

Saint Gabriel Catholic Church



Parish Handbook 2025/26



Scan this QR code to register in the parish.

Questions?

Call the parish office - 804-639-6712

OUR PARISH VISION

Gabriel announced the coming of Jesus Christ

The community of Saint Gabriel announces the Good News alive today through our commitment to be a parish of welcome and hospitality through the stewardship of our gifts. Through our worship, outreach, formation, compassion and forgiveness, we are called to pause and reflect on our relationship with God and one another as we live the Gospel each day of our lives.

Worship and Spirituality

Our spirituality is communal and personal. The celebration of the Eucharist deepens our spiritual growth and calls us to be a community of believers who live out our faith. When we gather with each other for prayer, the presence of Christ comes alive. As we make time to rest and rejuvenate our lives, our celebrations of Word and Sacrament strengthen us to live as a parish community that opens wide the doors for all to enter.

Education and Formation

We are a pilgrim church, constantly developing and finding new ways of coming closer to the Lord and His people. Growing and maturing in faith is at the foundation of our mission. The faith formation of our adults, children and youth, through ongoing lifelong education and sacramental preparation, prepares us for faithful loving, living and service.

Outreach and Community Building

The Lord sent the Holy Spirit upon the apostles to empower them to put their faith into action. At St. Gabriel, we commit ourselves to both aid those in need or crisis, and work to make our world a more just and peaceful place for all. The Gospel mandate to serve stands as both the foundation and challenge for the actions of our lives.

Hospitality and Community Life

All are welcome at St. Gabriel and are expected to become active and participating members of the community. The bonds of love and friendship that we forge with one another carry out the Gospel mandate to love. The call for full and active participation in the life of the parish is at the foundation of our life as a community of faith.

A Brief History of the Parish...

In 1997, with the expansion of western Chesterfield County and with the large number of families attending neighboring parishes, a plan was developed to open a new parish. The late Bishop Walter Sullivan chose Rev. John DeGiorgio; the pastor of the Church of the Redeemer in Mechanicsville; to start this new parish. He met with a small group of the Churches of the Epiphany and St. Edward the Confessor families who were eager to build a Catholic Church right in their own backyard.

Masses started at Clover Hill Elementary School on Aug. 2, 1997 with about 400 families. Bishop Sullivan wanted to honor the three Archangels by naming parishes after them. Our parish selected St. Gabriel and was able to move to its present location in June of 2001.

Rev. Pasquale (Pat) Apuzzo came to the parish as administrator during Advent of 2002. He became the pastor in March of 2003. In June of 2006, the parish dedicated its Prayer Memorial Garden in front of the church. In September of 2006, the offices were moved from their previous location on Route 360 near Chesterfield Berry Farm to the present onsite location behind the church. Fr. Pat retired in July 2013.

Rev. Eric Ayers served as pastor of St. Gabriel and Good Samaritan Parishes from July 2013-July 2017. Under his direction the parish retired its debt from the first phase of building and enhanced the current multipurpose space that serves as our sanctuary.

Rev. Dr. Felix Amofa became pastor in July 2017. Under his direction, the parish of over 1,100 families celebrated both our 20th and 25th anniversaries and began a feasibility study for facilities growth at the parish.

In July 2024, Rev. James Boachie was appointed as administrator and seeks to guide the parish forward in spiritual growth and service to the community. July 2025 he was appointed as pastor.

Staying true to the mission on which St. Gabriel was founded, parishioners announce the Good News alive today through the commitment to be a parish of welcome and hospitality through the stewardship of their gifts. Through worship, outreach, formation, compassion and forgiveness, the community is called to pause and reflect on their relationship with God and one another as they live the Gospel each day of their lives. The call for full and active participation in the life of the parish is at the foundation of our life as a community of faith.

PARISH OPERATIONS: OFFICE AND STAFF

Our mailing address: **8901 Winterpock Road, Chesterfield, VA 23832**

Our Phone number is: **(804) 639-6712**

Our web address is: **www.saintgabriel.org**

Rev. James Boachie

Pastor..... jboachie@richmonddiocese.org

Therese Venti

Business Manager therese.venti@saintgabriel.org

Lisa Gorton

Director of Adult Formation and Pastoral Care..... lisa.gorton@saintgabriel.org

Carole Cox

Director of Children, Youth and Young Adult Formation carole.cox@saintgabriel.org

Barbara Chandler

Music Coordinator..... barbara.chandler@saintgabriel.org

Heather Bigelow

Administrative Assistant..... heather.bigelow@saintgabriel.org

Parish Office Hours

Mon-Thurs. 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Fri. 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Parish Leadership Councils

Pastoral Council: contact pastoral.council@saintgabriel.org

Fr. James Boachie, Pastor

John Ambe

Clay Bigelow

Stephanie Cochrane

Carroll Connelly

Lisa Gorton

Lourdes Mosley

Richard Purdy

Tom Tortoriello

Eileen Violante

Nancy Wilson, Chairperson

Kathy Zehender

Finance Council: contact finance.council@saintgabriel.org

Fr. James Boachie, Pastor

Richard Bostwick, Vice Chairperson

Robert Cadigan, Second Vice Chairperson

Tim Evans

Vince Kokal

Carolyn Risco

Therese Venti

Susan Yost, Chairperson

Liturgical Council: contact liturgical.council@saintgabriel.org

Fr. James Boachie, Pastor

Barbara Chandler, Music Coordinator

Gary Garcia, Lector Coordinator

Lisa Gorton, Pastoral Care Coordinator

Carolyn Risco, Altar Server Coordinator

Therese Venti, Business Manager

Susan Williams, Usher Coordinator

Nancy Wilson, Prayer Leader and Eucharistic Ministry Coordinator

MASS SCHEDULES

Saturday Evening.....5:30 p.m.

Sunday Morning.....9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Refreshments and coffee are offered after Mass on the first weekend of each month.

Wednesday, Thursday & Friday Morning.....9:00 a.m.

Please Note: Holy Day Masses are celebrated at 9:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted in the bulletin.

Adoration and Benediction after the 9:00 am Mass on the first Friday of each month.

Our Sister Parish of Good Samaritan in Amelia offers the following weekend Masses:

Saturday, 4:00 pm– English Mass

Sunday 4:00 pm– Spanish Mass

PARISH COMMUNICATION

St. Gabriel's offers a variety of ways for you to find the information you need regarding parish events or issues.

- The bulletin – Available after each of the weekend Masses and on our website.
- Our website – www.saintgabriel.org, especially the calendar at www.saintgabriel.org/parish-calendar.
- Mass e-mails to the entire parish – are used to communicate our weekly calendar, last minute events (i.e. funerals or event cancellations), to highlight other important matters going on in the parish, etc. See Flocknotes below to join and receive e-mails.
- Flocknotes - With Flocknote, we are able to email or text everyone who joins or just a specific group. Text "GABRIELVA" to 84576 to join.
- U.S. Mail – Used primarily for those parishioners without e-mail and for certain personal or special communications.
- Facebook – "[St. Gabriel Catholic Church](#)" Group
- Web-Site, Parish E-Mail & Facebook - for inclement weather updates.

GIVING

Upon registration with the parish, you will automatically be enrolled to receive envelopes for your giving. You are also invited to join the E-Giving program in place of envelope giving by going onto our website, click on Stewardship, E-Giving

(<https://giving.ncsservices.org/App/Giving/saintgabriel>) Or using your phone, scan the QR code to the right.



E-Giving is an easy, convenient, secure and environmentally friendly way to give. When you choose to give online, your donation will transfer directly to the parish. It is convenient for you as you no longer need to bring your envelope, stop by an ATM or have your checkbook with you. E-Giving helps the parish as recurring donations provide consistency and efficiency.

To set up your E-Giving account, use the QR code below or visit www.saintgabriel.org/E-giving.

To set up your recurring donation:

1. under donation click on "recurring"
2. select the fund you would like to give to (offertory, building and growth, social concerns....)
3. input your dollar amount
4. click on the recurrence time (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly)
5. you can do more than one fund by clicking on "+ Add Donation"
6. input how you would like to donate, credit/debit card or bank account
7. input your payment information
8. submit

It's that easy.

You can change your donation at any time and do a special one-time donation. You manage your account. Please contact the parish office to let us know to stop sending envelopes. Thank you!

SCRIP

This program helps St. Gabriel Parish to raise funds at no cost to you! When you purchase gift cards from SCRIP, you buy them at face value and use the entirety of the amount the card is worth, and the retailer gives St. Gabriel a percentage back. Among many others, we have **AMAZON** and **VISA** cards! If we don't have a card in stock, we can order for you. And now, you can also order cards directly from your phone with the RaiseRight app! See below for details. You can find a Scrip Order Form at <https://www.saintgabriel.org/shop-with-scrip>. Complete the form and drop it off with a **check** at the office during regular office hours or put it in the

mail slot outside of the front doors of the parish office. You can also put it in the mail slot at the Welcome Table.

DOWNLOAD THE RAISERIGHT APP TO SHOP WITH SCRIP AND RAISE MONEY FOR ST. GABRIEL RIGHT FROM YOUR PHONE!

1. Download the RaiseRight mobile app from the app store using your smartphone or tablet.
2. Enter the enrollment code to join – **B169DFE18534**
3. Buy gift cards and earn money for St. Gabriel.
4. Browse bonuses, search for a specific brand, shop categories and more.
5. When you're ready to check out, sign up for secure online payments.
6. The brand gives back to St. Gabriel the moment you buy a gift card at no extra cost to you!
7. Get and use your gift cards-eGift cards are delivered to the app within minutes-view them in your Wallet. Physical gift cards can be mailed to your home or to St. Gabriel's Parish Office. Many are reloadable so you can keep earning with the ones you have. Use both types in-store and online.

Have questions about getting started? Call the ShopWithScrip Customer Support team at 1-800-727-4715 Option 3.

PLEASE ENROLL YOUR KROGER (GROCERY) PLUS CARD TODAY!

Go to their website at www.kroger.com/communityrewards and enroll your Kroger Plus card for St. Gabriel. Every time you scan your enrolled Plus card you raise funds for our parish. It only takes a minute to enroll your card. **Our Organization number is 82387.**

MEMORIAL PRAYER GARDEN

In front of the church building, a special place to relax, to visit, to pray, to reflect and to remember loved ones, living and deceased... for information about ordering Memorial Bricks or other memorial items, please call the parish office (804-639-6712) or visit www.saintgabriel.org/Prayer-Garden.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

OCIA/OCIC (RCIA) – The Order of Christian Initiation for Adults (OCIA) and children (OCIC) is the process for those ages 7 and older, who have not been baptized, of becoming full and active members of the Catholic Church. The process begins with an inquiry session in September and culminates in the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil.

Rite of Full Reception – Offered year-round, this Rite is for adults already baptized in another Christian tradition who are seeking reception into the Catholic Church. This rite is also for Catholics who need to complete their sacraments of initiation (Confirmation, First Eucharist). Children and youth between 3rd and 12th grade will prepare through the sacramental prep listed below.

Infant/Child Baptism – Preparation includes regular, active participation in the life of the parish; attendance at the Baptism preparation class focused on the history and theology of Baptism and what it means to raise a child to follow Christ as a Roman Catholic; an overview of the Catholic faith in preparation for the parents' role as first catechists of their child. It is recommended that sponsors/godparents attend baptismal preparation at their parish prior to the baptismal celebration.

First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation:

All children and youth preparing for sacraments need a foundation in faith formation.

Preparation for the sacraments is done in addition to ongoing faith formation appropriate to the grade level of the candidate for the sacrament.

- **1st Reconciliation** - For ages seven and older, there are six weekly Monday evening sessions in the preparation program. The sacrament will be celebrated on a Saturday morning in the fall and again before receiving the First Eucharist/Communion.
- **1st Eucharist** - For ages seven and older, there are six weekly Monday evening sessions in the preparation program. The sacrament will be celebrated at select Masses in May. The child needs to have received first Reconciliation beforehand.
- **Confirmation** – For tenth grade and higher, 15 years old or older. There are eight sessions in the preparation program. In addition, the youth need to attend a retreat and need to have received First Reconciliation and First Eucharist prior to Confirmation.

Marriage – Weddings cannot be scheduled before a couple meets with the pastor. Couples should contact the parish office for an appointment at least one year in advance of their wedding.

Religious Vocation– Young women or men who are interested in dedicating their life to religious life should contact the pastor through the parish office.

Anointing of the Sick - This sacrament is best celebrated outside a hospital setting. We offer special Anointing of the Sick Masses twice a year, or you can request anointing in the chapel, before or after Mass, or at home. Contact the parish office for arrangements or, in an emergency, call the office number (639-6712) after hours for the emergency number.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH FAITH FORMATION

Children's Formation (Pre-K through 5th Grade)

We foster life-long faith formation at St. Gabriel's and seek to establish its importance at an early age. In partnership with the parents as our children's primary faith formation teachers, our monthly faith formation program begins in Pre-kindergarten and carries through the grade levels using a spiraling curriculum. We also offer a fun and faith-filled Vacation Bible School in early summer. With a dual focus on developing a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and understanding of the Catholic faith the goal is a formation program that culminates in full and active participation in the Church. The curriculum covers age-appropriate Catholic doctrine combined with fellowship and social justice outreach. We also provide support to parents through online resources and emails to help bring the lessons your children share in their faith formation sessions into the home where it can have the most impact in your children's lives. Classes are held monthly.

Youth Formation (Middle and High School)

Building upon the children's formation program, the youth faith formation focuses on four areas: building their relationship with Jesus Christ, catechesis, social justice and forming a Christian community in partnership with parents as their youth's primary faith teachers. Each monthly session for our middle and high school youth holds engaging and dynamic activities that reinforce Catholic doctrine and build relationship with Christ, along with fun, fellowship and worship opportunities for our youth. Both the middle and high school programs feature a retreat to create an environment that fosters Christian community and empowers the youth to be active participants in their faith life. Classes are held monthly.

To register your child(ren) in Faith Formation and if needed, in Sacramental Preparation, visit www.saintgabriel.org/Formation-Registration or stop in the parish office during office hours. (See Page 3 for hours)

Adult Formation Opportunities

- **Spirituality Groups** – Three groups are offered for men and women in the parish during the school year. Designed to help one another deepen our faith through speakers, study, prayer and fellowship, consider taking the time to focus on your faith formation and strengthen the ties in your community. Registration begins in late August, but you can join at any time. **Sign up for these groups by visiting www.saintgabriel.org/Adult-Formation**
Fishermen – A men's group that meets every Tuesday evening at 7:30 p.m.
GIFTS – Growing in Faith Together Spiritually is a women's group that meets once a month on a Thursday evening from 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
WINGS – Women in God's Spirit meet 1st and 3rd Wednesdays from 9:45 – 11:45 a.m.
- **ROCK- Raising Our Catholic Kids** –These gatherings are designed to help you meet the challenges parents face today to raise our children in the faith. Connect with other parents in the parish and to the greater community and be supported you in the best and most challenging vocation you have – being a parent. **This is open to all parents and extends to grandparents, godparents and those special aunts and uncles in our children's lives.**
 - **Parents of PRE-K– 5th Graders** –Mon., 6 pm, Sept. 30, Oct. 7, 14, 21 and 28
 - **Parents of Middle Schoolers and High Schoolers** Tues., 6:30 p.m., Oct. 8, Nov. 12, Jan. 14, and Feb. 11 and March 11
- **Bible Studies** - Exploring the Bible can be a rich experience but daunting to do on your own. We offer two opportunities to break open the scripture depending on your interest and schedule. The studies meet in the Commons. Contact the parish office if you are interested in attending & watch bulletin for details.
 - Tuesday evenings, 7 – 9:00 p.m. – Based on Sunday Readings, this study is both a prayerful and insightful exploration of the Word we hear at Mass.
 - Friday mornings, 9:45 a.m.–11:45 a.m.– Various studies throughout the year using DVDs and study guides. Watch bulletin for details.
- **Book Discussion Group** - Meets on Saturday mornings 3 or 4 times a year. Enter lively discussion of various titles, applying the teachings and stories within your daily life and faith growth. See bulletin for upcoming dates and titles.
- **Catholic Connections** - This is a new program we are trying to launch targeting young single adults between 25 and 39 years old. Intention is for fellowship with a spiritual component. Very small response so far.

- **Couples in Christ** - This is a new program we are trying to launch for married couples in the parish. Designed for fellowship and spiritual growth in relationship with Christ and within their vocation of marriage. They will meet in home.
- **R&R Wednesdays** – Open to all parishioners, this Reflection and Recreation group meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, Sept. – May to receive spiritual guidance on a topic of choice and then participate in fellowship and fun with games like bingo, cards, trivia and so much more.
- **Seasonal Series and Workshops** – Each year the Adult Faith Formation Ministry will sponsor series or workshops to help you grow in your relationship with Christ, understanding of the faith and service within the Church. Watch the bulletin for details.
- **Resource Library** - Open when the building is, the Resource Library in the Commons offers books ranging from spirituality to biographies, from the Bible, to parenting and so much more, you are sure to find something that will help you in your spiritual growth. Books are on loan until you can return them. Donations are welcome – and a box is available to place your donations. *NOTE: There are also children's books on the Mass available outside the worship space entrance for use during Mass. These must be returned after Mass.*

Christian Care Opportunities

- **Healing Circle** - Offered annually for the bereaved, this 8-session gathering is for those who have lost a person they love as recently as three months ago. In this group we hope you find a safe space to share or be quiet, to listen and to be heard. Receive prayer, support, guidance and acceptance for where you are and who you are. Limited space available so sign up today at the Adult Faith Formation Table in the Commons or contact Lisa Gorton at 804-639-6712.
- **Praying Hands Prayer Shawl Ministry** – Praying Hands ministry members knit and crochet for those in need. All items are blessed and prayerfully given in times of joy and sorrow. Projects include baby blankets, prayer shawls and squares, hats and lap blankets. Items are donated to hospitals, parishioners, the military and homeless, so they can feel the warm embrace of God's love. New ministry members are always welcome. To join or to request a prayer shawl or item, contact Lisa Gorton at 804-639-6712.
- **Homebound and Hospital Ministry** – This beautiful outreach to those who are homebound or hospitalized brings Christ in the form of the Holy Eucharist and in the minister to those in need of that healing presence. If you or someone you love would like communion brought to them, or if you would like to join the ministry, contact Lisa Gorton at 804-639-6712.

Prayer Opportunities

- **Centering Prayer Group** – Tuesdays 9:00-10:30 a.m. a group meets in the nursery for prayer September – May. Contemplative prayer moves beyond active modes of prayer to a receptive prayer of resting in God.
- **Rosary** – Offered daily and the schedule is posted in the parish bulletin.

Stewardship of Time and Talent

We encourage you to review this list of ministry opportunities in light of the abilities, talents and gifts that God has entrusted to you. To sign up: visit <http://www.saintgabriel.org/Time> or stop by the welcome table to fill out a ministry form and place in the parish mail slot.

WORSHIP/LITURGY

Altar Server - Post-First Communion age through adults to assist the priest and assembly at Mass.

Arts and Environment - Help create a prayerful environment and assist with seasonal décor.

Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist – Distribute the Eucharistic body at Liturgy.

Linen and Vestment Laundering - A team takes turns laundering purificators, altar cloths and washable vestments.

Minister of the Word (Lectors) - Proclaim the scriptures at Mass and other Liturgies.

Music Ministry –enhance the sung and instrumental prayer of the assembly at Mass and other Liturgies.

Usher – Adults and teens to assist parishioners with seating, basket distribution, greet parishioners before and after Mass, distribute materials and meeting needs of the parishioners during our Liturgy.

PARISH PROGRAMS

Grounds Care and Maintenance - Care for the parish grounds including the prayer garden and office building landscaping.

YOUTH FORMATION AND MINISTRY- teams formed in Spring for Upcoming Year

Confirmation Catechist - Adults to assist in Confirmation preparation

Helping Hands Ministry – Adults to help organize teams and serve with youth on service projects

High School Catechist - Adults/confirmed teens to plan and present for High School Formation Sessions

Middle School Catechist - Adults/confirmed teens to plan and present for Middle School Formation Sessions

OCIC (RCIC) Catechist – Adults who will work with youth preparing to join the church

Peer Leader – Post-confirmation youth to serve with confirmation preparation

Sacramental Preparation Catechist – Adults to assist youth preparing to receive First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

Youth Social and Service Ministry – Adults and youth to help plan and implement monthly social events with social justice component.

CHILDREN’S FORMATION - teams formed in Spring for Upcoming Year

PreK-K Catechist - Adults to facilitate activities for monthly faith formation

1st Grade – 5th Grade Catechist – Adults to plan, present and coordinate activities for monthly formation sessions

OCIC (RCIC) Catechist – Adults who will provide sacramental preparation for children needing Baptism, First Reconciliation and/or First Eucharist – on as needed basis.

Sacramental Preparation Catechist – Adults to assist children preparing to receive First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

CHRISTIAN CARE

Homebound and Hospital Ministry- Bring Communion to homebound parishioners and/or to Catholics at Johnston-Willis Hospital

Praying Hands Ministry – Create Prayer Shawls and other gift items for those in need or bereaved.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Food Pantry and Food Weekend - Store and distribute food to the needy and assist with monthly food collection.

Migrant Ministry – Adults to reach out to the migrants in our area in the summer with pastoral support and outreach.

PB & J Bag Lunches for the Homeless – Prepare at parish monthly in the kitchen after the 11 am Mass on Sunday

Prison Ministry – Serve on retreat team, provide outreach, cookies or prayer for the incarcerated in state facilities, or help with spiritual formation and support for those in the HARP Program through the Chesterfield County Sheriff's Office.

Respect Life Ministry – Plan activities and outreach to protect life from conception to natural death.

Richmond Friends of the Homeless – Prepare a hot meal at parish monthly in the kitchen on the 4th Thursday of the month, 9:30 a.m. and deliver to Swansboro Baptist Church, and serve the meal between Noon and 12:30 p.m. and leave by 1 p.m.

The Parish Hosts Knights of Columbus Council 13170

The Knights of Columbus were founded on the four pillars of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism. Building on those four pillars, we have a council of very involved Knights. The St. Gabriel's Knights of Columbus are active in their support of the following areas:

In the Parish – Financial assistance to parish projects, particularly youth, children and social outreach; financial assistance for building debt reduction and hands on assistance for various parish projects and events.

Social Concerns – KOVAR, Transformation Retreats, Noah's Children, AIDS Ministry, Prison Ministry, and emergency needs as they arise in our community.

If you are interested in becoming a Knight, you may approach any Knight (wearing a blue name tag). The Knights are looking for Catholic Men 18+ who wish to deepen their faith and their ties within the St. Gabriel community. Website: <http://www.saintgabriel.org/Knights-of-Columbus>.

Parish Policies

Ministry with the Sick or the Bereaved – We ask that parishioners inform the parish when they are aware of a family member who is sick or deceased. However, parishioners should not request assistance except for themselves or members of their own family. In the Commons area there is a “Book of the Sick” where you can record the names of the sick and, with the permission of the sick or their immediate family, indicate the desire for a prayer shawl or a card.

Inclement Weather Policy - We do not follow school closings, or those of any other institutions, for bad weather conditions. We make those decisions on a per-event basis and according to the most current weather conditions. You can check our website for cancellations of large events like Masses, Faith Formation sessions, or for office closings. We will announce cancellations or closings by parish-wide emails.

Parking Restrictions - Do not park in the circle in front of the church building or behind the church building near the dumpster. Parking is not allowed *at any time* on either side of Winterpock Road or on either side of Bethia Road. The Chesterfield County Police have notified us that cars parked in any of these locations can be ticketed and/or towed.

The overflow parking lot off Bethia Road is only open on Sundays & Holy Days with large attendance Masses. At all other times, a chain blocks the use of the lot, which is a safety precaution. Please do not leave your car there for an extended period after a Sunday Mass.

Photo Publication – From time to time, the parish will publish in printed materials, on our website or in/through other modes of parish communication photographs containing pictures of parishioners. If you do not wish your picture to be published, contact the parish office to inform us of your wishes. Photos of minors will not be published without written consent from parents.