



Office for  
Transition  
Ministry

# Ministry Portfolio

*Full Portfolio (last updated Jun 12, 2019)*

## St. Brendan the Navigator, Maine

627 N Deer Isle Rd, Deer Isle, ME 04627, United States

Contact:

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

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

Weekly Average Sunday Attendance (ASA)	Number of Weekend Worship Services	Number of Weekday Worship Services	Number of Other per Month Worship Services
29	1		
Current Annual Compensation	Cash Stipend	Housing / Rectory Detail	Utilities
SECA reimbursement	Compensation Available for New Position	Housing Available for	Pension Plan
	\$23605		<b>We're in compliance with CPF requirements.</b>
Healthcare Options	Dental	Housing Equity Allowance in budget	Annual Equity Amount
Full family	Yes		
Vacation Weeks	Vacation Weeks Details	Continuing Education Weeks	Continuing Education Weeks Details
4		2 (standard)	
Continuing Education Funding in budget	Sabbatical Provision	Travel/Auto Account	Other Professional Account
\$501-\$1000/year	Yes	Yes	

*\$23,605 = diocesan minimum for 1/3 time; 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.

Anticipating the fact we had a Sunday without a supply priest, the Worship and Music Ministry planned a Morning Prayer service to celebrate the Feast of the Presentation/Candlemas. The Old Testament reading, chosen to provide context for the gospel, was beautifully read as a story which truly brought it to life. The service was enhanced by hymns and sung canticles and included a congregational discussion as a response to the readings. Members left the service carrying out the glowing votive candles symbolizing our bringing light into the world. The service was very moving - our ears, eyes, and hearts were opened. It built on St. Brendan's strengths: strong lay-led ministry and a deep appreciation of liturgy.

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

Parishioners realize the importance of St. Brendan's extending its ministry beyond the walls of the church to be more visible and accessible to the island and peninsula community. Rather than imposing our programs on the wider community, we need to be open to learning and understanding what is wanted and needed. We hope to explore ways to make our church facility useful to the community. Considering and evaluating creative ways St. Brendan's can sustain itself financially and otherwise over the long term, is paramount. We must be flexible, inclusive, and open to creative change, otherwise, we will continue to attract only - "old Episcopalians" -- as one member put it. We are currently exploring options such as earlier services in the summer and non-traditional styles of worship. There is also a desire to collaborate with other island churches and organizations as we anticipate an increased need for care on our island and peninsula - i.e. food, housing, and transportation. We believe Bishop Curry is giving us a direction for the future: "We can bear witness to his way of love in and for the world."

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

Welcomes collaboration, Builds community, Leads joyfully, Listens actively

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

We offer a traditional Rite II service when our seasonal members are present and then become more adventuresome in the fall/winter/spring months with lay-led services and innovative offerings to the Sunday liturgy. Examples: All Saints - lighting a candle one by one in prayerful remembrance of the 12 members of our congregation who have passed on since St. Brendan's inception; Advent Vespers - experiencing silence, candlelight, music, along with readings of poetry/prose written by our members. The Worship and Music Ministry (WMM) explores opportunities to bring the worshiper and season together in some meaningful way. We strive for a healthy balance between tradition and innovation in both word and music. We have relied on a faithful and talented pool of supply priests since January 2016. Many members comment on how their strong preaching carries them through the week. Our supply priests have worked collaboratively with us and we value this. When we have found ourselves without a priest, the WMM has led worship on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and other Holy Days. A Silent Meditation group meets weekly; this offering has enhanced our members' spiritual practice.

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How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

St. Brendan's has always had strong lay involvement. This is part and parcel of our DNA! In worship, the laity regularly participate as lectors, chalice bearers, lay Eucharistic Visitors, and in the choir. The laity take an active role in five ministries: Education and Spiritual Development, Pastoral Care, Worship and Music, Outreach, and Finance and Stewardship. Each is chaired by a member of the Congregation with a Vestry liaison. Communicating frequently, soliciting feedback, and taking the time to tackle challenging issues has become an important part of our church ethos. Sunday forums after church are held to vet ideas for ministry or to solicit input from the congregation on important matters. We yearn for a shared ministry that welcomes, appreciates, and respects our independent thinkers and doers with the gifts they bring.

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

The small size of our church community enables us to identify and rally around those in need. Word circulates quickly about illness, emotional and financial difficulties. Our Pastoral Care Ministry seeks to respond with help and care when needed. We maintain a prayer list and provide meals, visits, and rides for medical appointments. We share concerns, offer a kind word, and welcome others during coffee hour. We celebrate our faith community by recognizing birthdays, anniversaries, and special events on the first Sunday of the month. Close ties are maintained with our seasonal members, who sense our support when they are away. Many parishioners are fed spiritually through our varied approach to worship. In addition, our Educational and Spiritual Development Ministry offers programs in support of emotional and spiritual well-being. Book discussion groups are held, facilitated by both parishioners and priests. Last summer, a Psalms course provided an opportunity for members to share their beliefs and come to know each other on a much deeper level.

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

Pastoral care beyond ourselves has been primarily an individual offering. One such ministry is an inspiring jail ministry which has included a pen pal program involving parishioners and prisoners at the Maine State Prison. Currently, one parishioner tutors math and provides computer support on a weekly basis at the Hancock County Jail, while another ran a pet therapy program there. Outreach funds are used for computer supplies and books for the prison library. There is a culture of literacy at the jail – guards and inmates read and talk about books (many have not read a book since leaving school). Our volunteer feels this ministry is one way we can be a witness to people’s brokenness and suffering. Another ministry is our bimonthly service at the Island Nursing Home. This lay-led service of scripture, music, and prayers is evolving and growing in participation by our parishioners. One recent Sunday we met at the church for Morning Prayer, recessed and then moved with a dozen members to the nursing home to continue the service. We look forward to exploring more ways to enhance this ministry, realizing it is as much a blessing to us as it is to the residents.

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

St. Brendan’s historically and presently seeks greater involvement in the broader community beyond our walls. Identifying how we can best accomplish this - given our resources and demographic - is a challenge we embrace. As a parish, some past efforts have focused on global issues such as Myanmar and Palestine. Our most tangible and successful involvements have been island-based Outreach programs such as Dinner Is Served (a free dinner prepared and served for the community in our hall and delivered to house bound neighbors) and the ongoing WindowDressers initiative. We support the Island Food Pantry and Hancock County Food programs as well as H.O.M.E. which serves the homeless. We provide special Thanksgiving and Christmas meals for the food insecure. Our parish hall – which includes a commercial kitchen -- is a valuable resource and available to the community for rental. Parenting classes, musical events, tai chi classes, and tutoring programs meet regularly in our hall. The parenting class, founded and led by one of our parishioners, offers mothers a sense of belonging while building and reinforcing their confidence and knowledge about child development and parenting.

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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 been involved with WindowDressers for the past three years, which relies on volunteers to build high-quality, affordable insulating window inserts to help keep homes warm and reduce heating costs. Our spacious parish hall, the site for these week-long window “builds,” is well-suited for the insert construction and the warm camaraderie enjoyed during breaks. This project has been successful on a number of fronts: working for the common good of the island community, engaging and energizing members of our congregation in working with others, and actively involving our neighbors (some of whom now worship with us). It feels a bit like a “barn raising,” commented one parishioner. Home visits for measuring windows provide an opportunity to get to know islanders of all ages, incomes, and backgrounds. Several have ordered additional inserts after experiencing the effectiveness of their first order. After installing the inserts, one customer said she can now comfortably sit close by her window on a winter's day to read. The program is a godsend for those struggling financially with the burden of high heating costs. Gratefulness abounds on all fronts!

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

We practice our belief that stewardship involves giving from the bounty of the gifts God has given us with our time and talent as well as treasure. Some of the greatest giving is of time and talent. Skill, knowledge, and sweat are valued gifts; music, poetry and art, worthy food for the soul. We are blessed with a great deal of talent, and our members give freely to parish and community from their own personal bounty. As a small parish we understand that without everyone's active giving in a broad sense, we could not exist. With regard to financial support, our appeals have been low key and transparent. We are grateful to be able to report members have been highly responsive to our financial needs and goals. Indeed, sometimes we have amazed ourselves!

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

The church experienced serious conflict revolving around the Priest in Charge and related to a difficult and non-transparent building project. Leading up to this was our growth from a smaller congregation, renting space in other churches, to a larger congregation which acquired its own building. Tensions came forcefully to the surface at the end of 2014 and divided the congregation. Members left - some because they were involved or had a kinship with this group and others because they disliked how people behaved. Part of the problem is our strength - opinionated, knowledgeable, caring people who "play to win." Members have different perspectives of what happened and why but there is agreement that many did not treat others well. We have been deeply humbled by this experience and now realize this could have unfolded in a more loving, respectful and transparent way. We embarked on a Plan of Renewal which proved to be our best path forward for healing. Through the Plan we defined our mission and values and engaged the laity in five ministries touching all aspects of parish life. Three years later, we are now in a healthy position to welcome priestly leadership.

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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?

Our Renewal Plan addressed the change/divisions in our church in a deep and comprehensive way. Led by one of our supply priests skilled at transition and healing, we worked through a disciplined process requiring numerous discussions and consensus-building around our mission and values. Both the process and the product provided opportunities for engagement and growth. Now when addressing challenging issues, we realize we must communicate well, be transparent, and provide opportunities for discussion so everyone's point of view is heard. We have found, too, that when incorporating change, the challenge is to strike a balance between tradition and innovation. We have learned change takes time and it is up to all of us to be invested to ensure the future of St. Brendan's.

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### Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
<b>The Rev. Virginia Peacock</b>	<b>Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge</b>	<b>2008-11</b>	<b>2015-12</b>

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
<b>The Rev. Laurence Estey</b>	<b>Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge</b>	<b>2000-07</b>	<b>2006-12</b>

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
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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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Worshipping Community Web site: [st.brendans-me.org](http://st.brendans-me.org)

Media Links:

Online References:

Languages Significantly Represented:

Provide Worship or Classes in:

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### References

Bishop:

**The Rt. Rev. Stephen T.  
Lane**

207-772-1953 ext 125; [slane@episcopalmaine.org](mailto:slane@episcopalmaine.org). Note that Bishop Lane retires and Thomas Brown becomes Bishop of Maine effective June 22: same phone; [tbrown@episcopalmaine.org](mailto:tbrown@episcopalmaine.org)

Diocesan Transition Minister

**The Rev. Cn. Michael  
Ambler**

207-772-1953, ext 123; [mambler@episcopalmaine.org](mailto:mambler@episcopalmaine.org)

Current Warden/Board Chair

**Ms. Elisabeth Ingoldsby**

Please contact Canon Ambler

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Search Chair

**Ms. Barbara Kourajian**

Please contact Canon Ambler

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader