

St. David's, West Seneca

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

St. David's began as a mission holding our first service July 10, 1949, lay led, at the Masonic Temple. Growing quickly, we raised funds and broke ground for our church building in June 1954.

Designed by architect Stanley Podd, associated with design and construction of Kleinhans Music Hall, its architecture



is unlike other churches from that era having similarities to Kleinhans. During the 19 year tenure of Father John Paul Boyer, we learned to be a strong lay led parish. An addition in 2006 added an office, additional restroom, hospitality/meeting room and an elevator making the entire building handicap accessible.

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

We are located next to busy Southgate Plaza and right near the intersection of Union Rd. and Seneca St., one of the high volume intersections in Erie County. Our electronic sign draws a lot of attention and participation in many of our activities. For many years we were known for our famous clam chowder sales. In recent years we have become known and developed a following for our rib BBQ's. We have a dog greeter, Chloe, who has drawn people to the parish.

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

Members of our lay led parish care for each other, are connected, and do pastoral care. We have a large number of lay led outreach projects and many of our members participate in community outreach programs. Socktober is one of our outreach projects where every October new wool socks, blankets, gloves and hats are collected for the homeless. We offer drive through "Ashes To Go" (608 in 2025), pet blessings, and have a booth at the West Seneca Farmers Market. We are home to the West Seneca Community Food Pantry and built an addition to our parish house to completely house the food pantry.

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?

In June 2011 a large Chestnut Tree was cut down to prevent possible damage to our parish house. A cut into a large branch revealed an angel that has kept watch over St. David's for many years. Members share "God Moments" and stories we hear from acquaintances, those receiving ashes, bringing pets to be blessed, or stopping by at the farmers market. Much of our



From limb of chestnut tree at St. David's
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sharing occurs at Evangelism Matters an extension of our Sunday coffee hour.

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

Our parish currently hosts AA twice a week, GA once a week and four girl scout troops. Besides our ministries mentioned in other areas we founded and actively participate in the West Seneca Community of Churches which shares a Lenten Service series and a crop walk. We had twenty members participate in Commission to Dismantle Racism and Discrimination activities.

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

We are an aging senior congregation in recent years remaining fairly stagnant in size. We hope to attract more people, grow, and develop a younger average age. At the same time, we have to support the growing West Seneca senior community with programs like the Medicare informational event held last year.