



Office for  
Transition  
Ministry

# Ministry Portfolio

*Full Portfolio (last updated May 3, 2021)*

## St Matthew's Episcopal Church, Maine

496 Lisbon St, Lisbon, ME 04250-0879, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge (Part-time)

[mambler@episcopalmaine.org](mailto:mambler@episcopalmaine.org)

Weekly Average Sunday  
Attendance (ASA)

**33**

Number of Weekend  
Worship Services

**1**

Number of Weekday  
Worship Services

Number of Other per Month  
Worship Services

Current Annual  
Compensation

Cash Stipend

Housing / Rectory Detail

Utilities

SECA reimbursement

Compensation Available for  
New Position

**\$33700**

Housing Available for

Pension Plan

**We're in compliance with  
CPF requirements.**

Healthcare Options

**Full family**

Dental

**Yes**

Housing Equity Allowance in  
budget

Annual Equity Amount

Vacation Weeks

**4**

Vacation Weeks Details

Continuing Education Weeks

**2 (standard)**

Continuing Education Weeks  
Details

Continuing Education  
Funding in budget

**\$501-\$1000/year**

Sabbatical Provision

**Yes**

Travel/Auto Account

**Yes**

Other Professional Account

*\$33,700 includes stipend, housing, SECA*

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Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

St. Matthew's participates in the weekend-long Moxie Days Festival for which Lisbon is famous (on hold during COVID). The parade is one of the largest in the state and draws thousands of people to town. With the floats we have entered, we have discovered that we can showcase our church and make Jesus known while keeping within the theme of the year. Our road sign has the message "Jesus is our Savior. Moxie is our flavor." celebrating the Festival. Our float is designed to express the annual theme with a Christian message. It is a joy to ride the float or walk along beside it, greeting friends and visitors along the route, and handing out candy to children. We won an award in each of the last 5 years and last year we won the award for Best Overall. Participation in the parade rallies the Church members. St. Matt's is visible to the town not only via the float but also in the bright orange St. Matt's/Moxie tee shirts.

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How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

We are committed to prayer, Bible study, and listening to the Holy Spirit. We expect to change and grow in our discipleship during our walk with the Lord. We need a pastor to lead, teach, and challenge us during this journey, yet retain our uniqueness as St. Matthew's. Following the Holy Spirit equips us to reach out to the community. We currently email weekly announcements to all members to inform, ask for prayer, make announcements, and list the liturgical readings for the week. Our Facebook page is also used to announce special events and services. We are exploring further uses for our webpage. We continue to look at ways to enhance our worship and communication through technology. Bluetooth is used to assist those in the worship service with hearing loss. With COVID restrictions, we are connecting with parishioners via Zoom and live Facebook streaming in addition to in-person services. We are currently exploring other live-stream options, such as Facebook Portal, as an outreach to the wider community and to enable viewing at any time.

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Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community.

Biblically conservative  Compassionate pastor  Holy Spirit-led Prayerful worshipper

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Describe your liturgical style and practice for all types of worship services provided by your community.

At St. Matthew's, we are conservative and evangelical in our beliefs, but are flexible in our service format. We believe in the power of the Holy Spirit and rely on God's word. We are encouraged by challenging Bible-based teaching sermons. We have one service on Sunday, using Rite II. Contemporary worship and praise music with occasional hymns or gospel songs are sung, led by a music team accompanied by piano and often, guitar and drums. We endeavor to create a welcoming atmosphere for all who attend. There is a strong belief in the power of prayer and healing prayer is available. Testimonies of God working in parishioner's lives are frequently given at the end of our services.

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How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

Each year we bring a list of ministry needs to the congregation so they may offer their time and talent gifts. We have found many helpful hands for seasonal decorating, lawn maintenance, greeters for services, coffee time coordinators and other regular church needs. Weekly E-mails and Sunday church announcements are also used to engage others to participate in ministries such as meal trains, special needs, landscaping projects, and building maintenance. We have a parishioner, who was a pastor in another denomination, creating bible-based banners hung in our church, he leads a Bible study and occasionally gives sermons when asked. Pre-COVID: Some of our members visited new residents to town with a welcome basket and an invitation to church. Parish life gathered men and women into our kitchen who like to cook for meals and other special occasions. We always invited newcomers to coffee hour and First Sunday Brunch, which is a time we treasure. It is a time where people gather to visit and get to know one another on a deeper level. We hope to restart all these activities once the pandemic is under control.

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As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

St. Matthew's is a close-knit congregation comprised of people who are quick to provide support for each other in a variety of ways. Members readily and comfortably pray for each other on the spot as needs arise; we have prayer teams available during Sunday services and an active E-mail prayer chain. During the five Bible studies available weekly, support is given to each other as needed. Pre-COVID: Other events for fellowship and support have been periodic retreats, workshops, and healing conferences. Parishioners are quick to respond to calls for emergency repairs or assistance in other needs. Eucharistic, home, hospital, and nursing-home visits are lay-led, and transportation is offered to those in need.

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How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

Our primary focus is our involvement in the Lisbon Area Christian Outreach (LACO), which provides food and clothing to those in need. Many of us work at the food/clothing bank weekly. Other pastoral care includes visits made to nursing homes and hospitals, providing a place for AA meetings, and support of the Lisbon Christmas Giving Tree. Our annual Trunk or Treat and Kids' Only Christmas Shop reach out to children, both of which the community looks forward to each year. We have made our fellowship room an available site for blood drives, Life-Line Screenings and AA Meetings. We offer a thrift shop in warmer seasons for the community where household items are available at low cost. Household furniture is also listed on Facebook Marketplace throughout the year. Other forms of outreach include teaching seminars, (normally during Lent or Advent), and inspirational posts on our Facebook and Web pages. We have built a Memorial Garden for our loved one's ashes to be scattered which also provides a quiet place for anyone to come sit, pray, and meditate. Some of the activities listed above are temporarily shut down due to COVID, but will be revived again as soon as possible.

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Describe your worshipping community's involvement in either the wider Church or geographical region.

We at St. Matthew's are very concerned about the brokenness we see in ourselves and the world around us. We offer our involvement in the community as a way to bring Christ's healing. We are an active participant in numerous Ecumenical activities that support our local churches and community. We are charter members of LACO, which provides food and clothing for those in need and join in the community's Thanksgiving service each year. Every fall, we join "Hands Across the Bridge", as prayer witnesses against abortion. We participate in the yearly fund-raiser for a local ministry that supports women with unplanned pregnancies. We donate both financially and with gifts to our town's Christmas giving tree program and provide gift boxes for the Samaritan's Purse Christmas Child ministry. In addition, we have supported various needs through ERD and supported a child through Compassion International. We give our Easter and Christmas offering to local charities. One of our parishioners is teaching English as a 2nd language to several immigrant families. Currently, we do not have parishioners involved in any committees in the Diocese, although we have been more involved in past years.

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Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

We have realized that our approximately 20-acre property can be used for the spread of the kingdom in ways we hadn't envisioned. Our church is on a hill and is not visible from the main road. We cleared trees between the road and the church and erected a large white lighted cross on the hilltop. Benches that overlook the Androscoggin River were added for meditation and quiet time, and a creche is added during the Christmas season. Some of the cleared trees were cut up into firewood and distributed to needy families in the community. This ministry has continued with donated firewood from other sources. Townspeople look forward to the messages on our church sign by the road, which has brought some to attend our services. The Memorial Garden has become known within the community and a few people outside the church membership plan to have their cremains scattered there.

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What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

We are a small but committed congregation. The majority of families tithe or are taking steps toward tithing each year. A significant number give electronically. Our congregation has one of the highest levels of giving per unit in the Diocese, but due to our small numbers we are still very limited in our financial capability. We encourage each other to tithe our time and talents to fulfill the tasks necessary to operate the church. We have no paid staff except a part time sexton. We look out for each other and are quick to assist as needed in the church.

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What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

Some parishioners at St. Matthew's have had conflicts with the overall Episcopal Church including the stance on abortion, the ordination of women and of gay people, and the election of a woman and of a gay man to be Bishop of Maine. Over the years, St. Matthew's has lost numerous parishioners and their financial support, because they felt that they could no longer worship in The Episcopal Church. The remaining parishioners continue to pray and ask for God's guidance. In a Diocese that is more liberal than we are, St. Matthew's offers a conservative voice. We do have a good working relationship with the Bishop and staff and feel supported by them. Locally, all available resources are utilized to resolve conflicts at St. Matthew's with discretion and confidentiality. Some years ago, a major conflict arose between our rector and our assigned deacon. There were parishioners that supported each side. Several meetings were held with both parties. Unfortunately, the conflict was not resolved, despite exploring all avenues, including seeking guidance, and action from the Bishop. The deacon and the parishioners who supported her left the church. Scars still remain today.

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What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

We have been and remain challenged by the pandemic. Early on we learned to Zoom; soon after we figured out a safe way to worship in person, to include (masked) singing and communion. In addition, we continue to Zoom and now live-stream our services for those unable to attend in-person. At one time we tried having Vestry members become pastorally responsible for designated families. This did not work well because many Vestry members' gifts were more administrative rather than pastoral. Currently, Vestry members with more pastoral gifts are responsible for staying in touch with assigned members of the congregation. We have tried Wednesday mid-day, and Saturday and Sunday evening services at various times, for people whom Sunday morning was inconvenient. These services were sparsely attended and were discontinued. With each change we realize that there is a learning curve that requires a reasonable length of time before reverting or revisiting. Well-received changes include the use of a full-immersion baptismal tank (if requested) and the use of parishioner-made liturgical banners that enhance worship and refresh the look of the sanctuary.



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### Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. William "Beau" Wagner	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2007-08	2018-12

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Mervin Lanctot	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2003-05	2005-08

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
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Church School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School
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Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School	Number of Students for Adults School
		4	25

Day School	Number of Students for Day School	Number of Teachers for Day School	Number of Total Staff for Day School
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Contact:  
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Worshipping Community Web site: <https://stmatthewslisbon.org>

Media Links:

Online References:

Languages Significantly Represented:

Provide Worship or Classes in:

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### References

Bishop: 1-207-772-1953 ext. 125; [tbrown@episcopalmaine.org](mailto:tbrown@episcopalmaine.org)

**The Rt. Rev. Thomas J. Brown**

Diocesan Transition Minister 1-207-772-1953 ext. 123; [mambler@episcopalmaine.org](mailto:mambler@episcopalmaine.org)

**The Rev. Cn. Michael Ambler**

Current Warden/Board Chair Please contact Canon Ambler

**Mr. Brian Stowell**

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Search Chair Please contact Canon Ambler

**Mr Lee Frazier**

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader