

Parish Profile Committee Summary - December 2013

About Orcas Island

Orcas Island is the largest (57 square miles) of the over 170 named islands and reefs in the San Juan Archipelago that comprises San Juan County in northwest Washington State. The island is an hour's ferry ride from the mainland. The isolation of the island contributes to its slow and simple lifestyle (no stoplights; maximum speed 40 m.p.h), but it is a problem for those needing services, especially specialty medical care that is not available on the island.

Orcas Island is exquisitely beautiful, with a varied topography that includes fields, forests, mountains, beaches and lakes. Mt Constitution, the highest point in the archipelago (2,409 ft.) offers a panoramic view of the region, including the Cascade and Olympic Mountain Ranges, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and Canada, our neighbor to the north. The island is shaped like a horseshoe, with an 8-mile-long fjord, Eastsound, that nearly bisects the island south to north. On the narrow isthmus at the top of the island lies the village of Eastsound, which offers services including schools, groceries, banks, a library, post office, service stations, and small businesses and restaurants, many of which cater to tourism, the number one industry of the island. The island is also home to several small hamlets, including Westsound, Deer Harbor, Orcas Village, Olga and Doe Bay.

The population of Orcas Island is approximately 5,000, although it jumps higher in the summer with the many visitors to the island, and is somewhat less in the winter when island "snowbirds" move to second homes in southern latitudes. 93% of the island population is white, although we have a significant Hispanic community of approximately over 200 people.

The population of the islands is aging. In 2010 San Juan County census, nearly 35% of the population was above 60; 48% were between the working ages of 20 and 60, and 17% were under 20. The median household income in 2011 was slightly over \$50,000 and the median home value was \$459,874. The San Juan Islands face economic issues of an increasingly aging population that requires the services of an increasingly diminishing working-age population. As well, because the main industry of the island is tourism, many jobs are low-paying and seasonal. The high costs of housing and living make it difficult for young families to stay or locate to the island.

About Emmanuel Episcopal Church

Emmanuel Episcopal Church was established in 1885 on the shores of Eastsound Village. The church is a charming, white-painted, English-village-style church with beautiful grounds and an a remarkable view of the Eastsound fjord and surrounding mountains and forests. The church campus is regarded as an island landmark and is well-kept by the parish. As one might expect of a remote church on an isolated island, the church's fortunes have ranged up and down, affected by both its distance from and

has survived--with and without a rector, through recessions and "bubbles"-- for nearly

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130 years. We fully hope and expect it to survive another 130.

Results of online Parish Survey, Summer 2013, December 2013

The parish survey, Parts 1-4, was conducted online and in printed form over July and August, 2013, with Part 4 completed, December, 2013. The survey consisted of the following parts:

1. **“Where Have We Been?”**
2. **“Where Are We Now? (parts A & B)”**
3. **“Where Are We Going?”**
4. **“Ministry of the Clergy”**

93% of the 52 parishioners who responded to the “Where Have We Been” section of the survey have been with Emmanuel for at least 5 years, over 30% of these for 11 or more years. Nearly 40% of the respondents were raised as Episcopalians; 81% are over 61 years of age; 81% live on the island year round, and nearly 57% attend weekly services. 64% of the respondents live with other adults, and 27% live alone. Nearly 70% of the respondents are retired or “working retired;” 13% work full-time. The demographics of the respondents reveal that the congregation of Emmanuel Episcopal reflects, indeed, exceeds the island demographic of an aging population.

“Where Have We Been” - Part 1 (53 responses)

The first question asked respondents to describe the “Best Efforts” of the church in the past ten years. The responses, listed in descending order of frequency, are as follows:

Community Outreach, including Food Bank Lunch, Dinner Kitchen, making campus available to community, Market Day and Brown Bag Concerts during summer

Labyrinth

Children’s programs including Sunday School, Summer Programs, Holiday Crafts,

Children’s participation in worship

Lay-led programs including Centering Prayer, Education for Ministry (EFM), Dinner Kitchen, Grief Group

Special Services at Christmas, Easter, Blessing of the Animals

Rector’s Forum (now “Bible Workbench”)

A more creative, progressive liturgy, including publishing the liturgy in the bulletin

Capital improvements to the campus, including replacing the roof, remodel of Benson Hall, and energy-saving efforts including solar panels.

Good care of grounds.

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Sharing campus with community for special events, lectures, AA, Unitarian and Lutheran services.

Music

Welcoming, friendly congregation, with more fellowship opportunities, including more shared meals.

Special educational efforts, including Death and Dying, Book Club, Tai-Chi, etc.

The difficulties we have faced in the past ten years (in descending order) are:

Financial

Attracting young families

Being without a rector

Not enough emphasis on new paradigms for worship

“Where We Are Now” - Part 2: A & B (34 responses to Part A and 27 to Part B)
Responses were very similar to “where we have been,” with respondents being most proud of community outreach, our friendly and welcoming congregation, the beautiful campus, and openness to many points of view.

“Where we are now” also describes similar concerns in funding, an aging congregation (and related concerns for parish growth), and a desire for clearer strategies and plans to achieve our mission.

Respondents described “missing” church ministries as those for seniors, including ministries to the home-bound and a desire for a convalescent center.

Respondents described a good balance of outward and inward focus for the church.

However, they are concerned that the church is viewed by fellow islanders as rich, stuffy, old, and traditional.

“Where Are We Going” - Part 3 (20 responses)

Respondents described a church that could make an impact in the community in the next 5-10 years, as one that could make old stories and symbols relevant to the present, that focused on outreach, that assisted with life issues such as aging and grief, and that embraced diversity of age, race, class, and perspective. The hallmarks of a church of the future would be a communal process in determining where we are going, flexibility and adaptability, openness to questions, and a variety of liturgies, including experimental and innovative ones. Also, hold services for milestone events, national events or crises, vespers, Taize, contemplative, Seder, and labyrinth services.

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In early 2014, after a year of wrestling with a budget deficit, the vestry made the very difficult decision to eliminate the Children's Ministry position. The vestry and parish value our children and the Children's Minister's work. The parish is currently working on alternatives to provide ministry and Christian Education for our children. We are looking for a Rector who brings gifts to nurture this effort and grow our children's ministry.

"Ministry of the Clergy" - Part 4 (27 responses)

The most important elements to consider in searching for a future rector, in descending order of importance, are communication skills, work experience, and past references.

The most important qualities a future rector should possess, in descending order of importance, are the following:

Warm, loving, approachable, kind, compassionate, humble, accepting, inclusive, positive personality with good sense of humor.

Thinks outside the box, appreciates multiple spiritual paths, is aware of trends in a changing world.

"Gets" Orcas, is aware of issues and needs for both individuals and the community at large.

Good educator who has an interest and ability to grow lay leadership.

Beyond the definitive areas of responsibility in a priestly role: Liturgy, Pastoral Care and Counseling, Preaching and Teaching, respondents identified additional aspects of ministry to be important. The top five out of sixteen choices were: 1. spiritual formation, 2. communication, 3. leadership development, 4. education, and tied for fifth were 5. outreach, vision development, youth and family. See definitions at end of summary.

Respondents also seek a rector in good health, who is a good preacher, is versed in end of life issues and can also attract young people and families. The rector should be able to use technology, have had previous success in a small, isolated parish, and possess a deep, loving faith.

Questions and concerns were also submitted in the rector survey intended for the search's committee's use in the search for a rector. These will be made available to the committee.

Parish Profile Team: Kathi Anderson, Cheryl Danskin, Margaret Payne, Kelly Toombs

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Appendix

Any clergy whom Emmanuel calls is expected to fill a priestly role in the following definitive areas: **Liturgy, Pastoral Care and Counseling, Preaching and Teaching**. Additional aspects of ministry may be more or less important to members of the parish. From the list below, what 5 aspects of a priest's ministry are most important to you beyond the definitive roles listed above? Please circle 5 letters.

- A. **Administration:** Manages the operations of the church from staff, finances, communications, buildings/grounds, and programs.
- B. **Communication:** Understands and uses appropriate communication tools, including 21st century technology.
- C. **Community Leadership:** Participates in community groups outside the parish.
- D. **Diocesan Involvement:** Participates in and upholds diocesan ministries.
- E. **Ecumenism/Interfaith:** Leads and works in inter-denominational and inter-faith relationships and programs.
- F. **Education:** Leads in the design and implementation of Christian education for all ages.
- G. **Evangelism:** Trains and leads persons to understand and share by word and action, the Good News demonstrated by Jesus and invites others into Christian community.
- H. **Leadership Development:** Recognizes, develops and encourages lay leaders in ministry and mission.
- I. **Music Ministry:** Supports parish ministry through music.
- J. **Outreach:** Leads and supports parishioners to serve Christ in those outside the church walls.
- K. **Pastoral Outreach:** Coordinates pastoral ministries.
- L. **Spiritual Formation:** Leads others in the understanding and practice of a deeper spiritual life.
- M. **Stewardship:** Leads in the development of strong on-going stewardship programs.

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N. **Visitation:** In addition to pastoral care, coordinates and leads church members to participate in visiting those both within and outside the church.

O. **Vision Development:** Leads the church in discerning and planning strategies for mission.

P. **Youth and Family:** Has a heart for the young and inspires their participation in the life of the church.