

# 2019 Congregational Vitality Report



The Episcopal Diocese of Iowa



**Dear siblings in Christ,**

**In preparation for this year’s Convention I invited each congregation to report on our diocesan vitality at the congregational level. We have celebrated so many wonderful ministries this year through Engaging All Disciples, and I wanted us to be able to capture it in one document. It is my hope that the report will help us celebrate together, share our challenges, and inspire us by catching a glimpse of the Spirit at work across our diocese.**

**I give thanks to God for each of you for all you bring to the life of the Church,**

**+Alan**

*Awaiting reports from: St. John’s by the Campus, Ames; St. Mark’s, Anamosa; Grace, Cedar Rapids; Church of the Saviour, Clermont; St. Paul’s, Council Bluffs; St. Andrew’s, Des Moines; St. Luke’s, Des Moines; St. Mark’s, Des Moines; St. James’, Independence; St. Matthew’s-by-the-Bridge, Iowa Falls; St. John’s, Keokuk; St. Paul’s, Marshalltown; Trinity, Muscatine; Church of the Savior, Orange City; St. Thomas’, Sioux City; St. Alban’s, Spirit Lake; Church of the Good Shepherd, Webster City.*

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## ALGONA

# St. Thomas'

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

We offer meaningful worship, a welcoming environment, represent Episcopal presence in our community, caring ministry for the home bound and hospitalized, two opportunities weekly for adult religious education plus Sunday School class for children, and quality preaching that appeals to heart, mind, faith and daily life. We join other parishes in the CROP Walk, support the Care Team, and collect empty prescription bottles for overseas clinics.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

The offerings exceed our budget, a cadre of 20-24 regular worshippers, quality organists and spirited singing, recent remodeling of the kitchen (\$10,000+), updated lighting in the sanctuary, new carpeting in the undercroft, exceed the asking for the diocese' financial support, a passing of the peace that lasts over five minutes.

## What significant challenges are you facing?

We have but one family with two children. With other parishes in our town that have active programs for youth it is hard to attract young families. Most of the active members are over the age of 60.

## What is your main style of worship?

We use Rite II. A children's sermon is done when children are present. All baptized are welcome to the Eucharist. Passing the peace.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

Clergy Association meetings.



ANKENY

# St. Anne's by the Fields

*A small congregation in a fast growing city, Ankeny.*

**How do you describe the mission of your congregation?**

We are a diverse family united in Christ.

**What significant challenges are you facing?**

Financial stability and congregational growth.





## What is your main style of worship?

We follow the Holy Eucharist liturgy as outlined in the *Book of Common Prayer*. Our music is a combination of traditional and contemporary styles.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We call our ministry of reaching out to the community the Neighbor to Neighbor Program. This includes offering a free meal once a month, a Community Garden, and various events/activities that happens seasonally i.e. Love Lunches in the summer (in partnership with other churches, this is a feeding program done in one of the parks of the city), Travelers' ministry (in partnership with the Ankeny Ministerial Association where funds are collected to help travelers that are stranded or passing by Ankeny needing food, gas, or accommodation money). St. Anne's also belongs to AMOS, a non-partisan, grass roots community organization that works through area churches and social service institutions pursuing community issues arising from one-to-one conversations and small group meetings. These issues are explored through in-depth research to develop possible solutions. The congregation is also soliciting items helpful for the ministry of DMARC.



## How is your building used by the wider community?

Two Alcoholics Anonymous group meet every week at the church. The church is also an election venue.



BETTENDORF

# St. Peter's

**How do you describe the mission of your congregation?**

Worship God, love one another, carry that out as mission in the world.

**What signs of encouragement are you seeing?**

New members, some shifts from old ruts, less triangulation, lots of activities at the church for non-members.

**What significant challenges are you facing?**

Transformation for the 21st century without losing the strong mission and relational connections that make up the congregation's identity.



## What is your main style of worship?

Informal, broad, or low church, with inclusive and creative imagery in the liturgy and music.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

These have shrunk as the congregation has shrunk, we are re-discovering what we are called to do. Together we serve every other month providing a turn at offering the daily community meal. Members help with food pantries, hospice and anti-trafficking. As well as the usual adopting of families at Christmas and providing food for Thanksgiving meals.



## How is your building used by the wider community?

The Youth Symphony uses our rooms to provide children music lessons, three days a week, in two rooms. Also, voice and piano teachers give lessons in our building. Some of these groups then also have recitals in our building. We offer a series of three to four concerts free to the public in our building. For example our music director will be playing with a singer at Carnegie Hall in October, and they will give a free concert at St. Peter's a month before.



BOONE

# Grace Church

*We serve the area of Boone County and Hamilton County. We are a small congregation but very flexible in our worship and greeting others in the community.*

## **What signs of encouragement are you seeing?**

We have served our community with the food bank. We have a strong family connection with our congregation. We have supply priests that have been very flexible and willing to help us with our service.

## **What is your main style of worship?**

We use Rite II in our congregation and we have a strong family of worshipers that are very diligent in their pledge service and attendance.

## **What kinds of things does your congregations do in the community?**

We have our annual band concert pie and treats for the community. Again we give to the local food bank.

## **How are is your building used by the wider community?**

We have had baptisms, birthdays and we are planning some services for Lent and Advent.



BURLINGTON

# Christ Church

*We are Christ Church in Burlington, Iowa, the Mother Church of the Diocese of Iowa. We are located in the historical North Hill section of town. Our congregation is predominantly youthful middle-aged to elderly, drawing from Burlington, West Burlington, Mt. Pleasant, West Point, Ft. Madison, and all points in between and beyond.*



## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Our mission statement proclaims that Christ Church is a welcoming Christian community that encourages spiritual growth and ministry through worship and commitment to others.



## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

We offered Vacation Bible School this past summer for the first time in a long time, and we are planning a children's Sunday school this fall. We have also taken on some beautification projects around the physical plant that were greatly needed.

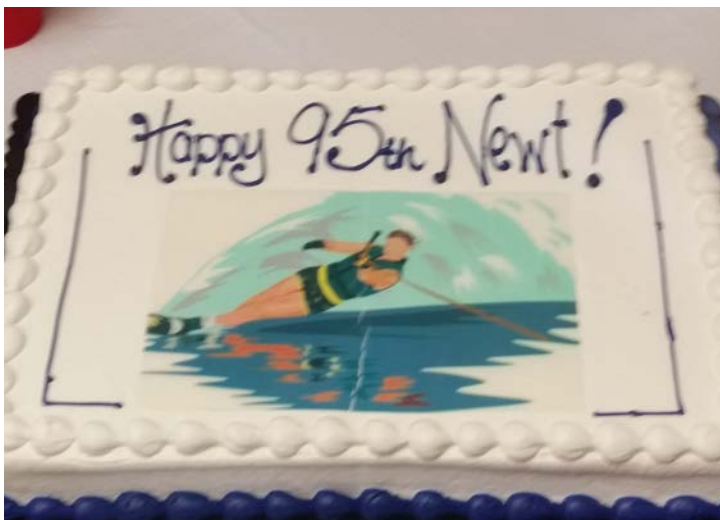


### What significant challenges are you facing?

The continued decline of membership through death and attrition locally, and through what some believe to be flawed policy and agenda at the national and diocesan level. Consequently, finances will continue to be a concern.

### What is your main style of worship?

Traditional prayer book worship using Rites One and Two with full hymnody. There is nothing more exciting than the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ!



### What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

As a congregation we support the Community Action Neighborhood Center with canned food and fresh produce, as well as financial contributions. We periodically host dinners at the Salvation Army. We financially support the Test Kitchen Education Foundation, which funds Elliott Test Kitchen; an after-school program that helps children with their homework, test preparation, and college entrance requirements, as well as teaching life skills. Several members volunteer at the Lend-a-Paw Food Pantry. We have also provided two camp scholarships to the local YMCA, and helped numerous individuals through the discretionary account.



### How is your building used by the wider community?

We are home to a Centering Prayer group, a local TOPS chapter, an NA group, and we provide space for blood drives a couple of times each year.



Trinity, Carroll



Trinity, Denison



St. Paul's, Harlan

## CARROLL/DENISON/HARLAN

# Trinity Cluster

*The Rev. Diana Wright serves as the Priest in Charge to Trinity, Carroll; Trinity, Denison; and St. Paul's Harlan.*

### How do you describe the mission of your congregations?

Worship in an Episcopal fashion, be as involved in the community as we can. Each parish does so in its own way.

### What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

Overall low conflict; stable attendance; new initiatives in two of the churches.

### What significant challenges are you facing?

Few people, aging, tired.

### What is your main style of worship?

Fairly "traditional" service.

### What kinds of things do your congregations do in the community?

Harlan: bike repair; Denison: TAP and services at local care facilities; Carroll: financial support

### How are your buildings used by the wider community?

None of them are used by community; Denison rents to an Hispanic church.



## CEDAR FALLS

# St. Luke's

*St. Luke's is a radically welcoming faith community in Cedar Falls. We are teachers and students, healthcare providers, business owners and engineers, parents, grandparents, sons and daughters. We are gay and straight, young and old, retired and just getting started, fitness enthusiasts and differently-abled. We are followers of Jesus striving to be good neighbors in a small university city where poverty is real, interfaith relations are improving, and racial divides exist.*

### How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Our mission is to “bring good news to the poor, proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and to let the oppressed go free.” We believe in the urgency of “today” to make these things happen. St. Luke's focuses on healing and reconciliation through worship and formation, a variety of food ministries, being present at public events, offering conversation forums, engaging in interfaith relationships, and actively caring for creation.

### What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

In July we launched a neighbor-to-neighbor food pantry, which now serves over 90 individuals twice a month. This summer we hosted a booth at our local farmers market and will offer a pet blessing in conjunction with that on Oct. 5. This is the second summer that we've had a booth at the PrideFest; we were delighted to have attendees come looking for the “church with the God loves me stickers!” We continue to be the primary host of Women of Faith dinners which bring together Jewish, Muslim, and Christian women for conversation and learning. Participation in our Christian Formation offerings continues to increase. Some of our high school students embarked on a Civil Rights Pilgrimage through the American South in June and others traveled to Israel. We remain grateful for our campus ministry partnership with ThreeHouse and our heritage prairie. And, our annual Lasagna Dinner remains a wonderful opportunity to gather the greater community in table fellowship and financially support the hungry in the Cedar Valley.

### What significant challenges are you facing?

We are almost entirely reliant upon pledges for our operating budget. Like many congregations, we have an aging membership and don't always see younger families on a regular basis. While our recognition is improving, St. Luke's is still not widely known in the Cedar Valley.

## What is your main style of worship?

We are fairly traditional in our worship, though we make good and frequent use of alternative liturgical resources. We have a tremendous music program, which also adds a vivacious spirit to our worship. Sermons are interactive and everyone is invited to come to the Table. St. Luke's has a number of excellent lay and clergy preachers.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

St. Luke's, in partnership with the NE Iowa Food Bank, offers a twice monthly community food pantry with evening hours to accommodate work schedules. In addition we provide a monthly meal at the Catholic Worker House and coordinate another community meal on 5th Tuesday months. Our annual fall lasagna dinner gathers hundreds from the Cedar Valley for an evening of fellowship as well as taking action against hunger in our community and our Mardi Gras party draws a great crowd who like to listen and dance to a local band. We regularly host Women of Faith dinners and are active partners in the Cedar Valley Interfaith Council. Our Canterbury Forum gathers people from throughout the Cedar Valley to inform and educate people about religious issues and to explore the relationship between religion and the broader society and culture -- including science, history, and the arts -- from the perspective of the religious mainstream. We host a booth at PrideFest and participate in the Rainbow Forum at UNI and have a booth at the Cedar Falls farmers market. We also provide dinner every Wednesday night at ThreeHouse on the UNI campus.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

We have a karate club that meets three times a week in our lower level. Other churches and non-profit organizations, like UMC youth retreats and JDRF, use our facility, including our labyrinths, for retreats and fundraising events. Study groups, music groups, philanthropic organizations meet in our parish hall. Women of Faith and CVIC meetings gather here as well.



## CEDAR RAPIDS

# Christ Church

Christ Episcopal Church is a vibrant community of diverse members. We reflect varied social-economic backgrounds, and diversity in expertise and educational backgrounds. We are situated along the I-380 corridor and members live primarily in the Linn County area. We have begun to integrate our strong liturgical and outreach traditions. Being a welcoming community with intentional practices to form a relational culture now drives our mission and vision.

### How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

The mission of Christ Episcopal Church is to be a home for those seeking a deeper relationship with God and each other. Vision: By our work, Christ Episcopal Church will become a recognized center for Christian spirituality and practices in Eastern Iowa—welcoming all people, renewing spirits, and serving the needs of the community.



### What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

We are experiencing people coming who have identified as not coming from a church background. Members are beginning to see ways in which the congregation can connect with issues in our neighborhoods. Children are coming to church.

## What significant challenges are you facing?

Our challenges stem from the cultural reality of being a center where generations mix together. In some ways we are learning how to listen to each other and how to check “my assumptions” so I can begin to understand the other person and his/her/their context. We are also learning to trust each other again and to resist segmenting within the community.

## What is your main style of worship?

Contemplative and choral Eucharistic celebrations. We are trying on Taizé and Centering Prayer sessions. We are using formation time to also explore prayer practices, and intentionally teach people ways of prayer.



## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

Christ Church has a rich history of being engaged in Cedar Rapids. Currently we are fostering partnerships with our faith communities and non-profits. Our strengths are in supporting our elementary school, food security, interfaith and ecumenical relationships, and post-incarceration supports.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

The facilities are used by DAR, Fitness program, Election Board, Embroiders Guild, and several other outside groups - with minimal cost for use, the grounds serve as a recreation area for the neighborhood - basketball court and Frisbee golf.





## CHARITON

# St. Andrew's

*Several members of our congregation are new to the Episcopal Church. We are involved in the community by serving at the local food pantry and on various boards.*

### **How do you describe the mission of your congregation?**

Our mission is to reach out to the community and the world by spreading Christ's message of salvation and love for one another.

### **What signs of encouragement are you seeing?**

Our community of believers continues to grow both in numbers and enthusiasm.

### **What significant challenges are you facing?**

We need to keep the momentum going as we grow in both a spiritual sense and in numbers.

### **What is your main style of worship?**

We are both relaxed and reverent in our worship.





**What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?**

We are active in providing food for those who are food insecure.

**How is your building used by the wider community?**

Girl Scouts and Narcotics Anonymous meet at St. Andrew's.



## CHARLES CITY

# Grace Church

*Grace Church, Charles City, serves Charles City and surrounding towns within twenty miles, including Nashua and New Hampton.*

### How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

The mission of our church is summarized in our parish prayer:

*Merciful God, help us to fulfill our mission to grow in the love of the Lord our God with all our hearts, all our minds, and all our strength through worship and study; and to love our neighbors as ourselves through mutual support and service in the church and community. This we ask through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

### What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

We are maintaining a weekly worship schedule with two services of Holy Eucharist each month and on holidays.

### What significant challenges are you facing?

The loss of two church members during the past three years.



### What is your main style of worship?

We continue a traditional worship service with attention to good theology and good music.

### What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We have joined with other churches to supply school children with school supplies.

### How is your building used by the wider community?

In recent years we hosted a local soup kitchen.

CLINTON

# Christ Church

*Christ Church is a merged congregation from the former Grace Episcopal in the north end and St. John's Episcopal in the south end of Clinton. Our 90 members in this river city in Eastern Iowa range in age from 6 months to 94 years.*

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

To know and love God; to grow in faith through prayer, study, worship, and service to our neighbors; to be lifelong learners and proclaimers of the gospel.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

The congregation cherishes its multi-generational gathering of members. Children are welcome and involved in worship. We have a vestry member in her 20s. The congregation is growing a relationship with its immediate neighbor, Lyons Methodist Church. The church is known in the neighborhood because of its involvement in Northend Outreach Ministries.



## What significant challenges are you facing?

Clinton County now has the fastest growing loss of population in the state, so new residents and visitors are a rarity. Food insecurity in parts of the city increased to 80%. The congregation is aging.

## What is your main style of worship?

Sunday Rite II Eucharist offers a dignified but simple style, with a mix of music from four hymnals; instruments include organ, piano, and strings. Members who have experienced disputes with one another still pass the peace and come to the communion table together.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

Our members actively participate in the year-round Northend Outreach Ministries effort to provide food boxes to neighborhood families in need, and in the summer lunch program for children in our neighborhood. Members are active in fundraising for the Clinton Symphony and are present at the city-wide Peace Walk, Back-to-School festivities, and Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration at the community college.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

Christ Church is the site for housing and preparing food boxes for families. The parish hall is used for meetings of outside groups on an irregular schedule.



## CORALVILLE

# New Song

*New Song Episcopal Church in Coralville is an expanding community next to Iowa City, with an increasing minority and low-income population, especially in the neighborhood where our church is located.*

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

We have been a mission-oriented church that takes our mission statement to be the Body of Christ to the World quite seriously. From the beginning we have sought out groups that have suffered from neglect and abuse. One of our members named us in jest “The Church of God’s Odds and Ends.” We have come to appreciate this characterization, and have embraced it.



## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

We have continued to be a loving and accepting group of people. Our membership continues to creep up gradually, even in a highly transient area like Iowa City-Coralville. It is a wonderful coincidence that in the same year of our 25th Anniversary we have also been able to burn our mortgage.

## What significant challenges are you facing?

We occupy a simple structure that is barely adequate. It has little off-street parking and almost everything, from large gatherings to small groups requires shuffling. It has had an effect on our ability to expand; yet also has allowed us to focus on our spiritual life, rather than on maintaining an historical structure. As we grow, we will also have to adjust our mutual-ministry structure in order to keep the church active in all its areas of responsibilities -- we are planning to review how we operate this year and next.



## What is your main style of worship?

We follow the basic order of worship in BCP, but try, gently, to “push the envelope” so as not to become trapped by habit. Music has been a staple with good pianists and acoustics, so Sunday worship is usually an adrenaline experience spiritually, particularly visible in the hearty embraces shared during The Peace.



## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We have never missed showing up at the Iowa City Pride festival every year, and have been instrumental in starting the Coralville Community Food Pantry, where several of us volunteer. We have also been present in organizations that support affordable housing, labor justice, and immigrant services.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

For several years we had an AA group using the building, a meeting place for some organizations, and for Healing Touch.

## DAVENPORT

# St. Alban's

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Our Mission Statement reads: "Our purpose as members of St. Alban's Church is to know Christ through worship, education and fellowship, and to make Christ known to those within the sphere of our parish and our lives." We try to make Christ known to those in the community by the various outreach programs we maintain, one of which has been in existence for the past 50 years. We have several other outreach programs that are from 4 years to 30 years in existence.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

When the Rev. Brian McVey left to go to Nashville in 2013, we were fortunate to receive the Rev. Charles Bencken as a long term supply priest for 4 years. During that time, he was with us only on Sundays and if we asked him to be at healing rites or funerals. We, as a congregation, maintained our day-to-day business, meetings and outreach. We are very self-sufficient. Now, we are very fortunate to have the Rev. Judith Dalmasso as our Priest-in-Charge. She is bringing order into our worship in which we were getting very relaxed. She has done teaching and reminded us why we do what we do in the Instructed Eucharist. She has introduced studies and plans on more during Advent and Lent. We have 6-8 new people that have regularly attended and plan on being with us for the duration. The youth group includes some youth from Trinity and is meeting regularly. We have had 5th Sunday worship services with the other 2 churches in the area and just had a 5th Saturday contemporary service in which 65 people and all 3 priests were in attendance.

## What significant challenges are you facing?

We have a very limited Parish Hall in terms of space. No classrooms, so the Sunday School has to be taught on one side of the Hall while visiting is going on before the service which makes it very loud for the teaching. Our kitchen is falling apart, the cupboards and counters are at least 35 years old. We have updated the bathrooms to be handicapped accessible, however, there are only 2 bathrooms. The nursery could use its own bathroom and more room. The Sacristy and Library (which isn't one at all, but a catch-all for stuff to be stored) could use more room and updating.

*We are a congregation of approximately 50-55 faithful worshipers. ASA 35-40 for both early and late services. We are an aging congregation for the most part, with very few children/young people in attendance. Many retirees who are actually retired and many retirees who are still working. Most of the congregation have grown children with children of their own. We have a few younger couples with either school-aged children or no children.*



## What is your main style of worship?

We are not a “high” church in that we don’t use incense. We use spoken Rite I at 8:00 am and Rite II with music at the 10:15 am service. We worship in the round. Christ is in the very center of us. It’s a visible reminder entering the Nave, praying and exiting....taking the image of keeping Christ in the center of our lives when we progress into the community. It allows us to look across the Nave and Sanctuary and see our friends, some of whom may be hurting, and look into their faces.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

The longest event is the Community Meal. We provide 6 different entrees, vegetables, salads, bread/butter, cottage cheese, applesauce, milk and punch. Our big feast is the December meal where we provide prime rib with all the trimmings. We have 2 Thanksgiving families where we provide Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings delivered to their homes. We also have 2 Christmas families. They give us names, ages, wants and sizes and we do the best we can (we’ve never been short on good will), wrapped and delivered to their door. We also give items for a Christmas dinner. Some members are part of the Underwear Because We Care movement. We’ve collected thousands of items, from underwear to socks to bras to T-shirts. Some members are part of Attacking Trafficking, a faith based organization to educate the public and provide training to hotels/motels. This past year, we’ve spearheaded “Free the Girls,” an organization that gives women a product to sell in their home country. It empowers them to earn a living outside of the sex industry. Youth group, with youth from Trinity in attendance every 3rd Sunday. They are planning to do community projects as a group next year. We provide services with Eucharist at the Scott Co. Jail, LutherCrest nursing home and SilverCrest Memory Care Unit. Some members volunteer at Winnies Wishes, a retail store where donated items are sold and all profit goes to the care and upkeep of Winnie’s Place, a shelter for abused women and their children.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

As stated above, AA meets here several times a week. We also have the Quad Cities Chess Club that meets every Wednesday. Once a year, Attacking Trafficking hosts a Prayer Service in January for those trafficked. The public is invited and we usually have a guest speaker. We host trivia nights from May-October.







DAVENPORT

# Trinity Cathedral

*We are the historical cathedral of the Diocese of Iowa, built in 1867 by the first Bishop of Iowa and used by every bishop since then. We serve the entire Iowa/Illinois Quad Cities area, as nearly two-thirds of our members travel five or more miles to attend Trinity Cathedral.*

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Grow spiritually and do Christ's work. We seek to grow in the knowledge and love of God, and to take the love of Jesus Christ out into the world in the work of reconciliation to God and one another.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

By calling a Curate we have returned to Trinity's legacy of training leadership for the future church and reinvigorated the parish. We have also reconfigured children's worship to better serve the needs of families.



## What significant challenges are you facing?

We continue to transition from those who remember and are nostalgic for the past to those who look hopefully and joyfully toward the future (mostly, but not entirely, a function of age).

## What is your main style of worship?

The cathedral provides prayer book liturgies supported by excellent music that are dignified, transcendent, and joyful.



## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We partner with other area churches of various denominations to serve the needs of our immediate neighborhood (People Uniting Neighbors and Churches, PUNCH). Trinity teams also work at an ecumenical food pantry once a week, serve meals to the food-insecure, and minister at a local homeless shelter.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

We provide space for an independent child care/preschool that serves 55-65 children at all economic levels, initially developed to support high school mothers so that they could graduate. An open AA group meets weekly. We also host local chamber music recitals.



DECORAH

# Grace Church

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Primarily to provide an inclusive atmosphere for traditional worship and weekly celebration of the Eucharist. Weekday Evening Prayer. Opportunities for outreach to the community. Occasional ecumenical gatherings.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

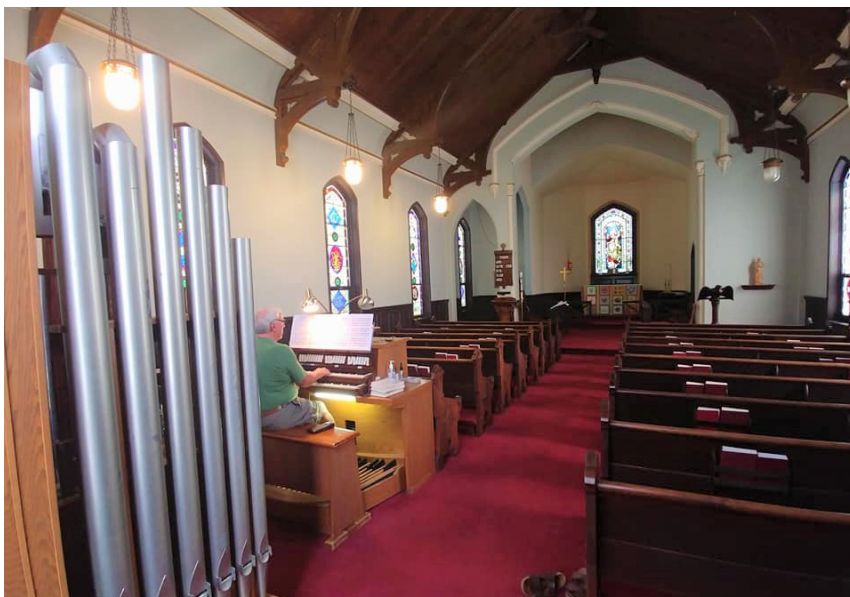
Small parish with active membership.

## What significant challenges are you facing?

Declining numbers; aging membership.

## What is your main style of worship?

We enjoy a traditional style of worship. We have a small two manual Schlicker organ for service music and hymns, and a singing congregation.



*Grace Episcopal Decorah serves the City of Decorah and its environs, including surrounding counties. We celebrated 150 years as a parish in 2018. The building was erected in 1876.*



## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

Help with weekly community meal, contribute to local, national, and international charities and programs. Ministry to residents in local nursing homes.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

Occasional wedding ceremonies.

DENISON

# Trinity Church

*Trinity, Denison is selling their building and entering a time of discernment about their long-term home—their report is also included in the Trinity Cluster.*

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Proclaiming the Gospel, while seeking and serving Christ in our interactions with all people

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

We have a small, but dedicated core group of church members.

## What significant challenges are you facing?

Our church facility is too costly to maintain for our small group.

## What is your main style of worship?

We have Holy Eucharist two Sundays per month and two Morning Prayer services per month. We like to experiment with different styles of music.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We support Neighbor Helping Neighbor, a group of inter-denominational churches that provide financial and other help to needy community members (help paying utility bills or rent, gas cards for getting to work or medical appointments, etc.) and we also support TAP, a temporary assistance program for providing individuals and families with food, clothes, and household items.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

We have been renting our parish center and church to an Hispanic Church of God congregation for a number of years. We have kept the rent low to help them get established.



DES MOINES

# St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral

*St. Paul's membership includes folks from all over the metro Des Moines community, as well as folks from as far away as Winterset and Lamoni. We also have a regular stream of visitors passing through town on business and who wish to worship in an Episcopal church downtown where their hotels are located, as well as seasonal visitors in town for the orchestra, theater productions, and the like. During the week, we serve a daily free meal with the Connections Cafe, serving a largely homeless population living in the Central Iowa Shelter, Y Supportive Housing, and folks living in tents along the river. We also host a wide variety of Anonymous support groups and a few other community groups such as a regular men's Bible study/lunch that has met here for well over a decade. With our Cathedral Arts program, we also attract a large number of visitors throughout the program year.*

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

The mission of St. Paul's is reflected in our commitment to living in and sharing the unconditional love of God in Jesus Christ through worship, fellowship, education, and service to the community and diocese. As the cathedral, our ministries also include annual diocesan worship liturgies as well as periodically hosting such things as the meeting of the diocesan board and Deacons' Day.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

We are attracting and retaining increasing numbers of younger adults and families with young children who live in the downtown area. We are starting up a new Sunday morning ministry for children under the age of 6 as we have a growing number of families with young children. Our Young Adults ministry continues to thrive, and we are transitioning from this being a ministry focused on parishioners to making it open to young adult parishioners from the other Des Moines parishes. Our Sunday morning worship liturgies continue to be musically rich with a robust choral ministry and our pipe organ under Organist-Choirmaster Mark Babcock, who also is the director of our Cathedral Arts music ministry. Our Eucharistic Ministers and acolytes, as well as our Outreach Ministries under the direction of Dcn. John Doherty are doing well, which include our strong Social Justice and Immigration, Care of Creation, and feeding ministries teams. We hosted an art exhibit for the second year as part of Art Week Des Moines, drawing in local artists and visitors with the coordination prowess of Spivey Knapik and Traci Ruhland Petty, and look forward to continuing this new tradition. We have several book/Bible study groups that

are thriving, including a men's book study and lunch, and a women's book/Bible study being led by the Rev. Jean McCarthy. We also had our first summer Youth Fine Arts Camp, drawing elementary aged kids mostly from the Homes of Oakridge complex.

### What significant challenges are you facing?

Since January 2015, we have experienced the deaths of 47 parishioners. It has been the passing of nearly an entire generation. Our ASA has remained stable with the addition of new members over the same period of time, especially amongst young adults: single, married, with and without children. We are struggling with budget deficits largely due to the deaths of so many long time, older parishioners. We struggle also with our volunteer base in maintaining some of our feeding ministries, but are holding solid with Eucharistic Visitors and pastoral care.

### What is your main style of worship?

We worship at 8:00 a.m. using the Rite I liturgy, accompanied by the organ but without congregational singing. This is a tight knit, loving group. We have various Christian Formation ministries from 9:00 - 9:45 a.m. throughout the year. We worship at 10:00 a.m. using the Rite II liturgy, which is our most diverse congregation, accompanied by our strong chorus and organ music ministers who help lead congregational singing as well as offering astonishingly beautiful music. This worship liturgy is sung. Our Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols service is particularly wonderful, and our Holy Week and Easter liturgies are profoundly moving. We continue to host a South Sudanese congregation on Sunday afternoons, who gather to worship in our chapel.

### What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We have a year-round, Monday-Friday free meal with the Connections Cafe in our undercroft, feeding on average 125 of our most at risk and poor neighbors. We attract large attendance through our Cathedral Arts series of Choral Evensong and organ recitals, as well as being an exhibition site for Art Week Des Moines. We serve a meal at the Central Iowa Shelter each month. We have an active Social Justice and Immigration team who go to the state capitol to lobby as well as accompany immigrants working their way through the immigration legal system. We continue to host our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Luncheon, serving the downtown Des Moines community, especially in conjunction with our Connections Cafe community.

### How is your building used by the wider community?

We host a Girl Scouts troop, host 5 Anonymous support groups, and a community men's Bible study group.



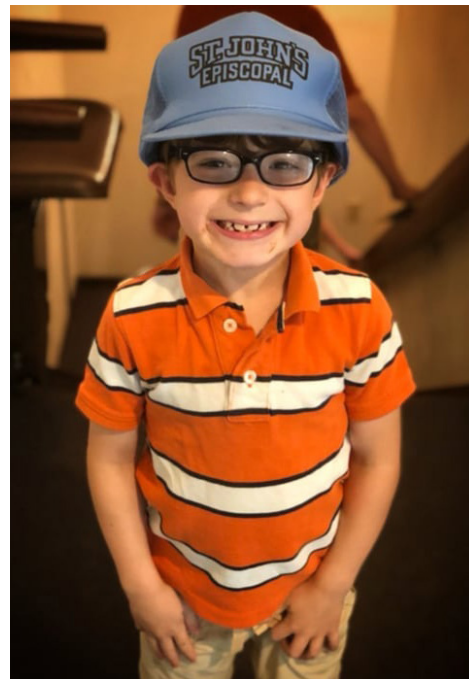
## DUBUQUE

# St. John's

*St. John's is a congregation in renewal. We were founded almost 175 years ago, in 1845, by the great missionary, Bishop Jackson Kemper. Most parishioners live within the city of Dubuque, some in the county, and some come to us from places beyond.*

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Our mission at St. John's is to love God, love others, and make disciples. We believe that love transforms lives. Love rooted in the life and teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Disciples are those who love God and love others according to the way of Jesus. At St. John's, we make disciples in the Great Tradition of Christianity, "in essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity."



## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

2018 marked a modest 10% increase in Average Sunday Attendance and a significant increase in pledge amounts. We have begun efforts at re-imagining and improving our campus (parish house and church) to the end of our facilities being utilized by ourselves, our mission partners, and diverse individuals and groups throughout the week. This summer (2019) we did a project drive in order to improve parish lighting and it was successful. We have begun to implement a congregational rule of life. We have begun to stress intentional Christian practice and discipleship. A choir and a choral scholars program has begun. A new mission partnership with St. Mark's Youth Enrichment (they ran their fifth grade summer program in our space this summer).

## What significant challenges are you facing?

Our congregation is small for the size of our campus, we face a STEEP financial challenge to stop living off of our endowment. We've identified a 5 year plan to do this, but it is challenging. Our large campus requires our attention and monies to maintain. We are not well connected to our neighborhood and city, though we are working at improving our connection and presence in the community



## What is your main style of worship?

Our Sunday morning Eucharist is traditional, but warm. What is exciting is the active participation of people of a variety of ages.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We need to grow in this area. But currently, we serve a meal every 5th Sunday of the month (when the local soup kitchen isn't serving a meal), we host two rummage sales, a bake sale, and the blessing of the animals.



## How is your building used by the wider community?

AA. Occasional non-profit meetings. Ecumenical Emmaus retreats. Occasional other groups throughout the year. St. Mark's Youth Enrichment. We hope to see our campus used by more as we move forward in our renewal efforts.



DURANT

# St. Paul's

*We like to think of ourselves as a little church with a big heart. We are located in the southeast part of Iowa, situated between Davenport and Iowa City. Durant is bordered by similar farming communities. We are one of three churches in the town, with our nearest neighboring town having six churches. Our buildings, (including the church and the parish hall) are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, an accomplishment of which we are proud.*

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Saint Paul's mission is to live by faith, to be known by love, and to be an inspiration of hope, comfort and peace. Since we are a small church, we hope that individuals will not only recognize our buildings, but identify us by our loving approach and heartfelt feelings toward all God's servants.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

We have been blessed with a priest on an almost full-time basis. The sermons are inspiring and are just the right length in terms of time. One service per month is devoted to children, which is a great incentive for grandparents to bring their grandchildren. These children are growing up with God as an inspiration for them to follow. We encourage the children to take part in all services with such tasks as ringing the bell, taking up the elements, passing the plate, etc. They are enthusiastic about this, often times racing to see who gets the first choice. For several years we have celebrated by coming together as a congregation to enjoy a fish fry with the fish being caught, cleaned and fried by a couple in the congregation. Typically, friends are also invited to share with us in the bountiful catch.



## What significant challenges are you facing?

We are no different from other churches in that we endeavor to add individuals to our rolls with little luck. We are faced with an aging congregation whose financial resources may become more limited with time, thus affecting the church's income. Young parents seem to be locked into sports practices and games, rather than reserving Sunday as a day of worship. Our selection of music from the current

hymnal is not appealing to many newcomers, but financial constraints hamper us from paying musical groups or individual singers to add more welcome music to the service (a practice done by many larger churches). Being a small church means that most jobs needing to be done are completed by our own parishioners. Unfortunately the same people are called upon the majority of time, which sometimes leads to burn out.

## What is your main style of worship?

We adhere to a more traditional style of worship, following the Book of Common Prayer. However, we are flexible in making changes to the service as long as the rubrics allow for it. It is exciting to be in church on those Sundays devoted to children, as we all benefit from their laughter and antics.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We are always looking for new ways to reach out to our community and beyond. We help out with a clothes closet, food pantry, Meals on Wheels, assisting (in conjunction with another Episcopal church) in feeding low income individuals, providing food and sharing a meal with local folks in low income housing, greeting weary travelers on I-80 during Labor Day and Memorial Day weekends, assist with services for those in a local nursing home, providing monies to an elementary school in Chicago with the Principal handling the money as appropriate. We will soon start a monthly project (Laundry Love) to help families who may find it financially difficult to provide clean clothes for their children. School counselors will identify the families who could benefit, and we will provide them with coins and laundry supplies. We join with other local churches in becoming an “angel” to children at Christmas time. These children are identified by the school counselors and we provide gifts as asked for by the families themselves. We join with other churches in having Vacation Bible school for young children during the summer.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

We are utilizing social media to inform the public beyond our community that our church and parish hall are available to rent for weddings, receptions, family events, meetings, youth groups, etc. Our buildings would be available also for local youth or other nonprofit groups to utilize as needed, with no charge to them. We have a church basement that we offer to our local churches to use for Lenten and Advent luncheons.





## EMMETSBURG

# Trinity Church

*Trinity Episcopal is a small rural church in a community of 4,000. Settled 1857 by Irish immigrants who named the community for Irish Patriot Robert Emmet. Largest employers include soy oil and bio-fuel refining in addition to light manufacturing, a county hospital, community college and state-licensed gambling casino. Economically depressed region attributed to agriculture markets and poor weather conditions. More than half (57%) of public school students qualify for free/reduced cost lunches (below poverty households).*

### How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Trinity Church, Emmetsburg is grouped with small churches of the Diocese whose average weekly attendance is fewer than 25. The mission is described as spiritual enriched by engaging new possibilities; focused on a willingness to reach out beyond the walls of the church to engage all disciples. Evidence includes the use of a diocesan grant to landscape a Prayer Garden of prominence on church property for prayers, reflection, and wildflower plantings to honor God's creations.

### What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

Trinity worshipers have proven the ability to use Trinity's human and organic gifts by combining the talents of people in the congregation and the community. Several examples since 2015 including (1) planting seeds of faith with the formation of a Ministry Development Team, (2) completing the exterior scrape/painting, (3) renovating community room and kitchen facilities to adapt the physical structure to meet the needs in the wider community, (4) successful grant application to landscape/create external Prayer Garden, (5) planting seeds of faith for the purpose of "inviting, welcoming, and connecting" with a transitional ministry.



## What significant challenges are you facing?

Health care costs and aging population whose needs are greater with the aging process. Fear of increased economic woes in the agricultural community whose families rely on favorable farm markets and crop growing weather.

## What is your main style of worship?

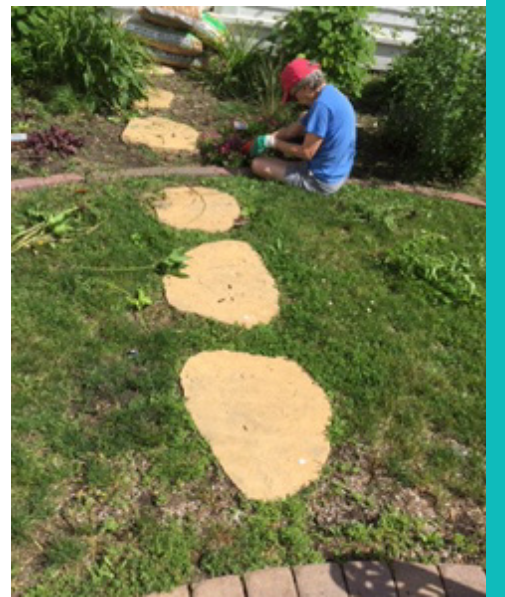
Anamnesis as described in scripture and Episcopal curricular practices: the “heart of it all” by taking, blessing, and giving of bread and wine “for the anamnesis of Him.” Dynamic support-services at the Diocesan level enriches Trinity worshipers by providing hope to the congregants. Emmetsburg is a community of citizens whose lives are enriched by spiritual nurturing and socialization.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

Volunteer/community involvement of non-profit groups that feed-the-children (schools), offering community’s use of the church building at no charge for social help programs such as domestic abuse counseling. Worshipers seen regularly at community events such as fundraisers for (KIWANIS) for children/playgrounds. Church community room opened twice a year for participating in citywide sale of used or recently new clothing and household items.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

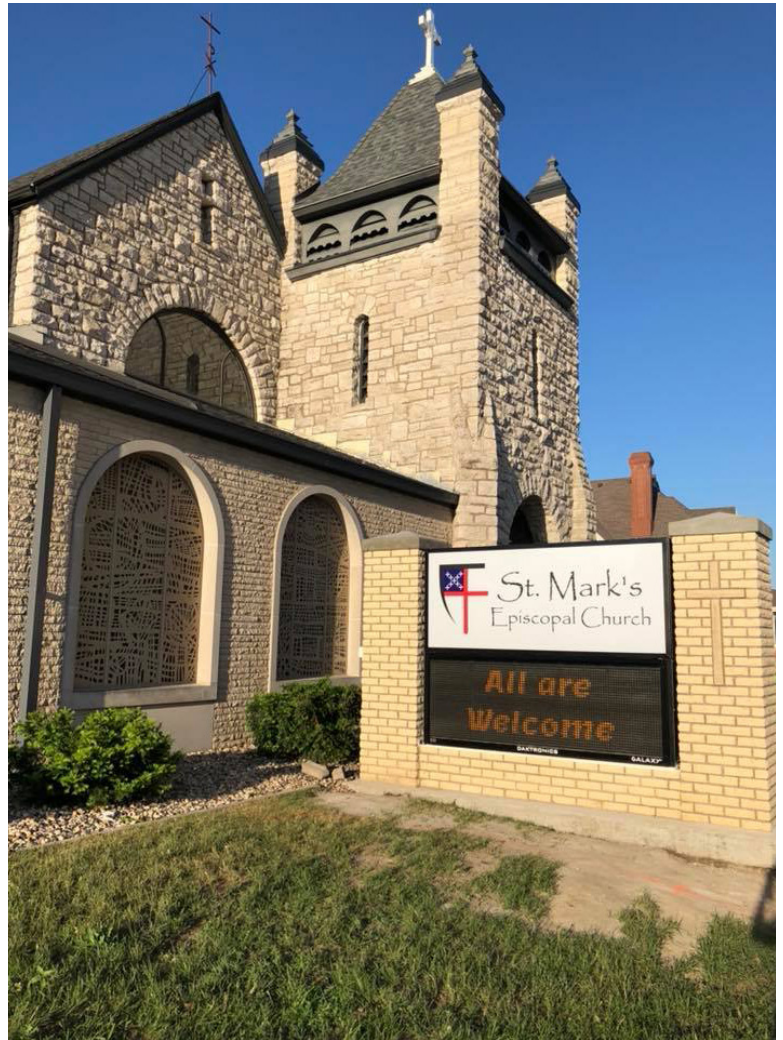
A domestic abuse counseling firm serving several counties is provided an office and space for counseling purposes, at no charge to the families, or counseling service with use of telephone service and world wide Internet services. Public affairs issues meeting the mission of the community at large and the future of the community environment demonstrated when Trinity sponsored a public discussion on watershed planning for lake improvement and water quality issues.



## FORT DODGE

# St. Mark's

*We are a parish located in the center of downtown Fort Dodge, Iowa. We are a diverse parish of long time parishioners to people who faithfully attend from the homeless shelter. This parish is active in ministering to many different organizations as well as individuals in need. Our ministry includes several fundraisers specifically for identified needs in our community. We are a very welcoming parish and extend our hospitality in many directions and including care for ourselves. Our buildings, (including the church and the parish hall) are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, an accomplishment of which we are proud.*



## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

We serve Christ and honor God in our community, and our church in all we do. We are a growing parish with many hands who are willing to serve and jump in and do the work of the church in serving others. Our mission is recognized through those parishioners who offer their service in the name of Christ to the community we serve; not only with church activities but in their places of business, volunteer organizations, and action within the Fort Dodge community. Our mission is recognized through those parishioners who offer their service in the name of Christ to the community we serve; not only with church activities but in their places of business, volunteer organizations, and action within the Fort Dodge community.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

St. Mark's has lay leadership who want to be involved, want to serve in outreach, want to meet people where they are. We will finish a congregational project and not long after the conversation turns to who else can we help. This is who St. Mark's is.

## What significant challenges are you facing?

We are an endowed parish which is both a curse and a blessing. This parish is not used to opening their pocketbooks very widely and stewardship is a challenge.

## What is your main style of worship?

Rite II is our style, not very formal. We will have some formality during the Holy Days but as a rule we are more low church than high. Our attendance is stable. We have the normal ebbs and flows. There is some anxiety/push to get more families and younger children in the parish but I believe this is a common theme particularly when some of the more senior members remember a full Sunday school from the 1960's. We welcome our children and love them.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We host dinner fundraisers for the women's homeless shelter. We take part in the community Manna Meal. We hosted several hot-dog cookouts this summer; one for our AA fellowship which meets here weekly and one after the Ft. Dodge parade. We led a community prayer service at The Fort in the clapboard church in June and in August we took part in welcoming back Iowa Central students to school. We are hosting an animal blessing for the city with requests for needed items for the Humane Society in conjunction with another downtown Lutheran church.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

AA meets regularly on Wednesday evenings in the parish hall. We have hosted the Iowa Museum Association meetings here as well.



FORT MADISON

# St. Luke's

St Luke's, Fort Madison (a city of approximately 9000 people), serves the city and surrounding rural area, including east central Illinois. We are a small congregation with a Ministry Development Team comprised of four priests, 3 deacons and one parish administrator. St. Luke's has one of the earliest MDT's established in the diocese with the first ordinations taking place in 2005 and 2006. Sunday attendance ranges from 15 to 25 people each Sunday. Our church, built in 1857 for \$4000, is the oldest church building in Fort Madison.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

Recently several new faces have come through our doors and they have returned on several Sundays following their first entry.



## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

The Mission Statement of St. Luke's is:

- To continue the liturgy and hospitality this congregation enjoys and to share it with others;
- To provide pastoral care, Christian education and outreach;
- To prayerfully ask our Lord Jesus Christ for help in feeding the body and soul of every person who walks through our doors.



## What significant challenges are you facing?

On the practical side, keeping our old building going.

## What is your main style of worship?

Rite II Holy Eucharist is the principal liturgy used in worship; however, each fourth Sunday is Morning Prayer Rite II conducted by one of the deacons. We also use materials from Enriching Our Worship 1 as well as some of the new expansive worship liturgies. The children’s Bell Choir which performs occasionally—Christmas and Easter—probably generates the most excitement.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We co-host a community meal at the end of a designated month. In addition, in September we are offering a Bible study, which will be opened to the community.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

The building is not used extensively by the wider community as only the church is handicapped accessible. However, it is made readily available for events such as weddings, funerals and meetings of community organizations such as the DAR. Although our building is not used for the following ministries, St. Luke’s members participate in the community End of the Month Meals program which are served at St. John’s United Church of Christ, the Backpack Program which provides weekend food to needy students attending Fort Madison Schools and Lenten Lunches with program sponsored by Parish Partner churches. We plan to hold a “block party” in late September or early October to become better acquainted with the residents who live around the church. Lastly, the church possesses a restored silk flag with 13 stars made by a granddaughter of Besty Ross, a member of the church, and given to the church in 1905.







GRINNELL

# St. Paul's



## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Our mission is to represent God's love and welcome to the town of Grinnell and our area, and to also represent God's love and welcome to the Grinnell College Community of students, faculty and staff.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

We are in a very happy and healthy season. The parish is nicely filled on Sundays with a wide range of people, from little kids to college students to town folk. We have many long time members and a regular influx of new faces. Our spirit is quite playful and we have lots of fellowship together. We are known as a parish that welcomes all and is invested in social justice. We completed a marvelous renovation of our interior space, making the building a warm and friendly place.

## What significant challenges are you facing?

None, really. We are blessed. Our Eucharistic Visitor program has had some fits and starts, but we are focusing energy on it this coming year with our seminarian taking the helm. This will help.

## What is your main style of worship?

We are a broad church style, and quite easygoing, even as we care that the liturgy is done well. A large number of parishioners take part in the worship, from serving as lectors to acolytes to Eucharistic Ministers. Children are allowed to stay with us through the entire service so they often make a joyful noise--it is lovely. Worship feels fun and holy.



## How is your building used by the wider community?

We host 6 weekly AA meetings; make our space available for the rehearsals of Shultz & Co, a local singing group; host the annual meeting of Church Women United (the past year and this coming); hosted a yoga class for expecting mothers; Grinnell College used our facility for a program with the Center for Prairie Studies; many local groups will use the parish for short term things, such as the Iowa People's PAC; Grinnell Community Theatre; and more.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We take part in Meals on Wheels; we have a 67 year old ministry called "Happy Birthdays Unlimited" where volunteer bakers make cakes to order for Grinnell students--these are ordered by parents to celebrate birthday or provide support during finals. We are known as a church with a passion for social justice and our members are involved in a wide range of advocacy activities, from volunteering for the ACLU to taking part in gun safety vigils at a local gun maker facility; we host a "Welcome and Welcome Back" BBQ at the parish for Grinnell students.



INDIANOLA

# All Saints

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Imagine being part of a faith community that comes to know and love you as you are. Imagine being warmly greeted each time you step through the door. Imagine a casual and comfortable circle of chairs and a small group where you belong, where you are encouraged to speak what is on your mind and heart with no fear and no judgment. Imagine being part of a faithful group of friends who are being formed with the mind of Christ and then sent into the world to love and serve the Lord. If you can imagine that, you have found All Saints!

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

Whether two or three or a dozen gather each week, we continue to give thanks for the blessings we receive from God, and let the scriptures open our hearts and minds to be repeatedly stretched and challenged to live Christian lives of commitment in a complex world. In this God never lets us down.

*All Saints (Indianola) is a relatively young and small storefront church serving a college town in mostly rural Warren county just south of Des Moines.*



## What significant challenges are you facing?

Our small size is both an asset and liability, and we never quite know how we will sustain our presence in Indianola without significant growth, or perhaps an alliance with larger Episcopal churches in the Des Moines metro area who see the value of this storefront worship and preaching station as part of their missional purpose.

## What is your main style of worship?

While we follow the Book of Common Prayer and use seasonal worship booklets with varied Eucharistic prayers, we celebrate informally and in a circle, offer reflections on our daily readings that engage everyone in conversational sharing, and offer communion to one another. It's very intimate, personal and powerful.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We provide goods to the Necessity Pantry, provide a meal on a rotating basis for Simpson College students who worship ecumenically on campus, and annually offer a Blessings of Animals in Buxton Park which adjoins the campus. We have also supported members involved in overseas mission work and provided some funds in our companion diocese of Nzara.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

It has been occasionally used for meetings and short retreats, but would also make a good flexible site for alternative or experimental worship experiences during weekdays or evenings.



## IOWA CITY

# Trinity Church

Trinity serves Iowa City and the surrounding area. We draw parishioners from about a 30 mile radius of downtown Iowa City. Our congregation ranges in age from 8 months to 102 years. A substantial proportion of Trinity's members are affiliated with or retired from the University of Iowa and its Hospitals and Clinics. Our members represent a wide range of economic circumstances. The great majority are white with English as their first language.

### How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Guided by the Holy Spirit we: love God and one another, worship, exercise stewardship, nurture, serve, question, discern, flourish, serve and uphold Christ and his kingdom in Iowa City and in the world beyond.



### What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

Discipleship learning and practice for all ages, youth choir and Royal School of Church Music, partnership with local alternative high school for food and necessity pantry, 20 young adults active in the congregation, elder worshiping community at Oaknoll Retirement Community.

### What significant challenges are you facing?

Trinity is located in downtown Iowa City. Like other downtown organizations we struggle with parking and traffic.

## What is your main style of worship?

Worship at Trinity is eclectic. On November 3 we will change to a new worship schedule that will allow stronger connections across the entire congregation.



## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

Food and necessity pantry at Elizabeth Tate High School, Angel Tree program to provide Christmas gifts for children of incarcerated persons, Free Lunch program, support of Shelter House and winter shelter, offer outdoor prayer station on church grounds and community prayer list.



## How is your building used by the wider community?

Trinity offers meeting space to 12 step groups seven days a week, rehearsal space to a local theatre group and hosts concerts and recitals for music students and community music ensembles. The parish is the meeting location of 100 Grannies, an environmental activist group.

## Le Mars

# St. George's

*St. George's Episcopal is in Le Mars, Iowa; founded in 1881, opened 1882 by English settlers; financed in part from a grant from St. George's Oxford. We had a large congregation in the 1960's and in the early 2000's, but death and a group of 20 from Orange City decided to start Church of the Savior in 2007. Our present number of congregants is five. We serve Le Mars and Plymouth County in Northwest Iowa.*

### How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Our mission is to represent The Episcopal Church in Le Mars; our outreach for 56 years was St. George's Pre-School, but due to retirements a year ago that came to an end. We have morning prayer every Sunday and Eucharist once a month with Shawn Brooks an ELCA minister and his wife Amy, also an ELCA minister, who between them serve five churches; two in Plymouth County and two along Hwy 20 east of Sioux City and St. Georges' once a month.



### What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

Since losing the pre-school last year, we have welcomed a day care into our parish hall as of January, 2019. They have just recently installed a pre-school that will open Sept. 3 in the same room that is affiliated with Le Mars Community Schools.

### What significant challenges are you facing?

Our challenge is a low number of people attending.

### What is your main style of worship?

We use Rite II of the Book of Common Prayer. It is exciting to have two new priests at the church, both of who do wonderful sermons.

### What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We sell pecans during the fall season in the community and everyone takes part in the sales.

### How is your building used by the wider community?

We have a day care in the parish hall and almost all the other rooms are used by the day care as well, but not the church part.

## Maquoketa

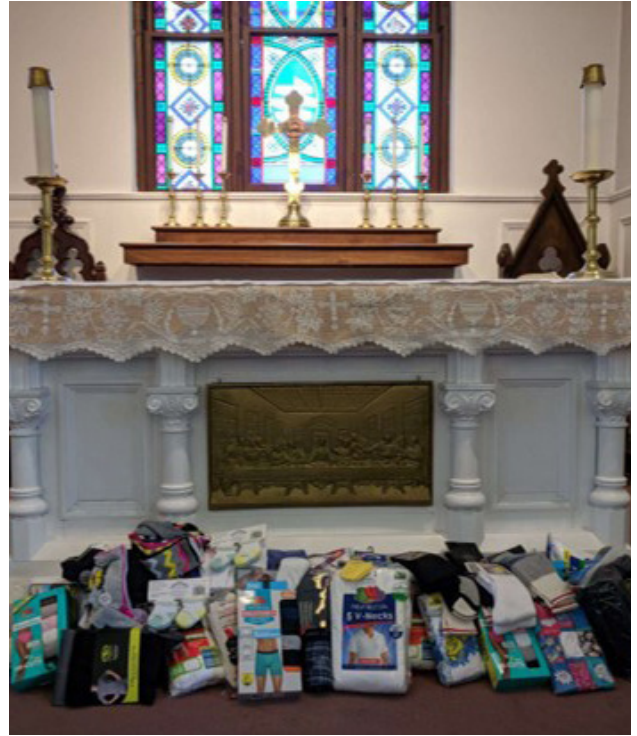
# St. Mark's

### How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

A Christian fellowship of Jesus-centered love, spirituality and service

### What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

A 45% increase in attendance in last year, the establishment of a worship center for children which is the first Sunday school program in decades, a 3rd grader in training as an acolyte (first one in decades), the start of a quarterly newsletter, several community outreach efforts, a 5th Sunday Fellowship Meal, leadership in community efforts to buy and renovate a building for the Community Cupboard, etc.







**What significant challenges are you facing?**

Continued growth in numbers and holiness

**What is your main style of worship?**

Eucharistically centered, variety provided by seasonal specially-made worship booklets, great singing, good preaching



**What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?**

We have an Undie Sunday, collect school supplies, support community cupboard with volunteers and money, active in Prevention Coalition for addiction prevention, have speakers on issues of community concern, make handicapped accessible parish hall available free of charge to community groups, UTO, etc.



**How is your building used by the wider community?**

Birthday parties, bridal showers, baby showers, family reunions, Thanksgiving dinner, Christmas Dinner, 4-H



## MASON CITY

# St. John's

*St. John's is a diverse congregation located in the heart of downtown Mason City. While we are physically located in Mason City, St. John's membership is comprised of faithful people from throughout North Iowa, several of whom travel up to 50 miles each way. Our downtown location means we encounter many of the challenges and opportunities experienced by many urban congregations as population demographics continue to shift since our founding almost 150 years ago.*

### How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Our Sunday bulletin states "The mission of St. John's is to welcome and reach out with the love of God to all." We continue to listen to what God may be inviting us to do in fulfillment of that task.

### What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

New faces are appearing and some are choosing to return and get involved. Average Sunday Attendance is up almost 20% over last year. Annual giving is increasing over last year. The number of pledges is up, including the number of first-time pledgers. St. John's continues to explore various liturgical expressions in worship. Our revitalized courtyard is being utilized more regularly for increased community visibility and involvement. Despite obvious challenges, overall congregational spirit feels healthy and alive!





### What significant challenges are you facing?

Aging congregation, aging physical plant, operating income shortfall leading to deficit spending. Changes in local demographics i.e., shrinking population, aging population, decline in church attendance and denominational affiliation.

### What is your main style of worship?

Firmly rooted in Episcopal tradition and excited to be open to new expressions of what worship can be. BCP, with occasional surprises!

### What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

Blessing of the Animals, Diversity lunch, Twice Blessed, Bandfest Booth, Hygiene Pantry, Community Kitchen, Meals on Wheels, Parish Farmers Market Cookouts.

### How is your building used by the wider community?

Host two AA groups, NA group, Al-Anon, TOPS, Senior Health Clinic, Healing Touch Clinic, Inspirational Writing Group, Twice Blessed Thrift Shop, Hygiene Pantry, host funeral lunches for those outside our congregation.





## MOUNT PLEASANT

# St. Michael's

We serve primarily Henry County and Jefferson County but do overlap into surrounding areas. Towns include Mt. Pleasant and Fairfield.

### How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

"May you see the face of Christ in everyone you meet, and may everyone you meet see the face of Christ in you." This is our mission statement included in our worship folders, etc.

### What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

We continue to add members and attendance. In the past few years added several new members each year and Father Ken's pastoral care has also resulted in a number of inactive members returning to active attendance. We were thrilled if we had 15 for a service. Now it is regularly 25-30 each week.

### What significant challenges are you facing?

No youth and an aging congregation. Several of the people who hold things together are in their late 70s and have had health issues. We only have a few people willing to perform as chalice bearers, acolytes/servers and altar guild. We are trying to train more but have not yet succeeded. We are in the process of trying to compile an 'instruction book' where each task that someone is doing is spelled out. Some of the old hands are less than willing to share their information but we're working on it. The book also contains things like bank account numbers, passwords to digital accounts and instructions for using digital equipment.

### What is your main style of worship?

We use Rite II of the *Book of Common Prayer* but have made significant changes to our music. Although several in our congregation would like to return to Rite I, especially during Lent, we have chosen to maintain an attitude of welcome to visitors and new comers. Most of us came from other religious traditions and we try to pick music that is joyful, uplifting and





perhaps familiar to non-Episcopalians. We have eliminated singing a communion hymn and provide vocal or instrumental pieces via YouTube, Alexa, using a new laptop and sound bar that have been donated to us. A parishioner gifted us with a new piano in honor of a recently deceased member. Our new music director has developed a wealth of new musical options and the new piano upfront gives him an opportunity to teach us new songs before church.

### **What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?**

We provide a noon meal at the local Senior Citizens center once each quarter and provide them with donations for its food pantry, summer sack lunch program and holiday baskets. The local community action program provides us with a family to sponsor at Christmas and asks us for help when they have families in need. We have entirely furnished an apartment for a domestic abuse victim and her children and also provided needed home furnishings, linens, clothes, games, toys, school pictures of the children, and furniture to enable a family of 6 to move from the tent they were living in to an actual apartment. In both cases, the adults were able to find jobs once these basic needs had been met. This past winter was a rough one and our junior warden did many furnace repairs at little to no cost and attributed this to St. Michael's. He does not advertise that, even among the congregation, and we do not underwrite it, but St. Michael's does get the credit. We have also paid for lodging and food for families who were stranded here due to weather. Our location on Mt. Pleasant's main street has often resulted in hitchhikers, cyclists, etc. to stop in and they have joined us for coffee hour, potlucks and Lenten suppers if they happen to hit one of those events. We arranged for overnight lodging for one individual who was hitchhiking at a local motel and the next day we found an envelope with around \$6 in it and a note thanking us for our hospitality and wanting to contribute to our good work. Truly the widow's mite. We hold a rummage sale annually over the Labor Day weekend and it is entirely a free will offering. People are free to take whatever they need (and we have a lot of nice stuff) and pay whatever they can afford, which is sometimes nothing. We also have two community suppers each fall and spring and anyone, especially struggling families and college students are welcome to come and eat at no expense. All of the ingredients are provided by the parishioners at no cost to the church. At the time of the rummage sale we also have a stand in front of the church (where the big parade passes by) offering free bottles of water to all who need it. We have a nice sign in both English and Spanish announcing that it is a gift from St. Michael's.

### **How is your building used by the wider community?**

We have AA and Al-Anon meetings at our church approximately six days a week. They also do a breakfast once a month using our kitchen. We have previously sponsored a Boy Scout Troop but without a Boy Scout in our midst we do not currently have that connection.

## NEWTON

# St. Stephen's

*Although St. Stephen's is located in Newton, Iowa, we serve all of central Iowa beyond Jasper County in several directions. We are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and our building was begun in 1871 with the first service being held on Easter Sunday, 1874. Over twenty years ago, we were forced to undertake a major renovation. Many from the community contributed to this expensive project. In return, we have opened our doors to our entire community for a meeting place. St. Stephen's is bustling seven days a week.*



## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Our main mission is "To be the hands, feet and face of God." We aim to spread God's love and word by caring for others. Our congregation serves as a family for all members, and we actively support each other's spiritual journey through life.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

Our members express solidarity by being willing to try alternate forms of liturgy and music. We are enjoying increased participation in educational programs and quarterly social events. We have recently welcomed new members into our hearts and midst. There is a greater awareness of the needs that exist in our community, and our parishioners are increasingly involved in community groups who aim to effect change. We have a great relationship with our Chapter group, and enjoy time spent together. We contribute to many causes and individuals in need through our Mission Fund and through Rev. Karen's Discretionary Fund. We share a renewed sense of family and express it through a birthday and anniversary card ministry. Our members provide leadership for such community groups as the Peer Drop-In-Center, Neighbors Helping Neighbors and Jasper County Cares. Our members have experienced awareness and growth through participation in JustFaith.

## What significant challenges are you facing?

We face many of the same challenges as other parishes in that our members are aging and our numbers are maintaining rather than experiencing steady growth. There are simply fewer people who are able to do the "heavy lifting" ministries both internally and outside of our church. Sadly, we have very few children to continue our legacy.

## What is your main style of worship?

Our worship is a combination of traditional and casual. Last year we experimented with a Saturday Evening Service on two Saturdays per month. It is casual in nature and followed by a simple supper. This service continues to thrive. At our Annual Meeting in January, it was presented to the parish that St. Stephen's needed to consider going from two Sunday Services to one, although traditionally our early service was quiet with Rite I and the later service was Rite II with music. After conducting an all-member survey, the vestry opted to go to one service with Rite I on the first Sunday and Rite II all other Sundays. Every effort was made to please all members, and it has worked beautifully. We all feel a greater sense of family as we worship together and it is encouraging to see more faces on Sundays. We still have Evening Prayer each Wednesday.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

The involvement of members of St. Stephen's in our community is simply amazing given the size of our parish family. Several of our members are employed in human service providing fields. We now are the sponsoring church for the Jasper County Crop Walk. We send a team of packagers to Take Away Hunger about four times each year. We sponsor and staff Laundry Night on the second and fourth Mondays, which provides free washing, drying and food for homeless and disadvantaged families. We maintain a Blessing Box that is stocked with food, clothing, blankets, etc. for those who need help. We support the Jasper County Animal Rescue League with food, other supplies and funds. We support the Salvation Army Food Pantry with donations and funds. We donate generously to St. Nick's Christmas Club, which provides gifts and food for needy families. We donate to both school food pantries, support the school lunch program by paying off family debt and donate products to the high school Hygiene Closet.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

Fifteen 12-Step groups meet in our building each week. They also feel free to schedule additional area meetings in our building. A group of rug hookers has used our building for many years. Newton Noon Kiwanis meets at St. Stephen's every Wednesday. St. Nick's Christmas Club accepts and stores all the gifts in our building for most of the month of December, and we provide lunches for the workers. The Good Friday Cross Walk begins at St. Stephen's each year and we store the cross that is carried from church to church. This year we hope to resurrect the Christmas Church Walk that was "born" at St. Stephen's almost twenty years ago.



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## OSKALOOSA

# St. James'

*We are a very small congregation in Southeast Iowa that mainly has retired and elderly individuals.*

### How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

To gather from the community those who need a spiritual home.

### What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

As a small congregation, we still have Sunday services, even though some may be Morning Prayer Services, but we make it a priority to get to church each Sunday.

### What significant challenges are you facing?

We face the challenge of getting new families/people as members into our Church. Everyone has to take on multiple roles within the Church, due to the low numbers.



### What is your main style of worship?

Traditional worship.

### What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We try to have book studies or classes about events, to try to get more people from the community involved.

### How is your building used by the wider community?

We have AA/NA groups that use our basement for meetings during the week. Our Hall is also used often for meetings.



## OTTUMWA

# Trinity Church

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

We are a small congregation in southeast Iowa that serves older people who have been Episcopalians for a long time and enjoy the traditions of the service but the accepting nature of Episcopalians toward others who do not share our race, creed, national origins or beliefs.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

Those who are involved at Trinity share great fellowship and can be consistently relied upon to serve at Trinity. Since the death of our organist, we have purchased an electronic hymnal that is working well and being more accepted by the congregation.

## What significant challenges are you facing?

We need more people coming to Trinity. This would also provide more income to work with, we would hope.

## What is your main style of worship?

Our style of worship could be categorized as casual/traditional. The exciting part of our service is the variety of approaches of our supply priests.



## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

Individually our members serve on several community organizations, but as a group, we contribute supplies for bereavement bags for our local hospice, provide desserts to our soup kitchen once per month, and collect funds for four community charities during the year, donate personal hygiene supplies to our local high school and provide Christmas gifts to our children's emergency shelter.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

Our space was being used by the Area Agency on Aging as their meal site, but they have moved to another location that is more accessible (on the bus line for seniors) and that has better kitchen facilities in an effort to begin cooking meals on site.



## PERRY

# St. Martin's

*St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Perry, Iowa, was formed in 1956. Currently serving residents in Perry and Dallas County, St. Martin's continues to provide significant ministry to urban and rural Iowans. St. Martin's has served over eight thousand persons in a Free Medical Clinic, and provides substantial financial and personal ministry to a diverse community in Perry. St. Martin's has been an integral part of supporting diversity in the area by sponsoring families coming to Perry from other countries.*

### How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

The mission of St. Martin's is to share God's healing love justice and mercy. Since its formation, St. Martin's has distributed substantial financial assistance (over \$250,000) to non-profit groups in the area, who meet the criteria of sustaining the mission of the parish to those in need. The parish maintains an active ministry throughout the year to vitalize the Love of Christ and the work of Bishop Martin of Tours.

### What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

St. Martin's has an active children's education program. The congregation places the needs of the children as a priority in the future of the parish and its ministry. Children are a very real part of the liturgy, mission and ministry in the community. St. Martin's actively seeks new and better ways to serve others in the area.



## What significant challenges are you facing?

As with many small town congregations, St. Martin's faces the challenge of sustaining the work of the parish in a culture of declining interest in organized religion by many in the community. St. Martin's strives to serve others in a diverse community containing many denominational choices.

## What is your main style of worship?

Our continued involvement of youth in our worship. We also welcome the opportunity to provide healing to those in need. We also include our pets as blessed members in our community of worship. We always welcome new and diverse forms of worship that are acceptable to the Diocese.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

St. Martin's provides a grant program for those non-profit groups that meet the criteria to qualify for financial assistance. Each year, St. Martin's provides over \$16,000 in grants to sustain the Mission of St. Martin's. In addition, St. Martin's provides food baskets to needy families throughout the year. St. Martin's also is active in community activities throughout the year. We participate in the annual Arts Festival, the Sesquicentennial Celebration, Perry Ministerial Association, and fund raising to support police-fire and rescue activities. St. Martin's supports International Festivals and cultural activities in the community. Members of the parish volunteer to serve in the Food Pantry, as well as other organizations as active members of the community.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

St. Martin's maintains a welcoming environment to anyone who requests the use of the parish building. In the past the facility has provided a place of healing for thousands of clients in the Free Clinic active in the area.



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SHENANDOAH

# St. John's

*We are a faithful, spirit-filled congregation serving Shenandoah in Southwest Iowa.*

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

We remain open to different opinions and to change. We try to listen to the needs of the community and respond where and how we are able.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

With the fall season upon us we have started up our lectionary study, which includes a meal before and Compline afterwards. We have had two more join our group of 6.





### What significant challenges are you facing?

An aged congregation and years of non-resident clergy.

### What is your main style of worship?

We participate in traditional services but have added use of *Enriching Our Worship*. The form we use for the Prayers of the People is engaging. The lector asks for the prayer, i.e. "I bid your prayers for Social Justice" and a parishioner responds with the prayer.



### What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We host a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, we support several local programs, and we bring Ashes to Go to downtown.

### How is your building used by the wider community?

AA and Adult Children of Alcoholics use the building.



## SIOUX CITY

# Calvary

*We are Calvary Episcopal Church, located in the Morningside area of Sioux City, Iowa. We serve, and have members from the entire Greater Siouxland Tri-State area. We are located off of Gordon Drive, which is a major thoroughfare in Sioux City.*

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

“The Mission of Calvary Episcopal Church is to provide a safe place where all are known, accepted, and encouraged to grow as living members of Christ.”

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

We have an active and strong participation in worship. Although our numbers are not large, we are devoted and committed to God, the church, each other, and the community. We hold a number of community events, which are appreciated and well attended. These events include: a major flower sale in the spring, and smaller ones for the altar flowers Christmas and Easter, Shrove Tuesday Pancake suppers, and a Pork Chop Supper. We have members in our congregation actively working with community support programs such as Sioux City Food Bank, St. Thomas’ Food Pantry, Crop Walk, and service organizations. Our Vestry is a diverse hard working group of individuals who work well

together, toward accomplishing our goals as a parish. Naturally, we do not always agree with each other, but resolve the matters with love and respect toward each other, always asking God for guidance. We have just begun an exciting Hispanic Ministry, and offer two Eucharistic services a month, solely in Spanish. (This ministry is a work in progress.) We have worked with the Diocese to enlist the help of Rev. Sherri Hughes-Empke with this. She graciously comes to Calvary twice a month to offer this ministry (as well as an additional English Eucharist while our Rev. Gerhart is in Swaziland). We have a very active youth program. Rev. Gehart has made this one of her focus points at Calvary. This has proven to be a blessing for not only the youth involved, but for the entire congregation.



## What significant challenges are you facing?

As with many Episcopal churches, the small size of our membership is a challenge. This provides challenges in terms of limited budget, as well as limited numbers of people to do the various tasks required of an active church. However, we all work together, offering our individual gifts of time, talent, and treasure, to fulfill our Mission Statement.

## What is your main style of worship?

For Eucharist, we generally use Rite II from the *Book of Common Prayer*. We also have Morning Prayer a couple of times a month. Our services are casual, and comfortable. The church building itself has the sense of being a “sacred” place, and the love and support we share with each other truly makes us a family in Christ.



## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We host, and participate in a number of events and services for the community. Some of these are held at Calvary Church, and some are out in the community. These include, pancake supper, pork chop supper, spring flower sales, Crop Walk, Siouxland Food Bank, St. Thomas' Food Pantry, rummage sale, Easter egg hunt, and Blessing of the Animals.



## How is your building used by the wider community?

A group of Morningside College professors who formed a musical group, has been using one of our downstairs rooms for regular practice. In the past, a local artist used one of our downstairs rooms for his work. Our facility is used for various celebrations, such as birthday parties, and anniversaries.



SIOUX CITY

# St. Paul's Indian Mission

*St Paul's Indian Mission serves the native peoples of all tribes in Sioux City, Iowa.*

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

The mission of our congregation is to provide a safe welcoming and healing environment for all the tribes to worship. We are a living part of the native community and engage individually and collectively in the self-identity and self-determination efforts of the community.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

Our average Sunday attendance has almost doubled in less than three years.







### What significant challenges are you facing?

Our congregation lives near or under the poverty line so financing the over 100-year-old building is a challenge.

### What is your main style of worship?

We are a conservative congregation with a traditional style of worship. We pray and sing hymns in languages other than English.

### What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We hold an annual picnic in a city park as a community building event.

### How is your building used by the wider community?

Our building is used for wakes, fundraising, for DHS meetings, for teaching native culture programs, for baby showers and birthday parties, for arts and crafts, and for storytelling.

## SPENCER

# The Way Station

*The Way Station is an outreach ministry of the diocese in downtown Spencer, Iowa. We serve Spencer and the surrounding community, especially youth who live within walking distance.*

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Our mission is to share the extravagant love of God with all who come to us and all we meet, thereby creating a community centered on the love and the Way of Jesus. We emphasize kindness, teaching it and living it, going into the community to help as a Youth Service League and handing out kindness cards. Our youth worship and learn about God at GPS (God Positioning System).

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

More youth and adults are coming in and being transformed by God's love. The youth are excited about their new worship/learning time, as well as helping folks in their community through the Youth Service League. We are also gaining recognition in the community.



## What significant challenges are you facing?

Those we minister to tend to be transient and may not be consistent in attendance. Volunteers are also difficult to find and schedule.

## What is your main style of worship?

Our worship is a mix of traditional and laid back/modern. With the youth, we are following something of a contemplative model where they help lead music and steer the course of our time together (Can we have another story? Let's sing this song! I'll play it on the keyboard!)

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We pass out kindness cards and help people. We have been helping a family after the dad had a stroke at their house.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

So far, we host a clergy women's book group. We have hosted a contemplative prayer circle. We offer radical hospitality on an ongoing basis with our cafe and book nook. We participate in Spencer Main street activities.





## STORM LAKE

# All Saints'

*All Saints' was formed in 1954 by a small group of Episcopalians living in Storm Lake. The congregation first met in homes, including a funeral home, the college chapel, in a British pre-fab structure which came in a box and finally in the present church on the edge of Storm Lake, made possible by a gift of land and a low interest loan from the diocese to construct the church. Our congregants come from a four county area. We are small but mighty, averaging a weekly attendance of 18. We have been blessed with the presence of Rev. Stacey Gerhart who has served All Saints' as the Priest in Charge for the past two years.*

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Our mission is "Together in Christ, We Worship, Pray, Work, and Serve." It includes spiritual and charitable outreach in our communities and schools.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

Attendees and visitors often comment on the fellowship and family atmosphere within our congregation. We endeavor to make all who come welcome. Rev. Stacey's warmth, compassion and energy make her a great asset to our church. Her leadership inspires members to be involved. We have a wonderful church facility located on some of the last undeveloped land along the lake. While few in numbers, our youth take part in worship services and have participated in diocesan camps and leadership training.





## What significant challenges are you facing?

As with most rural churches, our numbers are dwindling with an aging congregation and young people moving on for other opportunities. A number of our congregants spend winters in warmer climates. We are currently in excellent financial condition but have been required to draw down reserves to support a part-time priest.

## What is your main style of worship?

Our weekly services are traditional. We maintain a stable and consistent core of participants, including our youth. We are blessed with a talented pianist who provides wonderful music at each service. As with many churches, we “pass the peace,” which has taken on a life of its own at All Saints’.

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

The past two years we have hosted nature and star gazing camps for area youth with many activities outdoors in God’s creation. We have an active ministry team and a mission of providing books, briefs and hygiene products to the local elementary school. We have also extended our support and love to a single mother with a special needs child.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

Our church is available for weddings, funerals, retreats, showers, meetings, etc. We use it for our camp offerings and for local non-profits who are seeking a quiet, bucolic place to meet.

WATERLOO

# Trinity Church

## How do you describe the mission of your congregation?

Our mission is to strive to reflect the love and acceptance of God in our lives and in the larger community through worship, prayer, education, and service. Our vision affirms our love of Christ through worship, education, and service -- to live by Faith, to be known by Love, and to be the voice of Hope.

## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

Our Preschool is thriving. This fall, Christian formation will be provided for all ages every Sunday. We have a growing children's ministry and will have three Sunday School classes for babies through 8th grade.

## What significant challenges are you facing?

Small numbers and aging congregational leaders.





### What is your main style of worship?

Two Rite II Eucharists each Sunday--8am without music and 10am with choir. We added acolytes to our first Sunday of the month service when children take on leadership roles in the liturgy and we have a children's sermon. This service has blossomed and many of the adults talk about how awesome it is to see the kids grow in their gifts and participation. We have also added a pray ground to our worship space to allow young children a good view of the altar and a space to worship with their parents.

### What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

Last year, a small group met as the Outreach Committee to establish goals for the \$5,000 designated to outreach projects. From this, we began "Community Cooking" for our monthly Catholic Worker House meals and increased our prayer shawl ministry, expanding it to Allen Hospital. The Community Cooking has doubled our parishioner participation in Catholic Worker House and allowed for members of various ages to engage with one another. We still need greater engagement on what outreach projects are important to the larger congregation and an organized vision for the types of outreach that we would like to do. This year we added Stop and Serve, a celebration of MLK Jr. Day, with small outreach projects for all ages to work on and then distribute in the community (animal shelter, car bags, etc.). We also donated 40 complete school supply bundles for children at a local elementary and our own Preschool students. These backpacks were assembled at our Christmas in August celebration.

### How is your building used by the wider community?

From Monday to Friday, most of our building is used for our preschool and childcare ministry. In the summers, we expand our program to school age kids, who meet in our sanctuary. On weekends, I often see community members using our playground designed for young children. We are working on raising money to put down fall-safe tiles. We also host a local Trunk or Treat that has exploded into a community event.

WAVERLY

# St. Andrew's



*We are ten Christians striving to do all that God asks of us. We consist of three sets of parents, two pair whose children are all grown up, one pair whose two young children bring laughter and joy to our church. We have a widower whose children are grown and gone, and is recently retired. We have one woman that is a professional in the mental health field.*

## **How do you describe the mission of your congregation?**

To provide space for groups to meet in an ecumenical space, bridging differences in a Christian way, as well as providing co-working space to like-minded individuals.

## **What signs of encouragement are you seeing?**

We feel that we are using our space in a positive manner. We do want to expand our co-working program. People are remembering that we are there, and that we are part of the community.



## What significant challenges are you facing?

Low membership is our biggest problem. We have had to cut back on some of our food missions because of this.

## What is your main style of worship?

Rite II is our “normal” worship. With the size of our parish, we have cut back to 2 services a month. Until September 1st, we have had those services on Saturday afternoon. After the 1st, we are moving it to Sunday afternoon. We have a fairly informal service, being served by two retired Episcopal priests. What’s exciting about this is that we are still open! And still listening for God’s Word!

## What kinds of things does your congregation do in the community?

We have potlucks, bible studies, and pet blessings. Soon we will start movie night for college students, and a separate movie night for children and youth.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

Ecumenical Bible studies, co-working space, several different groups meet in our church building, and we even have a musician that uses our building acoustics for recording of his original songs.



WEST DES MOINES

# St. Timothy's

*St. Timothy's is a multi-generational community situated in West Des Moines. We strive to be the hands, feet, and voice of Jesus wherever we live, work, and play. We serve God's people across the globe. From the Faith + Grace garden in our backyard to St. Timothy's School in the Diocese of Nzara in South Sudan.*

**How do you describe the mission of your congregation?**

We are the hands, and feet, and voice of Jesus in the world.



## What signs of encouragement are you seeing?

Faith + Grace garden, Youth Justice Initiative (YJI) study table, Wings after-school study table, Women at the Well, Backpack Ministry, FreeStore, small group ministry through Bible study and book study, confirmation, every Sunday worship is youth Sunday, Children Living the Word, Christian formation for all ages, second offering partners, first Sunday breakfast, sharing faith stories, pilgrimage experiences, and VBS with St. Andrew's.

## What significant challenges are you facing?

Busyness

## What is your main style of worship?

The shape of worship is familiar but the music, prayers, silence, enthusiasm, participants enable a fresh expression and engagement.

## How is your building used by the wider community?

Newly renovated parish hall is used by outside groups for meetings, celebrations, receptions, voting.





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