

# ST. JOSEPH'S-ON-THE-MOUNTAIN

## Episcopal Church • Mentone, Alabama



### *A small church with a big heart.*

We celebrate Christ as a community. • We are inclusive and welcoming of all.  
We respect our foundation of stewardship. • We strive to grow in our understanding of God.



### **Our Mission**

To live and celebrate as a giving, worshipping community committed to sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

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Find Us on



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## We seek a rector who...

- Demonstrates a disciplined understanding of the **teachings of the Bible and God's presence** in the world
- Leads others in the **formation and development** of a deeper spiritual life
- Provides **pastoral care** to people at significant/challenging times in their lives, whether at church or in homes, hospitals, nursing homes, hospice, etc.
- Can **equip and foster** the congregation to minister to those in need, within and beyond the Parish
- Is able to **help people of all ages** understand and live the Christian faith
- Can lead the **design and implementation of Christian education programs**
- Possesses effective and engaging **preaching/public speaking** skills
- Teaches the **importance of stewardship** and its role in the life of the Parish
- Works well with the **diocese and diocesan programs**
- Possesses the skills to **manage and oversee our staffing needs**
- Is knowledgeable and involved in the **financial affairs** of the Parish
- Is willing to work **interdenominationally** across different faith traditions

### Our Assets

- Membership that is committed to living out the Gospel
- Effective community outreach programs
- Established and growing online ministry
- Well-maintained building and grounds
- Strong financial position

### Our Challenges

- Continued growth will require larger facilities and thoughtful space management.
- As membership ages, we need to explore avenues for connecting with newcomers.
- We need to find ways to engage every member in outreach services and lay ministry.

### Our Aspirations

- Use our talents and resources to develop more extensive Christian education programs
- Offer regular Bible study groups
- Expand the Cursillo movement
- Further expand participation in lay ministry and outreach programs

# Worship at St. Joseph's

Central to Christian life at St. Joseph's is following in Christ's call to worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24, BCP, 833) through the scripturally based Book of Common Prayer Liturgy. St. Joseph's offers the invitation for all to come, to feel accepted and welcomed, and to be spiritually fed by the Risen Christ in love, peace, courage, and hope in the following ways.



## Sunday Morning with Holy Communion, 11 a.m.

As a primarily Rite II parish, our worship services are Christ-centered with an openness to innovation in prayer and through music, which includes the Episcopal hymnal, Alleluiah III, and Taize. (Worshippers have the choice of attending worship in person or via Zoom.)

## During the Week

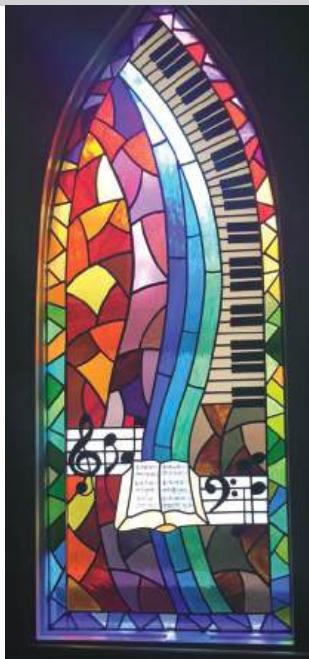
On the first Thursday of each month, we offer a Healing Eucharist, in which lay persons are welcomed to read Scripture, set the altar, and help serve Holy Communion.

## Special Services

The seasons of the church year are followed with corresponding worship services. Additionally, as the calendar allows, we invite all to a Celtic service, Taize, Stations of the Cross, and Blessing of the Animals.

## Devotional Times for One or Many

All are invited to attend Centering Prayer on Monday mornings via Zoom, and to meditate and commune with the living God in the Sacred Garden by tracing the Stations of the Cross, walking the labyrinth, or simply sitting in the beauty of God's creation as represented in the Sacred Garden.



## Spiritual Formation

The tradition in the Episcopal Church is to invite all to grow in holiness, in Christ, and in the union and communion with God, both individually and corporately. Recognizing there is not a "one size fits all" prescription, in this growth, grace abounds at St. Joseph's in the encouragement of one another through the Greatest Commandment and as witnesses of the Great Commission.

## Our common and individual spiritual growth is nurtured through biblically-based offerings, such as:

- Weekly Sunday Discipleship Forum
- Sunday Children's Church
- Yearly Education for Ministry Seminar
- Advent and Lenten Wednesday Worship and Soup Suppers
- St. Joseph's Lenten Meditation Booklet
- Lay-led Book Studies

## Online Offerings

Sunday sermons are streamed live and archived on the church YouTube channel ([youtube.com/@saintjosephs4196/videos](https://youtube.com/@saintjosephs4196/videos)) and on the church website ([stjom.church](http://stjom.church)).

# Parish Ministries

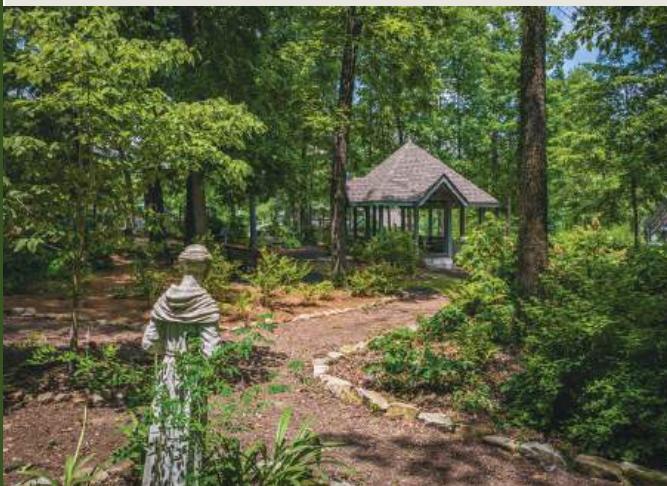


## Opportunities to Serve

- Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEMs)
- Acolytes
- Lectors
- Music Ministry
- Media Team
- Ushers
- Altar Guild
- Flower Guild
- Episcopal Church Women
- Volunteers to help the tasks of the Senior and Junior Wardens
- Volunteers supporting the St. Joseph's Food Pantry

## St. Joseph's Sacred Garden

This tranquil oasis is welcome to all, and is used by members, non-member residents, and town visitors alike. In addition to being a place for reflection, the garden provides an outdoor space for Holy Eucharist services, funerals and other events, such as our Live Nativity presentation.



## Parish Ministries / 2

**A**t the heart of St. Joseph's is our commitment to love our neighbors through service. The scope and depth of our support for the community is thanks to the time, talents, and generosity of our congregates and rector. From serving nutritionally challenged neighbors to providing our facilities to area support groups to funding scholarships, we are a church that sets goals to help others—and we often exceed those goals.

Below are examples of our outreach efforts. In addition to our existing programs, we always invite and nurture new outreach ideas as needs arise.



### Food Ministries

- Weekly pantry—20-plus volunteers distributed over 73,000 pounds of staples and fresh foods to 40 households over the past year.
- The 2024 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper raised \$3,000 for the local rescue squad.
- Meals on Wheels
- School Backpack Program
- Emergency food requests
- Front porch giving basket
- Holiday family food boxes



### Support of Other Community Groups and Facilities

- Mentone Volunteer Fire Department
- DeSoto Rescue Squad
- Moon Lake Library
- Emergency Dental Program (ECW)
- Vann-McCary Scholarship—St. Joseph's Episcopal Church Scholarships (secondary and occupational schools)
- Emergency assistance
- Health-related travel vouchers
- Rector's Discretionary Fund—Individual assistance with utility bills, propane in cold weather, and dental expense assistance, for example
- Emergency Food and Shelter Program (grant monies)

*At the heart of St. Joseph's is our commitment to love our neighbors through service.*

# St. Joseph's by the Numbers

We have shown steady growth in our membership over the past several years. In fact, in March 2024 on Confirmation Sunday, we welcomed 19 new confirmants. New attendees include a group of children, which has resulted in our hiring a children's minister. St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain, although a small family parish, is in a healthy financial position. We are debt-free. We have the following endowed designated funds, which are invested with the Diocese of Alabama.

*As of year-end 2023:*

Chimes Fund	\$7,636	Vann-McCary Scholarship Fund	\$123,000
Mil Ferry Educational Fund	\$29,539	Sacred Garden Endowment Fund	\$11,199

We have two undesignated investment funds with the diocese.

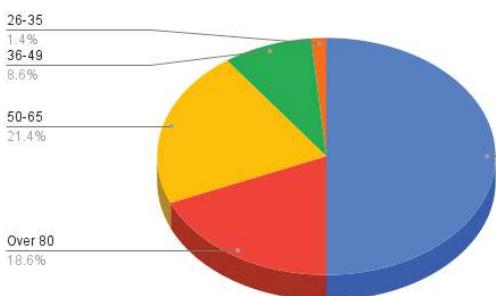
Operating Reserve Fund	\$93,748	Ellen Powell Fund	\$94,367
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Success in receiving various grants and donations has allowed us to make several updates to the outside of the church and to expand our parking area to accommodate our growing attendance. Our 2023 expenses for outreach and mission were approximately \$52,500. We exceeded our pledge to the diocese due to income beyond our projections. We pledge 10% of our undesignated income to the diocese. Our budgets have yielded surpluses at the end of our fiscal years, which have been used to increase the operating reserves and fund needed projects.

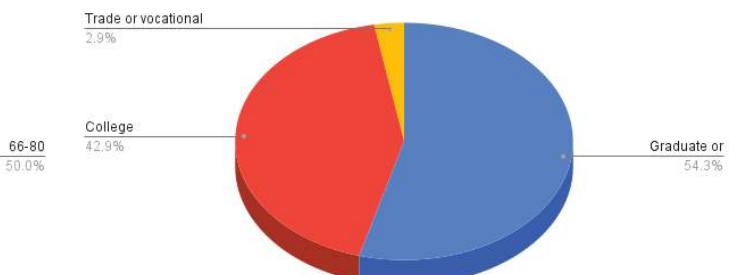
Year	Membership	ASA	Pledges	Amount Pledged	Plate and Pledge
2021	112	39	39	\$135,760	\$179,433
2022	113	42	39	\$135,950	\$192,874
2023	112	59	34	\$105,423	\$223,277

*(Midyear 2024, ASA was 74)*

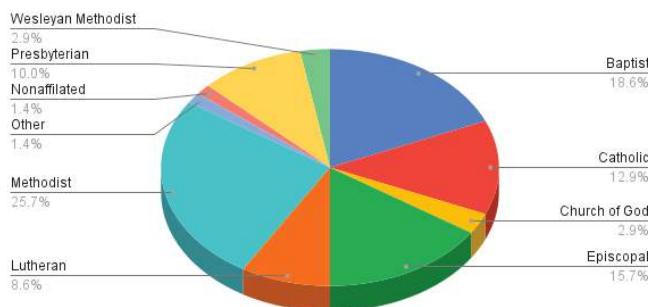
Age of Congregants



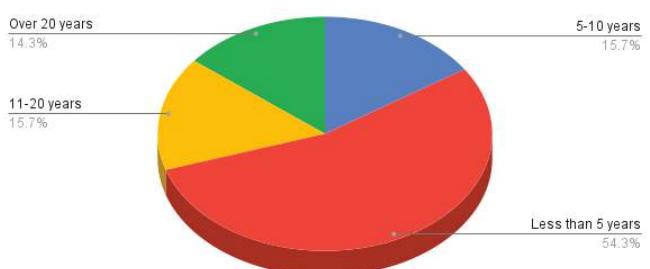
Level of Formal Education



Congregants' Childhood Denominations



Years Attending St. Joseph's



## A History as Unique as Our Mountain

**S**t. Joseph's was born in the heart of Mentone, in a cabin many call the "slab shack" for its cut-wood construction. In that small structure that no longer exists, the first services were held in 1965 by The Rev. John Franklin Machen, a retired Episcopal priest. Fast-forward a bit to our current structure, built around a 157-year-old cabin (pictured below) that was home to several generations of Mentonians before St. Joseph's was formed. Here our first service as a recognized congregation by the Diocese of Alabama took place in 1971, conducted by The Rev. Graham Glover. In 1972, Bishop Furman Charles "Bill" Stough visited St. Joseph's for the first confirmation.

By 1974 the building was more or less what it is today. Over the years, mainly through work done by volunteers and church members, the building was shaped into a

church with construction materials that included wood reclaimed from area buildings of the same vintage as the cabin.

### Harmony of Past and Present

As with any well-used building, parts of the church were showing wear and tear. By 2015, plans took shape to give St. Joseph's a facelift.

Our recent renovation lovingly honors the historic 1870s cabin in the center of the church while offering every modern amenity.

In addition to interior improvements, the church revived plans for a garden retreat. A work in progress, the Sacred Garden includes a gazebo, native plantings, 1,000 feet of pathways, memorial benches, Stations of the Cross and a prayer labyrinth. We have also installed a Memorial Garden for the ashes of members and their families.



*Historic cabin inside the church as it looks today*

# Our Mountain Home

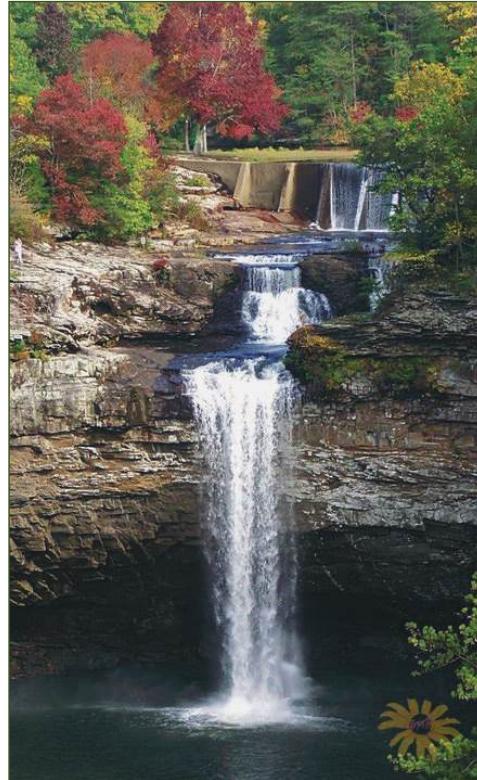


"I understand why Jesus so often went to a mountain to pray.  
It's because mountaintops permit you to poke through and into the holy.  
Mountaintops provide a moment to 'hear the clock ticking'  
and to slow down and to talk about the holy."  
—The Rev. William M. King, *Places of Secret Prayer—Pilgrimage in Alabama*

Mentone is a charming and historic township that is thought to have been named for the French community of Menton. Mentone's uniqueness has spurred many articles, books, and other media coverage, making it **one of Alabama's most popular vacation destinations** and a peaceful stop for tourists making their way along the Lookout Mountain Parkway. Established as a health resort during the late 19th century, its history and legends are among the most colorful in the state.

Today, Mentone is known for its **variety of girls' and boys' summer camps** and for its many vacation rentals.

With a population of about 400 inside the town limits, Mentone is home to both full-time residents and folks who live in other parts of the country but whose love of the area compels them to maintain second homes here. A



genuinely inviting (some say "magical") place, Mentone is a destination for people who enjoy beautiful scenery, history, arts and crafts, antiques shops, and music—whether for a weekend or a lifetime.

## Geography & Climate

Winters here are mild, with just enough snowfall to enjoy the scenery. Summers are moderately warm but cooler than in lower-lying areas. The average temperature is 64 degrees. With an elevation of over 1,700 feet, **Mentone is the highest incorporated town in Alabama**, yet not far

from major metropolitan areas:

- 15 miles from Fort Payne, AL
- 50 miles from Gadsden, AL
- 50 miles from Rome, GA
- 50 miles from Chattanooga, TN
- 110 miles from Birmingham, AL
- 100 miles from Atlanta, GA
- 160 miles from Nashville, TN

# Our Mountain Home / 2

## Recreation & Attractions

Mentone is just five miles from **DeSoto State Park**, a 3,500-acre site nestled atop Lookout Mountain that features swimming, hiking and mountain biking trails, playground and picnic areas, zip lines, vacation cottages, and camping facilities. DeSoto Falls borders Mentone's town limits, with **Little River Canyon**, a national preserve, just a nine-mile drive away. There are also eight community parks nearby, a large sports complex, a recreation center, senior citizens' center and believe it or not, a ski slope.

## Economy

In the past, Mentone was known solely as a resort area. In more recent times, the town's economy has been based upon camps, small businesses, and tourism.

## Education

Students attend primary and secondary schools in either Valley Head or Fort Payne. Cornerstone Christian Academy is in nearby Rainsville. There are also numerous community colleges, four-

year colleges, and universities located within 100 miles of Mentone.

## Healthcare

The DeKalb Regional Medical Center in Fort Payne is the closest hospital to Mentone, offering full emergency services as well as a pain management center, physical fitness center, cancer center, maternity center, and full in-patient/outpatient services. In addition, several major medical centers are all within 160 miles—Huntsville, Birmingham, Chattanooga, Nashville, and Atlanta.

## Community Organizations

This small but active community has nine local churches, a Cub Scout pack sponsored by St. Joseph's, and several active non-profit organizations, such as the Mentone Educational Resources Foundation, Rhododendron Garden Club, Little River Arts Council, the Mentone Arts and Cultural Center, a public library, and Moon Lake Village with art studios, artisan shops, and a performance amphitheater.

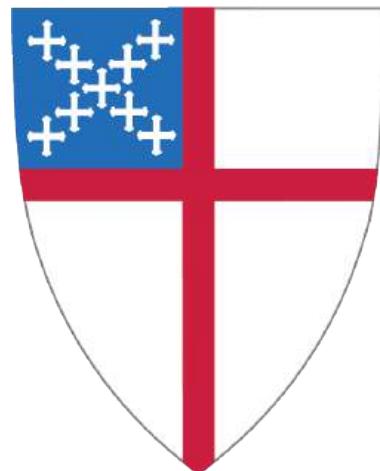
*While Mentone is a well-known vacation destination, many agree that it is a spiritual place, where one can find inspiration in breathtaking vistas, waterfalls, lakes and woods.*



# The Episcopal Diocese of Alabama and St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain

The Episcopal Diocese of Alabama is in Province IV of the Episcopal Church and serves the northern half of the state of Alabama. The southern half of Alabama, the counties below an imaginary line drawn east to west just south of Montgomery, forms part of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast. The Diocese of Alabama follows the Episcopal tradition of worship across 87 parishes; three college ministries; and Camp McDowell, the diocesan camp and conference center. The current and 12th bishop of Alabama is The Right Rev. Dr. Glenda Curry. She was installed as diocesan bishop in January 2021 and maintains offices at Carpenter House in Birmingham, alongside of the Cathedral Church of the Advent.

Alabama is the only diocese in the Episcopal Church where there are no mission congregations—all churches are expected to be self-supporting and self-governing parishes, with diocesan subsidies reserved for new church starts only. Total membership is estimated to be over 30,000 people.



*The Right Rev. Glenda Curry  
& The Rev. Dr. Ethan P.J. Ferguson*

St. Joseph's-on-the-Mountain plays a continuing and active role in the life of the diocese. Examples of diocesan engagement include the parish priest and parishioners' regular attendance at the annual diocesan conference; service on diocesan committees; regular participation in periodic workshops and training programs; maintenance of an active ECW presence; annual covenant support of the diocese; and an active Cursillo ministry.



The McDowell Camp and Conference Center is a ministry of the Diocese of Alabama, hosting retreats, conferences, weddings, educational programs, and other get-togethers in a beautiful setting in Nauvoo, Alabama.