

## St. Philip's, Buffalo

### What are some significant moments in the history of your church that have shaped its identity today?

St. Philip's Episcopal Church was founded in 1861 as an African-American place of worship. St. Philip's relocated from downtown Buffalo to the Delavan Grider neighborhood. With over 50 years of service at the Sussex Street location, the church has built strong ties with local residents and is known for its impactful food ministries and community outreach programs.

### What makes your church unique in the region and the diocese?

St. Philip's has never had the opportunity to worship in a space specifically created for its congregation. Our survival is the result of perseverance and resourcefulness.

### What are the most vibrant ministries or strengths of your parish today?

1. The St. Philip's Food Pantry established in the 1970's in collaboration with FeedMore WNY.
2. Our Healing Hearts Grief Support Ministry has been in existence for ten years. In September, 2025 an invitation was extended to all members of the WNY Diocese.
3. During COVID19 a decision was made to maintain connections with the congregation through daily evening prayer from Monday to Friday. This became the impetus for the Sunday hybrid worship service. As a result many local members and out of town former members are included in our worship service.
4. Since 2022 our church has partnered with Niagara County churches in the Love Rising movement as an effort to create caring communities. Presently, our Love Rising project, Little Free Library, promotes reading through donation of books to five schools within our immediate neighborhood and literacy activities with children from two day care homes.



### Describe a moment in your community's life when you felt the presence of the Holy Spirit moving among you. What made that moment possible?

Upon hearing of the tragic mass shooting on May 14, 2022 involving 10 victims while shopping at a local, top supermarket, the Holy Spirit immediately moved us to plan a vigil. On the 5th day following the shooting, a group of 12 individuals from our church, food pantry, and the diocese participated in a vigil at the site near the shooting. Several passersby joined us as we prayed and distributed the Pledge of Faith and Action against Racial Injustice cards designed by the diocesan commission to Dismantle Racism and Discrimination.

**How does your church engage with the local neighborhood, the civic life of your community, or diocesan and/or Episcopal Church-wide initiatives?**

Our diocesan engagement includes active participation on the Commission to Dismantle Racism and Discrimination.

Standing, Resolution, Search and Transition Committees, Diocesan Council and various national committees.

Our community engagement includes educational partnership with Doctor Lydia T. Wright School of Excellence named after a deceased member of our church.

Providing space for daily NA/AAA meetings, health and wellness dance group sessions, monthly block club meetings, Eastside Parkways Coalition (An environmental justice organization bi weekly meetings.)

Annual attendance in support of victims of the May 14, 2022 Tops supermarket mass shooting during city-wide remembrance day.

Our ministry of Petals and Prayers providing several times a month flowers to the residents of the Terrace View Long Term care Facility.

**What are the hopes and dreams of your congregation for its next chapter?**

We are in Phase 1 of a feasibility study in the real-estate development process with Trinity Wall Street to revitalize the Delevan-Grider community.