



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN VERMONT
Together in Christ...growing locally, serving globally

October 6, 2020

Dear members of the Standing Committee,

I have been petitioned by the Reverend William Davidson on behalf of the members of St. Paul's in Wells, currently a mission congregation, to be allowed to move to parish status under the provisions of Article VI of the Constitution of the Diocese and Canons 13.1 and 13.3 of the Diocesan Canons. Copies of the relevant sections of the Constitution and Canons are attached to this letter.

I have forwarded several documents from St. Paul's in Wells. They seem to mostly meet the canonical requirements. The only thing that isn't exactly to the letter, but meets current practice, is being able to pay a priest. Currently their priest is half time. The canons do not specify that a congregation moving to parish status must demonstrate the ability to pay for a full-time priest, but that is one interpretation of the canonical language. The Chancellor has advised that the canons leave discretion to the Bishop and, in turn, the Standing Committee and Diocesan Convention, to approve of the St. Paul's, Wells, request. I note here that very few of our congregations meet that full-time clergy standard. I believe they will find it challenging to find a new priest when their current priest really retires. The congregation is mostly young families with children, so they have room to grow and energy to face the challenge of making a way.

Their Diocesan apportionment is up to date. According to their priest and wardens, the condition of their property and buildings are in excellent order. I have seen them, and this seems true.

The canons require that I request the Standing Committee to approve this change, and that its approval be ratified by Diocesan Convention. It is my recommendation that we grant their request.

Peace and blessings,

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown



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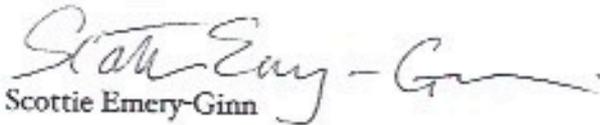
**The Standing Committee
Five Rock Point Road
Burlington, VT 05408-2735**

October 7, 2020

Dear Bishop Shannon,

The Standing Committee approves the request by the Reverend William Davidson on behalf of the members of St. Paul's in Wells, currently a mission congregation, to be allowed to move to parish status under the provisions of Article VI of the Constitution of the Diocese and Canons 13.1 and 13.3 of the Diocesan Canons.

Sincerely,


Scottie Emery-Ginn

President of the Standing Committee

cc. Tom Little, Chancellor

Telephone: (802) 863-3431 • In Vermont: (800) 286-3437 • Fax: (802) 860-1562 • www.diovermont.org

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

7 East Wells Road

P.O.Box 726

Wells, Vermont 05774

September 28, 2020

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown
The Episcopal Diocese of Vermont
5 Rock Point Road
Burlington, Vermont 05408

Dear Bishop Shannon,

This letter is in support of the request from the wardens and Members of the Vestry of St. Paul's Church, Wells, that our Church be granted parish status in the Diocese of Vermont.

We believe that our congregation meets the criteria as enumerated in Canon 13 of the Diocesan Canons. For more than ten years, St. Paul's has paid in full all Diocesan apportionments as assessed by Convention. The interest and principal on any Diocesan loan have been repaid, or are currently being satisfied. Our financial records are in good order, and the requirement for an annual audit is current, with the audit for 2019 in preparation. We have kept our real property, Church, Parish House, and Grounds in good repair, which includes the renovation of the Parish House and the complete repair and repainting of the interior and exterior of the Church building. The Vicar has been paid a negotiated stipend since first arriving in 2009. We see no reason that would impede us from continuing to meet the requirements of Canon 13 for parish status.

If any other information is required for the execution of this request, please let us know.

Faithfully,



William A. Davidson, Vicar
St. Paul's Church, Wells, Vermont

Cc: Wardens and Vestry

St. Paul's, Wells, Vt.

Treasurer's Audit Report for Bishop Review – October 2020

General Observations:

St Paul's Episcopal Church, (SPEC) Wells, Vt is in sound financial condition with healthy short term cash flow (Citizens Bank Business Checking) and ordinary ongoing budgeted expense obligations. SPEC has one long term debt obligation to the Diocese (Butterfield Loan), a 8 year loan at 3% interest for SPEC capital improvements on Parish House, which is current and also a very healthy long term investment position (Diocesan Unit Fund), low risk money market investment (Citizens Bank Money Market) and securities (AT&T stock) and Putnam fund investments. Even during pandemic, income and expenses have been balanced and relatively ordinary.

Balances and summaries below:

Short Term Income:

Current Citizens Checking Account Balance:	\$45859.04	
Current Outstanding Extraordinary Expenses:	\$7000.00	Unit Fund Q2/Q3 Expense
Total	\$38859.00	

Long Term Investment

Current Diocesan Unit Fund:	\$31534.49	
Deposit Pending	\$7000.00	Unit Fund Q2/Q3 Investment
AT&T Stock Holdings	\$2549.85	
Putnam Investments	\$1000.32	
Total	\$42084.66	
Long Term Debt:	\$8592.60	Butterfield Loan Balance

Other notables:

SPEC made an assessment overpayment to Diocese in 2019 and by decision of SPEC Vestry that overpayment is being applied to ongoing assessment obligations for 2020.

2019 Audit still in process and with accountant and expect final submission by Oct 15, 2020

Extraordinary Income – Parish created a Covid-19 Relief Fund to support Wells Area Parishioners and Residents which was funded by parishioners and other benefactors

Total Contributions: \$7600.00

Total Disbursements: \$2380.5

William Harrison, Treasurer

A Brief Sketch of St. Paul's Church, Wells, Vermont

The congregation of St. Paul's Church, Wells, began in the late 18th century with a small number of Episcopalian families. In 1824, the congregation grew enough to organize as a parish, and in 1841 the Church building was constructed and consecrated the following year. During the 2nd half of the 19th century and into much of the 20th century, the Church was served by clergy who were attached to other nearby congregations. In the last decades of the 20th century, St. Paul's was linked with Trinity Church, Poultney. After participation in the Slate Valley Regional Ministry with four other local congregations for 11 years, members of the Church decided to separate from Regional Ministry and build up itself as a congregation that would worship, learn, and serve Wells and beyond. It called the Rev. William Davidson as Priest in Partnership in 2009. During the past decade or so, the parish has witnessed a growing membership and a deepening commitment to community service. The decade has seen the parish restore both the interior and exterior of its Church, the same building that it erected in 1842. It acquired a building next to the Church, which has been renovated to serve as a proper parish house for the congregation.

The story of St. Paul's is best told by noting that at present it:

- Has a flourishing program for children every Sunday. A playground beside the Church has been constructed, with the input of the children. It features a mud "kitchen," large tunnel, rocks and tree trunk "seats," a May Pole, raised garden beds, and a compost bed, with plans for a tree house and a rope swing with tire.
- Invites all of its members, from the youngest to the oldest, to take an active part in the Sunday worship.
- Helps stock and serve at the Wells food shelf (Our Neighbor's Table).
- Actively supports local causes and charities, including:
 - Rutland Dismas House (for newly released prisoners),
 - The Angel Tree Project (supplying new clothes for local children in need at Christmas),
 - The Lights of Wells, a community celebration before Christmas (providing refreshments to all and live bluegrass music in the Church).
- Has donated funds to:
 - The Rock point School
 - Vermont Interfaith Power and Light
 - The Episcopal Hospital Chaplaincy
 - Local families in financial need
 - Parishioners whose income has been compromised by the COVID Virus
 - The campaign for Rock Point
 - Episcopal Relief and Development
- Holds a monthly vigil for racial justice, with the nearby Methodist Church.
- Has a wide age span in the members of the Church, including a large number of families with small children. The average age of our parishioners has decreased considerably since 2010.
- Our average Sunday attendance at worship is in the low 30's, often with many of those present being young children.



