



All Saints' Parish Profile

All Saint's Episcopal Church

559 Park Avenue, Scotch Plains, NJ 07076

Our Mission

is to strive to be a growing Christian community that welcomes, nurtures, and nourishes people of varied cultures, backgrounds, and ages. We are committed to share the Good News of Jesus Christ through worship, fellowship, outreach and education for our parish family and for the community. We gather as the Body of Christ so that we may grow in Christ and learn to live out our faith each day.

Our community will

continue our efforts to embody Christ's teaching through inclusivity, compassion, and empowerment by fostering a welcoming environment within our church and our Scotch Plains/Fanwood community. We strive to grow together in our faith while seeking to evolve and develop our present and future community, centered in love, fellowship, unity, and service.

History and biography of our congregation

All Saints' Episcopal Church was founded November 1, 1872. Our brownstone church with porte-cochere was dedicated on its current site by the Rt. Reverend John Scarborough on May 22, 1893. The church served summer visitors from New York who took the train line to nearby Fanwood and Plainfield, as well as local residents in Scotch Plains, New Jersey. The parish has maintained the structure of and atmosphere of the church with regular maintenance and periodic improvements.

In 1946 stained glass windows were installed and dedicated in memory of Lt. John N. Rau and church members who served the country during World War II. A parish house was dedicated in 1950 to house the rector's office, vestry, choir, and nursery rooms. Lea Hall was added to accommodate congregational meetings, fundraisers, coffee hours, and other social events. In 2015 our basement classrooms were refurbished and dedicated in honor of the late Charlotte Baker, a former Sunday School teacher and director. In 1961 the parish purchased a rectory near the church, which has been the home of last three rectors.

The parish held an annual crafts fair for more than 50 years to raise funds for the church and to draw local residents to visit our facilities. Currently the parish hosts periodic music concerts for visitors and parishioners. In 2023 we celebrated the 150th anniversary of the founding of All Saints' Church, where historic church documents, pictures, and crafts were put on display to show the evolution of the church, past events, and the parish family in recent decades. Our anniversary culminated in a gala dinner at the pre-revolutionary Stage House Inn, just down the street from the church. The church holds a Sunday service at 10 a.m. and a prayer service on Wednesdays at noon. Both services have consistent attendees, while the holiday services attract a larger crowd of families and visitors. The congregation supports parish outreach activities for the collection of food for a nearby pantry, household and infant supplies for families in need, and crafts for children and hospice patients; we also contribute generously to the relief efforts of the diocese and the national church.

Our goals for the future

We want to establish a stronger and deeper relationship between our parish and our local communities.

Although we are generous and effective with our outreach to those in need, over the years we have ebbed and flowed in terms of our affinity-based, human-touch engagement with those we serve and those with whom we partner. Whether that outreach comes from the adults, families, or—often independently—our Youth Group, that engagement has involved soup kitchens, the Fanwood Nature Center, Refugee Assistance Partners, Boy Scouts, and our own Senior Breakfasts, to name but a few. As we have often found, the work is more effective when we team up with other Episcopal parishes, the NJ Diocese, other local places of worship (through Ministerium), youth groups, charitable organizations, etc. Partnering and teaming up may be the key to revitalizing our Youth Group. We hope to move beyond writing checks and putting food on the shelves to direct participation in outreach efforts by more parishioners.



Our form of evangelism, like many Episcopalians', is generally one of sharing our time, talents, and ministries. We commonly have shared God's word through action and example even when words may elude us. In addition to the outreach to those in need, we have a flair for food and a knack for fellowship that has natural extensions. Having a penchant for sharing, we have both talents and love for theater and music. As we look to the future, we hope to have more parishioners sharing their talents and passions.

We have a great capacity to communicate, but not always done it as effectively as we can, either within our own parish community or outward through social media and other channels—though we are making a concerted, renewed effort now. Our goal is to have cross-generational, intentional communication.

One important “potential success” in cultivating such relationships, beyond its own notable merits, is that it offers opportunities to “do the work [He] has given us to do,” helping each of us in a thriving parish to “grow in Christ,” per our mission statement. Sometimes it is through resonant ideas that express God's abundance that such intentions can be fired. We hope to see this reflected in our long-term planning.

Our top five congregational programs

St. Vincent's Food Pantry & Heart for Humanity

Music Ministry

Senior Breakfast Plus

Coffee Hour

Boy Scout Sponsor



Our style of worship

Our approach to worship incorporates a Eucharistic-based liturgy. We follow the Book of Common Prayer Rite I and Rite II according to the church season. Music is an integral and inspirational part of our worship utilizing both The Hymnal 1982 and Lift Every Voice and Sing II hymnals. We also feel it is important to have our church school children join our services after their instruction and for them to participate in varied ways. Lay members are invited to actively participate in worship services, taking on roles such as Altar Guild, ushers, acolytes, readers, intercessors, and choir. We offer Sunday services with Eucharist at 10 a.m, noonday prayer service on Wednesdays, and an evening contemplative prayer service monthly. Special services are conducted for Holy Week, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. On New Year's Day we renew our Baptismal Covenant. All who seek a relationship with God, wherever they may be on their spiritual journey, are welcome at our church and at God's table.

Our immediate and further reaching challenges

The All Saints' leadership has elected to enter this discernment phase without hiring an interim minister. Parishioners and visitors alike walk into All Saints', and our church life appears to be operating as before. Lay leaders have stepped up to ensure active participation with ushers, acolytes, readers, intercessors, and Altar Guild in our worship services. Church operations have continued with our lay-led committees, including Vestry, Finance, Stewardship, Building & Grounds, Community Outreach and now Discernment. Our organist-choir director and choir work tirelessly, especially during special services held in Holy Week. Coffee hour is robust in food and conversation. We are carrying on our church life as best we can.

There is a strong desire to develop our Christian education on all levels. All Saints' presently holds a weekly lay-lead Bible study class that a small number of parishioners attend. Other adult education programs have been too infrequent and fleeting since the pandemic. Our youth have no formal curriculum once they move on from Sunday School, and our recent confirmands participated in an abbreviated, nonstructured preparatory classes. Our once very vibrant and active Youth Group has dwindled over the years. After our last Youth Group leader stepped down to focus on other ministries, no one has been called upon to lead our youth, to the detriment of our teens and families. To build up these ministries, we need volunteers.

We pride ourselves in being a welcoming parish, and yet solicited feedback indicates a lack of communication, leaving members seeking more information and opportunities for input. To solicit new volunteers, we need to focus on intentional cross-generational communication.

Additional challenges lie in balancing our desire for growth and outreach while nurturing our current members on their faith journeys. In 2022, All Saints' was very focused on its outreach ministries to the detriment of our own home community. We were stretched to capacity, and our volunteers were burned out. In response, 2023 became a year of introspection and strategic realignment. This process, far from diminishing our eagerness for change, allowed us to refocus, prioritize, and streamline ministries in harmony with the community's collective vision.



Housing arrangements available

All Saints' maintains a four-bedroom rectory located close to the church at 583 Park Avenue, Scotch Plains. It is near public schools and public transportation and is just a couple of blocks away from the downtown.

Our financial information

2023 as completed		2024 as budgeted
213,463	Total Income	246,425
140,798	Clergy and Personal Expenses	163,511
15,899	Operations Expenses	13,010
28,856	Outreach Expenses	23,190
28,856	Building Expenses	52,468
0	Other Expenses	0
218,611	Total Expenses	252,179
(5,148)	Excess Income	(5,754)

2023 notes: Declines in pledge income (\$ 4,300) and contributions (\$ 5,100) were offset by higher open collections (\$ 4,000), rental income (\$ 3,600), fundraising (\$ 1,500) and, notably, a \$ 5,500 increase in outreach donations. Higher stipend, pension, and insurance costs increased clergy expense (\$ 6,800), and revised property insurance raised premium expense (\$ 2,100). Cost savings included snow removal (\$ 2,300) and contracted services (\$ 4,400 in services provided in 2023 that were not invoiced until 2024). Outreach costs increased by \$ 10,600, including both donations to other organizations and the cost of the monthly Senior Breakfast Plus program. The operating deficit declined, allowing us to reduce the draw on the Endowment Fund by \$ 3,500.

2024 notes: The 2024 budget was prepared on a pro forma basis, including rector costs for the full year. Pledge income is \$ 10,000 higher, offset by lower open (\$ 2,100), fundraising (\$ 4,000) and outreach contributions (\$ 6,500). Material expense increases include administrator salary and benefits (\$ 18,000) due to higher rate and increased hours, Continuing Education/Professional allowance (\$ 5,600), snow removal (\$ 4,500), and property insurance (\$ 3,000). The unbilled 2023 contracted services are in the 2024 budget, increasing costs by \$ 4,400 to cover this timing difference. Outreach expense is \$ 5,700 lower, reflecting the lower contributions. To cover the operating deficit arising from higher costs we have budgeted an additional \$ 35,000 draw from the Endowment Fund; it is not likely that this will be required, as savings arising from using supply clergy during the transition will reduce the operating deficit.