

Who is St. Bartholomew's?

Our congregation of St. Bartholomew's has a Spirit running through it that is best described by the word "enthusiasm". "Enthusiasm" is rooted in the Greek "en theos" – God within. As Jesus knew God's spirit to be in every living thing, we too find God in each other, in the earth around us, in our children, and in our surrounding communities.

Our enthusiasm is the base of a strong laity and a strong faith community. We like each other; we respect each other; we work intentionally to form the worship and ministries that bind us; we welcome all people through our doors; we are all on our own spiritual journeys – together.

Our worship life together has an overall informal quality, first detected in the post and beam structure with clear glass windows that frames us. Inside, the children sit up front watching as the priest blesses the homemade bread for communion. We sit in chairs: there are no pews, there is no pulpit. Yet there are traditional qualities present too, an intentional blending that helps us meet the God within: Holy Eucharist every Sunday, liturgically-based preaching, both an early said service and a later service with support from the choir that regularly sings anthems, motets and service music.

Our priests have been strong guides, helping us to find not only our inner paths, but also our outward ministries. Many of our ministries extend us to families and children in need: we offer a food pantry, school supplies, Thanksgiving meals and Christmas stockings to local families, and distribute non-food stamp essentials to the urban poor in Portland. We stand out in our ministry to God's earth and creatures: St. Bart's is seen as a resource for environmental stewardship in the Diocese and in the surrounding secular communities.

Perhaps most challenging to us as a congregation is an overabundance of enthusiasm! We often want to do more than we have hours to give. We are indeed blessed with spirit, with each other, and with our simple, beautiful church: our prayer is to grow in wisdom, perception and peace within our sanctuary, and to carry that back out again into God's world.

*Mission Statement*

*St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church is an inviting and inclusive community. We celebrate our connections with one another and all of God's creation. We strive to be leaders in the stewardship of the earth and social justice. Through creative liturgy, life-long education and spiritual inquiry, we seek to gain depth and energy for ourselves and for our service in the wider world.*

Who do we hope to be?

The entire parish has come through a recent Strategic Planning process feeling optimistic about our goals for the years ahead. As part of this process, we crafted a fresh mission statement for our guidance. Sentence by sentence, it is a window to both our vision and our challenges.

*St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church is an inviting and inclusive community.*

This is how we like to think of ourselves, though we realize that to be inviting and inclusive takes constant vigilance. Since St. Bart's is located away from the center of town, it is particularly challenging. We have an open door policy. We welcome everyone regardless of... everything. However, being inviting is not a committee job; it is the calling of each of us at St. Bart's. Its place at the top of our mission statement is purposeful not only as a descriptor but as a goal.

*We celebrate our connections with one another and all of God's creation.*

Celebrate we do. In celebration we find spiritual nourishment. We celebrate the sacred stories and rituals from our rich tradition, our children's growth and transitions, our elders' wisdom, the talents among us, and the glorious gifts of God's creation. With filled spirits, we strengthen all aspects of our ministries.

*We strive to be leaders in the stewardship of the earth and social justice.*

This statement embodies one of our greatest visions and greatest challenges. Known already as a leader in earth care in the Diocese, the people of St. Bartholomew's want to build and share this ministry that we care so much about. We recognize that earth care and social justice issues are deeply interwoven, both in our own community and beyond.

While our vision is enthusiastic, our active members are becoming tired. We want to make intentional choices about how to be effective in these ministries with our limited lay resources. To be a leader takes extra energy, and the demands of our secular lives are already straining us. The challenge as we move forward is to find the "en theos" in our enthusiasm, through both inspiration and rest.

*Through creative liturgy, life-long education and spiritual inquiry, we seek to gain depth and energy for ourselves and for our service in the wider world.*

St. Bart's is a sanctuary, a place of simple beauty, music, friendship and peace. It is a place to meet God and seek new understandings. Maintaining this is primary to us; before we go out, we need to feed and grow our spirits within. We've identified three wells for such spiritual nourishment:

- We alternate creative liturgies with the traditional Rite II Sunday Eucharists. Engaging and inspiring preaching is paramount. Informality,

- the presence of our children, and participation of the laity honors the Spirit in each of us. We want to nourish the richness of our worship environment.
- Lifelong education at St. Bart's begins with the lay-taught Godly Play Sunday school program. Around sixth grade, Rite 13 and subsequently J2A programs engage our youth well. Challenges lie with supporting the volunteers who coordinate and teach, and providing new resources as the children outgrow Godly Play. We love adult education and want more of it, both rector-led and lay-led. We see opportunities for integrating learning with fellowship, finding new models that can work with the needs of our multi-aged congregation.
  - Spiritual inquiry has an energy that is different from education. Questions that cause us to go deeper, to hear and learn from other questioners, and to re-think our spiritual patterns keep us alive and engaged. Education and inquiry often walk together, but education without inquiry would leave us hungry.

#### Who are we looking for in a rector?

Our new rector will have many tasks, celebrating our strengths and helping us through our challenges toward the vision stated in our Mission Statement and Strategic Plan. Foremost, though, the rector will need to be one of us. This marvelous person will...

- Be a good communicator, both as a preacher and a pastor.
- Be a people person with a sense of humor.
- Be comfortable with a creative and flexible liturgy.
- Be a confident and collaborative person.
- Recognize our talents and leadership qualities, and encourage us.
- Be comfortable with informality.
- Come to us and help us when we are sick, in trouble, or dying.
- Work with us as we wrestle with issues of growth: loss of intimacy, financial considerations, physical space needs, even whether or not to grow.
- Tell us stories and ask us questions that lead us to discover God's stirrings within us.
- Love us.

We, in turn, will support our new rector with our respect, honesty, friendship, and willingness to engage. Such a partnership requires a leap full of faith, from

both parties. Our new rector will find helping hands as she or he settles into the community, and eager spirits to continue the journey.

Please visit our website at [www.stbartsyarmouth.org](http://www.stbartsyarmouth.org) for additional information.

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church  
396 Gilman Road  
Yarmouth, Maine 04096  
207-846-9244

Carole Closser, Senior Warden  
The Very Rev. Stephen Foote, Interim Rector

Discernment Committee

Betsy Puelle, Co-chair  
Peter Chandler, Co-chair  
Barbara Barhydt  
Weesie Barton  
Nancy Bower  
Holly Chapman

Karl Maria Fattig  
Morris Hancock  
Bobbi MacCallum  
Libby Moore  
Doug Ritchie  
Van Tingley

All correspondence concerning the discernment and search process should be directed to:

Peter Chandler  
P.O. Box 7205  
Portland, ME 04112-7205  
207-791-7162  
[pchandler@bnn CPA.com](mailto:pchandler@bnn CPA.com)