

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

About St. Mary's Episcopal Church

Location	Goochland, Virginia
Setting	Suburban
Communicants in Good Standing	1,513
Average Sunday Attendance	289
Average Weekly attendance	311

Our Liturgical style and practice: St. Mary's liturgical style is characterized as Broad church, BCP based. Our liturgical style is neither high nor low church and is characterized by a strong balance of a traditional approach to worship with a comfortable and welcoming environment. A hallmark of this is that we continue to offer Morning Prayer services in Ordinary Time in addition to Eucharist Rite I (9 am service) and Rite II (11 am service). We continue to hold morning prayer services on the second and fourth Sundays, except during Advent, Lent, and Easter. A full schedule of our Worship Services is available on our website (<https://www.stmarysgoochland.org/>).

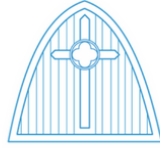
Strengths

St. Mary's Episcopal Church is located on River Road in the eastern section of Goochland County about 20 minutes from the center of Richmond, Virginia. Founded in 1866 following the close of the Civil War, the parish was established to minister to the needs of the local Welsh coal mining community. Construction for the historic sanctuary began 1877, enabling attendance to accommodate 135 people. That chapel served its community for over a century.

Eventually, it became clear that the original church building, now affectionately referred to as "Little St. Mary's," needed to expand in order to accommodate the growing congregation. In an effort to preserve the historical integrity of the campus, a strategic plan was drawn up to include the building of "New St. Mary's"—a larger sanctuary situated behind the original church. Two architects specializing in carpenter gothic buildings designed the new building. New St. Mary's was dedicated in 1992. Sunday services continue to be held in each building.

St. Mary's has grown into a healthy, program-sized parish in the Diocese of Virginia. As of the end of 2023, we boast 1,723 active parishioners, with an average weekly attendance of 311 people across three services. The parish family is experiencing rapid growth. Over the past three years, we have averaged 8% growth per year and are projecting growth to 2,200 parishioners in 2027.

We are blessed with a serene church yard and grounds that provide a refuge from the complications of nearby suburbia and the surrounding metropolitan area. Our church cemetery remains a hallmark and treasured reminder of our history and roots as the oldest graves date back to the



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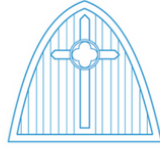
1870s. A hemlock planted in 1877 sits by Little St. Mary's and points to our long history and God's faithfulness to us. Throughout not only our long history but also our recent growth, St. Mary's has had a steadfast desire to stay true to our core values and to what makes this place so special.

The people, the place, the worship, and the work are four aspects of what makes St. Mary's "St. Mary's" and are tightly bound together by the shared values of hospitality, belonging, kindness, and the core conviction that we are all human, all imperfect, all yearning to be made whole by the grace of God. As we continue our spiritual growth individually and collectively as a congregation, we pray these themes guide us as we move forward. We have a deep gratitude for our commitment to carrying out our life and ministry as a real community where we are accountable to each other. We are entering a new season in the life of this parish and share a deep belief that God has given us everything we need to go forward with faith, hope, and love.

At St. Mary's, we gratefully have a knowledgeable, creative, approachable, inspirational clergy and staff. We have a vibrant and joyful community of parishioners who care about and know one another, and who are welcoming to newcomers. Through hard work and intentionality, we enjoy a climate of trust in our Parish with respect to lay and clergy leadership and the congregation. The spiritual responsibility of the Vestry is to be faithful stewards of St. Mary's ministries—keeping the purpose of each true to our values and providing connections between them and the parish community. Our ministries are integral to how we do the work God has given us to do; they are a critical vehicle for taking care of one another and for learning from each other. And while we all deeply value our shared history and traditions, above all, we are tied together by our personal relationship with God and His Church.

Our community of faith is rooted in worship, through which we express our love and gratitude to God, each other and our neighbors. On Sunday mornings, we have a 9:00 a.m. service in Little St. Mary's and an 11:00 a.m. service in New St. Mary's. Between the services, Sunday School for children ages 4-12 is held in the youth education building, and programming for adults varies depending on the season (examples include adult forum, mini speaker series, etc.). Opportunities for spiritual formation are also offered regularly throughout the week (examples include men's spiritual practice, centering prayer, lectionary Bible study, etc.). St. Mary's also has a dedicated group of parishioners who attend a special service of prayer, healing, homily, and communion at noon on Wednesdays.

In 2022, as church attendance continued to rise and more new families joined St. Mary's, we felt called to establish a new casual, family-friendly service at 5:00 p.m. on Sundays during the program year. The service is held monthly and frequently coincides with youth group; additionally, it is followed by a potluck supper, offering families the opportunity for fellowship beyond the confines of Sunday morning programming.



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We have a caring core of lay ministry, including ushers, altar guild, musical leaders, readers, oblation bearers, and pastoral care. Additionally, we have a robust children's ministry and youth program serving children ages 4-18 through Sunday School, youth group, Vacation Bible Study, mission trips, and local outreach opportunities. St. Mary's enthusiastically welcomes children at all of our services, for St. Mary's is a destination for families to grow together in God's way.

An outcome of our growth is reflected in the shift over the past few years in our approach to stewardship. At St. Mary's, we view stewardship as a spiritual practice anchored in prayer and direct expression of our gratefulness for God's goodness in our lives. Notably, our recent stewardship campaign "Enough, and More Than Enough" focused on the congregation joining together and offering what we have as a collective community, understanding that God will bless our offering as more than enough.

Our strong culture of stewardship has allowed us to live fully into our founding identity as a mission minded church by continually increasing our support to our outreach partners. Our outreach partnerships are a pillar of our faith life and reflective of our desire to support this community. We understand that our Outreach Ministries are not a 'program of the parish', but constitutive of our identity in Christ.

Further adding to our financial strength is our commitment to creating an endowment fund to care for the building and grounds, including two church buildings, an expansive graveyard, youth education building, parish hall, and 15 acres. The goal of the financial endowment is to take care of the physical place so that we can focus our annual resources on outreach and people.

With immense gratitude and joy, we eagerly anticipate celebrating our 150th anniversary in 2027, and initial conversations have already begun to ensure a proper commemoration of this milestone. We deeply value our history and traditions and seek to preserve and celebrate them. We are currently reflecting on what God is calling us to do and what He's calling us to be as we grow together over these next three years *and* in the years to follow.