

## **What to consider when deciding what to wear to church:**

One of the questions that visitors and newcomers have when they plan to attend a service at St. Paul's is: "Is there a dress code?" Officially, there is no dress code for coming to church. **We come to church to offer praise and thanksgiving to God, so being in church is far more important than being correctly attired.** However, we also understand that church is a place and time that is set apart from the rest of the world. It is a place and time that is sanctified and holy. We come to church in community, in a common union with our brothers and sisters in Christ. The way we come to church, the way we are in church, is a part of that offering and being in community.

Because we understand our attendance in a church service as a way to show our love for God and for neighbor, what we wear can reflect this love and concern for God and our fellow parishioners. Being properly covered shows reverence for God and respect for others. **In loving concern for others, we should not choose clothes that attract attention to ourselves but should dress modestly so that others are not distracted by what we wear.** When attending a Sunday liturgy, the worth or the cost of our clothing is not important, but it would be good to wear something that is not too casual or careless. Putting some effort into our attire is a good practice and reminds us that we are to consider our preparation for church. We not only prepare our minds and our souls for worship but also our bodies. It is important to consider how our efforts and even our simple presence affect those around us, creating an environment where Liturgy - work of the people - can happen.

When choosing what you will wear to a church service, please remember the spiritual well-being of those who will be worshipping with you and consider the following guidelines in your clothing selections:

- Long pants, not shorts, are appropriate. If women or girls choose to wear skirts, it is best that they are long or mid-length.
- It is good to have shoulders and backs covered, and necklines should be moderate.
- It is important to consider the overall modesty of an outfit being worn.

These suggestions are intended for each person to assess himself or herself. Everyone has different means and circumstances. Some people come as guests and some come infrequently. **It is more important to have someone in church than not, so we should never make anyone feel uncomfortable for what he or she is wearing.** But, for those of us that do have the means and the awareness, it is good to follow these guidelines of modesty and formality.