Who are we?
We are blessed to be St. Paul’s. We are little children, teenagers, young adults, middle agers, and elders. We come from Brookline and many different neighborhoods and towns in the greater Boston area and beyond. Together we seek to invite those looking to experience the fullness of Christ’s love, to welcome all people into our faith community, and to deepen our connectedness to Christ though learning to follow the two Great Commandments: to love God with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our strength; and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

What makes Sunday at St. Paul's happen?
Behind the vibrant church school hour and beautiful, heartfelt worship services are many conversations and meetings, hours of sermon preparation, curriculum and lesson planning, hospitality preparations, assembly of worship bulletins, developing announcements, writing updates, with prayerful attention to countless details by parish staff and many volunteers.

What happens at St. Paul's outside of Sunday?
Social action and outreach, pastoral care and counseling, education, pre-marital counseling, baptismal preparation, funeral planning, financial and building management, communications, intern training, leadership development, fellowship, worship and prayer. Our building is open and bustling seven days a week. We also offer our space free of charge to the Brookline Food Pantry and 12 Step Programs.

Who are the staff at St. Paul's?
The Rev. Jeffrey W. Mello, Rector (full-time)• The Rev. Elise A. Feyerherm, Associate Rector (half-time) • The Ven. Pat Zifcak, Deacon (non-stipendiary)• The Rev. Isaac P. Martinez, Curate/Director of Children and Youth (full-time/diocesan funded) . The Rev. Megan C. Holding, Priest Associate (non-stipendiary)• Andrew E. Clarkson, Director of Music (15 hrs/week)• Jill Seiler- Moon, Parish Administrator (28 hrs/week)• Christine Quinby, Finance Administrator (6 hrs/week)• James Santagati, Sexton (full-time)

Who are volunteer leaders at St. Paul's?
● Wardens, Treasurer, Clerk and Vestry (governing committee of the parish)

Why do we need annual pledges? Don’t we have an endowment and rental income?
We had to borrow a significant amount from the endowment for the Capital Campaign renovations to our church school classrooms and the tower which we need to pay back. One of our goals is to become more self-sufficient through pledging (currently pledges account for about 65% of the budget) and less reliant on an endowment. We do receive income from the apartment in the rectory and from the preschool downstairs. This income although helpful is not enough to sustain a busy parish such as St. Paul’s.

---turn over---
**Why should I consider pledging? Can’t I just put money into the weekly offering plate? Does St. Paul’s need my pledge?**

Weekly non-pledge offerings amount to approximately 9% of all contributions to St Paul’s, but we can’t count on them—they change from year to year. Pledges are an annual financial commitment from individuals and households that allow us to plan our budget for staff and programs.

Every pledge is valued, whatever the amount. Pledging to support our shared life together is about more than the dollars raised. It is about being thankful for the blessing that St Paul’s is; creating a community-wide covenant that we are responsible to and for one another; that we share in keeping the doors open, the lights and heat on, the ministries thriving and supported to do the work we depend on them to do. Pledges are the basic sustenance of parish life and represent both our vitality and our capacity for more growth.

**How many pledges a year do we receive? What amount should I pledge?**

For 2019, 121 households made an annual pledge to St. Paul’s. The range of pledges was from less than $100 to over $13,000 and everything in between! When deciding what to pledge, consider committing a percentage of your household income. What percentage of your household income have you given in the past? How much are you able to increase your pledge this year? If you’re just starting out, what percentage feels possible? 2%? 3%? 5%? A tithe of 10%? It takes some discernment to figure out the right level for your household. (See chart below)

**Can’t we just repeat our pledge from last year?**

Part of the purpose of an annual appeal is to deepen our connection to God and each other, to create an opportunity to reflect on our resources, gifts, and blessings and what we can commit to the church. There are many reasons why someone might raise (or lower) a pledge. Given inflation, if a pledge stays the same for multiple years, it is essentially lowered. Just as your own personal household expenses go up yearly, so do the church’s.

**Why does giving to the church matter spiritually?**

Because we are St. Paul’s: our spiritual life, our experience of worship, reverence, and music, our passion for justice and ministry outside the parish, our learning and care for one another, our humor and celebration are communal realities.

Because we are grateful for the blessings we receive and the challenges that help us grow as a people of faith and as community members. Because it is helpful and good to discern our priorities: What really matters in our lives? Where do we spend our time? For what are we grateful? To what values do we dedicate our lives? Because giving to the church is an act of generosity, but also an act of trust. Both trust and generosity are spiritual practices or disciplines.

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**Annual Appeal Proportional Giving Chart**

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*Many thanks to our friends at Emmanuel Church, Boston, for permission to adapt some of their FAQ material.*