



St. Peter's Episcopal Church - Ripon, Wisconsin
Parish Profile for the Search for Our Next Rector

Welcome

Welcome to St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Ripon, Wisconsin!

We are a vibrant parish rooted in history, grounded in tradition, and joyfully alive in Christ's Spirit. From our reverent worship to our warm hospitality and our commitment to serving neighbors, St. Peter's has been a place where faith flourishes and community has thrived for more than 160 years.

Now we are discerning the next chapter of our shared life. We seek a rector who will walk alongside us, celebrate our Anglican heritage, and help us live more deeply into God's call for today and tomorrow.



A Letter from Our Senior Warden

Dear Friends in Christ,

Thank you for your interest in St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Ripon, Wisconsin. For more than 160 years, St. Peter's has been a place of worship, fellowship, and service in our community. From our founding on the banks of the Gothic Mill Pond to today, our parish has sought to live faithfully into our mission: to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

When you step into our historic sanctuary, you will notice the beauty of carved statues, stained glass, and sacred music that lift our hearts to God. Yet just as important are the smiles of welcome, the joy of children waving ribbons in procession, and the conversations shared over coffee hour lunches in our parish hall. Worship here is reverent and rooted in tradition, but never distant—it is joyful, communal, and alive.

Service is central to our parish life. Through our Blessing Box, food pantry support, backpack and sock drives, and veterans' outreach, we seek to share God's love in practical ways with our neighbors near and far. Our parish grounds, including the newly added Rosary Garden and memorial spaces, remind us of the generations of faithful who built this community and entrusted it to us today.

As we enter this season of transition, I am reminded of the resilience and generosity of the people of St. Peter's. We look forward to welcoming a new rector who will lead us with wisdom, joy, and compassion. We seek a partner in ministry who loves the beauty of Anglo-Catholic worship, cherishes the gift of music, cares deeply for people, and will walk alongside us as we continue to grow in faith and service.

It is a blessing to serve as Senior Warden of this remarkable parish. On behalf of our vestry and congregation, I invite you to discover more about us in these pages and to prayerfully consider whether God may be calling you to join us in the next chapter of our shared life.

Grace and peace,

Yolanda Meincke
Senior Warden



Table of Contents

Our Mission & Core Values.....5

Our Transition Prayer.....6

Worship, Liturgy, & Music.....7

Fellowship & Church Community.....8

Our Next Generation.....10

Service & Community Outreach.....12

What We Value.....14

Governance, Support & Staff.....15

Our History.....16

Our Church Home.....17

Our Future Together.....19

Our Financial Health.....20

Our Ripon Community.....21

Our Parish Leadership.....24

Closing Note.....25

How to Apply.....25



Our Mission and Core Values

For more than 160 years, the people of St. Peter's have gathered to build a church community where faith flourishes in Ripon. Through the generations, our mission has remained steady:

Mission: To restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. Our core values continue to guide us today. They shape the way we worship, serve, and live together as a parish:

- Vibrant Worship – Beautiful, traditional liturgy that connects us with God and one another, rooted in the Gospels and relating God's Word to daily, modern life.
- Authentic Welcome – A community where visitors quickly become family and all are embraced with Christ's love.
- Living Faith in Action – Using our gifts in ministry, outreach, and service to improve the lives of those around us.
- Joy in Fellowship – Sharing meals, study, and laughter as we grow together in faith and friendship.
- Faithful Tradition with Openness to the Future – Honoring our Anglican heritage while seeking new ways to grow and serve in a changing world.

“People were very welcoming when we attended for the first time.”



Our Transition Prayer

O God, you know us better than we know ourselves. Guide us throughout our time of transition. Empower each one of us to use our unique gifts in ministry, to share openly and honestly our thoughts, to respect the opinions of others, and to encourage humility, patience, and joy. Instill in us a vision of the Church's family; that, guided by your Holy Spirit, we will be united in love and joyfully accomplish this mission. Amen.



Worship, Liturgy, and Music

St. Peter's is known for its Anglo-Catholic liturgical style – formal yet welcoming; reverent yet alive. Using Rite II, most Sunday Masses currently offer chanted prayers with a sung liturgy. A formal procession led by a crucifer, thurifer, acolytes and our priest begin our worship together and set the tone for Mass. Incense is included on a regular basis. The 1982 Hymnal inspires our music enhanced by our new Rodgers Imagine 351D electronic organ that allows for recordable music when needed. Worship is guided by a printed worship booklet including the Order of the Mass, the Readings of the Day and music to sing the prayers and responses.

In addition to Sunday Mass, St. Peter's offers regular opportunities for daily prayer and seasonal devotions. Morning and Evening Prayer are part of our rhythm of worship, often led by parishioners and an Episcopal Sister who shares in our ministry. During Lent, we gather for Stations of the Cross, walking together in reflection and prayer.

We also mark the Church's great feast days with joy and color. Our processions may include a whiffler, festive streamers, and child-sized ribbons so that children can take part in the celebration.

Fellowship and Church Community

Community life at St. Peter's is vibrant and joyful.

Weekly Coffee Hour Lunch

Each week, we enjoy a catered lunch immediately following Mass. This is well-attended and is the place where we strengthen our community.

Annual Christmas Open House

Each year as part of the city of Ripon community's Dickens of a Christmas celebration, we open our decorated sanctuary for tours. In recent years, we have also sold booyah, a midwestern chicken stew, and baklava as a fundraiser.

Annual Parish Picnic

Early Fall on the shores of the Gothic Mill pond; potluck style; lawn games, etc.

Book Groups & Formation Classes

These groups meet either during the Sunday coffee hour or during the week and discuss books on current events, spirituality, and theology.



Fellowship and Church Community

(Continued)



Online Ministry

Services are livestreamed to extend our reach to those unable to attend in person. Book studies are often recorded as podcasts by our priest so that many can participate.

Sisters of the Holy Nativity

We have served as the church home for the Sisters of the Holy Nativity, an order formed in 1882 by Charles Grafton. The last remaining associate, Sister Charis, is a beloved and active member of our community.



Services

Services include bulletins with full liturgy listed, announcements of church and community events, celebrations of birthdays and anniversaries, and recognition of the community work of our members.

Our Next Generation

Passing the torch

We believe that St. Peter's is a place of a loving God. We want it to be a place of comfort to our next generation.

Youth Acolytes & Streamers

Children serve actively in worship. Learning the traditions of Sunday worship; finding new ways to express a celebration of God's love.

Families

Families are fully engaged in worship, service, and parish life. Church-appropriate activity totes for children are available at each service.



Our Next Generation

(Continued)

Our Adult Christian Formation is designed to offer new and different topics of discussion for parishioners, often centered on themes of scripture, faith, culture, community, and justice. It is led by our Rector and a few lay leaders. Our youngest parishioners gather with Sister Charis after mass twice a month to learn more about Jesus and their lives in the Episcopal church. Activity Totes are available for children during every service. The bags offer Christian-themed items to engage kids' wiggles and fidgets so caregivers and kids can worship together. Adults gather after coffee hour on Sundays to discuss books with Christian relevance. Currently, we are learning about the history of Christianity and the Anglican faith from our guest clergy.

As members look to the future, we seek to:

- Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
- Work to renew and revitalize the community around the church by building coalitions with partners that share this vision and commitment.
- Provide more opportunities for Christian education and spiritual formation at every age and stage of life



Service and Community Outreach



At St. Peter's, service is an expression of our faith. We understand our call to love God and neighbor as an invitation to care for those around us in tangible ways. Acts of service help us live out our baptismal promises, deepen our relationships with one another, and connect us more fully to the wider Ripon community.

Our outreach takes many forms, always shaped by the gifts of our people and the needs of our neighbors:

Blessing Box

A neighborhood resource, initiated in 2017, stocked with food, personal items, books, household essentials, and more. Its guiding motto: "Take what you need. Leave what you can. Be a blessing to all."

Local Food Pantry & Teachers' Cupboard

We partner with Ripon's food pantry to support families experiencing food insecurity and help stock classroom materials for area educators.

Veterans' Outreach

Each year, we deliver holiday gifts, cards, and treats to the Wisconsin Veterans Home in King, WI.

Sock Drives, Care Packages & Disaster Relief

From socks for unhoused neighbors to care packages for National Guard members and international relief efforts, we join in meeting needs near and far.



Service and Community Outreach

(Continued)

12-Step Ministries

Our parish hall hosts weekly meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous and Overeaters Anonymous, offering safe space for support and healing.

Annual Blessing of Animals

Each October, near the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, we welcome neighbors and their pets for a joyful outdoor service, giving thanks for the gift of creation.

Backpack Ministry

In partnership with the Ripon Boys & Girls Club, the church collects school supplies and fills nearly 70+ backpacks for area school children and distributes them annually.

These ministries reflect our shared conviction that faith is lived out not only in worship but also in service. Together, we strive to embody Christ's love through generosity, presence, and care.

“ We are at our best when our gifts are in action, meeting needs with love. ”





What We Value

We value community.

St. Peter's is a community that offers a warm embrace to all who walk through our red doors. From our weekly post-service Sunday lunches, where parishioners come together to talk about their daily lives to the service projects that send backpacks, food, cards, and love out to the Ripon area community, we believe in being a church of extravagant welcome.

We value our Anglo-Catholic tradition.

St. Peter's is proudly an Episcopal Church that actively celebrates its Anglo-Catholic heritage as a parish of the historical Fond du Lac Diocese, now Diocese of Wisconsin. Our high church worship is reverent and beautiful with opportunities to include sung and chanted liturgy, the use of incense and bells, and traditional hymns from the 1982 hymnal. While we have experienced other worship styles over the years, many in the church appreciate the beautiful, reverent, and participatory Anglo-Catholic style that is rooted in tradition yet open and welcoming.

We value continued learning.

Book studies are regularly led by either our priest or parishioners on topics ranging from theology, spirituality, and current events. Studies done by our priest are often recorded for those who can't attend in person as podcast episodes. Our parish seeks open discussions and is eager to learn.

Governance, Support, and Staff

The Parish staff of St. Peter's is led by our full-time Rector. In addition, the staff includes an organist, a Lay Minister for Parish Growth, and a Sexton. These positions are all part-time. We maintain regular part-time Parish office hours.

The Lay Leadership team is led by our Senior Warden and Vestry. Yolanda Meincke serves as our Senior Warden, Joe VanWie is our Junior Warden. Kathy VanWie oversees our day-to-day financial needs as Parish Treasurer. Her work is supplemented by ADP Business Services - Payroll for Small Businesses who handles our payroll and does our tax work (overseen by the Senior Warden).⁹ Other members of the vestry include Sr. Charis, S.H.N., Jolene Schatzinger, and Clyde Mansmith. Each member is elected to a three-year term during the Annual Meeting, which is typically held at the beginning of the year. Our Junior Warden oversees all our buildings and grounds needs.



Our History

Our church is situated on Ripon's Gothic Mill Pond, one of the most beautiful properties in the area. This site was designated for St. Peter's Church by John Scott Horner, who was the Michigan Territorial Governor and Secretary of Wisconsin. An early Anglican settler, Horner played a key role in the founding of the city of Ripon, which he named after his ancestral home in Ripon, Yorkshire, England. He also contributed to the establishment of Ripon College.

In 1860 Fr. Fayette Durlin was sent to Ripon by Bishop Jackson Kemper of the Diocese of Wisconsin to establish an Episcopal church. A group of Episcopalians met briefly in a store until the church could be built. The cornerstone for the church was laid on June 8, 1860.



1864-1901

Parish School opened; rectory built;

1865: Renamed St. Peter's, honoring Ripon Cathedral in England; Fr. Durlin buried on grounds.



1988

Undercroft renovated into Brown Hall.



2016

Built Blessing Box outside of Parish Hall



2025

Rosary Garden renewed in the front yard of the church

1860

Grace Church founded by Fr. Fayette Durlin.



1920s-1970s

Renovations are made, stained-glass windows are added, a thriving VBS is established.

1974: Added to National Register of Historic Places.



2007-2015

Spanish Language ministry

2009: Mission trip to Costa Rica



2019

Columbarium is installed in the Memorial Gardens behind the church



Our Church Home

St. Peter's stands as a place of beauty, history, and hospitality in the heart of Ripon. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1974, our church is both a sacred space for worship and a gathering place for the wider community.

Sanctuary and Organ

The Nave seats approximately 200 people and is enhanced by several life-sized German hand-carved statues and stained-glass windows depicting the life of St. Peter. In 2024, we welcomed a new Rodgers Imagine 351D electronic organ, which beautifully supports our liturgical and musical tradition. Its rich, versatile sound fills the sanctuary with joy and reverence, continuing a long history of music at St. Peter's that once included our historic Marshall-Lancaster pipe organ, originally built in England in 1864.

Parish Hall

Originally built as a parish school, this large meeting space on the main level now hosts parish events, community gatherings, and formation programs. Kitchens...

Brown Hall

Converted in 1988 from a crawl space under the church, the undercroft was recently renamed in honor of the Rev. Canon Robert J.C. Brown (rector from 1965 to 1997). Brown Hall includes a certified commercial-grade kitchen, lounge, ancillary chapel, and flexible space for parish and community use.

Parish Offices

The main office and rector's office have been extensively remodeled to support the ongoing work of the church.



Our Church Home

(Continued)

Rectory

North of the parish hall stands our beautiful limestone rectory, built in 1901. The home features a spacious foyer, two living rooms, a formal dining room, an updated kitchen, and four large bedrooms. With modern amenities, a large backyard with a fire pit, and a scenic view of Ripon's Gothic Mill Pond, the rectory provides a comfortable and spacious residence for our rector and family. It includes a detached two-car garage.

Columbarium

Added in 2019 to our Memorial Gardens, the parish columbarium offers a sacred resting place for parishioners. Our church grounds are a place of peace and memory with plantings dedicated to loved ones, including a rose bush brought west in a Conestoga wagon.

Rosary Garden

The Rosary Garden is a recent addition, providing a quiet outdoor space for prayer and reflection.

Our Digital Ministry

Our church home reaches beyond the walls of our historic building. St. Peter's uses technology as another way to share the Gospel and stay connected with our extended church family. Sunday services are livestreamed so that those who travel or live at a distance can join in worship. Sermons and educational offerings are recorded and shared online, and our podcast ministry allows us to reach listeners throughout the Diocese and beyond.



Our Future Together

We seek a rector who will be:

- A skilled liturgist, with a gift for bringing biblical lessons to everyday modern life while leading joyful Anglo-Catholic worship.
- A pastoral caregiver, present and compassionate.
- A wise administrator, steady and organized.
- A community-minded individual who engages in Ripon's civic and cultural life.
- A faithful leader, guiding us with hope and courage.
- A lover of music who values the role of hymnody, choral tradition, and organ in enriching our worship.
- A supporter of ALL people in both pastoral care and sacramental life

Together we hope to:

- Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
- Work to renew and revitalize the community around the church by building coalitions with partners that share this vision and commitment.
- Provide more opportunities for Christian education and spiritual formation at every age and stage of life.



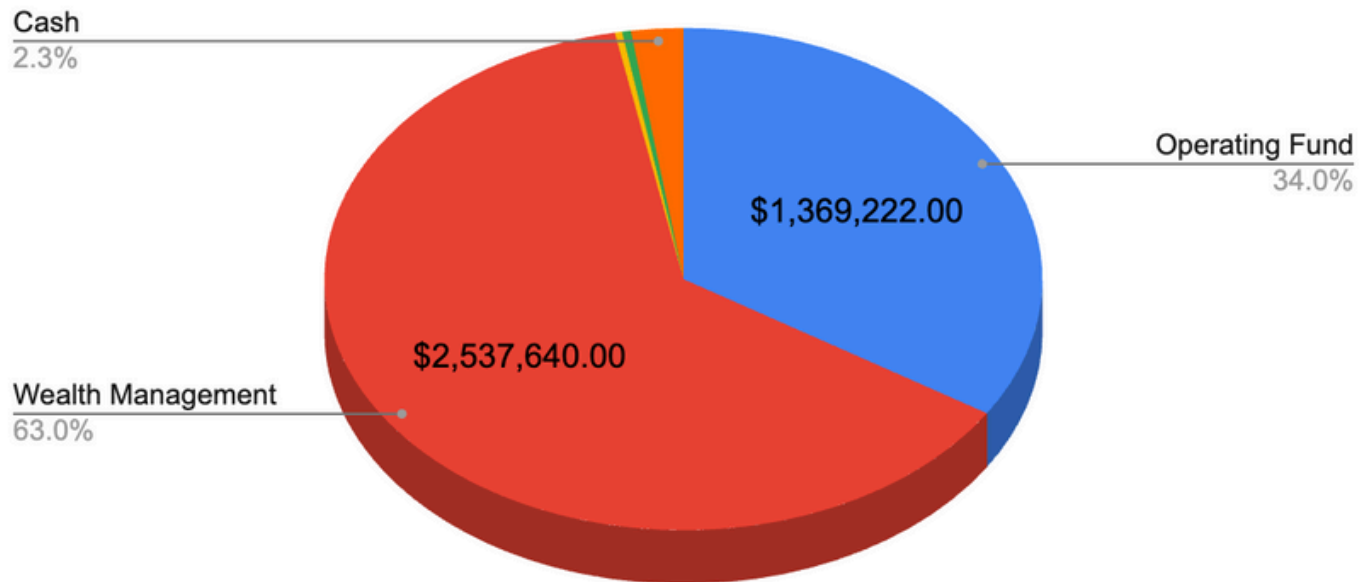
Our Financial Health

Our parish is blessed with a strong financial foundation that will allow us to focus on ministry and support our next rector as we continue to grow in faith and service. We have built and sustained resources that will support our future growth. We currently hold \$2.5 M in investments, \$1.4 in our operating fund, and about \$95,000 in cash reserves. Annual operating expenses are covered by pledge income, operating fund income, and grants. Outreach ministries and capital improvements to the church and rectory are funded from the wealth management fund.

We believe these financial resources will give us the flexibility to create new opportunities, care for our facility, and invest in ministries and outreach that help us live our call to serve Christ in our community.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Pledge income	\$53,468.00	\$35,568.00	\$49,130.00	\$52,989.00	\$62,410.00
Other income	\$124,809.00	\$73,895.00	\$273,917.00	\$142,527.00	\$213,991.00
Total	\$178,277.00	\$109,463.00	\$323,047.00	\$195,516.00	\$276,401.00
Operating expenses	\$169,881.00	\$182,145.00	\$236,127.00	\$208,215.00	\$276,401.00
Missions and capital improvements	\$5,764.00	\$7,874.00	\$14,146.00	\$108,941.00	\$61,300.00
Wealth management income	\$5,764.00	\$7,874.00	\$14,146.00	\$108,941.00	\$61,300.00

St. Peter's Finances



Our Ripon Community

Nestled in central Wisconsin, Ripon (population ~8,000) offers the safety, friendliness, and close-knit atmosphere of a small town—yet with many of the vibrancy and amenities of much larger places. We are blessed to live within about an hour's drive of Milwaukee, Madison, and Green Bay, making Ripon ideal both for those who love peaceful living and those who want access to metropolitan resources.

Education, Health & Lifelong Learning

- Ripon Area School District serves over 1,600 students from pre-K through high school across seven schools. Ripon Area School District is known for its strong academic programs, attention to student success, and a low student-teacher ratio.
- Ripon College is a four-year residential liberal arts college with about 750 students, many of them Wisconsin residents. The college's presence brings intellectual energy, cultural events, lectures, arts, and athletic games—all part of the town's rhythm.
- SSM Health Ripon Community Hospital provides comprehensive health care, with emergency services 24/7, laboratory, specialty services, primary care, and surgical care. The hospital, along with local clinics, ensures that excellent medical care is right here at home.

Natural Beauty & Recreation

- Just five miles away is Green Lake, Wisconsin's deepest natural lake, perfect for boating, swimming, fishing, or simply enjoying a lakeside sunset.
- For outdoor lovers, the Mascoutin Valley Trail offers miles of biking and walking through serene uplands and woodlands. In winter, these same landscapes become pathways for cross-country skiing and quiet walks.
- Golf courses, parks, nature preserves, kayaking opportunities—Ripon provides abundant opportunities to enjoy the outdoors in every season.



Our Ripon Community

(Continued)

Arts, Culture & Community Life

- Downtown Ripon is charming, historic, and lively. Boutique shops, cozy cafés, a small movie theater, and restaurants give life to Main Street. The Village Green hosts free summer Friday night concerts, local festivals, and community gatherings.
- Annual events connect us: Ripon Fest in summer, Dickens of a Christmas during the holiday season, and many smaller cultural offerings keep our community calendar full.
- Ripon has its own local newspaper, helping to keep people informed, connected, and engaged. There is a strong sense that civic life matters here—and people often take part.

Proximity & Connections

- Fond du Lac Cathedral (Cathedral of St. Paul), just 30 minutes away, is an architectural treasure of our diocese and an inspiring site of diocesan worship and events.
- The nearby cities of Fond du Lac and Oshkosh offer cultural opportunities, waterfront attractions, unique dining, and shopping, all within an easy drive.
- With Madison, Milwaukee, and Green Bay about an hour away, Ripon combines the peace of small-town living with quick access to metropolitan opportunities.





Our Ripon Community

(Continued)

Why Ripon Feels Like Home

- Though Ripon has a small-town feel, having a college, hospital, vibrant downtown, and nearby lake and trails gives it the richness you might expect only in larger places.
- Lower cost of living, safe neighborhoods, meaningful connections, involvement—Ripon allows people to participate in community, enjoy natural beauty, and still commute or travel easily when needed.
- Being about one hour from Madison, Milwaukee, or Green Bay means access to bigger cultural, educational, and professional resources without losing the peace.

What This Means for St. Peter's

Living in Ripon enhances what St. Peter's is called to be. We find partners for service in our schools and college; we care for neighbors in times of illness through the hospital; we share in joy when the community gathers for festivals, concerts, or sports; and we draw strength from natural beauty in our prayer and reflection. Opportunities to engage with our community are plentiful in this family-friendly setting.

Our Parish Leadership

Vestry:

Yolanda Meincke - Senior Warden
Joe VanWie - Junior Warden
Sr. Charis, S.H.N.
Kathy VanWie
Jolene Schatzinger
Clyde Mansmith
Andy Prellwitz

Search Committee:

Jolene Schatzinger
Clyde Mansmith
Andy Prellwitz
Katie Bratton
Amory Ewerdt





Closing Note

St. Peter's is a vibrant, resilient, and welcoming parish. We honor our history, delight in our worship, and embrace our community with joy.

We invite our next priest to join us in continuing this journey—rooted in Christ, alive in the Spirit, and open to the future God is calling us toward

How to Apply

Saint Peter's is a parish in the Diocese of Wisconsin, with Bishop Matt Gunter serving as its 12th bishop. The Diocese of Wisconsin reunited in 2024, following approval at the 81st General Convention. Three historic dioceses: Milwaukee, Fond du Lac, and Eau Claire comprise the diocese.

If you feel called to walk with us, please send your cover letter (addressed to the vestry) along with resume and Vocation Hub profile to Canon Scott Leannah, scott@diowis.org and Transition Minister, Mother Meredyth Albright, meredythalbright@gmail.com.

The deadline to submit applications is **June 1, 2026**; however, applications will be reviewed and considered as they are received.

Saint Peter's Church
217 Houston Street
Ripon, WI 54971

920-748-2422

stpetersripon.com
office@stpetersripon.com