



Office for
Transition
Ministry

Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio (last updated Aug 29, 2018)

Good Shepherd, Maine

116 Main Street, Houlton, ME 04730, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge (Part-time)

mambler@episcopalmaine.org

Weekly Average Sunday Attendance (ASA)	Number of Weekend Worship Services	Number of Weekday Worship Services	Number of Other per Month Worship Services
53	1	1	
Current Annual Compensation	Cash Stipend	Housing / Rectory Detail	Utilities
SECA reimbursement	Compensation Available for New Position	Housing Available for	Pension Plan
	\$28468		We're in compliance with CPF requirements.
Healthcare Options	Dental	Housing Equity Allowance in budget	Annual Equity Amount
Full family	Yes		
Vacation Weeks	Vacation Weeks Details	Continuing Education Weeks	Continuing Education Weeks Details
4		2 (standard)	
Continuing Education Funding in budget	Sabbatical Provision	Travel/Auto Account	Other Professional Account
\$501-\$1000/year	Yes	Yes	Yes

\$28,468 is diocesan minimum including salary, housing, SSI. Provided housing potentially available.

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Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

While every church celebrates Christmas, none is more thought provoking than that at The Church of the Good Shepherd. Maybe it's the beauty of the church, or the familiar hymns. Maybe it's the family being home for the celebration or the excitement of the children. We are celebrating the birth of Christ and the success of our church family in Christ. Our church is our home and there is no place we would rather be for Christmas. It's the culmination of success that we've had throughout the year. As we look around the congregation we see signs of our recent accomplishments. We remember our riverside baptism, and the pride we felt of sending 6 of our teens to E.Y.E. We remember our time together celebrating our first responders, and supporting our community through our coat giveaway, food bank donations and community meals. Most importantly, we remember our children and the success we've had in a vibrant Sunday School program. Our sense of fulfillment is in our service to others and we see and feel that fulfillment most profoundly at Christmas.

How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

When we consider what it means to prepare ourselves for the church of the future, there are two common themes: making sure we are supporting and encouraging faith and spiritual growth in our children/youth and the importance of being responsible financially. With the support of the entire congregation, 6 of our youth were able to join over 1000 others for the Episcopal Youth Event '17 in Oklahoma City. They had an unforgettable and life changing experience filled with worship and fellowship, opening their eyes to the diversity within our larger Episcopal community that they had never previously considered. Having had this opportunity we are hopeful they will have a sense of comfort and confidence when exploring their faith as they become young adults, knowing their paths may not lead them back to Houlton, but hopeful their connection with the Episcopal church will remain. We feel that growing strong faith and a sense of family within our church is important to the future of our immediate and larger church.

Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community.

pastoral care, communicator, resourceful, open minded

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Describe your liturgical style and practice for all types of worship services provided by your community.

Our usual liturgy is a Rite 2 Eucharist, in an inclusive and comfortable setting. Lay members participate in many capacities throughout the service; notably, the service is lay-led up to the reading of the Gospel. The Sunday School has a service downstairs and then they join us upstairs for communion. We use the conventional hymnal and the newer "Lift Every Voice and Sing". A more casual midweek evening service accommodates those for whom Sunday worship is not possible.

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

We practice mutual ministry by calling on lay people as worship leaders, servers, chalice bearers, prayer leaders, and lesson readers. Lay Eucharistic Ministers also bring Communion to shut-ins or parishioners in local senior residences. In addition we incorporate many others into our ministry throughout the year. As an example, during Easter season our teens read The Passion on Palm Sunday. We were encouraged by their maturity, willingness, and their ability to share in this part of our ministry. Their enthusiastic participation delights the whole church family.

As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

Our Good Shepherd family accepts the presence of all people without bias. All are able to celebrate the Sacrament or receive a blessing during the Sunday service. Being a small church we take notice and work to take care of each other. The informal Wednesday evening service is low-key and held at the back altar. As with the Sunday service, liturgy is related to the present day, but the presentation is conversational, as in a Bible study. Personal issues are brought up and receive a nurturing and pastoral response. The Sunday coffee hour also provides opportunity to be with each other and follow up with those in need. We believe in mutual ministry. This brings lay people, including the Sunday school and youth group, into service participation year round. We particularly nurture and value the role that youth play in our congregation, as they sing, read lessons, perform spiritual skits, take up the collection, or tend to each other's immediate needs. This lay ministry sustains us as we search for a new priest and beyond.

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How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

Just when the temperatures really begin to drop and the snow starts to fly, Good Shepherd offers a warm clothing giveaway. Community members are invited to come choose warm winter clothing. A rack full of new children's coats are received from Aid for Kids; other items are donated by members or purchased by the church. Children and parents are excited to find the just right warm coat, and hats and mittens knit by one of our members top it off. Mothers are often surprised to find a warm wrap for themselves, too. Other adults come in with a light jacket and leave with a coat that will protect them from the elements. Everyone is invited to go upstairs to enjoy a warm soup supper. While there is a steady stream of customers, the clothing area and the dining room are rarely crowded, giving us a chance for real conversation. We have celebrated with families as children grow up and listened as they share their struggles. There is no paperwork, just a warm coat, a chance to chat, and sometimes a hug. Good Shepherd is an integral part of the wider Houlton community; our coat giveaway is just one example of how we provide pastoral care outside our membership.

Describe your worshipping community's involvement in either the wider Church or geographical region.

Our church participates in the local ecumenical association. Monthly meetings allow for group prayer and coordination of joint events such as a joint Thanksgiving service, Lenten Service/Luncheons and Pastoral coverage at the local hospital. In the wider church we have parishioners who sit on the diocesan council, on the discernment committee for the new Bishop of Maine, go to diocesan convention, regional council, and in the past year we had a group of Sunday School students attend the EYE convention in Oklahoma City. Sunday school students also participate in Operation Christmas Child.

Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

Good Shepherd is blessed with a congregation of caring, thoughtful, and creative "doers" who come together to plan, organize, initiate, and carry on many different ministries and traditions that we hold near and dear. In looking at the many different initiatives recently started, it is evident that recognizing, supporting, and including our larger community is important to us. One event that brings many of our members pride is our First Responder Service. This started as an idea and desire to remember, honor, and show our gratitude to our local heroes. On, or around, the date of September 11th, members from our local fire, ambulance, Sheriff, police, and state police departments are sent an invitation to join us for a Sunday service in their honor and recognition. The sermon, prayers and lessons are chosen and prepared keeping their selfless work and dedication in mind. The Sunday school makes handmade "Thank You" cards they personally deliver during a wonderful luncheon following the service. The recognition is always followed up by heartfelt letters of gratitude for our kindness and thoughtfulness from those who attended.

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What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

We recognize the need for the giving of time, talent, and treasure to support our church. Pledge card numbers and dollars pledged have decreased over the past few years. Some of this trend may be attributed to the overall economy and its effect on our many fixed income parishioners. The other factor is the death or relocation of our older pledging members. However, the number of non-pledging givers and the dollars given have increased over the same period. Those who are restricted financially more than make up the difference with their talents and time given. Our average Sunday attendance continues to increase offsetting the attrition of older members. The young families bring youthful energy and enthusiasm to the congregation. Our church is well-maintained and parishioners frequently donate to special projects above and beyond their pledges and regular donations. Many of the smaller buildings and grounds repair projects are undertaken by church members.

What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

Conflict is minimal in our small church but when it occurs we deal with it head-on. We are a Church Family and most can resolve things easily. Many smaller disagreements are resolved quickly just by talking things through. When a larger disagreement occurs, we deal directly with it and don't allow it time to escalate. We talk to participants, hear their concerns, consider a resolution and develop a plan that resolves the issue to fit the wider church community but in an equitable way for those involved.

What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

Change has been most successful with careful planning, conversation and thoughtful implementation. Our most recent minister chose to try some liturgical changes to our service and did so with great success. She introduced the idea weeks ahead of time and built support slowly, giving people time to adjust. The new liturgy was received well by the congregation and has been used on multiple occasions. Like all congregations we've also seen challenges with change. We have several experienced people who have talents in the kitchen and have been supporting our success through community meals and luncheons. Suggestions of change in the kitchen can sometimes be met with skepticism and hesitation. However, these concerns can often prevent mistakes that have happened previously. Good ideas for change have been successful by asking for feedback on an idea of change rather than a demand. Partnerships work better than opponents.

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Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Ginny Urbanek	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge (Part-time)	2011-07	2018-03

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Leslie Nesin	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge (Part-time)	2004-09	2011-05

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
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Church School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School
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Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School	Number of Students for Adults School
3	21		

Day School	Number of Students for Day School	Number of Teachers for Day School	Number of Total Staff for Day School
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Contact:
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Worshipping Community Web site: <https://www.goodshepherdhoulton.org/>

Media Links:

Online References:

Languages Significantly Represented:

Provide Worship or Classes in:

References

Bishop:

207-773-1953 ext 125; slane@episcopalmaine.org

The Rt. Rev. Stephen T. Lane

Diocesan Transition Minister

207-772-1953 ext 123; mambler@episcopalmaine.org

The Rev. Canon Michael Ambler

Current Warden/Board Chair

Please contact Canon Ambler

Mr. Stephen Mine

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Search Chair

Please contact Canon Ambler

Mr. Stephen Mine

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader