

St. Columba's Parish Profile

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WASHINGTON



Welcome to St. Columba's

This profile is an invitation to learn about us. After reading it, we hope that you will consider how God might be calling you to lead and walk with us.



"We began in 1884 in a little white frame chapel standing approximately where our fieldstone church stands today. In fine weather the congregation gathered under the Columba oak, which is still with us, gnarled and showing its age but a powerful symbol of the life and growth of our community..."

(Excerpted from the Rev. Dr. Margaret Guenther's "History of St. Columba's"). Margaret is a priest at St. Columba's.

In the spring of 2014, nearly 200 parishioners came together during two Community Gatherings on a quest to imagine our future. In the process, we reconnected with who we are. Utilizing an Appreciative Inquiry process, parishioners told their stories about St. Columba's. These stories revealed what was unique about our parish. We reconnected with the passion, opinions and spirit that define us. We felt God's presence and began imagining a new future. We experienced community in a powerful and healing way.

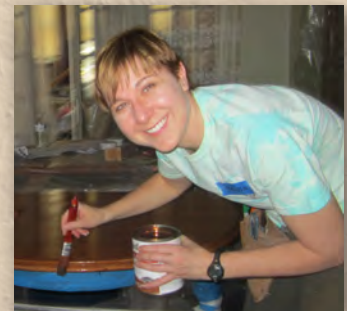
The information we collected during our Community Gatherings, along with additional data gathered from staff, neighbors and other parishioners in individual and group interviews, was used to prepare this document. Our intent is to describe all that we are: our strengths, achievements, mistakes and challenges.

This is the Soul of St. Columba's.



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All Are Welcome



We are a vibrant and inclusive community that seeks to explore our faith and follow God's call to us.

St. Columba's is a large community, with membership exceeding 3,500 and Sunday attendance that averages more than 700. We welcome parishioners of multiple generations, diverse families and different faith traditions. This is a spiritual place. God is felt and present here in many ways that we do and do not understand. We support one another and the greater community. When committed, we can be a powerful body of energy, resources and service to do the Lord's work with great joy.

We are in our 140th year as an Episcopal parish. Our history includes many notable stories of taking risks to grow and implementing bold programs that changed the lives of others. There were Columba "saints" who led the way, including previous rectors and parishioners who shaped our identity. We have a long history of service to our community, especially the homeless; we are founding members of Samaritan Ministry and Friendship Place. We continue to minister to the homeless today through our Water Ministry and other service initiatives. We founded a Nursery School at a time when the District of Columbia did not provide preschool classes in its public schools. In addition, St. Columba's has embraced changes in our faith community that furthered the inclusion of women and gay clergy in the church. We invite you to read more about our **history** in the St. Columba's Newsletter celebrating our 140th anniversary. Our traditions are shaped by where we have been, our hopes by what we aspire to be.

Who is **St. Columba**?



1909



1920



2014

A Guide for Reading This Profile ...

This profile is organized around our mission and is supplemented with photos, videos and links to our web page.

“St. Columba’s is a welcoming Christian community that seeks to be open in spirit, deep in faith, rich in worship, active in service.”



This **mission statement**, and the Columba cross that represents it, were used to organize this profile. We are a big church, with many programs and parishioners in different places spiritually and on different journeys. While pages of this profile focus on specific aspects of our parish life, these aspects are best understood as deeply connected activities. Our programs and community form a web of experiences that create the special place and things that happen here.

Throughout the profile, elements of this cross are utilized to represent this interconnectedness:

- Open in Spirit – 
- Deep in Faith – 
- Rich in Worship – 
- Active in Service – 
- Foundations – 

Feel free to visit our website for additional information through **links** (indicated in **blue**) on each page. You can also get to the web by clicking on the title at the top of each page.

Columba.org

Come search us out and know us.

Worship

Everything we are and do flows from worship.

Sunday worship fills us with the energy and spirit to be Christ's body in the world. Lifted by liturgy, music, healing rite and prayer, we experience the "thin" places where God is most present.

St. Columba's is rich in opportunities for spiritual growth, with active prayer and discernment groups, a Benedictine cell and several ministries that support our shared worship.



WAYNE C. FOWLER

Rich in Worship



We seek spiritual nourishment through rich and beautiful worship that opens us to the mystery of God's presence.



REV. JANET VINCENT

The peace of the earth be with you,
the peace of the heavens too,
the peace of the rivers be with you,
the peace of the oceans, too
deep peace falling over you,
god's peace growing in you.



The Peace of
the Earth

A Guatemalan Blessing
(translated by
Christine Carson)



The building itself reflects
the worship within: In a
quiet nave, one can feel
the spiritual presence of a
place that has been filled
with prayer and is home to
the Holy Spirit.

Worship

Our flexible and adaptive worship services meet us where we are, regardless of age or background.



WAYNE C. FOWLER



WAYNE C. FOWLER

Rich in Worship



Our congregation places great value on sermons that stimulate and inspire us. We particularly value preaching that applies the Word of God to us personally and gives meaning to our lives.

Sundays at St. Columba's

8 am Eucharist - Church Nave
9 am Eucharist - Church Nave
9:15 and 11:15 am Eucharist - Great Hall
10:15 am Education Hour - Great Hall
11:15 am Eucharist - Church Nave
5 pm Eucharist (see [worship schedule](#))

On Sundays, our earliest service is simple and spoken. The morning services include two short and energetic services in the Great Hall for families with young children.

There are two Rite II Eucharists with full music in the Nave. The afternoon service rotates between contemplative and contemporary formats.



CHIP SOMDEVILLA



JAY TREADWELL

Hopes for the Future

- Welcome and embrace a congregation with diverse needs for worship and support
- Create more chances for common worship across age groups
- Connect our expansive parish through common experiences and appreciation of worship
- Provide worship opportunities that balance parishioners' busy lives with the need to grow more deeply in faith
- Identify and implement styles of worship that increase children and youth attendance and participation

Music

Music programs at St. Columba's serve to connect us to all the ways in which we worship and serve God.



WAYNE C. FOWLER

The music programs run through the life of St. Columba's and are intentionally volunteer to reflect the entire parish.



WAYNE C. FOWLER

Rich in Worship



In worship, music lifts our community so we experience God's presence more closely.

Hopes for the Future

- Create more opportunities for music in our worship and parish life
- Continue to incorporate new musical styles into our worship and music tradition
- Honor our long history of deep and broad support for the music program

Number of Choristers:

St C's Singers: **64** (15 in ensemble)

Gallery Choir: **13**

Boy Choir: **12**

Girl Choir: **34**

Primary Choir: **25**

Number of Ringers:

30 including **12** youth in Genesis Ringers



JAY TREADWELL



VIDEO: KENDALL PAYNE

Watch the video to learn more about the role of music in worship at St. Columba's.



WAYNE C. FOWLER



WAYNE C. FOWLER

Music and Children

Our children and youth take a lead role in worship.



JAY TREADWELL

The St. Columba's music program provides our youngest members with a language they can use to speak to God in God's house, which is accessible and FUN!



WAYNE C. FOWLER

Rich in Worship





The music program is an on-ramp to a deeper relationship with St. Columba's and each other. This is especially visible in families with young children.



Watch the video to learn about the role of music in children's formation at St. C's.

Service

Through service, we seek to understand God's grace in our lives, allowing us to deepen our faith through action.



STEP Program Celebration

WAYNE C. FOWLER

St. Columba's has historically provided abundant service opportunities, both locally to address homelessness and hunger, and globally to support world peace and environmental initiatives. Youth and adults work together building healthy, long-term relationships within our community.

We are a founding member of Rebuilding Together, Samaritan Ministries and Iona Senior Services, and have made long-term commitments to provide services, which include:

- Rebuilding Together (formerly Christmas in April), 1984
- St. Columba's Appalachia Project (SCAP), 1989
- Loaves & Fishes, 1989
- Samaritan Ministries, 1989
- Water Ministry, 1990

Out of a challenge from our rector in 1994, we launched the St. Columba's Truesdell Educational Partnership (STEP), which was a promise from our parish to support 73 kindergarten children through high school and college. In the course of those 20 years, we provided more than 200 volunteers and raised funds to help with college tuition.

Click [here](#) for descriptions of all St. C's outreach programs.

Active in Service 

We reach out with the spirit of showing Christ's love, and by serving others, we are served.



RYAN MCNAVAGE

Rebuilding Together

"The two weeks were filled with people heeding the call to help someone else, working long days for someone they might not even meet or who might not say thank you. But they came to be active in service. They came to do what was right. They came when they were called. We are all called."

Ryan McNavage, Rebuilding Together



REV. JANET VINCENT

10 Mission Groups
4 Mission Partners



THE REV. JASON COX

Service lets us be God's hands and feet in the world. Through service, we develop relationships that enrich our lives and broaden our understanding of the lives of others.



VIDEO: KENDALL PAYNE

See the Water Ministry in action.

Hopes for the Future

- Strengthen our presence in the community through robust support of existing programs
- Create a vision for service that will build community within the parish and energize us to use our time, talent and treasure to make a genuine difference in the life of our city
- Ground the experience of service in our worship

The **Water Ministry** provides lunch, showers and laundry facilities four times a week for 30-50 people who are homeless or in need.

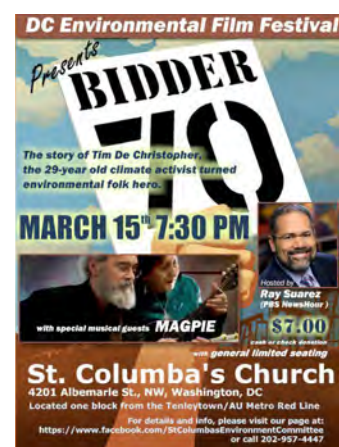
Service in Action

Through service, example and advocacy, parishioners seek to live into the stewardship of God's creation.

St. Columba's Environment Committee

The Environment committee works to provide opportunities for caring for God's holy creation. We work as individuals and as a church to gain awareness of global and local environmental issues.

Recent activities include hosting the DC Environmental Film Festival, creating "zero waste" events at St. Columba's, providing reusable mugs for coffee hour and engaging the parish community through service and education.



Columba Day Zero Waste Annual Picnic

Attendees	Landfill Trash	Recycling	Compost
500+	Less than 1 lb.	48 lbs.	139 lbs.



Active in Service 

St. Columba's Appalachia Project (SCAP)

Each summer, high school students spend a week in Barbour County, West Virginia, making a positive difference in the lives of others through home repair. Living in community with adult and college-age leaders, young people establish a special bond with each other and those they serve through work and worship.



SCAP helps young people to see first-hand the effects of poverty in America.



Developing intergenerational relationships is a key element of SCAP. Young people form healthy relationships with adults outside of their family circles. These bonds form the basis for deep and long-lasting relationships and ties back to the parish.

Active roles for college leaders keep faith-based opportunities at St. Columba's viable for this crucial age.



Pastoral Care

We hold each other up with love, prayer and service in times of celebration, transition, sorrow and pain.

The Stephen Ministry offers caring Christian presence and support by trained lay caregivers for those in transition. Stephen Ministers also serve as visiting **Eucharistic Ministers** who take communion to those who are homebound. The communion kits are distributed during Sunday services so that those receiving home communion share one bread, one cup and the experience of "one Body in Christ." **Remembering Gatherings** are offered twice a year by clergy and a Stephen Minister for parishioners and the wider community who have lost loved ones. Both here and during our Blue Christmas service held in mid-December, we commit those who have died into God's loving care.



VIDEO: KENDALL PAYNE

Deep in Faith



Hear Michele's Story: Why Stephen Ministry?

Healing and Deep Caring

are part of our culture. You are not alone but held in Christ's love. Our pastoral response includes on-call clergy and lay organized support with prayer at the center of all pastoral care.

A Healing Rite with the laying on of hands by clergy and lay ministers is available to parishioners at most services on Sundays for those seeking healing, special prayers, petitions or a deepening of faith.

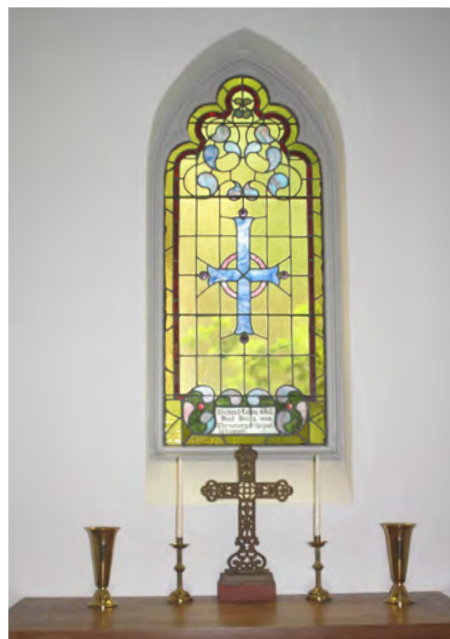


PATRICK C. RYAN

Our ministries also include:

A **Prayer Chain** of volunteer parishioners (managed by a staff member) who gather and pray for those in need.

A **Good Shepherds ministry** prepares and delivers home-cooked meals to parishioners who are experiencing illness or times of transition.



BARBARA MCGOWAN



JAY TREADWELL

Flower Baskets created from Sunday flowers are hand-delivered to parishioners experiencing significant life events. Whether there is a new baby, illness or death, a basket of flowers from St. Columba's is hand-delivered by caring volunteers.

Hopes for the Future

- Foster a culture in which people are as comfortable asking for help as they are giving it
- Nurture the pastoral impulses of our parish
- Strengthen our traditional care while finding new ways to reach those in need

Children

We walk with children on their spiritual journey.



St. Columba's employs a full-time staff member dedicated to ministering to children and their families on their journey from birth through grade 5. This individual coordinates the Great Hall services, Nave "Storytime," Sunday school, baptism classes, festivals and activities around church holidays and is a liaison for pastoral care for Great Hall families.



Open in Spirit





REV. JANET VINCENT

Jesus Loves Me



JAY TREADWELL



Worship with the children in the Great Hall

VIDEO: KENDALL PAYNE

St. Columba's values children as an integral part of our parish community. We want them to know that God is with them. Children are allowed to be who they are: nurtured, allowed to fail, and encouraged to spread their wings and take on responsibilities.

Children

Children often are the best theologians and the catalyst to their parents' spiritual journey.



CHIP SOMODEVILLA

Many St. Columba's families enter the church through our diverse and vibrant children's ministries. Our Baptism preparation is a teachable moment and often the beginning of a lifelong relationship with the church. Sunday school classes, staffed primarily by volunteers, are offered for each grade from three-year-olds through grade 5.



WAYNE C. FOWLER

Open in Spirit



Sunday services intentionally encourage children's participation

- **Nave** During the sermon and prayers, children at the 9 am service leave for "Storytime," which explains the lessons in an age-appropriate language for kids.
- **Great Hall** Clergy minister at two services designed for preschool children and their families.

All of our clergy celebrate at these services on a rotating basis.



KATHERINE DREGER

Hopes for the Future

- Continue our focus on children and their lively involvement in worship and programs supporting their development
- Bring together the Great Hall and Nave communities as one parish
- Assist families to transition comfortably between the Great Hall and Nave services



JAY TREADWELL

Our deep, rich music program for children includes Primary Choir, Boy Choir and Girl Choir.

Youth

The youth programs at St. Columba's serve as a foundation for life and create a home for young adults.

Based around the three-step, six- to seven-year Journey to Adulthood (J2A) program, our middle and high school students are encouraged to broaden their spiritual growth through service, fellowship and prayer.



THE REV. JASON COX

Rite 13 In grades 6 and 7, young teens explore their creative gifts while building a strong community of peers, and celebrate with a special liturgy near their 13th birthdays.

J2A (Journey to Adulthood) In grades 8 and 9, young people explore how to use their gifts through topics centered around self and spirituality.

YAC (Young Adults in Church) In grades 10 through 12, St. Columba's youth meet to explore how best to claim their role as young adults in the church.

Classes meet every Sunday. Discussion topics may range from discernment of Bible verses to taking leadership roles in the St. Columba's community or just taking quiet time to catch up on each other's lives.

Active in Service 



BARBARA MCGOWAN

Youth Formation

- **Youth formation** is led by a full-time member of the clergy committed to youth ministry, supported by volunteer leaders.
- At the end of the J2A program, young persons may go on a pilgrimage. Pilgrims take time and space to look for “thin” places close to God as they explore their faith, strengthen their friendships, and, of course, have fun!
- Youth formation is tightly linked to service opportunities at St. Columba’s as young people learn to use their gifts to help others.
- Young people are integrated throughout liturgy. All acolytes are young persons, starting as early as 3rd grade and continuing through high school. Selected youth serve as sacristans or as readers and ushers.
- One major benefit of the youth program is the opportunity to form healthy relationships with adults not connected as parents, creating a safe and encouraging environment.



Hopes for the Future

- Continue support for a welcoming youth program that prepares our young people to claim their church
- Strengthen intergenerational bonds
- Create more opportunities for young people to work with staff and volunteer leaders throughout the church and larger community

Adult Formation

We are a community of lifelong learners seeking to understand and live into our Christian faith and our relationship with God.



WAYNE C. FOWLER

The Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde

We have an Adult Formation Support Team headed by a clergy member working to build a coherent and multifaceted program of adult formation. Current programs offer a variety of ways for parishioners to relate to God and foster their spiritual development.

Courses of Spirit and Faith explore a variety of topics including church history, worship, interfaith dialogue, spirituality, the arts, religion and social issues. Recent courses led by both lay and clergy include "Poetry and the Life of the Spirit" and "Reading the Bible: Approaches and Text."

Deep in Faith



Our parishioners are at various places on their spiritual journey—some with deep roots in the Episcopal faith and others experiencing their first faith community at St. Columba's.



Hear "Tattoos on the Heart," a gang-intervention presentation.

This requires an adult formation program that meets people where they are while encouraging them to grow. How do we invite people into discovering their spiritual journey and what it means to be an adult Christian?

Smaller venues for prayer and formation

are also available, such as Centering Prayer, the Benedictine Cell, the Creative Aging Network and others. A daily community prayer is sent out via email to parishioners and the parish Facebook page. We have also launched a Digital Resource Center that focuses on three aspects: pray, think, do.

Sunday Forums are offered during the program year between the 9 and 11:15 am services. These forums are a place for parishioners to gather as a larger community. They are used to educate, inform and discuss important issues affecting the church as well as our global community.



Spirit Link

Hopes for the Future

- Grow creatively in programming so that Adult Formation has an overall vision and focus similar to our children's programs
- Rethink and revitalize the forums as a vehicle for Adult Formation to include more creative programs, relevant issues and dynamic speakers and thereby increase parishioner participation
- Create programs and classes that support adults in discovering their spiritual identity and the path to Christianity
- Provide more ways to deepen who we are spiritually as a faith community



Community Gathering to envision St. Columba's future, April 2014

Nursery School

The formation of children occurs not only on Sundays but through a vibrant 5-day-a-week nursery school program.



BARBARA MCGOWAN

St. Columba's Nursery School's philosophy is to prepare children to become good citizens in their communities. Through well-conceived play and activity, children learn the give and take of friendship, leadership and collaboration with many different kinds of people to prepare them for school and life. At this Episcopal school, each child is valued as an individual and learns to value others the same way.



VIDEO: KENDALL PAYNE

Hear Julia Berry discuss the Nursery School's philosophy and values.

Open in Spirit



Facts and Figures

- Full-time staff of 19, as church employees; head of school reports to rector.
- 106 children, age 2.5 to 5.5, in 5-day programs; 25% have special needs
- Currently 21% of enrolled students are part of families who belong to the parish
- The school pays 6.5% of gross tuition & program earnings to the church

The school operates under the church's 501(c)(3) but has its own budget, manages its own finances, and consistently runs a surplus.



BARBARA MCGOWAN

St. Columba's understands that children's spiritual growth is nestled within their physical, emotional and moral development.



BARBARA MCGOWAN

Nursery School

St. Columba's Nursery School occupies the ground floor of our building and a special place in our hearts.



The church and school are intentionally integrated physically and financially; the school is an extension of the parish. The school pays rent for its space and has contributed to St. Columba's Capital Campaign. School funds have paid for core facilities renovations and continued innovative investments in the outdoor environmental learning center.

Open in Spirit





Hopes for the Future

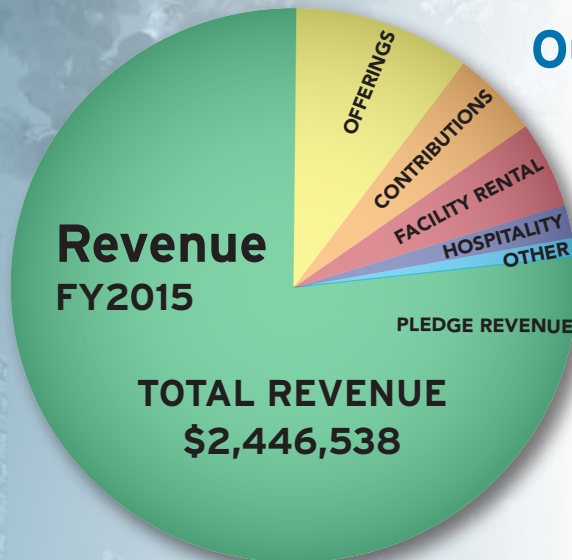
- Actively engage clergy with the Nursery School and its children
- Improve outreach to young Nursery School families in the parish as a way to develop deep roots and longterm membership
- Raise the percentage of students whose families are parish members
- Enhance and strengthen relationships between school and parish staff



Stewardship

Faith in our Future

We have spirited ambitions. Our financial management and stewardship need to align with our passion for St. Columba's.



Our Relationship to Money

We do many things well at St. Columba's, but stewardship has not traditionally been one of them. We are a large and lively parish and strive for more ardent stewardship. Pledging does not fully support our operating budget. Over the years we have utilized fundraisers and special "asks" to cover shortfalls in pledging and capital campaigns to cover deferred maintenance. We have no endowment. We do have significant potential resources. After seven years of declining stewardship and deficit spending, the last year has seen an increase in the number of pledges and the amount of pledge dollars. We have renewed commitment and energy and see pledges moving in the right direction.

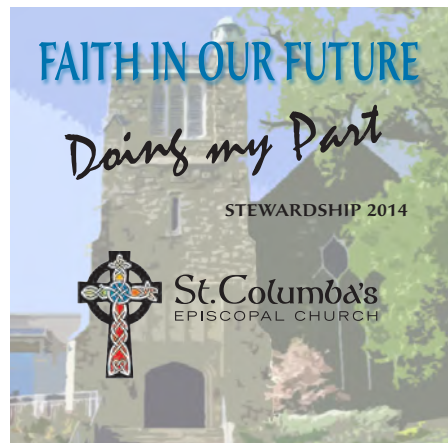


Staff

We have a total of 25 staff, three full-time/one part-time non-stipendiary clergy, two full-time/four part-time program staff and 10 full-time/4 part-time administrative staff. No staff member is dedicated to stewardship; we rely on volunteer leadership.



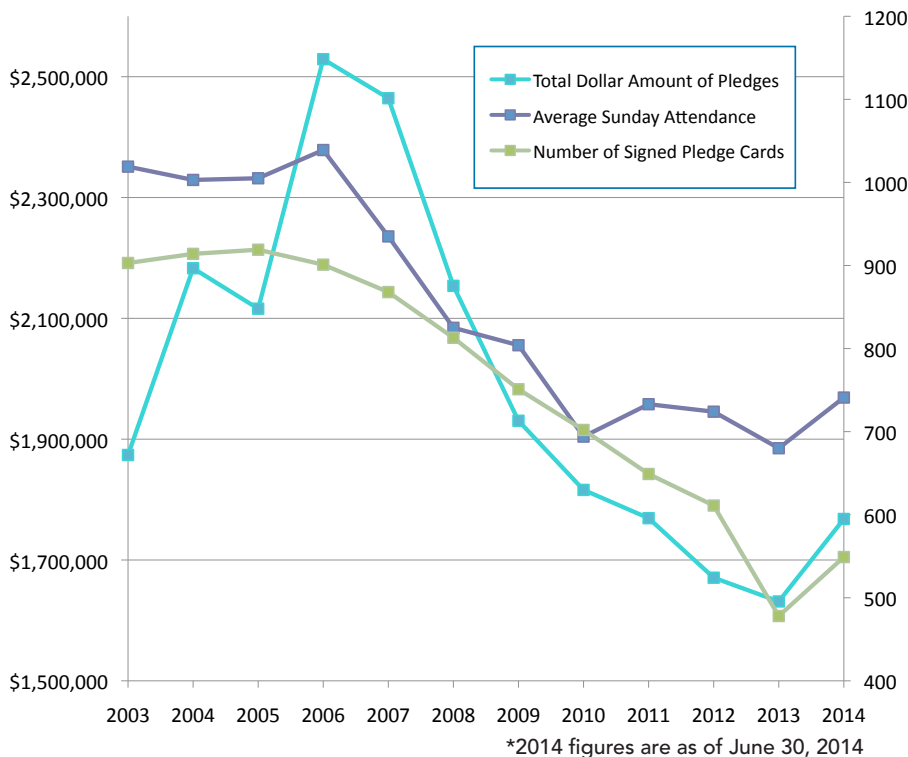
BARBARA MCGOWAN



We need to find the right balance of staff and clergy to support our program and worship needs.

12 Year History:

Pledge Dollars, Average Sunday Attendance and Number of Pledges



2013 Capital Campaign

We have care-worn facilities requiring some much-needed attention. Last year we completed a capital campaign, achieving pledges totaling \$4 million payable through 2017 to fund deferred maintenance and enhancements. This allows us to move forward with the most essential maintenance and renovation work. We are in the process of setting priorities and sequencing work that needs to be done in light of our goals and the needs identified in a professional assessment of our physical plant.

Hopes for the Future

- Establish a partnership among clergy, staff and lay leadership that will inspire meaningful, proportional pledging and enable us to achieve our stewardship goals
- Instill a serious common understanding of stewardship as the natural corollary of our gratitude for this community and our many blessings

In the Neighborhood

St. Columba's Episcopal Church is a vital neighborhood and community resource located in Northwest Washington, DC.

The church sits at the same corner of Albemarle and 42nd streets where it began

as a mission of St. Alban's Episcopal Church in 1884. The neighborhood consists of family-friendly houses and apartments clustered around a university and commercial centers, easily accessible by car and public transportation. Restaurants, stores and coffee shops are within easy walking distance of the church. The community is thriving and growing.

Our congregation reflects our neighborhood, including many families with children, as well as parishioners in other phases of life, including retirement and beyond. We welcome parishioners of multiple generations, diverse families and different faith traditions. Parishioners live

in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area where they work as professionals, leaders and government-service employees.





VIDEO: CARL STEWART

Watch an aerial video of St. C's

Neighborhood Relationships

- The parish has served as a catalyst for community services for seniors (Seabury Resources for the Aging, Friendship Place and Iona House) and the homeless (Fletcher House).
- Currently, five 12-Step groups use our classrooms for weekly meetings.
- We have served as a polling site for Precinct 31 of Ward III for more than 50 years.
- Three community choirs use our space for rehearsals and concerts.



Hopes for the Future

- Continue using our talents, resources and staff to be a good neighbor in our community
- Revitalize services formerly provided to neighborhood groups, especially senior citizens
- Seek opportunities to reach out to our changing and growing community

Take a Walk Around the Block



JAY TREADWELL

eðow

Episcopal Diocese of Washington

Under the leadership of the Rt. Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde, the diocese's first priority is the renewal and revitalization of our congregations and core ministries.

St. Columba's is a member of the **Episcopal Diocese of Washington**, which includes the District of Columbia,

and Montgomery, Prince George's, Charles and St. Mary's counties in Maryland. The diocese is blessed with rich racial and cultural diversity, including seven Spanish-speaking congregations, numerous rural congregations and a variety of urban parishes. The diocese includes in its mission the support of several international partnerships as well as 17 Episcopal schools.

St. Columba's is a member of Region II, one of six geographic regions into which the diocese is divided. Region II represents a portion of the District of Columbia. It includes both large and small parishes in commercial and residential areas. This region's Episcopal parishes are ripe for growth through innovation. They have robust outreach opportunities but also tremendous room for fresh expressions of ministry and community-building. The diocese is particularly excited to have vibrant parishes such as St. Columba's modeling

new ways of ministry, campus outreach and family formation.



WAYNE C. FOWLER

Open in Spirit





THE REV. ROSE DUNCAN

Former parishioner the Rev. Melinda Artman's ordination in May, 2014

Members of St. Columba's

are actively involved in the governance and structure of the diocese. Our members have served on the Diocesan Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council and have represented the diocese as part of our deputation to General Convention. One member of the parish serves on the Diocesan Commission on Ministry. A member of our clergy serves as chair of the Diocesan Task Force on Chaplaincies, and another clergy member serves as chair of the Diocesan committee for St. Anna's Home. Our chief operating officer serves as chair of the Diocesan Human Resources committee.



Recognizing the spiritual gifts that God has given them, 14 parishioners have become ordained priests of the church. We are proud that nine women are included in this number. Some of those priests now serve in this diocese; others have been called to positions throughout the church. Two members of the congregation are also currently postulants of EDOW.

Hopes for the Future

- Expand our presence in the diocese by exchanging knowledge and program experience with other congregations
- Increase our financial support of the diocese to levels appropriate for a church of our size



St. C's clergy leading morning prayer at the annual convention.

Challenges and Hopes for the Future

Our story is one of faith, courage and service. We are the largest parish in the diocese. We are proud of who we are. In recent years, we experienced challenges and losses that disrupted our parish life. Today, we have a renewed sense of hope and promise for the future.

We are ready for a new beginning.

This is a church of many voices and opinions. While all of these voices come from love for St. Columba's, they pose paradoxes with respect to our challenges and hopes for the future. How we discern and make choices around them will affect our future journey.

- We are a corporate-sized parish that in many ways wants to continue as a pastoral church, holding onto previous expectations and ways of operating.
 - We love and have a passion for St. Columba's that is not reflected in stewardship dollars and financial well-being.
 - We desire to make a difference through service but have no overall vision to unite our community and spur us forward.
- We want to maintain our focus on children's programs while finding ways to support families, individuals and seniors.
- We experience tension between holding onto the past and working to realize a new future.
- We want to love and be loved but are challenged to live into the radical welcome we would like to create.
- We lose sight of the invitation to grow deeper in faith as we get immersed in the activities of service and community.

We love the size and the vibrancy of this place and seek ways to experience community across many different kinds of worshippers. We have experienced challenge and conflict. We are stronger for our journey and the questions we ask.

We hope that you feel the spirit and faith of this community, our desire to be part of something greater than ourselves, and our hope to grow in God's love.





St. Columba's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

A Letter to our Future Rector

Dear Rector,

By now you have read our profile, perhaps explored our website, and we hope you have heard us speak from our soul. Our parish is ready for you—ready to grow in love, ready to enrich our faith and ready to live into our future. We are delighted that you have heard a call from God to know us, to enter into a deeper conversation and possibly to love and lead us.

At St. Columba's, our needs are at once simple and complex.

We need a rector who is present with us in small moments and in broad vision. Our most basic commitment is to worship. The Rt. Rev. Eugene Sutton, formerly associate rector and now bishop of Maryland, recently preached that "Good worship consists of its own three legged stool: music, liturgy and preaching." A successful rector at St. Columba's will be committed to the continuation of a large and vibrant music program providing depth and beauty to our worship. A similar commitment to diverse liturgical experiences is also essential: A typical Sunday brings the glorious pandemonium of the Great Hall, the richness of the Church Nave and a contemporary service in the afternoon. And we look for you to be Eucharistically centered, to be honest and vulnerable and able to bring the Gospel from the head to the heart through creative, well-crafted and challenging sermons.

As part of the self-assessment performed to develop this profile, St. Columba's held community gatherings and conducted a great number of interviews and small group discussions. What surfaced in those discussions was a strong need to be ministered to individually by a rector who knows our names, who cares that we are here, whom we can count on and care for in return. We are looking for a rector with a pastoral heart.

St. Columba's is also a complex place to run, along several dimensions. Some dimensions are obvious: You will manage four clergy and 25 staff members, with a budget over two million dollars. There are committees, meetings and requirements that come with a large organization, with most of this work invisible to the vast majority of parishioners. Your leadership style, and how you lead in different situations, is key to successfully meeting the challenges posed by our size.


In addition to being the face of the church, you will need to listen, create effective teams of clergy and staff, and lead the parish as we evolve and change. In the past, successful leadership has been marked by intellectual and Scriptural rigor, by preaching born of preparation and inspiration, and by the ability to articulate a vision for the future that draws parishioners closer to God. You will need to unlock the potential for full funding of our aspirations. And since most of your congregation will encounter you on Sunday mornings, you will be most successful if you can build a bridge from the pulpit to the pew.

One of the most complex challenges of leading St Columba's is also a blessing: how to handle the incredible energy of this place and this congregation. We are a community historically marked by a drive to be God's hands and feet in the world, to share the many gifts that we bring individually and as a whole, and push toward an idealized vision of St. Columba's in the community. The challenge is to see this energy as an opportunity and to channel it into a vision of the future, in which we can make a difference in our own lives and those around us.

The opportunities are myriad. We are a parish that is a challenge to lead and yet so hungry for leadership. We are a parish that has great gifts and great potential. We are a church committed to deep faith and rich worship, to active service and an open spirit. And we can't wait to meet you.

Open in Spirit





Rector Search Committee

Rick Dulaney, co-chair

Patty Jensen, co-chair

Lucy Bremner

Annette Davis

David Frulla

Charlotte Hudson

Susan Laing

Ryan McNavage

Joe Payne

Bill Riggs

Peggy Treadwell

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St. Columba's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Open in Spirit
Deep in Faith
Rich in Worship
Active in Service

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