

St. Philip's

Episcopal Church

Norwood, NY



"Welcoming the weary…Dedicated to discipleship"

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

As a congregation, we seek to:

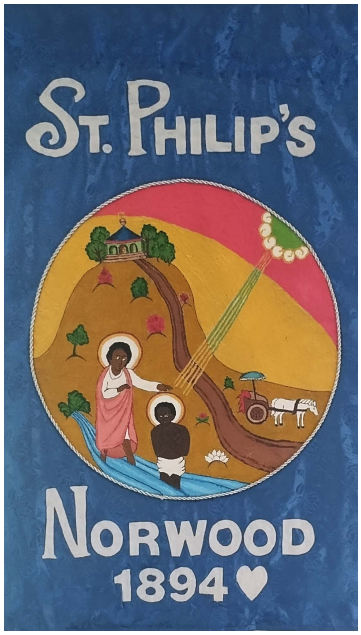
1. Open our doors to all who come, regardless of race, class, gender, disability, or religion,
2. Reach out in service to our neighbors, especially the poor and elderly

As individual members, we seek to:

1. Grow daily in the understanding and practice of our faith,
2. Care for one another as beloved brothers and sisters

OUR FOUNDATIONS

Vision: We strive to be a welcoming, open, and affirming faith community. A place where God is present, people care for one another without judgment, and everyone is invited to grow in Christ.



Mission: Rooted in the words of Jesus in Mathew 11:28-30, we open our doors to all who come and reach out in service to our neighbors while seeking to grow daily in the understanding and practice of our faith.

Prayer: Prayer is central to who we are. Our parishioners consistently name prayer support among our greatest strengths. There is a strong sense that "God is present" within our community. We pray for one another, for those in need, and for the life of the wider community.

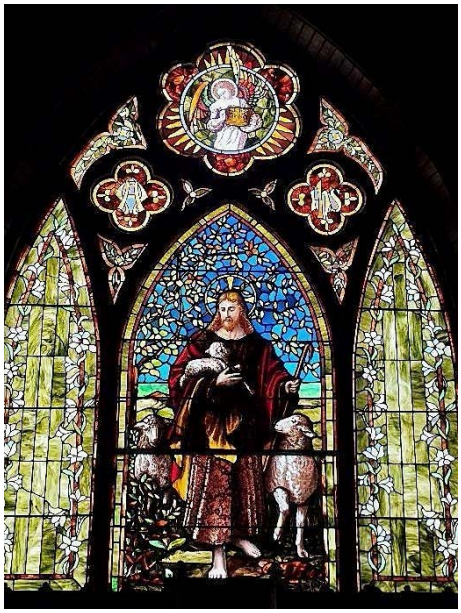
Our Liturgical Style: We value the Episcopal tradition of Scripture, Tradition, and Reason. Our liturgical style follows the Book of Common Prayer, centering on the Eucharist and seasonal church calendar while fostering a spirit of diversity, openness, and belonging. We encourage parishioners to serve as ushers, lectors, servers, and members of the Altar Guild.

THEN AND NOW

The Episcopal Mission in Norwood began in the late 1860s with occasional services held in various places in the village, generally by the clergy serving Grace Church in Norfolk. In 1870 the Rt. Rev. William Crowswell Doane, first Bishop of the newly formed Diocese of Albany, visited "Potsdam Junction" (as Norwood was then known) in the Congregational House of Worship. The Rev. Reeve Hobbie said Morning Prayer, the Bishop preached, confirmed five persons, and celebrated Holy Communion. Four other Episcopal priests were in attendance, along with the Rev. Archdeacon Henry Patton from Ontario.

In 1874, St. Andrew's Mission was organized. The cornerstone of the church was laid in 1880 with much celebration. The building was completed in 1885, and on May 23, 1894 it was consecrated and took the name St. Philip's Church. Formal incorporation as a parish followed in 1901.





Within a few years of finishing the church, the congregation began investing in its lasting beauty. Around 1896, the large Annunciation window above the entrance to the Nave main doorway was created by Harry Horwood, an English-born stained-glass artist from Ogdensburg. In 1906, the Good Shepherd window was installed in the chancel, another Horwood work, a reproduction of Bernhard Plockhort's well-known painting, paid for by parishioners with the help of donations from parishioners of Trinity Church in memory of the Rev. Reynold M. Kirby, who in addition to being the rector at Trinity, served St. Philip's from 1883-1890, in between rectors and assisting those that served. Both windows were carefully restored. They remain treasured signs of the care earlier generations took for this place.

A significant test of resilience came on August 9, 2024, when remnants of Hurricane Debby brought torrential rain and severe flooding to Norwood. The lower level of the Church and Parish Hall, home to the Common Cents Thrift Shop, was inundated. The shop was forced to close for several months. With the generous help of the Norwood United Methodist Church, it later reopened in the Methodist Education Building. The flood was a hard blow, yet our congregation has responded with determination to recover.



Over the decades, St. Philip's has remained a steady presence in Norwood. Many current members have deep roots here. Others have joined more recently. We are an older congregation. Health and transportation challenges affect some members' ability to participate as fully as they once did. Building maintenance and finances remain ongoing concerns, but the commitment of those who are here is deep and steady.

We are now in a sense of transition. Supply clergy currently lead our Sunday services while we seek a new rector – a partner who will honor the long story of this place, walk with the people who love it, build upon what we have, and help us write the next faithful chapter.





OUR FAITH IN ACTION

St. Philip's parishioners joyfully reach out to others in many ways. Here are a few examples of our faith in action:

- Common Cents Thrift Shop – Our primary community ministry provides clothing and housewares at very low cost (or at no cost in cases of great need).

- Community Luncheon – Offered free of charge on the last Wednesday of each month. A long-standing tradition of feeding people that dates back to the earliest years of the parish. Mrs. Majorie Clark Bowhall, a church historian, wrote that "our church suppers were popular well before the building of our Parish Hall." That spirit of hospitality and service continues today.

- Support of several children-oriented initiatives such as "Back to School program", Summer and Vacation lunch programs, Norwood, Norfolk, Raymondville Outreach program.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

At present, we do not have children or youth programs as no households with children under 18 currently attend consistently. We recognize this as both a challenge and an opportunity.

Our congregation has expressed interest in deeper formation opportunities including:

- Bible Study and discipleship training
- Healing services
- Seminars on "being in Christ"
- The St. Philip's Chapter of the Order of the Daughters of the King



We believe formation is essential to our mission of being "dedicated to discipleship," and we look forward to growing these offering under new leadership.

WHO WE ARE SEEKING

We are seeking a priest who is a follower of Jesus, guided by the Holy Spirit, and ready to shepherd a fully open and affirming community. We seek someone who will build on what we as a congregation have established rather than start over.

Faith Foundation

- Deepening personal relationship with God
- Biblically grounded
- Comfortable with Episcopal liturgy and the Book of Common Prayer
- Active life of prayer

Pastoral Style and Character

- Caring, welcoming, and affirming
- Welcomes diversity
- Able to relate across generations
- Supportive and uncritical leadership style that helps maintain a safe, inclusive culture spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

Leadership Gifts

- Meaningful preaching that connects Scripture to everyday life
- Ability to encourage and equip lay ministry
- Willingness to participate in the life and energy of the parish, including coffee hours after service and community outreach
- Sensitivity to the pastoral needs of an older congregation while casting a vision for growth and welcoming younger members

Practical Skills

- Collaborative work with wardens, vestry, and lay leaders
- Sound judgement to oversee and support administrative operations of the parish including finances and building stewardship
- Ability to help us navigate challenges with hope and realism

Above all, we seek a leader who will join us in the work we are already doing and help us grow deeper in discipleship.

CONTACT US

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