

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Piney Parish
Policy for the Use of Alcohol

Introduction

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Piney Parish, acknowledges that The Episcopal Church's longstanding tolerance for the use of alcohol which, in some cases, has contributed to its misuse and has undermined a climate of wholeness and holiness for all. We aspire to be a place in which conversation about alcohol, substance misuse, or addiction are not simply about treatment but about renewal, justice, wholeness, and healing. The following Policy was approved unanimously by the Vestry of St. Paul's Episcopal Church Vestry on November 16, 2016 and made effective January 1, 2017.

The Policy is as follows:

1. St. Paul's, Piney Parish, aims to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all people, including people in recovery.
2. All applicable federal, state and local laws will be obeyed, including those governing the serving of alcoholic beverages to minors on and in church property.
3. When alcohol is served, it will be monitored and those showing signs of intoxication will not be served. Attendees will be limited to two servings of alcohol.
4. When alcohol is served, the event organizer will appoint an adult(s) to oversee its serving. That adult(s) should not drink alcoholic beverages during the time of his or her execution of his or her responsibilities.
5. Hard liquor will not be served.
6. If minors are present at a church-sponsored event alcohol must be served at a separate station that is monitored at all times to prevent underage drinking.
7. Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages will be clearly labeled as such. Food prepared with alcohol does not need to be labeled provided the alcohol is completely evaporated by the cooking process; however, it is recommended that even in this case the use of alcohol in cooking be noted on a label.
8. When alcohol is served, appealing non-alcoholic alternatives will be offered with equal prominence and accessibility.
9. The serving of alcoholic beverages at parish events, if publicized, will be publicized as a secondary or tertiary part of the event.
10. Alcohol consumption will not be the focus of any ministry or event.
11. Food will be served when alcohol is present. On these occasions, 50% of the total food served should be food of substance, such as proteins.

12. Outside groups or organizations using the facilities where alcoholic beverages are served will assume responsibility for those persons who might become intoxicated and will provide alternative transportation for anyone whose capacity to drive may be impaired.

13. Alcoholic beverages shall not be served when the business of the Church is being conducted.

14. Clergy shall consecrate an appropriate amount of wine when celebrating the Eucharist and perform ablutions in a way that does not foster or model misuse. Excess consecrated wine may be reserved for future use, poured into a piscina, consumed by the clergy (if a small amount) or poured into the ground or otherwise reverently disposed of.

15. Receiving the sacrament in one kind (bread only) is perfectly valid as is the use of non-alcoholic wine as an alternative.

We believe that God's gifts are good and we know that humans struggle to use them in ways that are healthy, positive, joyful and in harmony with God's purposes for creation. Moreover, we recognize the pain, confusion and disease that arise when the gift of free-will is impaired by addiction to alcohol and other drugs. We especially acknowledge the need for guidance and for a healing ministry for those who misuse alcohol or other drugs and also for those who have close personal relationships with them. As a parish, we will provide opportunities for education and conversation about the use and misuse of alcohol and other drugs. Because we are people of faith, we do not lose hope nor do we despair in the face of addiction. God in the form of Jesus Christ offers new life and the Holy Spirit gives us power to transform our darkness into light.

Adopted by the Vestry of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Piney Parish, on November 16, 2016.