on occasional trips. These intermittent programs are a well-attended and meaningful part of our youths' experiences at St. Mark's. An adult Bible study program, most often led by the rector, meets between the services Sunday mornings. A Christmas Pageant on the fourth Sunday in Advent and/or an Epiphany Pageant involve the entire Sunday school; occasionally the Youth Group has written, directed and presented pageants.

The acolyte program (grade five and above) and The Choir of Young Voices (grade three and above) provide ongoing Christian education in Anglican/Episcopal tradition both during practice sessions and in services. Confirmation classes, preparation for Baptism and other educational "seminars" are offered by the rector as needed. Of special interest was a "Last Things" program, addressing the need of preparing for one's own financial, legal, and liturgical issues before death. Several parishioners seek a mid-week prayer group.

It is a priority to allow as many families with infants and young children to participate in parish activities. The nursery is staffed for the adult Bible study class, Sunday choir practice, the 10:15 a.m. service, most Holy Week, Easter, and Christmas services, special services, and during all-parish meetings.

+Outreach+

Peeling one hundred and fifty pounds of potatoes for a benefit supper, decorating fifty wreaths for the Christmas fair, staffing the Evening Sandwich Program one day a week, working at the local food bank, and opening the doors to a half a dozen 12-step programs and support groups weekly illustrate just some of St. Mark's' active commitment to outreach. Sixty-eight percent of the parishioners responding to the survey participate in outreach suppers and the Christmas Fair; one quarter of the survey respondents support the community Evening Sandwich Program.

The long-sought-after and much-celebrated goal of dedicating the entire profit from the Christmas Fair to outreach has been attained. An emerging Outreach committee is working to create a mission statement and long term plans. The newly developed church garden will be offered as a place of rest and refreshment not only to parish families but also to patients and their families from the hospital and mental health facilities across the street.

Encouraged by two ardent parishioners, the United Thank Offering and The Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief receive strong financial support. One parishioner brings Amnesty International concerns to us one Sunday each month, motivating others to write letters. The Sunday School has sponsored children from third world countries and has participated in the Heifer Project. Special efforts of fund raising are made for major disasters or crises such as the Oklahoma City bombing.

Lay Eucharistic ministers take communion from the services to shut-in parishioners on a regular basis. Our small hospital visitation program is very active in reaching those needing and wanting Episcopal support. The Martha Guild makes Christmas baskets and sends seasonal cards to homebound and nursing home members of our parish family. Our Help Committee responds to immediate and individual needs of transportation and meals.

Both as a church and through the efforts of individual parishioners we are active and visible in the community. We are reaching out in Christ's love to our own extended family and to those in need nearby and far away.

Looking through the stained glass: Perceived strengths and perceived challenges

What do you see out a window from the sanctuary? What do you see in the new stained glass windows? Do you see what I see? My perception, your perception; somewhere in the middle, perhaps, the reality. These are not new words. In several sessions defining who we are at St. Mark's we found that some of what we see as strengths we also see as challenges to the parish and for a new rector. By taking information included elsewhere in this profile and adding more, let us illustrate what we mean.

Strength: St. Mark's has strong lay leadership. What a blessing! Our new rector will know that the parish does not stand still. The Vestry, the Worship Committee, the Finance Committee and more: all highly active, functioning and thoughtful groups with distinct roles of leadership.

Challenge: Managing many highly-motivated, dedicated lay leaders is part of the call.

Strength: We are concerned about our youth and the Christian Education program. We have dedicated volunteer teachers; we have a growing population of preschool and school-aged children who, hopefully, will become active members at St. Mark's and in the greater Anglican community. Reiterating, both the Acolyte and Choir of Young Voices programs include worship education in their meetings, reaching many of the 3rd through 12th graders. The youth of the parish generally love each others' company and want to spend time together. Activities for them are well attended and appreciated.

Challenge: Coordinating and continuing the curriculum in an organized, directed manner. Filling in the missing music portion of Christian Education, particularly to those under 3rd grade or those not wanting to participate in the current program. Teacher burn out. Those who do teach could use training and trained leadership. While the Youth Group has had strong leadership, particularly in the 70's with close work with the Interfaith Council and later directed by Perrin Radley, it now needs committed leadership (preferably not exclusively parents). The program needs to be ongoing, not spur of the moment, not always in the talking stage. The program and its leadership need to serve two distinct groups: grades six through eight and grades nine through twelve. Survey results say to focus on

the youth at St. Mark's. *Can we/should we/will we see our way clear to a part-time professional Christian Education director?*

Strength: People who come enjoy our worship, our fellowship, our missions in Waterville and beyond. The people of St. Mark's are humorful, caring for each other, open, inclusive, and intelligent. Ages are not separated; church supper tables show children sharing time with other families, older children, older members of the community both of St. Mark's folks and those who join us for events. At the Christmas Fair Heritage Kitchen, the children bus tables while the "Grand Dames" of the parish collect the money. The Diocese thanks us for our mission of hospitality, for St. Mark's by its very location prompts an open door to the Diocese for meetings large and small. When parents visit children at college, we frequently see those families worshipping at St. Mark's. We are visible in the greater Waterville community.

Challenge: Sometimes it is easy to continue in that fellowship of the usual leaders and usual workers and the perception is that everything already is accomplished by "the old guard." Once a newcomer has visited, we want to make our worship, fellowship, and missions in Waterville and beyond theirs. Visitor welcoming and follow-up, encouragement to continue attending, and helping newcomers become involved (without smothering them) needs to come from a broader base of the parish. It is difficult to reach the college students, either with a presence on campus or inside our doors. We still have to tell people where the church is in Waterville. We need to spread the word of St. Mark's Episcopal Church outside our own doors.

Strength: Our place, our building and grounds, are a plus. Centrally located in Maine, St. Mark's is one and one-half hours from the coast, one and one-half hours from Maine's largest city, Portland, and one and one-half hours from the mountains. It is accessed easily by the highway but nestled in a residential area. Our new 20-year old facility with 5-year old addition houses more action than meets the eye. St. Mark's Church kitchen presents amazing suppers that have a reputation for taste, good company, and raising money for good causes such as the Homeless Shelter, the Soup Kitchen, the Food Bank, and the Deacon's discretionary fund. Physical changes made to the kitchen five years ago have improved access and traffic patterns; there is enough new and functional china and the needs of the cooks continue to be met by purchases of simple but effective kitchenware. Our faithful crew of dishwashers contributes mightily. The church space is utilized regularly by numerous 12-step programs, by the Red Cross for Blood Drives, by teachers of music and Tai Chi, and by Boards of Directors of the Homeless Shelter and Amnesty International. The parking lot is usually full.

Challenge: The future - distant and not-so-distant. A 20-year old building means a 20-year-old furnace and 20-year-old furniture. Like any house, there is never enough storage space, even with the addition. *With all the groups using the building, is it secure?* Certainly, cleaning once a week is not enough; daily wear and tear, particularly in mud season, is hard on the floors, the carpeting, the sexton, and the eye. We also need better long-term planning for the needs that will soon come: roof, furnace, additional pews, more chairs/new chairs for the altar area, a commercial dishwasher. Keeping the garden groomed and watered is difficult. The more members of our family, the less space we have. *Will we wear out or outgrow our space and not be ready with the solutions?*

Other challenges needing our energy

Hospital visitation: We need to train more lay people to be involved actively in this ministry.

Who we are (whether we like to see it or not): The St. Mark's community is very homogeneous, very self confident, demanding, and a little smug. We sometimes insulate ourselves too well. We are not good with authority figures and hierarchical management.

Financial planning for the long term: We need to take a good, long, and productive look at and then plan for providing appropriate salaries and benefits for the staff, preparing for the future needs of the building, investing what we have wisely, organ maintenance, and replacement of simple things like congregation prayer books, hymnals and Bibles, Sunday school equipment and nursery needs. We need to increase our pledge base.

Several congregations under one roof: We are challenged to bring together the Sunday 8 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. congregations; we are also challenged to include and involve our "snowbirds" - people who flee the winter season and return in the midst of spring - as well as those who summer in Maine and attend St. Mark's for the summer season.

Burn out and letting go: St. Mark's ministers to people from a diverse, almost rural, geographic base; it's a trip for many to get to church to worship let alone to be involved in the numerous other parish activities. We are a relatively small parish of less than three hundred souls; often the same individuals are found trying to do the same things year after year. Perhaps, "If I don't do it, it won't get done" needs to change to "if I don't do it, someone else will, "or", if it doesn't happen, maybe it's time for a brief rest from that project." Recently, more newer members are becoming involved; certainly that will help but the struggle is ongoing and we will need to address it.

Looking through the clear glass in the church, we see our strengths

Our traditions from mission status to the present: A strong corporate worship; dedicated corps of acolytes dating from our beginnings to our newest 5th graders; music; individuals from St. Mark's who participate in the work of the Diocese; willingness to step up financially for specific needs such as UTO, PBFWR, and specific disaster help both locally and globally.

Our aesthetic qualities: The worship services - the way they are put together - are quite beautiful. The careful work of the Memorials, Acquisitions and Planning (MAP) Committee has resulted in a thoughtfully and beautifully decorated sanctuary balancing the round stained glass window from the old church with the new, contemporary designed stained glass; the new hymn boards combine elements from both the "new" tabernacle and the hymn board from the old church. The dedicated Altar Guild keeps the silver, brass, altar linens and vestments pleasing to the eye. The garden

just off the sanctuary was prepared and dedicated lovingly to welcome, comfort, encourage, and bring joy. St. Mark's is often complimented for its aesthetic beauty.

Our mission of hospitality: The parish has great cooks, great decorators and enthusiasm for parish/Diocesan gatherings. The Martha Guild provides receptions for families and the community when requested after funeral or memorial services. The Martha Guild actually misses serving Clergy luncheons when St. Mark's' turn doesn't come often enough! We are thankful that we are centrally located and can provide space (and more) as needed.

Our music program is steeped in Anglican tradition and in St. Mark's own musical history of quality. Our tracker organ and two choirs lead and strengthen corporate worship. Opportunities are given to individual youths and adults from the parish to present music as parts of services. The new addition consolidated music, robes, instruments and office space. The Arts at St. Mark's has been established as a forum for recitals and chamber concerts from within the parish and from the greater community.

Our ability to celebrate joyfully together: All-parish celebrations have included burning the mortgage; saying good bye to our last rector, Perrin Radley, and his wife, Laurel; baptisms and confirmations for our parish and the region; brunch when the Bishop visits, and more. Our Celebrations Committee coordinates many feasts that dovetail with parish meetings, events and services. No less important are breakfast for the participants between services on Easter, youth group meetings that celebrate with pizza, the end of the choral year pool party, and the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper put on by the acolytes and their families.

Our many volunteers: Those who create the service bulletins, those who organize, collate and mail the monthly newsletters, those who work in the office during the hours the Administrative Assistant cannot and more, give willingly and capably of their already busy time so that the office functions consistently.

Children's sermons: Begun about eight years ago, sermons are presented at the 10:15 a.m. by St. Mark's clergy, visiting clergy, leaders of lay ministry, and other members of the congregation. These brief but informative sermons teach lessons from scripture, about Episcopal tradition, and about lay ministries to all the children of God.

Active internal organizations: Within the parish are over a dozen vibrant committees whose work is ongoing and whose memberships span all of our demographic areas. The Martha Guild is one; it is a remarkably active and centered organization for women. Its work includes independent fundraising, financial contributions to outreach and for parish needs, hospitality for visitors and families, and more. Monthly meetings include fellowship, entertainment and/or education, parish life updates, and planning sessions.

Qualities we seek in a new rector

Opinions regarding leadership, ministry styles and qualities of our new rector were clearly articulated by members of St. Mark's. Most especially we seek

- * a spiritual leader
- * a nurturing and pastoral minister
- * a leader in parish growth and development
- * a collaborative administrator.

The spiritual leader at St. Mark's needs to demonstrate clear understanding of the spiritual nature of Christ's teaching. We ask that the rector lead by example and enhance our relationships with God through sermons, guidance, music and prayer. We seek someone with strong spirituality, knowledgeable about Christian history, and passionate about life.

Preaching skills are very important. We expect sermons that are clear, intelligent, well planned and delivered, succinct and inspirational. Challenge our spirituality; invite us to go where we don't even know we need to go. Challenge our spiritual confidence without squashing it. Relate Biblical teachings to our lives in this world. Reach our children, too.

A rector at St. Mark's is in partnership with the parish. We need someone who will share and guide us, not "do it all." There was a time when we were not welcome in the planning of our worship; now we are. We were challenged to and learned to take hold of The Prayers of the People. Our rector serves as a valued member in the Worship Committee. Parishioners are free to express their own spirituality.

Our worship is a celebration. We'd like a rector who will join us in it.

The new rector must be nurturing and pastoral. Being nonjudgmental and accepting of all manners of human beings are essential qualities for a new rector at St. Mark's. Our parish has worshipers from cradle Episcopalians through many heritages and backgrounds, and from newborn to over ninety years old. All must feel welcome and cared for during worship and in their greater days and full lives as parishioners and people of God.

Our parish has cared for AIDS victims and their families; we have worked through several uncomfortable sexual and emotional situations with several individuals within the parish. We have suffered through the actions and reactions of Bishop Chalfant's resignation; we, along with the Waterville community shared a great loss when a former senior warden died unexpectedly. We also have rejoiced as a parish with the births, successful adoptions, and baptisms of children. We were gladdened when the long-awaited goal of dedicating the entire profit of the Church Fair to outreach and not to the

working budget was reached. We have been joyful when parishioners who left St. Mark's over particular issues have returned to share our worship again.

Our ideal candidate has time for everyone, has patience for and with others, has energy to work and play with the young, the old, the infirm, and the strong-willed. We need a rector who unifies the parish, who is a mature counselor in times of crises and flexible, outgoing, approachable, and down to earth in times of joy. We are ready to move forward and we want someone to grow with us.

Growth and development are critical. We'd like a rector who will stay with us for a good period of time - the kind of time to help make plans and carry them out, time to become visible and involved in the community, and time to find the unique things about St. Mark's and help us build on them. While we have witnessed sporadic yet steady growth in the number and diversity of people in our parish, our new rector, working with lay ministry, will need to establish and reinvigorate programs designed to attract new people into our church and establish St. Mark's as a home for families and children. On too many occasions throughout our history a family brings a child for Holy Baptism, stays a while, and melts away.

Commitment to expanding our parish, to youth, to varied life styles and to diverse socioeconomic backgrounds are important qualities that will enable us together to broaden our base and bring more people into this Episcopal church.

We seek a collaborative administrator. Parishioners and paid staff value working with, not for, the rector. Skills including organization, delegation, and good communication will enable the new rector to spend time out of the office and with the people of the parish and the community.