

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church**  
25 Church Street  
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In 1840, the Reverend Robert Prout visited the county seat of Calvert County to ascertain the need for and interest in a new Episcopal parish. With the nearest parishes then at Port Republic and Sunderland, Mr. Prout found considerable interest, and on March 1, 1841 the new parish was formally organized. A vestry was elected, and they chose the name "St. Paul's" for the parish. Mr. Prout was elected the first Rector. Mr. Prout referred to St. Paul's as "Our Infant Zion."

In June 1842, St. Paul's Parish was formally admitted into union with Convention of the Diocese of Maryland. The first services of the new parish were held in the Calvert County courthouse. The church was constructed in 1842, under the supervision of Dr. James Duke. Bricks for the building were fired in a kiln located on the site. On Christmas Day 1842 divine service was held for the first time in St. Paul's Church. The Rt. Rev. William R. Whittingham, fourth Bishop of Maryland, consecrated St. Paul's Church on October 10, 1848.

The land on which St. Paul's Church sits was acquired from the family of Dr. Benjamin Williams. This was the same family, whose land called Williams Old Field was selected in the 1720's as the site for the new courthouse in Prince Fredericktown.

In 1856 a Rectory and glebe of ninety acres was purchased. On March 3, 1882, the Great Fire swept through Prince Frederick, leaving almost every building in ashes. The courthouse was destroyed, and a temporary courthouse was set up in the Rectory. In June of that year a second fire destroyed the Rectory. Miraculously, the direction from which the wind was blowing saved St. Paul's from harm. These fires left St. Paul's as the oldest public building in Prince Frederick. A second Rectory was built in 1883.

A new rectory was eventually constructed and used until the 1930's. St. Paul's next rectory located on Main Street, was built and used until 1992 when Project Echo (Ecumenical Council for the Homeless) purchased the building and is currently using the residence today. St. Paul's current rectory is located next to the church and is known as Barnabas House.

In 1885 a steeple was erected at the entrance of the church. The bell tower was dedicated and rung for the first time on July 13, 1885 as a memorial to one of St. Paul's most faithful members, Charles S. Parran, who had left a bequest for this purpose.

The interior of the church has undergone several remodeling. Two of the more significant ones were the addition of the altar window in 1909 and the rearrangement of the pews in 1915 to allow a center aisle. The window is a memorial to Mr. Prout and the founding vestry, and a plaque in the narthex memorializes this fact. In 1982 the Duke Room was completed behind the church and provides more space for the Choir, acolytes and priest. In 2001 the church roof and floor were replaced.

Construction of a Parish House beside the churchyard began in 1936 and stood until the current parish house was planned for and built in 1993. The new Parish House was dedicated to Margaret Shields King, whose family still attends services at St. Paul's. Sunday School and various church functions are held in the Parish House. Many community groups and individuals use the Parish House as well.

Religion has been a strong element in the history of Calvert County. Some of the oldest Episcopal churches are still standing such as Middleham Chapel in Lusby, rebuilt in 1748; Christ Church in Port Republic, rebuilt in 1772; and All Saints in Sunderland, rebuilt in 1774.

During the past 164 years there have been there have been 31 rectors. In 2004 St. Paul's called their first woman rector, The Rev. Julie C. Wizorek.

For a complete history of the church the book, "Our Infant Zion" written by Ailene W. Hutchins, is available from the Church office. The book was commissioned for the 150th anniversary of the church founding. Included in the 182 page book are photographs from the early 1900s and a complete listing of tombstone inscriptions from the church cemetery.

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[www.stpaulspf.org](http://www.stpaulspf.org)