In Search of a Priest-In-Charge

The Profile of

St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church

Grand Junction, Colorado

2020
Mission Statement, Core Values, and Vision Statement

St. Matthew’s Mission Statement

St. Matthew’s, where all are invited and welcome to celebrate faith, community, and friendship.

St. Matthew’s Core Values

When it comes to God:

• Our Sunday worship is at the heart of our life together.
• We open ourselves to the Holy Spirit in our personal lives and in our life together.
• We seek quality Christian education and spiritual formation at all age levels.

When it comes to our church:

• We embrace everyone with loving pastoral care in whatever situation or stage of life they find themselves.
• We bring together all generations for fellowship.

When it comes to our community:

• We open our doors and our arms to all who come.
• We are intentional in sharing our faith with others.
• We reach out in loving and substantive ways.

St. Matthew’s Vision Statement

God is calling us at St. Matthew’s to a season of both growth and renewal, deep faith, and reaching out to God’s people—to those in need and to those who need God.

This call is to go beyond our welcome here, where it is comfortable, and to find ways to meet God’s people where they live.
St. Matthew’s is an amazing place, filled with the essence of God in all we do, both within our doors and out in the community. We have been in the Grand Junction community for over 125 years, and we continue to thrive and grow. We have a vibrant children’s program and an active youth group.

Our congregation includes all age groups and economic levels, and all participate with a loving heart. By way of example, whenever we have a potluck meal, it is wonderful to see consideration for a range of dietary needs.

St. Matthew’s is home to over 80 ministries, including a shoe program for needy children, clothing drives, support for Matthew’s House (for homeless youth 18-24 years old), a shuttle ministry for the homeless, and a Stone Soup program. We have an amazing music program that fills us with beautiful music from our choir, handbell choir, and congregational vocalists and instrumentalists.

We look forward to welcoming a new priest who is filled with spirituality, compassion, and love; a good preacher; and an intentional lover of liturgy who enjoys children, music, sunshine, and joy.

- Ann Hayes
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I. Who We Are and the Rector We Seek

Who We Are

Demographics
- Young and old (mostly retired, but with a lively youth presence)
- A varied range of socioeconomic levels
- Balanced among conservative, moderate, and liberal politics and theology
- Mostly Caucasian, mostly heterosexual, but accepting and inclusive
- Well educated as measured by college, graduate, and professional degrees
- Prayerful

Financials
- Debt-free
- Practice year-round stewardship
- Generous

Inclusivity
- Welcoming
- Joyfully greet newcomers
- God’s Table open to everyone
- Hospitable

Spirituality
- Entrepreneurial, offer something for everyone
- Value the opportunities to sit quietly and worship
- Accepting of innovation while valuing tradition
- Opportunities for lay leadership
- Sponsor numerous ministries both in and outside of the church
Christian Education
• Sunday School Program
• Vacation Bible School
• Adult Bible Study
• Youth Group

Youth Participation
• Commitment to bringing children to God
• Passion for the spiritual well-being of our children
• Monthly "Ice Cream Sunday" with significant youth involvement in the 10 am service
• Strong presence of youth assisting at the altar

Technology
• Accept our need to better utilize technology

Music Programs
• Value good music by having a music director, bells, a choir, organists, pianists, and instrumentalists
The Rector We Seek

It is important to our parishioners to have a priest who is approachable and available. We value strong interpersonal skills in our clergy. We hope to find someone who is accepting, open-minded, and enthusiastic.

We seek a priest who has a deep spiritual life and whose spirituality sets an example that we all want to emulate. Our ideal priest would be a spiritual leader first and an administrator second.

The deep spirituality we are looking for in a priest would manifest itself through good preaching. We want our priest to know the Bible well and to present that knowledge confidently and clearly.

Tradition is valued at St. Matthew’s. We take pride in our ancient Anglican tradition, and we cherish the thought that the Eucharist has been served around the world for many centuries. We believe that our kids, who have grown up in an ever-changing world, benefit from exposure to tradition as well. At the same time, we are not opposed to innovation in worship.

A priest with intergenerational skills would suit us well. We would welcome a priest who would not be deterred by an infant toddling up to the altar during a sermon. Conversely, with an aging church membership, we see the value of a priest who can minister to those who are advancing in years.

As members of an engaged church community, we are searching for a priest who will delegate responsibilities and who will encourage lay involvement. We appreciate respect and tolerance, as they are especially important in a church like ours that spans a broad theological and political spectrum.

We would like a rector who values outreach and missionary work. We proudly sponsor a parish member who serves as a missionary in the Dominican Republic. At the same time, we engage in missionary work in our own community through an extensive range of outreach programs.

In conclusion, we believe that the Holy Spirit will deliver us a priest who embodies the essence of the qualities we hope to find in the person who will lead us into the future.
II. History of St. Matthew’s

For the past 85 years, the history of St. Matthew’s viewed through the lens of clergy tenure can be described as very stable. There have been only seven rectors since 1935.

The Grand Valley was opened for settlement a decade after the Civil War, and the plat for the town of Grand Junction was filed in November 1881. During the following decade, Episcopal services were held at various churches and meeting halls around the frontier town, but there was no formal, organized congregation. In 1890, the Rev. Olin Ostenson arrived in Grand Junction, and a cornerstone for St. Matthew’s was laid in November 1891 on the edge of the downtown area.

Over the next three decades, St. Matthew’s served Episcopalians in the region despite shifting from mission to parish to mission, then back to parish, and to mission again. After a succession of short-term rectors and shifts in diocesan designations, stability came at last in 1935. The Rev. Eric A.C. Smith arrived and led St. Matthew’s through the Great Depression and the World War II years. He was succeeded by the Rev. Leon C. King in 1945. The combination of the post-World War II baby boom and the uranium boom in the region, which led to the establishment of the Atomic Energy Commission compound in Grand Junction, brought significant congregational growth. In 1949, Rev. King responded to this growth by leading a move to a new and much larger church on what was then considered the outskirts of town. The Rev. Paul Habliston followed in November 1951 and served through May 1963.

The Rev. Canon Bill Foster, “Father Bill,” was installed as rector on All Saints’ Day 1963 and retired after 29 years in 1992. During Father Bill’s tenure, a major remodel of the St. Matthew’s building located on North Avenue took place during 1987-1988.
The Rev. Stan Wright succeeded Father Bill and served for nine years until his retirement in 2001. During his tenure the church on North Avenue was sold to Colorado Mesa University, and St. Matthew’s moved to its current location in March 2001. The contemporary design of the new building opened the congregation to new ways of worship and ministry.

Following the departure of Father Stan, parishioners joined together to start the Pastoral Care Team. This ministry, which continues today, was developed to visit those in the hospital, thereby relieving the duties of the interim clergy.

The Rev. Edward Konieczny arrived in the summer of 2002. His administrative abilities led to the retirement of the $742,000 construction mortgage. Father Ed also led successful efforts to host two Colorado General Conventions at St. Matthew’s and directed the growth of a revitalized Christian Formation program for children. At the diocesan level, he served as a capable chairman of the Standing Committee during a period of difficulty. These efforts culminated in his election as bishop of Oklahoma in 2007, a position from which he will retire in early 2020.

During Father Ed’s time at St. Matthew’s, the church gained structure and administrative strength. Finances were improved with budgeting, expense tracking, and the formation of a Finance Committee. St. Matthew’s Foundation was begun as well as the Legacy Wall. Stability and confidence increased in the church.

When Rev. Hollis Wright arrived in 2009, St. Matthew’s launched an effort to add staff and programs to welcome children and families. The church undertook a program called Holy Directions from 2011 to 2013 to consider the direction of the church. Hospitality became a major focus as the congregation endeavored to truly welcome all people, attracting parishioners from a wide array of backgrounds.
Holy Directions also identified a strong desire for greater community outreach. The Outreach Committee was formed, given a budget, and authorized to request funds to participate in new ventures. The resulting outreach programs are numerous and growing.

Before Rev. Hollis retired in 2019, St. Matthew’s celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2015 with the “Heritage Project,” which included a new organ, an outdoor pavilion, an outdoor labyrinth, a new sign, and an improved playground. These were all accomplished without debt through a capital campaign. Finally, St. Matthew’s has raised up three individuals for Holy Orders; an additional three people are currently in discernment.

The continuity of a variety of lay-led ministries is a testament to the vitality of St. Matthew’s. We are excited about the search for a rector who can help us continue our record of clergy stability and who can lead us to the next level.
III. Description of Grand Junction

Grand Junction is the largest city between Denver and Salt Lake City and is almost equidistant between the two. The city sits in the Grand Valley where the mountains open into the Utah desert at an altitude of nearly 5,000 feet above sea level. The climate is dry with about nine inches of rainfall per year, but the valley is remarkably green thanks to irrigation from the Colorado River. Snowfall tends to be light and melts quickly in our sunny climate.

Grand Junction is the hub of the valley with a 2019 population of 64,629 within the city limits. Three other towns in the Grand Valley—Palisade, Fruita, and Clifton—help bring the population of Mesa County to just over 150,000.

The view to the east is dominated by the 11,000-foot-high Grand Mesa, the world’s largest flat-topped mountain, which can collect over 20 feet of snow annually and provides much of the domestic water supply for the region. Nearby Powderhorn Ski Area provides terrain for both recreational skiers and racers. Other major ski resorts such as Aspen, Telluride, and Vail are all within 2-3 hours of town. Cross-country skiers and snowmobilers find an extensive trail network available for their use on top of Grand Mesa. Those who like to fish can ice fish on reservoirs in the winter and head to the lakes in the summer. Grand Mesa is home to both US Forest Service campgrounds and resorts for those seeking cooler weather in the summer.

The Colorado National Monument, a 32-square-mile collection of deep red rock canyons and steep cliffs, defines the southwest boundary of the valley and is one of the most popular visitor attractions in the area. The largest monolith is Independence Monument, which soars 450 feet above the valley floor and usually gets a new American flag placed by rock climbers every Fourth of July. Rim Rock Drive is 23 miles of curves, tunnels, and switchbacks through an exceptionally scenic landscape. Runners and bikers find the 2,300-foot ascent a challenge going up and a thrill on the way down.
In addition to these public lands, the Bureau of Land Management has approximately 1,000,000 acres of land in Mesa County, and the US Forest Service has an additional land base of 400,000 acres. The net result of the presence of these highly accessible public lands is that Grand Junction is increasingly being recognized as a regional magnet for outdoor recreation.

Connecting the valley from De Beque Canyon in the east to Fruita in the west is the James M. Robb Colorado River State Park, which is named for the late civic leader and St. Matthew’s member. It is a collection of five different sections which feature a variety of camping, river access, trails, and wildlife-viewing opportunities. The State Parks Department calls it a “string of pearls.”

Grand Junction is the largest commercial center in western Colorado/eastern Utah. Historically, Grand Junction’s economy has been, at times, based on farming, ranching, mining, and energy. Recently, outdoor recreation and tourism have been increasing economic drivers.

Agriculture in the Grand Valley features a variety of offerings, from our renowned Palisade peaches to a thriving wine industry. The Grand Valley American Viticultural Area (AVA), home to 27 wineries, is one of only two designated AVAs in Colorado. Local agricultural products are available at several excellent farmers’ markets during the summer months.

Grand Junction is the major medical center between Denver and Salt Lake City. Of the four hospitals, St. Mary’s is the largest and serves as a regional tertiary medical center and houses a Level II Trauma Center. Community Hospital recently built a new campus. The Veteran’s Hospital serves military veterans throughout the Western Slope of Colorado and eastern Utah. Colorado Canyons Hospital is located in Fruita.
Distances over the mountains and across the desert are greater than what may be typical in major cities, but Grand Junction has considerable air service—direct, non-stop flights are available to Denver, Chicago, Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Phoenix, and Dallas/Fort Worth. Amtrak rail passenger service is available, as is the increasingly popular Bustang bus service connecting all corners of Colorado.

Grand Junction features an excellent symphony, an active arts scene, multiple top-quality golf courses, an attractive downtown, a sizeable mall, numerous private exercise gyms, and the ubiquitous big-box stores and chain restaurants.

Grand Junction is also home to over 10,000 students who attend Colorado Mesa University, an institution that offers higher education, cultural events, and Division II athletics. We have also hosted the NCAA Junior College Baseball World Series for over 50 years and serve as the hometown for the Colorado Rockies Rookie League minor league team, the Grand Junction Rockies.

Grand Junction is one of those rare communities where people who have to move away because of job transfers return when they get the chance. St. Matthew’s ranks highly as one of the attractions for those returning.
IV. Parish Life and Ministries

We are a vibrant Christian community in Grand Junction, Colorado, striving to live and love in the way of Jesus.

At St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church, ALL are welcome – regardless of race, ethnic background, gender identity, sexual orientation, capability, or circumstances of life. Indeed, we are a place where every person who walks through our doors is highly regarded. We are a place where worship brings to life the message and love of Christ and where our “open table” policy ensures that no matter one’s situation, all are worthy to partake in the gift of communion with God. We are a place where inclusiveness, hospitality, spiritual well-being, physical vitality, emotional growth, and social outreach are valued.

Currently, there are over 80 different ministries or events where one can witness God’s love in word and action, and most parishioners feel inspired to serve on many fronts. Whether it is leading the choir or a Bible study, cooking dinner for the homeless, or laundering the vestments, there is something for everyone! Thanks to the shared leadership between clergy and lay ministries, St. Matthew’s is a vibrant, healthy, Spirit-filled, active place—truly the Body of Christ.

Worship/Support for Sunday Services

Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.
Psalm 95:6 | NIV

• Eucharistic Ministers – serve wine and Communion bread
• Retired/Assisting Clergy
• Acolytes – assist the clergy during the service
• Lectors – read the lessons and Psalms
• Ushers
• Altar Guild – prepare the altar before services and clean up afterwards
• Communion bread baking
• Eucharistic Visitors – take Communion to those who are homebound or in nursing homes
• Tellers – Vestry members who record weekly contributions
• Service Bulletin Folders

**Music**

*Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.*

Psalm 100:1-2 | NIV

• Choir
• Handbells
• Audio technology – manage the sound system during service
• Guest soloists and instrumentalists

**Spiritual Development for Children and Youth**

*Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.*

Luke 18:16 | NIV

• Sunday school during 10:00 am service
• Monthly first Sunday children’s service (Ice Cream Sunday) – Children serve as ushers and lectors
• Middle and High School Youth Group
• Summer Vacation Bible School
• Nursery – Childcare for infants to age 4
• Baptism/Confirmation
Spiritual Development for Adults

*For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them.*
Matthew 18:2 | NIV

- Men’s Bible study group
- Tuesday morning Bible study
- Lenten/Advent classes & studies
- Topical classes and programs
- Reference Library

Health and Wellness

*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?*
1 Corinthians 6:19/NIV

- Prayer chain – notification of prayer requests via email
- Community Garden
- Pilates Class
- Yoga Class
- Healing Service
Outreach - Ongoing

Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!
Psalm 100:2 | ESV

- Matthew's House – a transitional home that supports homeless young adults ages 18-22
- St. Matthew's Shuttle – van services for those at the homeless shelter
- Meal Preparation at Homeward Bound
- Stone Soup Project – prepares and serves meals for the homeless monthly
- Cathy Donahoe – sponsored missionary in the Dominican Republic
- Sister Church – All Saints' and St. John's, Ireland
- Partner – St. Christopher's Mission of the Episcopal Church in Navajoland, Bluff, Utah

Outreach – Annual

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.
1 Peter 4:10 | ESV

- Elementary school clothing drive - fall
- Ulman 4K for Cancer Bike Riders – host riders in July for a cross-country cancer fundraiser
- Soles for Souls – shoe drive for children in Mesa County Schools
- Slippers and Robes – bathrobes and slippers for low income nursing home residents during Lent
- Spirit of the Valley 5K – supports para-athletes
- Summer concert series in the Pavilion – donations support outreach programs
- Salvation Army Angels – Christmas gifts for children and young adults
- Support Migrant Education
Social Connections/Welcoming Visitors and New Members

*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*

*John 13:34-35 | ESV*

- Coffee hour
- Welcome Ministry/Newcomers
- ECW (Episcopal Church Women)
- WWJD (Wine, Women, Jesus, and Dessert) – a social gathering with dinner for all women the first Monday of the month
- Bro-night, usually once a quarter with Deacon Rich
- MOSM (Men of St Matt’s) – a social gathering with dinner for men the first Tuesday of the month
- Pancake Supper (Shrove Tuesday)
- Karaoke Night
- Christmas Light Tour

Special Events and Behind the Scenes

*So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

*1 Corinthians 10:31 | ESV*

- Banners
- Brass polishers
- Gathering Space décor/upkeep
- Greening/“ungreening” of the church
- Kitchen crews and helpers
- Linens/vestments care/laundering
- Funeral/memorial service receptions
- Special event set-up/take-down
Finances/Demographics

*Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

2 Corinthians 9:7 | ESV

- Stewardship Committee
- Pledge Campaign Committee
- Finance Committee
- Foundation and Legacy Society
- Seminary Fund Committee

Leadership and Governance

*Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity...*

Titus 2:7 | ESV

- Vestry
V. Building and Grounds

In whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:21-22 | ESV

St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church is situated on 4.79 acres in a largely residential area of northeast Grand Junction, and the building comprises 11,499 square feet. The architecture is that of a modern mission style with a large windowed “lantern” topping the building. Mature landscaping is found throughout the property.

Immediately adjacent to the spacious sanctuary with seating for approximately 250 is a large gathering space used for fellowship, event dining, all parish educational offerings/meetings, etc. The two spaces are separated by moveable walls comprised of stained-glass panels that were designed and created by the parishioners. The panels can be easily opened to enlarge either space.

Administrative offices are adjacent to the Gathering Space, along with the choir room and the sacristy. Elsewhere in the church are three classrooms, a youth room, the church library, and a conference room. The church kitchen boasts industrial-quality appliances. A carillon bell tower in front of the church welcomes visitors.

A special purpose pavilion was constructed to augment space for numerous social events and celebrations. Total available covered square footage is 1,318 square feet with 146 square feet for bathroom facilities and general storage. Lending an overall “large patio” feeling to the space are ceiling fans and portable heaters that help extend the season of use.
A memorial garden and columbarium are located to one side of the main building, assuring a quiet and private atmosphere. A labyrinth for meditative walks is also available.

A fully fenced and newly renovated playground is accessible off the nursery. All standard playground equipment is new with an emphasis on safety. The grounds in general are child and pet-friendly. Area residents find them so inviting that they utilize the area for pet exercise and recreation.

Oversight of maintenance and repairs for all buildings and grounds is the purview of the Junior Warden who coordinates Spring and Fall Clean-Up with volunteer congregation members chipping in. Snow and ice removal are addressed well and in a timely manner. Renovations and improvements are also addressed by the Junior Warden working with the Vestry. A recent upgrade for signage and repairs to the flagpole and exterior lighting have been completed.

An active and ongoing recycling program is in place and working well.

A 1,173-square-foot storage building was constructed in 2005 and holds supplies for general maintenance as well as decorations, records, and equipment.

Overall our facilities and grounds reflect the spiritual home of a dedicated community that loves and cares for the resources which we have been so generously given.
VI. Demographics

Seventy-eight percent of our members identify themselves as retired. Approximately 15% of our parishioners are under age 20. (The equivalent figure for Mesa County as a whole is 25%) Our very dynamic youth program is attracting more youth and families.

While our community is not racially diverse, we are by no means one-dimensional. Politically, we are equally split among liberals, moderates, and conservatives. There is a similar distribution in terms of theological orientation, although a slightly larger majority considers themselves to be theologically moderate. The parish is marked by respect for the different viewpoints among us and a high degree of collegiality among our members.

We are a generous community with 29% of our membership contributing more than 10% of their income to the church (before taxes). This generosity translates into a church that is both debt free and financially sound overall.

Our members also exhibit a high degree of commitment to St. Matthew’s. Sixty-two percent of our members have belonged to the church for over 10 years. Three-fourths of those members attend church every week. Parishioners tend to be very engaged in our church life – from serving on a committee to engaging in outreach, regularly attending a class or Bible study, or attending fellowship or special events.

We are a tolerant parish – 75% of members are comfortable with same-sex blessings, 70% are comfortable with our church performing such blessings, 93% are comfortable with a female priest, 95% are comfortable with a priest who is a person of color, and 83% are comfortable with a priest who is gay.
With just over 500 members, St. Matthew’s is the fourth largest parish in the Diocese of Colorado and by far the largest parish on the Western Slope. We have a diversity of personalities, programs, and activities that one might expect to find in a large parish. Our members, however, are quite unified in the opinion that we have a good thing going and we look forward to the arrival of a Priest-in-Charge who will embrace a very good situation and endeavor to make it even better.

St. Matt's Age at a Glance

Mesa County Age at a Glance

ST. MATT’S BY AGE

0-9
10-19
20-29
30-39
40-49
50-59
60-69
70-79
80-89
90-99
100+

Under 20
20 - 69
Over 70

Photo courtesy of Downtown Grand Junction
VII. Finances

*Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.*

2 Corinthians 9:6 | ESV

St. Matthew's financials are very stable, and the church is debt-free.

In the 2019 Annual Parish Meeting the Treasurer's report stated:

“This year’s annual financial statements mark two years consecutively that we have hit the nail on the head with budget planning. Year 2018 ends with giving and spending being at 99% of what was predicted in the budget. This is consistent planning and is laudable for the many who are involved.

“Overall, we ended up even in terms of income and expenses in 2018. The month of December was a generous month for giving and helping to bring us back from an almost $10K deficit. Pledged giving was at 100% of budget for the entire year, so thank you to all who fulfilled your pledges. However, in 2019, it appears that we must be prudent and scale back the budget a bit. The new budget will be presented at the annual meeting.

“THANK YOU to all who support the ministry of this parish in all that we do, from worship & liturgy to outreach to food & gift donations to youth & children to shuttle bugging! We are a team, each member working together for the good of one another and to the benefit of our community.”
## St. Matthew’s Operating Budget Review

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*Proposed budget
VIII. Communication

Because effective communication greatly contributes to the smooth operation of the parish, St. Matthew’s uses various means with which to connect with parishioners. Prior to the Sunday services, announcements pertaining to that week are mailed electronically to all. Each Sunday, these same announcements can be reviewed in the weekly bulletin; they are also reviewed orally at the services. The church website has been recently updated and includes information about worship, ministries, outreach, current events, and resources.

The Evangel is a monthly newsletter sent electronically or printed and mailed on request. It includes updates on ministries and messages from our pastor, deacon, and directors of the children and middle school/high school programs. Constant Contact is a multi-purpose method for making a variety of announcements. The parish directory contains pictures and contact information for parishioners.

Finally, St. Matthew’s has a Facebook page with videos and photos, news of current events, general information about the church, and a link to the parish website. We are implementing use of Instagram as a tool to reach out to our younger demographics. With all these ways to communicate, no one is left out of the loop at St. Matthew’s!
IX. Our Hopes for the Future

As with any search process, we look to the future filled with both optimism and concern. The reasons for optimism are multi-faceted. We are in a great location in the Grand Valley. We have a debt-free parish. We have little internal conflict and we all get along well. By most metrics, we are the fourth largest parish in the Diocese of Colorado and by far the largest on the Western Slope. Surely a highly qualified priest would welcome the opportunity to minister to a parish with so many blessings!

And yet the reasons for concern are equally obvious. Although the Grand Valley has many people who have left the Front Range of Colorado for the more relaxed pace of the Western Slope, we do realize that we are competing with the Front Range. Growth in Grand Junction has brought a dramatic increase in amenities, though the shopping and cultural opportunities are admittedly greater in the Denver Metro area. A priest with a working spouse would likely have more access to gainful employment in Denver than would be available in the Grand Valley. Grand Junction has grown and become more vibrant, but we are not the Front Range. Truthfully, we like it that way.

The concerns multiply when considering the current limited availability of priests. Episcopal priests are retiring in large numbers, and there are fewer seminary graduates. In addition, numerous parishes in the Diocese of Colorado are looking for priests. This situation has prompted the Diocese to assist by helping us to find a Priest-in-Charge.
In the end, we hope that the size of our dynamic parish, the slower pace of life on the Western Slope, the lack of traffic, the abundant outdoor recreational opportunities, and the growing number of cultural events in the Grand Junction area will appeal to just the right priest. For the past many months, we have repeated the following prayer every Sunday:

_O God, inspire our conversation, deepen our prayer, and make us a community of humility and grace. Raise up for us, we pray, a priest who will administer your sacraments, and serve your people with love and compassion._

Our Search Committee has consistently acknowledged that God has already chosen our priest for us. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we hope that you see the same perfect fit in us. Amen!

We would like to thank the Search Committee members – Janette Deagle, Dave Emerson, Rich Emerson, Jeannie Koizumi, Cynthia Mill, Virginia Settle, and Tonya Wren – for their hard work over these past many months. We are also grateful for guidance provided by our Vestry liaisons Ken Brownlee and Jamie Galbasini for their insight. A special thanks to Carl Koizumi and Ed Groenert for their provision of photographs for the Parish Profile. Thanks also to Bryan Wade, our graphic designer, for making our Parish Profile look so professional! And thank you to all parishioners who shared their thoughts about our parish and its future.

_Bruce Noble and Robbie Breaux_
Search Committee Co-chairs