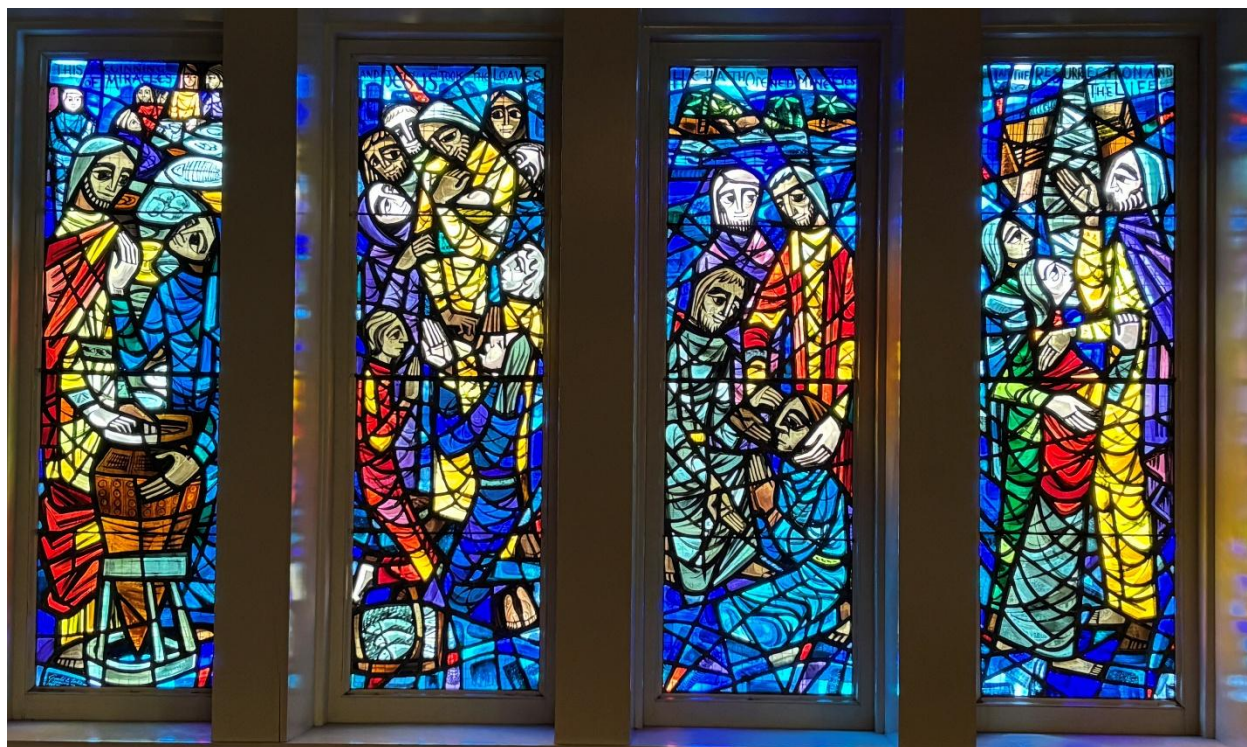


Parish Profile



the **Church**
of **St Peter** and
St Simon-the-Apostle

525 Bloor St East, Toronto, Ontario M4W 1J1

416 923-8714

office@stpeterstsimons.ca; www.stpeterstsimons.ca;

The earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is, the world and all who dwell therein.' – Psalm 24.1



Diocese of Toronto
Anglican Church of Canada

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This sacred land is the territory of several Indigenous Nations - the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishnaabe, with special recognition to the Mississaugas of New Credit. We also acknowledge that we are on the shores of Niigaanigichigami/Lake Ontario. This territory is governed by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Treaty, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Anishnaabe Confederacy to peaceably share and sustain the life of the Great Lakes. In the spirit of that Treaty we seek to place at the centre of our gatherings the values of respectful reciprocity, diversity, peace, responsibility, and mutual aid.

Our Land
Acknowledgement

Who Are We?

Welcome to St. Peter & St. Simon-the-Apostle Parish (SPSS). If God chooses you to be our new shepherd, you will join our congregation which strives to express God's love and live with a strong sense of God's grace. This grace manifests itself in two ways: 1) in our receiving from Jesus undeserved favour; and 2) God's Holy Spirit working in and through us to accomplish in our community more than we could imagine. With the first comes humility, while the second commits us to service in the world. Given this strong foundation we look for someone who will help us expand this love into the wider community.



Established in 1888, the community draws people from St. Jamestown, Cabbagetown, Rosedale, and beyond. Additionally, God has knitted together in our church community, people from the Caribbean and the LGBTQ2S+ community.

The church is accessible from the Sherbourne subway station on Line Two (Bloor/Danforth) and the Bloor Danforth exit of the nearby Don Valley Parkway. This confluence of accessible points allows us to draw additional constituents from all over the GTA. One of the benefits is that it has allowed people who have moved out of the immediate area to retain membership in our parish. About half of the congregation live in the existing neighbourhood.

At the heart of SPSS is our common worship, which is the centre of our community life together. It informs both our internal ministry and our external outreach. And along with Biblical study and to other works that inform and drive our Christian life.

Our youth ministry functions not only on Sundays but throughout the week. Our Sunday school ministry is led by our dynamic child, youth, and family minister, Sileen Phillips. The program nurtures about 10-15 children and young people on a Sunday, imparting

knowledge of the Bible and preparing eligible members for confirmation. Several of our young people have gone on to be Servers.

The Homework Club is an afterschool program that provides a safe space for children from the neighbourhood, Monday to Friday. Staff and volunteers provide supervision, recreational activities and help with schoolwork. This is a joint ministry, shared between our church and Rosedale Presbyterian and St. Andrew's United churches.

Along with children and youth our congregation has a significant aging core that requires a strong commitment to pastoral. Some are able to attend services, while others are homebound. Consequently, pastoral care is integral in expressing God's love and maintaining connection to the parish.

A high standard of Choral Music over the years has been one of God's gifts that has manifested itself in SPSS. This has been a magnet for new parishioners and a grounding for existing congregants who cite this as one of the things that enhance their worship experience.

'And people come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God.' -- (Luke 13:29)

We are known to be welcoming to newcomers. When God brings us visitors our sidespersons bid them welcome and follow up at the end of the service by

inviting them to the coffee hour that follows. We are humbled by the newcomer choosing our parish and hope that by God working through us and them they may find a new home in the parish.

SPSS is made up of a diverse constituency. God has knitted together a parish that celebrates the gifts that the Lord has given each of us. Sharing these gifts with the community is a reflection of how we try to meet the needs of parishioners and the community.

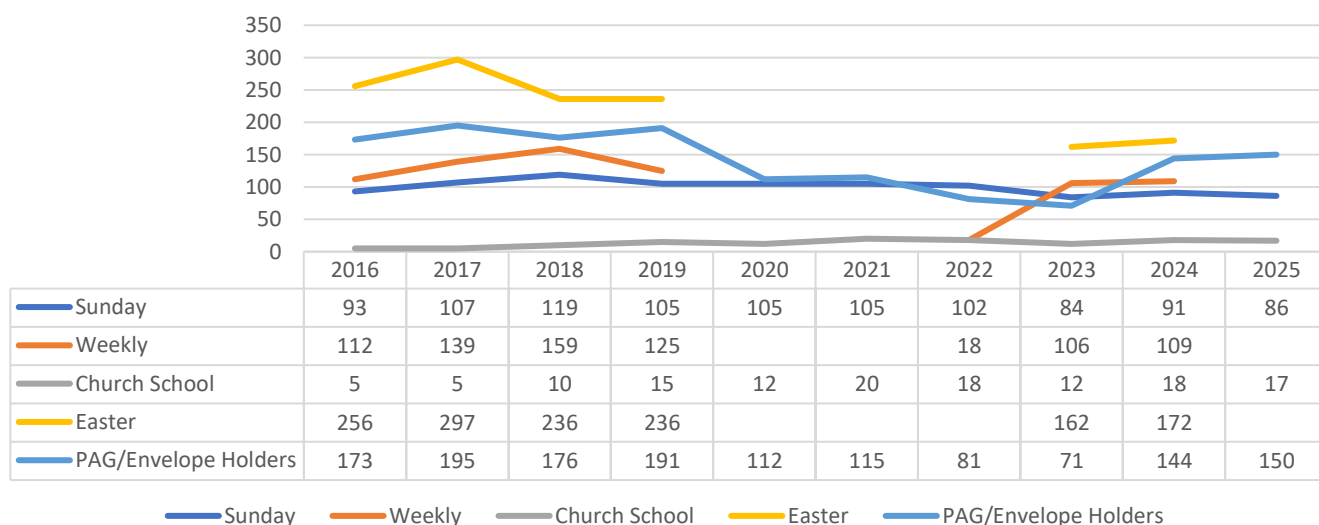




Attendance

Our congregation has been stable but like most parishes experienced a downturn due to COVID – 19. During and coming out of the pandemic we started to offer our Sunday 10:30 AM services online via a livestream, varying in about 45 online parishioners. The broadcast reaches a former parishioner in Windsor, Ontario, who is appreciative of the contact. It is a vital technological link to some of our homebound parishioners.

St. Peter and St. Simon the Apostle, 2016-2025: Attendance
(Excludes online ministry stats)



What else should you know about us?

As part of our commitment to environmental stewardship, we have dedicated a portion of our extensive church gardens as a pollinator habitat. Planted with native species, this space attracts and supports essential pollinating insects and birds, contributing to local

biodiversity and serving as a visible reminder of our responsibility to care for God's creation.

Our commitment to sustainability is reflected in the practices of our Hospitality Committee, which prioritizes the use of reusable dishes and serving ware whenever possible. By reducing waste and encouraging environmentally responsible practices, we seek to embody faithful stewardship in both our worship and our daily parish life.

We believe that caring for the environment is an important expression of our Christian calling, and a tangible way of serving both present and future generations.

Worship, Liturgy and Music

A strong, liberal Broad-Church Worship, liturgy, and music culture have long been central to the life of this parish. Together, they provide a rich and enduring expression of our faith, shaping our life with God and one another. Through word, sacrament, prayer, and song, they nurture spiritual growth, strengthen our sense of community, and invite all who gather with us into the beauty and mystery of Christian worship.

Regular Services



- **Sunday 9:00 AM:** A quiet BCP Communion service attended primarily by local residents. The homilist typically presents the same sermon which will be presented to those who attend the 10:30 AM service.
- **Sunday 10:30 AM:** Our primary choral Eucharist with anointing, utilizing both BCP and BAS liturgies. The elements are presented by members of the congregation during the offertory. This service is live streamed for those unable to attend in person. Once a month, Choral Matins replaces Communion.
- **Sunday School:** Instructional youth programming and a "toddler-friendly" area in the Nave are available during the 10:30 AM service, followed by fellowship in the Parish Hall.
- **Wednesday 11:00 AM:** A BAS Communion service with anointing featuring congregational singing and piano. Following the service, 15 – 25 participants (primarily retirees) gather for tea and lunch to deepen personal connections.

Music

"Speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

EPHESIANS 5:19–20

The beauty and power of sacred music deepen our worship, enrich our communal fellowship, and help lift our hearts to God and his son Jesus Christ. While firmly committed to our Anglican choral and liturgical heritage, the choir also welcomes thoughtfully chosen new music that complements and enhances

our worship. In doing so, we seek to honour the parish's longstanding musical tradition while allowing it to remain a living and vibrant expression of faith.

As the parish welcomes a new priest, the SPSS Parish Choir looks forward to supporting and enriching worship through the liturgical traditions that are deeply valued by the congregation. Through Choral Matins, Choral Eucharists, Choral Evensong and other services that unite choir and congregation in prayer and song, the choir fosters meaningful and inspiring worship experiences. Our choir values opportunities to celebrate the diversity of the Church's musical heritage, including the observance of Black History Month through special choral offerings that broaden and enrich our shared liturgical life.

Rooted in the rich tradition of the Anglican Church, our parish choir enriches Sunday worship with a diverse choral repertoire. This includes plainsong, sung Mass settings, and anthems spanning from the Reformation to the present day, with a particular emphasis on the work of Canadian composers. In addition to singing the Eucharist, the choir also leads the music for Matins.



Our [Music Director, Mervin Fick](#), brings more than four decades of experience in Anglican, Lutheran, and United Church traditions.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic was a highly destructive event, forcing the suspension of in-person services and Lay Pastoral visits, it was transformative as it accelerated our

adoption of video technology. We implemented live-streaming and "phone trees" to maintain contact with the vulnerable. Post-pandemic, we have resumed in-person Jesus' advice is a central tenant to SPSS interaction in our community. We serve a diverse geographic and social area, drawing from St. James Town, Cabbagetown, Rosedale. With



Parishioners' visit to Toronto Islands' St. Andrew by-the-Lake for service & picnic

four new condominium towers recently constructed nearby, we are strategically positioned.

Community

We welcome diversity and have a long tradition of support for the LGBTQ2S+ community, including having celebrated a number of same-sex marriages and anticipate continuing supporting this community into the future.

Jesus in the parable of the Good Samaritan asks the lawyer “Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”³⁷ The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him. “Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”” (L 10: 36 - 37)

Although the COVID-19 pandemic was a highly destructive event, forcing the suspension of in-person services and Lay Pastoral visits, it was transformative as it accelerated our adoption of video technology. We

implemented live-streaming and "phone trees" to maintain contact with the vulnerable. Post-pandemic, we have resumed in-person pastoral visits, including the offering of Communion and anointing for the homebound.

Homelessness and Social Justice

Our ever-present commitment to Jesus' call to serve vulnerable folks in our neighbourhood prompted us to be the first church in Canada to offer Out of the Cold. We continue to support [St. Simon's Clubhouse](#)¹, which was situated in the lower parish hall, moved when the economics for the Shelter Operator changed because of COVID 19. However, we provide space for cooking classes for shelter residents.

¹ St. Simon's Shelter is a separate entity from the Parish Corporation

Now the parish is working on a meal kit initiative with Little Trinity, to provide meals to unhoused and the marginalized. This latter initiative is being championed within the parish by Laurie Sanderson. We have strong commitment to working for our community and look to the leadership of our new Priest-in-Charge to expand our reach and service.



Some of our members helped with our meal kits.

Community Partnerships



In cooperation with neighbouring Presbyterian, Catholic, and United churches, SPSS hosts an after-school homework club. This service provides educational support and recreational activities weekday afternoons during the school year. The program is supported by paid staff and by volunteers from the church community.

SPSS provides rehearsal space for the [St. James Town Community](#)

[Arts Children's Choir](#) and meeting space for [CREW \(Community Resilience to Extreme Weather\)](#).

Three years ago, SPSS started a pollinator garden. This project is spearheaded by a dedicated group of parishioners, with support of [Faith and the Common Good](#) and a multi-year grant from TD Bank Friends of the Environment Foundation (TD FEF).

As part of an effort to reach out to our neighbourhood, we continue to start the Christmas season with our festive Mistletoe Market. We offer low-cost luncheon, free music, the sale of home baked goods, preserves, crafts, and “small treasures.” This effective

outreach attracted 30 – 40 vendors to occupy the low-cost booths. This event also serves as a fundraiser for the parish.

Jesus' relationship with strangers and the alien calls us to show hospitality. Members of the two parishes that came together to form SPSS in 2016 have been involved with the [Anglican United Refugee Alliance \(AURA\)](#) for almost forty years, beginning with the refugees from Vietnam. Working with AURA – which has offices in the church of SPSS – they have helped to settle many individuals and families. Of note are a family that came in early 1989, and a man who came more recently and who was reunited with his family when they were brought to Canada from Uganda. These two families became members of the parish of SPSS and in one case, the eldest daughter has become a server. The church has embraced these refugees, providing them a community. In the last four years the parish completed sponsorship and welcomed a family from Iraq. Currently, the parish is acting as a lead sponsor for another family from Afghanistan, currently in Turkey, and waiting to come to Canada.



Caribbean Night at SPSS, celebrates an integral part of our community. It was started by parishioner, the late Dr. Winston Isaac², a past student at Codrington College in Barbados. Codrington College, built in 1743, is the oldest Anglican Theological College in the Western Hemisphere, where many Caribbean priests are trained. Dr. Isaac felt it would be an honour to establish a link with Codrington College by holding a yearly fundraising event.

² Along with his work as a professor in the health field, the Caribbean community, and his many church roles, he was St. Kitts and Nevis Government Honorary Consul, founder of the Walnut Foundation, a men's health group, which focuses on prostate cancer.

Caribbean Night at St. Peter and St. Simon-the-Apostle typically attracts 80 to 100 attendees. Many were associated with other Anglican churches in-and-around the Toronto area, as well as other organizations.

Fenwick Nanton became involved with coordination of the program starting in 2015; he is now responsible for its annual coordination. The program continues the tradition started by Dr. Isaac and the proceeds help support the Homework Club and [Codrington College](#).

A connection with the training of clergy is the parish's work in mentoring theological students and hosting transitional deacons. We provide a welcoming learning environment for transitional deacons that have successfully graduated to the priesthood. Over the last five (5) years there have been three candidates from the parish who transitioned from the Diaconate to the priesthood.

SPSS has been an active participant in the City of Toronto's annual architecture event, [Doors Open](#), for the past four years. Over a weekend in May, residents of Toronto are invited to come inside buildings deemed architecturally significant by the City. Several of the people who visited the church during this event have come back to the occasional services, most frequently for the candlelight service on Christmas Eve.

Communications

Communication, internally and externally, is critical to the health and visibility of the parish. We have focussed on our website, with new navigation, photos, and more concise information on the home page. The site now includes updated news stories and events as well as timely and easily available information on Easter, Advent, and Christmas services.

Communication outreach through social media is in its infancy; however, we see these vehicles as a vital outreach to younger people. Our Facebook and Instagram sites are works in progress

and we look to improve our engagement and outreach using these platforms in the future. Our [YouTube Channel](#) currently hosts our Sunday Worship and provides a base upon which we can build.

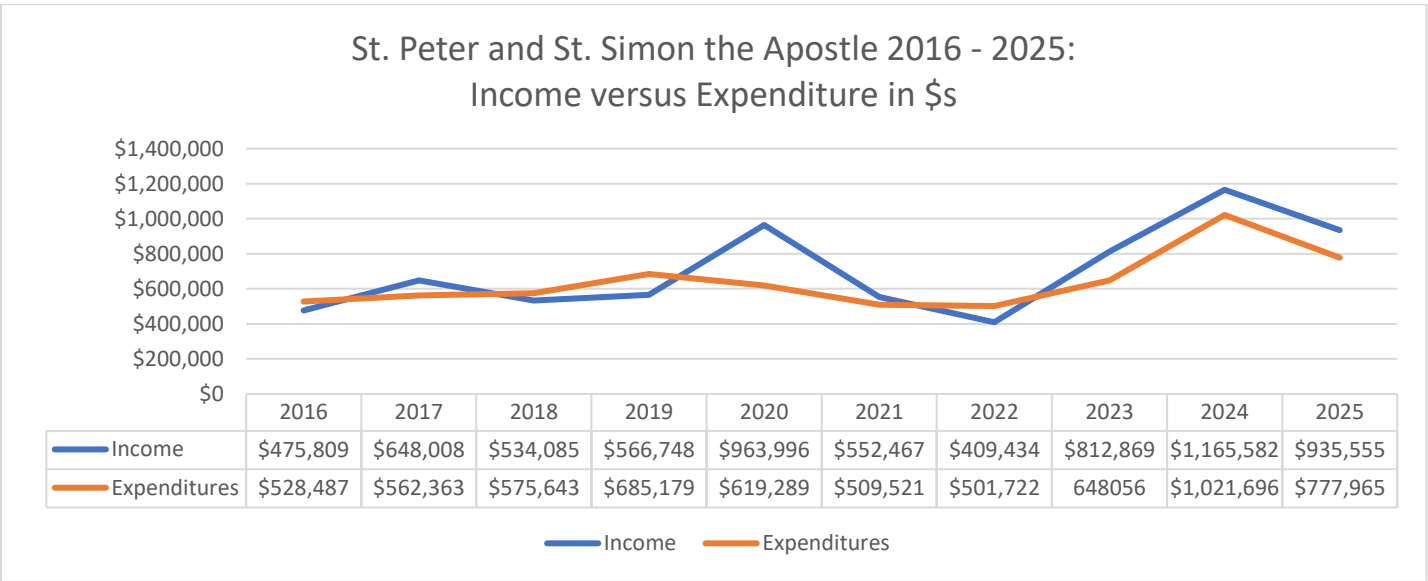


Internal communications are managed through the weekly parish e-news that the SPSS office prepares covering events, special notices, and service information. Currently, a new design template for the parish e-news is underway.

External communications have been enhanced through print advertising in the local neighbourhood newspaper *The Bridge* as well as *The Toronto Anglican*. We are also utilizing the *Cabbagetown Review* to advertise services and events in addition to our social media channels.

Finances

Finances play a vital role in the life and mission of SPSS. Sound finances sustain the ministries of the parish, enabling us to fulfil our mission to parishioners and the community. Effective stewardship of our financial resources is both a practical necessity and a spiritual responsibility. At SPSS we have faced financial challenges; however, with the Lord’s help and working closely with our Diocese, we have a roadmap to fiscal sustainability.



You will note a rapid rise and fall income in 2023 - 2025. We had a failure of our main roof over the narthex, and we had to finance the repair. We lost a major tenant when Covid 19 restrictions that precipitated that move. Our rectory fund was used to finance the roof repair and renovations of the church to finance day-care repairs as well. As such we have incurred a debt to our Diocese of about \$251,000 from the Rectory fund.

Jesus said, “Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? (Luke 14:28)

Combining outreach to the community with stewardship of our material resources, the parish supported St. Simon's men's shelter for decades. The departure of the Shelter during Covid provided us with an opportunity to consider how best to serve the community and also provide financial stability for our future. We chose to focus on a daycare – a significant need



in the local community. In 2022, SPSS secured a long-term lease with *Munchkin Manor*, a daycare with established sites in other churches. Major renovations to the basement of the church building were required to meet the city's standards; the cost was ~\$1,200,000. We were able to cover this cost by borrowing from SPSS's Rectory Fund. Munchkin Manor provides care for fifty toddlers and pre-school children. We believe that this is one way for the church to minister to the families of our community.

This change, however, led to financial strains on the parish. This was further exacerbated by unexpected costs associated with maintenance of the building. One such cost was for the replacement of the flat roof over the Narthex, the new entrance to the church, which failed after only 22 years. SPSS borrowed \$295,000 from our Diocese in Oct 2024 to defray the cost.

Due to limited cash flow in the past three years, SPSS fell behind in its financial commitment to our Diocese. As a result, the Churchwardens made an appeal to the parish membership in Nov 2025. We generated an increase of 240 Thousand dollars in givings. Remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'", the response was so generous that the parish realized a substantial surplus at the end of the year. This has allowed us to reduce the amount of our loan, stabilize our monthly payments and reduce the arrears with incremental payments, as agreed with our Diocese.

To address our financial future, SPSS formed a new Stewardship Committee in January 2026. This committee is focused on raising awareness among parishioners of our financial needs and obligations and exploring new possibilities for fundraising.

Long-Term Capital Needs

A significant challenge for SPSS in the future will continue to be the maintenance of our historic 1889 and 1912 structures. The main roof needs replacement at a projected

present cost of over \$3M. We plan to address this in stages; by so doing the parish will be able to spread the replacement costs over a number of years without compromising the building's structural integrity.

For further details, please see the Financial Report presented at the [Annual Vestry](#) meeting on Mar 8, 2026.

Committees

To help manage the work of the parish while encouraging active participation from the congregation, a number of committees have been established over the years. One of the most significant, already highlighted earlier in this document, is the Stewardship Committee. Another, the Health and Safety Committee, was created in direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

By delegating specific responsibilities to these and other committees, and by drawing on their expertise and recommendations, the Churchwardens are better equipped to oversee the parish's complex canonical, legal, and operational responsibilities.

The involvement of parishioners on these committees not only strengthens the parish's capacity to carry out its mission but also fosters a shared sense of ownership, engagement, and commitment to its direction and future.

Through active committees, collaborative leadership, and a shared vision, we remain dedicated stewards of this sacred space, ensuring that SPSS continues to be a beacon of God's love and welcome for generations to come.

One committee that grew out of the COVID-19 pandemic is Health & Safety. Initially, it focused on masking and social distancing and transformed into looking at the whole system of safety protocols including the development of Workplace Violence and Harassment policies to the evacuation procedures in the event of a fire. Further, the work of this committee led directly to the installation of an AED machine that is readily accessible in the Narthex. This ensures that the building is safe for worship and all the activities that go on under our roof.

Parish Committees and Chairs

Advisory Committee -- Russell Smith, Mathew Beasley, Adam Nymann

Altar Guild -- Joy Quan-Lee

Community Relations and Communications -- Stephanie Woodside

Garden Guild -- Jane Rajantie

Health and Safety Committee -- John Pugsley
Hospitality -- Jane Rajantie, Laurie Sanderson, Fran Brown, Marina Caytap
Property Committee -- Larry Krotz
Refugee Committee -- Barbara Pearson and David Carrington
Social Justice/Advocacy -- Regi Khokher
Stewardship -- Gary Toneguzzo

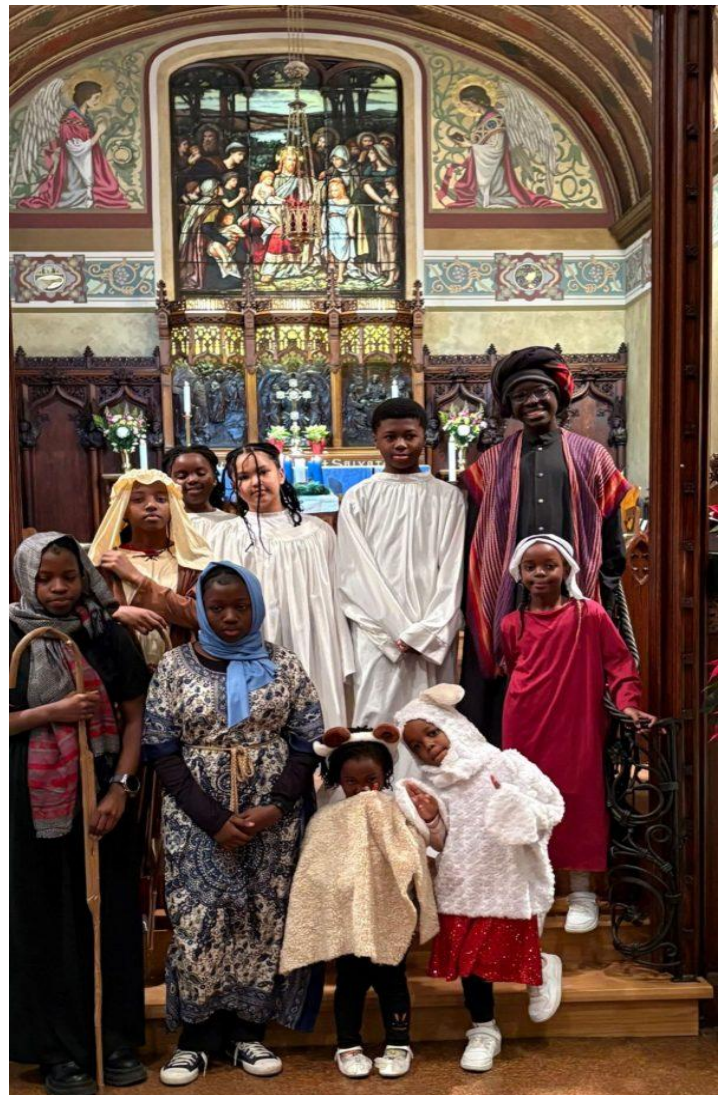
‘For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way life.’ – (Ephesians 2:10)

and refreshment and for spiritual growth. As we have been dealing with the growing Sunday School, we would love to develop a youth group, perhaps in partnership with other area Anglican churches. We are hopeful that this possible collaboration would strengthen our youth programme and perhaps create an opportunity to once again offer an active drama club.

There are so many needs in our city and the immediate community surrounding our church. In God’s steward call to us at SPSS, we interpret this church as a community hub – a place of rest, fellowship, and refreshment, as we prayerfully listen to the direction into which our faith in Jesus is drawing us. Many of these opportunities to help the poor and marginalized, have come to us through initiatives brought by parishioners. This includes bringing cans of food Sunday by Sunday as part of their offering. These canned goods are then sent to the foodbank at [St. Bart’s](#). These are

Future Vision

Our dream for SPSS in the next 5 years is to see a growing congregation who accomplishes even more outreach into our immediate communities. May we become a place where people find rest



wraparound things that have blossomed and reinforce our commitment to the marginally housed and unhoused. And we see this as God's grace working through the congregation to produce a greater effect in the community.

At the heart of growing the congregation is the recognition that to fulfil the caring and growth initiatives we must continue to listen to the needs of the congregation and the

OUR PARISH PRAYER

"Heavenly Father, You watch over your church and love every sheep in Your flock. You know the concerns of our hearts and the challenges we face. We ask for Your blessing and guidance in our search for the shepherd You have chosen to lead us.

We are open to experimentation and trying new things, just as we respect our traditions and culture.

Grant us wisdom and discernment to recognize the priest whom You send to shepherd and guide us. A person filled with Your Holy Spirit, and a love for You, with a dedication to our parishioners, and a passion for Your kingdom. Lord, send us a leader with a servant's heart, willing to walk alongside us in joy and sorrow. May this new leader encourage us in faith, foster a spirit of unity, and challenge us to grow. Give us patience as we wait, as we entrust our search to Your will and Your plan."

local community. We seek to meet the spiritual, pastoral, social and practical needs of our congregation while extending hospitality and outreach to the broader community.

Our New Priest

This prayer with God's help highlights some of the qualities that will lead us into this new life of the parish. The parish is situated in a diverse and rapidly changing demographic. We have people who cover all strata of our society. And it is the ability to minister to and be comfortable around this demographic that will lead to growth and the long-term success of the parish.

We seek a candidate with a deep spiritual faith and prayer life with strong preaching skills and the ability to communicate the gospel in ways that connect with contemporary life.

Strong organizational and leadership skills and a vision that aligns with services provided in the community by the parish would be an asset. However, since this enterprise is a large one, the ability to delegate and collaborate with lay leaders and individual parishioners, empowering them to express their gifts in service to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is desirable.

Our new priest must embrace our affinity for traditional Anglican liturgy and worship. St. Peter and St. Simon-the-Apostle occupies a unique place within our Diocese, offering a liturgical experience that is between the style and practice found at St. James Cathedral

and St. Paul's Bloor Street. Our worship is rooted in reverence, beauty, and the rich traditions of the Anglican Church.

Our worship is enriched by a strong choral music program that is both meditative and inspiring, drawing people more deeply into prayer and reflection. Music is not simply an accompaniment to worship but an integral part of our parish identity and spiritual life. Our new priest should value and support this choral tradition.

A deep appreciation for traditional liturgy, sacred music, and the Anglican choral tradition is therefore essential. A pastor who embraces these traditions will be well positioned to build on the parish's strengths, nurture its spiritual life, and lead the congregation into the future while honouring the heritage that has shaped our community.

At SPSS, the new pastor will be invited to lead a growth strategy that supports both the elderly and the young while reaching out to those in the wider community who are not currently connected to a faith community. We see this as an opportunity to build meaningful relationships and demonstrate the relevance of faith in contemporary life.

SPSS values the richness of its diversity—in age, background, experience, perspective, and spiritual journey. We seek a pastor who will embrace this diversity with authenticity, respect, and joy, fostering a community where all feel welcomed, valued, and encouraged to grow in faith. An appreciation for the varied gifts and experiences within our congregation is an essential expression of pastoral leadership.



Housing



As our new Priest-in-Charge is invited to seek out their own housing. We will provide a housing allowance at the level which is determined by our Diocese.



Appendix

Our Building & History: A Foundation for Ministry

God has provided for us a physical home that is the foundation from which our programs grow, and our community outreach extends.

Historical Architecture

Designed in the Arts-and-Crafts style by William L. Symons, St. Simon-the-Apostle opened in March 1888 and features a half-timbered Jacobean chapel. Today, the chancel, sacristy, organ loft, and belfry remain in their original form. After several

modifications and additions our

historic Nave now has a capacity of over 500. See our [rental webpage](#) for more pictures of our building.



In 1977, the buildings were designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, and in 1988, the parish entered into a heritage easement agreement with the Ontario Heritage Trust to ensure the permanent preservation of the site.

Modern Accessibility and Growth

In 2000, we launched a major project to modernize our aging infrastructure. This included the installation of an elevator, new washrooms, a narthex, and cloakrooms to accommodate large community events. A prominent ceramic-tiled spired tower and entrance portico, designed by Spencer R. Higgins, was completed in 2004. This addition created a quiet, meditative, cloister-like courtyard and provided a modern, accessible link to Bloor Street.

For a deeper understanding of our parish, we encourage you to review our [Annual Vestry Report](#). This document provides valuable insight into the day-to-day administration and operations of the parish, offering a closer look at the structures and processes that support our ministry. It also addresses a number of important topics and challenges that are not fully covered in this Parish Profile, providing a more comprehensive picture of parish life and governance.

Memorials and Heritage

Our sacred space is marked by significant memorials including:

- The Chancel Rood Screen (1923): Designed by Eustice Bird.
- The Reredos (1920): Oak panels erected by the Parson family in memory of parishioners lost in the Great War.
- The Memorial Chapel (1952): Designed by Marani, Rounthwaite and Dick as a tribute to those lost in WWII, with a capacity of 54.
- Stained Glass: An extensive collection from all periods of parish history designed by prominent Canadian artists.



Visit our parish [webpage](#) for more information and photos.