At St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Federal Way, the clergy, staff, volunteers and members seek to follow a mission statement that says they will be a community of faith centered on Christ and celebrated in the Eucharist.

They seek to be a community that serves the poor and needy of the church and the community at large, “in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul, our patron, and to be a community continually open to the spirit of conversion and growth as a living sign of the Kingdom of God in our world.”

Father Thomas Vandenberg has been pastor since 1982.

“Our parish is very active, with five weekend Masses; each is well attended,” Father Vandenberg said. “As a parish we set aside 10 percent of our ordinary income to use to help people in emergency situations. We are blessed with excellent musicians, an adult choir and ensembles that tailor their music to the Masses they lead,” he said.

Joe McQuiston, the pastoral assistant for adult education, said his ministry looks to continue “to build the ministry of Christ.”

“We build resources that help adults understand and live their faith; this stems from their baptism — for them to share the Gospel in their homes and in their community,” McQuiston said. “We are all called to follow in the spirit of Christ.”

Other parish ministries include the Family Ministry, the Youth Ministry, and the Music Ministry.

There is also one called the Ministry of Community Spirit. That ministry features a variety of programs, including Adopt-a-Flower Bed. Under that program, parish members work on the parish grounds to help maintain the beauty. Flower-bed areas are assigned and participants maintain and inspect their spaces regularly throughout the growing season. Parish school families are encouraged to maintain the areas around the school, and to count the work toward their school service time.

The Layette Committee is also part of the Ministry of Community Spirit. In that program, a group of women gather monthly to create layettes for newborn infants in need. Their talents include hand-knitted or crocheted blankets and sweater sets.

Other programs in the Ministry of Community Spirit include Catholic Youth Organization activities; Community Supper for the needy; Couples for Christ, a family renewal program; the Knights of Columbus; the St. Vincent de Paul Society; and the Legion of Mary, in which volunteers help priests minister to the sick.

Annual celebrations include the Parish Fall Festival to celebrate cultural diversity, and Simbang Gabi, an Advent celebration of Philippine tradition dating back to the 17th century.

The parish, founded in 1961, has 2,360 registered households. St. Vincent de Paul School opened in 1964. It is a K-8 school with 330 students. The principal is Wanda Stewart. Informational material on the school says that staffers seek to promote academic achievement and spiritual development for students and their families. “This is reflected through our actions, support of each other, and service to the community,” the material states.

The current church building was constructed in 1996. The old church now serves as the school gymnasium and the parish social hall. All parish buildings, including the school, are on the same campus.