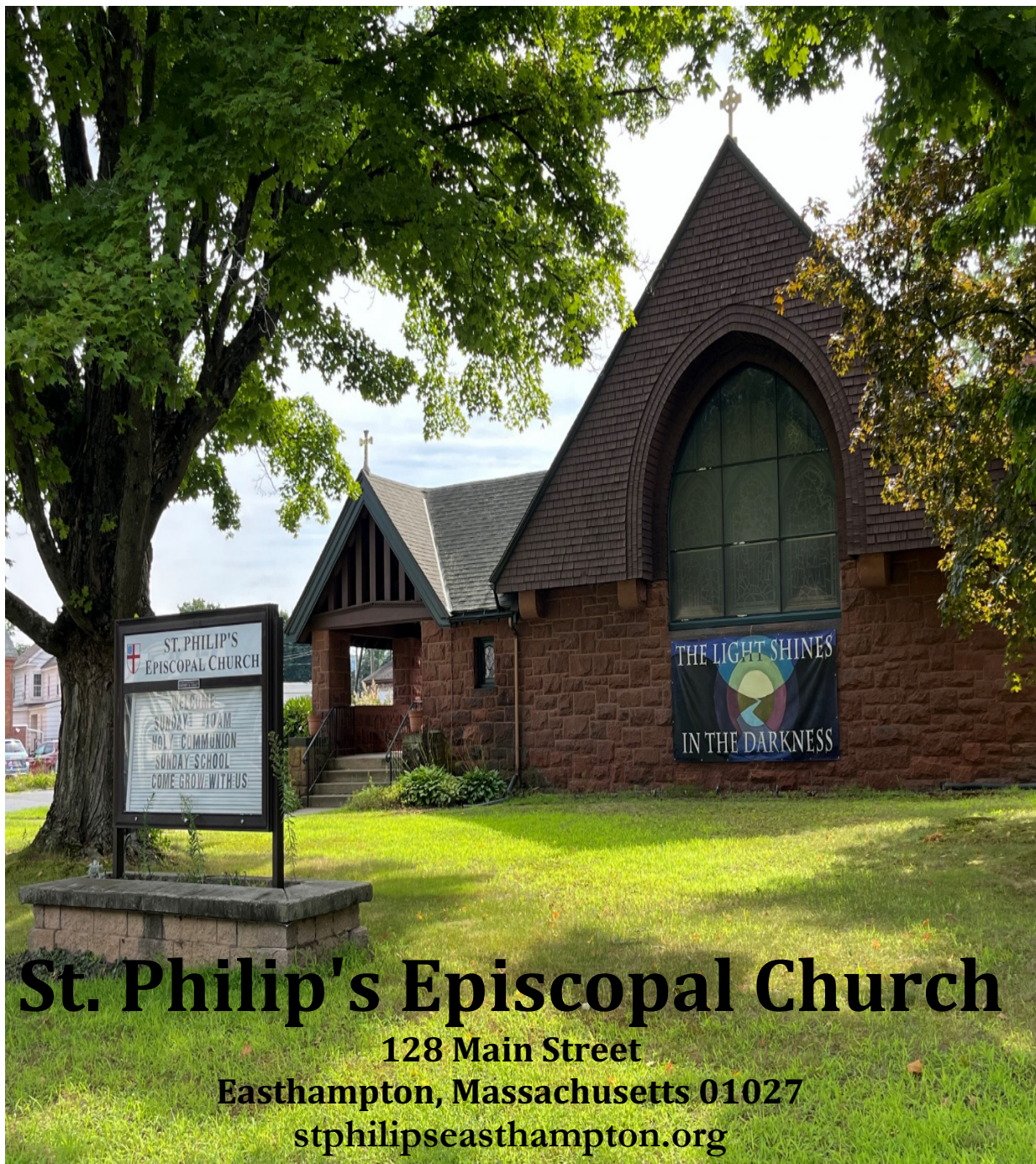




St. Philip's Episcopal Church

128 Main Street

Easthampton, Massachusetts 01027

stphilipseasthampton.org

PARISH PROFILE 2026

Welcome from St. Philip's

St. Philip's is a community of Christians who yearn to receive more and more of what God gives. We believe that this provides us with what we need and cannot provide for ourselves, and invites us to be deeply grateful and to share generously what we have been given. We are committed to showing up for one another, that we may remember what it means — and what it takes — to be God's people.



Since January 8, 1871, when twenty Episcopalians gathered in Easthampton Town Hall to worship, our parish has been anchored by the Episcopal Church's roots, tracing back to Jesus and his ministry. We embrace scripture, tradition, and reason as we strive to follow the Way of Christ. Today our congregation comprises 65 active members. Our average Sunday attendance is between 40 and 50 people. Our youngest member is two years old; our oldest just celebrated her 98th birthday. Some of us are lifelong Episcopalians. Others are new Christians. And there are many people in between.



When our priest-in-charge came to us in 2016, it was not clear whether St. Philip's could or should remain open. Over the past ten years, we have moved out of a "survival" mindset and into one of thriving. Our parish is having an effective impact on the quality of life in Easthampton and seeks to be an important contributor to the mission of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts.

In the spring of 2024, we partnered with Holy Cow! Consulting. Fifty of us completed the Church Assessment Tool. The results of that survey revealed that St. Philip's is a healthy, mutually trusting place where worship, the spiritual life, and reaching out beyond our own walls stand out as our hallmarks. The report described us as a "Magi Church" — one with the capacity to embrace the next phase of our parish's mission, life, and ministry.

Long, long ago, Philip, our patron saint, told his friend Nathanael:

*"We have found him about whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote,
Jesus, son of Joseph from Nazareth," to which Nathanael replied,
"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip invited him to "Come and see."*

— **John 1:45-46**

Can anything good come out of Easthampton, Massachusetts? With God's help, we believe it can — and already does. We invite you to "Come and see."

The Area/Our Location

For 125 years, our church has been located on Main Street, Easthampton — a city of more than 16,000 residents nestled at the base of Mt. Tom in the Connecticut River Valley of western Massachusetts. Founded in 1871, the congregation first worshiped in several places in the city before finally purchasing our present location in 1899. That property included not only the building that is now our parish hall, but also a large house that served as the rectory after the church was built in 1901. The rectory was sold in 1999, completely dismantled, and rebuilt in a nearby town. A much-needed parking lot now occupies that space.



St. Philip's has been part of Easthampton's history as the city has evolved from a rural farming village to a flourishing mill town, and now to a vibrant and diverse community with a wealth of artists, retail shops, award-winning restaurants, and numerous recreational opportunities.

We are part of the Five College area in Hampshire County. Our community's commitment to the education of children and young people is comprehensive and strong. The public schools include Easthampton High and Mountain View (serving 1,400 students, pre-K through Grade 12) and Hilltown Cooperative Charter School (Grades K–8). In addition, two independent schools are located here: The Williston Northampton School (Grades 7–12, founded in 1841) and Neari School, a special education school serving 50 elementary, middle, and high school students from across the region. Six childcare centers and three dance schools are also found here.

Neighboring faith communities include Our Lady of the Valley (Roman Catholic), Easthampton Congregational Church, Trinity Lutheran Church (Unaltered Augsburg Confession), Calvary Baptist Church, and God is Love (non-denominational). Nearby churches include two other Congregational churches, a Methodist church, and Christ Community of Hampshire County.

Community Life

Easthampton offers a rich network of civic, cultural, and recreational resources that shape and sustain the quality of life for all its residents:

- **Easthampton Community Center** — distributes food, clothing, and household goods to neighbors in need.
- **Council on Aging Enrichment Center** — offers programming and services for seniors.
- **The Easthampton Housing Authority, The Treehouse Community, and the Lathrop Community** — specialized housing options serving diverse populations.
- **One Cottage Street** — site of numerous artist studios, as well as Riverside Industries, serving people with disabilities.
- **City Space** — a cultural hub for visual artists and musicians, currently being renovated as a venue for music and theater.
- **Millside Park** — an outdoor venue for concerts and community events.
- **Easthampton Community Gardens** — public garden plots for residents.
- **Nonotuck Park, Nashawannuck Pond, the Manhan Rail Trail, Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, the Pascommuck Conservation Trust, and Mt. Tom State Reservation** — abundant outdoor recreation for all seasons.
- **The Easthampton Public Library, youth sports programs, a farmers' market, and the Veterans' Council** add vitality to these community resources.

Oh — and all parking in the city is free!

The Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts

Our diocese is shepherded by our recently elected Bishop, The Rt. Rev. Miguelina Howell, who describes herself as "a fellow traveler." Already she has discovered that we are a diocese "with a rich history, faithful congregations, a deep commitment to justice, and people who love Jesus Christ and care deeply about their communities."



With her election, the diocese has adopted this new logo, the tree of life, symbolizing our communion with God. The diocesan vision — *"Growing in God's Mission: We are in this TOGETHER!"* — reflects our commitment to a way of being Church that values commitment over isolation, collaboration over competition, and mutual ministry over individualism.

Together, trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the diocese commits itself to cultivating communities where all God's people may grow in faith, serve with joy, and participate fully in God's dream for the world.

Our diocese comprises 50 parishes and missions organized in three regions, or "corridors." St. Philip's is one of 17 congregations in the Connecticut River Valley corridor.

To hear directly from Bishop Howell, we recommend this [video](#).

Learn more at the diocesan website: www.diocesewma.org

Our Mission and Ministry

The Book of Common Prayer describes the church as "the community of the New Covenant" with the mission "to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ." With God's help, we seek to be a community that worships and grows spiritually together, takes care of one another, and reaches out to serve the wider world.

WORSHIP anchors everything we do, binding us together as the Body of Christ.



Each Sunday we celebrate the **Holy Eucharist** at 10 a.m., or offer lay-led **Morning Prayer** when our priest is not available, using Rite Two for both services. Services are live-streamed for those unable to attend in person. Our worship is enriched by an exceptionally strong choir and music ministry (people really sing here!), heartfelt Prayers of the People, and the laying on of hands in "Community Blessings" that mark important transitions in parishioners' lives.

Five evenings each week, a team of lay people leads **Compline** on our Facebook live-stream.



We mark the rhythms of the church year with Harvest Sunday and an altar of remembrance in autumn; mid-week prayer services during Advent; Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services; an ecumenical Blessing of the Palms with our neighbors at Easthampton Congregational Church; and Holy Week services that culminate in Easter Vigil and Easter Day celebrations.

Baptisms, funerals, and memorial services are opportunities to celebrate Christ's abiding presence. In recent years, Bishop Fisher (now retired) confirmed or received several adults into the Episcopal Church at St. Philip's.

FORMATION opportunities invite people of every age to learn and grow in faith.

Until recently, **adult parishioners** gathered on Zoom for the Sunday Lectionary Study Group led by our priest-in-charge. That group is on hiatus as we determine the level of interest in continuing it as a lay-led ministry. In the meantime, one of our parishioners leads two weekly small groups on Zoom: a "Pilgrims" group on Sunday afternoon, and a Bible study group on Thursday afternoon.



Children and young people attend weekly Sunday School classes (September–June) that include prayer, Godly Play, and service projects throughout the year. A team of five adults, working in pairs, offer these classes during the Liturgy of the Word portion of the Holy Eucharist liturgy. Young people and teachers join worship during the Exchange of Peace, or stay in class for the duration of Morning Prayer services.

FELLOWSHIP knits us together as community.
PASTORAL CARE ensures that no one walks alone.

Our **fellowship ministry** includes sit-down Sunday morning coffee hours and a weekly drop-in "Brown Bag" lunch group. Special gatherings include potluck lunches preceding all-parish meetings, a Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, Lenten suppers, and the All 4 Her Consignment Sale — all occasions to share food, laughter, and companionship.



Our **pastoral care ministry** includes providing rides to church or appointments, delivering meals to those in need, and sending greeting cards on behalf of the parish community. "St. Philip's Connects," our in-house email group, allows parishioners to check in with one another and request prayer in times of need.

OUTREACH is a hallmark of our life together at St. Philip's.
Our lay-led ministries put faith into action in Easthampton and beyond.

We partner with three nonprofit organizations to address growing food insecurity in Hampshire County:

- **Easthampton Community Center Food Pantry.**
- **Pioneer Valley Power Packs (PVPP)** — providing weekend meals for children, headquartered at St. Philip's.
- **Take and Eat** — an interfaith organization providing weekend meals for Meals-on-Wheels recipients in Easthampton.



Our newly formed Social Justice Committee focuses on food insecurity and ensuring the dignity of our undocumented neighbors. Rooted in the Baptismal Covenant, its members work regionally on both initiatives, keeping the parish aware of opportunities for active engagement.



Our streetside library and prayer box offer the wider community a place to leave a prayer request — read aloud during Sunday services — or to take home a new book.

In recent years, St. Philip's has offered its worship space for cultural events open to the public, including a dramatic reading of George Herbert's *The Sacrifice*, a production of an original play by a

parishioner, *Would You Like Angels with That?*, and a screening of the film *The Philadelphia Eleven* followed by a panel discussion.

Seen as a whole, this network of ministries tells the story of a church that is prayerful, welcoming, and outward-facing — a congregation grounded in faith and determined to put it into action. Come and see.

Our Property

St. Philip's physical plant includes the church building and the parish hall, with a parking lot between them. Accessible parking is available, and the church building features an accessible entrance, nave, and sanctuary, with reserved space for wheelchair and scooter users. The parish hall has a portable ramp at its main entrance, and the first-floor meeting space is accessible.



In August 2025, we worked with MassSave and a local contractor to insulate much of the parish hall, improving its energy efficiency.



Various community groups use our parish hall seven days a week: 12-step groups, Girl Scouts, toddler play groups, a local theater troupe, art students, and a summer science camp.

Financial Information

2026 Operating Budget

Table 1 — Projected Income | Total: \$149,280

Source	Percentage	Estimated Amount
Pledge receipts	74%	\$110,467
Plate and special offerings	14%	\$20,899
Rental income	6%	\$8,957
Investment income	5%	\$7,464
Fundraising	1%	\$1,493

Table 2 — Projected Expenses | Total: \$149,880

Category	Percentage	Estimated Amount
Clergy and lay compensation	63%	\$94,424
Property upkeep and utilities	20%	\$29,976
Diocesan assessment	8%	\$11,990
Office administration	5%	\$7,494
Program expenses	3%	\$4,496
Miscellaneous	1%	\$1,499

Account Balances

Account	Balance
Checking Account Balance (as of July 2026)	\$54,011
Endowment Value (as of June 2026)	\$264,391

Financial Highlights

- In August 2025, the parish borrowed \$7,500 from the endowment to fund a new sound system in the nave. By year's end, parishioners had contributed \$8,300 to repay that loan — a testament to our generosity and financial commitment.
- The 2026 diocesan assessment of \$12,678 will be paid in full, as it has been for the past several years.
- St. Philip's carries no outstanding debt.
- In August 2026, the vestry approved the 2025 audit, which has been filed with the diocese.

Clergy Compensation Package

In compliance with diocesan guidelines, the vestry is prepared to offer a total compensation package for half-time employment (20 hours/week) with a value of **\$60,000 to \$70,000.**

This is inclusive of: cash salary, housing allowance, 50% of required SECA payments, contribution to the Church Pension Fund, and a contribution toward health insurance if needed.

Gifts and Ministry of Our Congregation

Lay members of St. Philip's bring many and varied gifts to the work of the church. The following overview reflects the breadth and depth of engagement that sustains our common life.

Worship Ministry

- The Altar Guild, Choir, Crucifer/Verger, Lectors, Intercessors, Ushers, Greeters, and Tech Team provide steady and dependable support for Sunday worship.
- On Holy Eucharist Sundays, three licensed Lay Eucharistic Ministers assist with distribution of the sacrament.
- On Morning Prayer Sundays, one person serves as officiant, with four others licensed as preachers.
- Five people rotate leading online Compline five evenings per week.



Formation

- One parishioner leads two weekly adult discussion groups on Zoom.
- Five Godly Play-trained teachers staff the Sunday School teaching team.

Fellowship

- Two co-chairs recruit and train weekly coffee hour hosts and stock the kitchen with supplies; fourteen people currently take turns hosting.
- One vestry member manages fellowship events throughout the year.
- One parishioner manages the Card Ministry.

Outreach

- Four members serve on the board of Pioneer Valley Power Packs; as many as 10 parishioners, along with community volunteers, help with shopping, packing, and delivery to Mountain View School and Smith Vocational High School each week (September–June).
- Two parishioners co-chair our monthly involvement with Take and Eat; at least 15 parish members help with shopping, meal preparation, and delivery.
- Two parishioners volunteer weekly at the Easthampton Community Center Food Pantry; parishioners donate food on Sundays; the children of the parish organize a Thanksgiving Food Drive and Christmas Gift Drive each year.
- Eight parishioners serve on the Social Justice Committee.
- Parishioners provide generous financial support for all outreach programs.

Financial Stewardship

- The parish treasurer works closely with a CPA to monitor the monthly balance sheet and files a report with the vestry each month. Once accepted, it is released to the parish.
- The endowment is managed by the diocese.
- The Finance Committee, working with the Treasurer and Senior Warden, develops the annual operating budget for vestry approval before the annual meeting.
- The vestry appoints a three-person Audit Team each year. The completed audit is filed with the diocese.
- Teams of counters, working in pairs, record offertory income each Sunday. The team leader provides quarterly progress reports to pledgers.

Stewardship of our property

The Property Committee monitors and addresses needed repairs — with in-house talent or outside contractors — and ensures that grounds maintenance, fall clean-up, and snow removal happen in a timely fashion.



Communications

- The Junior Warden manages a vibrant social media presence and works with the Parish Administrator to keep the website current.
- Four editors collaborate with the Parish Administrator to design the weekly worship bulletin and the online newsletter, the *N.O.W.*
- "St. Philip's Connects," the in-house email group, keeps parishioners connected throughout the week.

Governance and Administration

- The wardens meet weekly with clergy, the Minister of Music, and the Parish Administrator to monitor pastoral and program issues, maintain the calendar, and plan communication strategies.
- The vestry comprises six elected members; officers include the Senior and Junior Wardens, the Treasurer, and the Clerk.
- The parish adheres to the Constitution and By-laws of the diocese, with particular attention to Canons 16–21 pertaining to parish life and governance.

Gifts and Ministry of the Clergy

We hope to call a new priest who can help us strike a balance between continuity and change. While we are not resistant to innovation, we are not seeking a major break from the past. We seek a priest who will give devoted attention and leadership to the many endeavors we have committed ourselves to — continuing what is working, while growing into new ministries to which we may be called.

To sustain and nurture our current strengths, we seek a priest who...

- Knows and loves God and is grounded in prayer and a call to follow Jesus
- Can lead worship and administer the sacraments with reverence, working collaboratively with our Minister of Music and lay ministers to enrich worship
- Preaches sermons rooted in scripture that instruct, inspire, and connect to daily life
- Will support us in our outreach partnerships in Easthampton
- Is a faithful pastor, finding joy in personal and spiritual connection with parishioners

To move us forward, we seek a priest who can help us...

- Spread the word about what a vibrant church we are
- Welcome and shepherd newcomers
- Build a larger and more age-diverse congregation
- Foster deeper spiritual formation across all ages, especially for adults
- Identify, mentor, and incorporate new lay leadership
- Discern how best to use our gifts both within the church and beyond

Our next priest will be humble and energetic — a good listener whose non-judgmental presence, humor, joy, and vibrant life in Christ will help others feel seen, supported, and drawn closer to God.

**Challenge us! With God's help, we can handle hard things.
Come and see!**

We welcome your interest in this ministry with us. Please contact the Canon to the Ordinary, The Rev. Heather Blais, to learn more: HBlais@diocesewma.org.

Voices from Our Parish

During the parish profile process, a committee gathered parishioners for small group conversations. Their words speak for themselves.

"We're expected to live our faith throughout the week, not just on Sunday."

"At St. Philip's, everyone has a different skill set to add, and no matter what that is, it is respected and valued."

"There's a balance between what is going on devotionally and what is going on as outreach. Our food ministries have always been very active, and they've become much more so."

"We're a destination church. You might have to travel to get here, but a lot of people do."

"We're here because we've got gifts to offer. Take and Eat is a big deal. Power Packs is a big deal. I'm putting my resources into those ministries because, for me, that's the way to be a Christian: serve your neighbors."

"After we moved here, we drove by this church all the time, and finally my husband said, 'I'm going to try that little brown church.' Well, we never looked further."

"Anything that comes up in the community — people in this parish just pour their hearts and souls out."

"I think our location on Main Street is an asset. How we capitalize on that is really important."

"How can we reach people with the message that worship can change their lives? Once you get to know Jesus, once you get to understand what God is inviting us to do and become, it changes the way you live your life."

"The first time I came here, I had decided to stay only one Sunday. Fifteen years later, here I am."

"I don't think I've ever been in a community like this in my life. Although the church service is on Sunday, I feel it every day."

"We've stayed because the liturgy resonates with us, as does the focus and commitment to the greater community, as well as the St. Philip's community itself."

"Being here means a lot to me — the quality of the support, the quality of the preaching, the awareness of social justice issues."

"We have a really wonderful choir — not only voices, but personalities — people who really get along and have grown with each other, have grown musically."

"The welcome in this church is extraordinary."

"We have some big challenges ahead of us, partly because of the age of our congregation."

"It would be great if the new rector feels comfortable being out in the community of Easthampton."

"There are some pretty cool things going on here."
