

PRIEST IN CHARGE SEARCH

Position Title: Priest in Charge

Full/Part Time: Part Time*
(see below)

Receiving Names until:

Church Address: 136 Rivet Street
New Bedford, MA 02744

Email: stmartinsnb.secretary@gmail.com

PARISH STORY - History

1. Tell us about when your church was founded and how have your parish and community changed over the the years.

St. Martin's Episcopal Church at 136 Rivet Street in New Bedford, Massachusetts, has a long and distinguished history that began as a service to the local community at Olivette Chapel just down the street from our present location, and continues to be so today. In 1887, a number of members from Grace Church decided that the more than one-hundred English residents in the South End of New Bedford should have a neighborhood church.

In 1891, construction began on the St. Martin's Church building. Miss Julie Rodman secured a brick from St. Martin's in Canterbury, England (597 AD) that was added over the archway by the loft and remains there to this day.

Henry Vaughan, a renowned architect of our National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., designed the building and Baptismal Font, which is a replica of that in St. Martin's of Canterbury. Mr. Vaughn also designed the Chancel, organ loft, and the Sacristy, which was added in 1917.

St. Martin's has developed it's outreach to minister to the local and societal needs of our time. We work to feed the hungry with our food/pet pantry. We support the local community with clothing and household items, all through the donation of time and treasures by our parishioners. We minister to and welcome God's children no matter their spiritual journey or race, creed, gender, sexual orientation, or life story.

2. Tell about one significant event that stands out in your history.

There are many events in the history of St. Martin's which are noteworthy. However, the event with the most longterm effect is the establishment of our food/pet pantry nearly 21 years ago in November of 2003.

Our food pantry at St. Martins serves approximately 150 people a month, providing bags of food to take with them to supply about 4-5 days of meals. We are affiliated with the Boston Food Bank but also depend on donations from our parishioners and local businesses.

The food pantry program is just one of the ways that we reach out to people in our area to provide service and care.

The the pet pantry began because we understand how important pets are to people, and when troubled times hit, our pets can suffer too. Our pet pantry offers food and other essential supplies to our pantry guests, depending on their needs and the availability of items. As is one of our goals, we believe this feeds the souls of our community, fostering love for God's creations.

PARISH STORY - Present life

1. Tell us about a time in your church's life which you recognize as a success and a time of failure.

The fact that this church has remained solvent and a service to so many in our community **for over one hundred and twenty five years**, is a huge accomplishment! We have survived fiscal hardships, community demographic changes, a pandemic, loss of clerical leadership and by the grace of God, have survived!

In spite of this survival, our failure has been to develop a larger congregation. We have been unable to overcome the lack of ordained leadership to guide our efforts in this goal nor to combat societal changes in attitudes toward organized religion. We have not been able to build on the firm foundation which has been established to this date.

2. Share your worship style and special worship moments you like.

We practice and enjoy Rite Two from the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. The holy Eucharist is a great comfort to the congregation. We have a guitarist and a drummer and are quite an enthusiastic, although small, singing congregation.

3. What brings people back week after week?

A commitment on the part of the congregation to keep this church alive, giving them a friendly, safe and comfortable place to worship and enjoy the fellowship and community of others.

4. How do you care for each other?

Mostly by letting parishioners know they are known and offering comfort and acknowledgment. We conduct home visits for those sick or shut-in providing the Holy Eucharist if desired. We have phone contact to follow up on parishioners not seen for awhile or unable to attend. We hold a healing prayer service. We also mail out celebratory or well wishes cards for birthdays, anniversaries or those who are ill.

5. Tell us about outreach in your community.

The most robust outreach programs in our mighty little church are certainly the Food/Pet Pantry and the Thrift Shop. We have described the Food Pantry above and also operate a very busy Thrift Shop which provides gently used clothing and small household items at a very reasonable price. This serves the community by providing a means for our neighbors to attain these items themselves, without depending on charity.

Other outreach programs include:

Blessing bags for the homeless

Santa's breakfast/ Pizza with Santa

English tea

Senior Cookout

Veterans' Breakfast

Live Facebook stream of each Sunday service

6. What gifts and skills would you like your new leader to bring and what gifts and skills can you offer?

One of the most important contributions we will look for from our new clergy leadership is participation in our church community. We need a leader who is willing to work to understand, join in, and gently uplift and guide our aging congregation; ministering to the elderly with inspiring sermons, true concern for their circumstances and helpful ideas and actions for improving their quality of life. At the same time, we need a leader who will work to see how this church can continue to serve the community and grow by serving Jesus Christ.

At the same time, we offer tremendous resources in lay leadership, decades of experience in service to this church and community, and a boundless willingness to support and assist our new clergy in their path serving the Lord. We offer our treasures, our time and our talents to the best of our ability.

COMPENSATION & HOUSING

Compensation available for new position: \$24,000

Negotiable? Yes

Housing Allowance

SECA reimbursement options: Negotiable

Healthcare: 25% of Diocesan 80/20 plan

Dental: Available through Diocese

Vacation weeks: 4 weeks

Continuing education weeks: 2 weeks

Continuing education funding in budget: \$500

