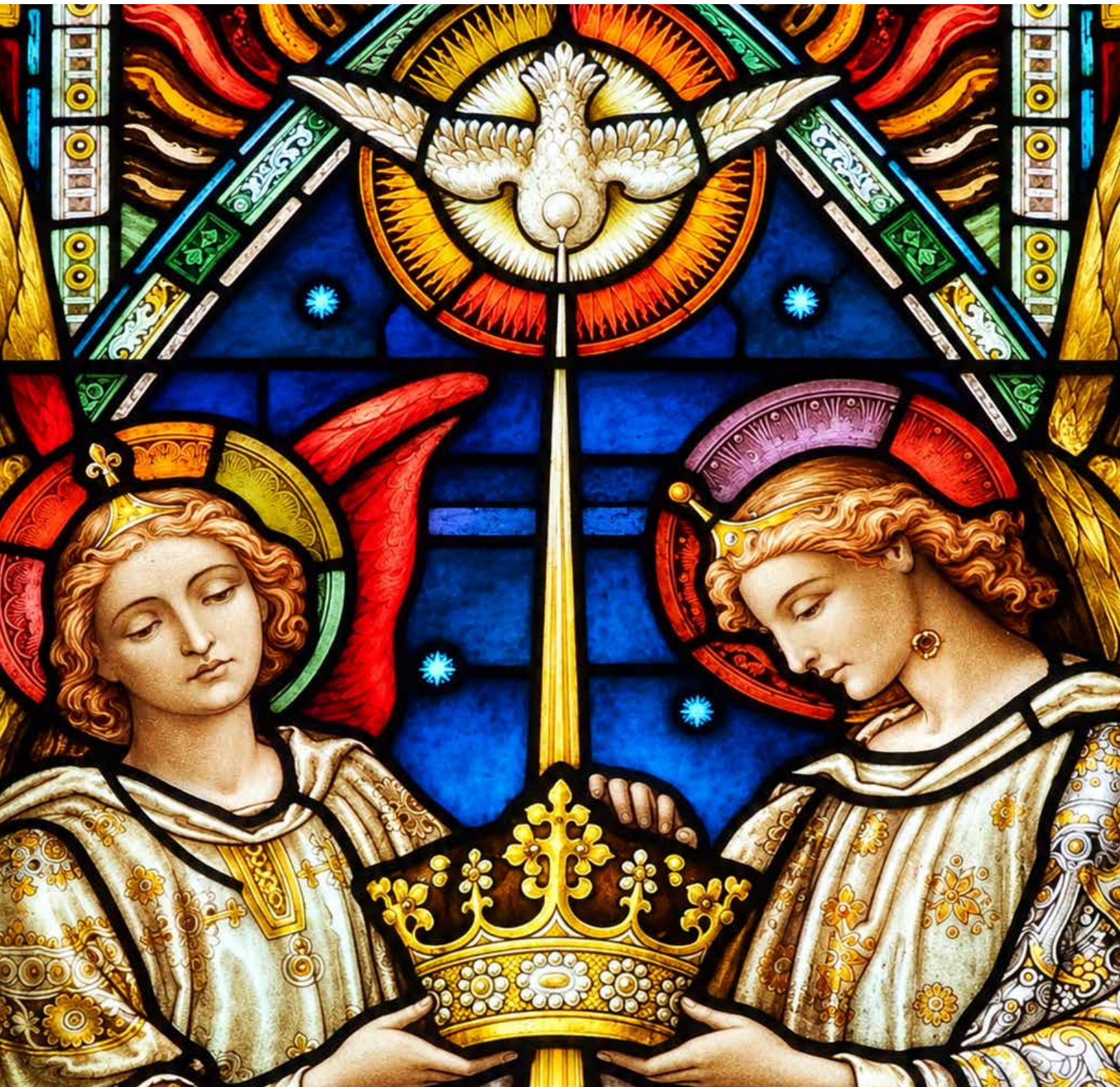




THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE
HOLY COMFORTER
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA



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Welcome

We Welcome Everyone

At Holy Comforter, we believe every person is created in the image of God and every person has a place at Christ's table. Whether you have been part of the Episcopal Church your entire life, are exploring faith for the first time, or simply searching for a church to call home, you will find a community that welcomes you with open hearts and genuine hospitality.

For more than 160 years, Holy Comforter has sought to share God's love by creating a place where people are known, valued, and encouraged to grow in faith together. Here, worship is meaningful, friendships are authentic, and service extends beyond our walls into the Montgomery and the River Region communities. We are more than a congregation—we are a family learning each day what it means to love God and love our neighbors.

Our History

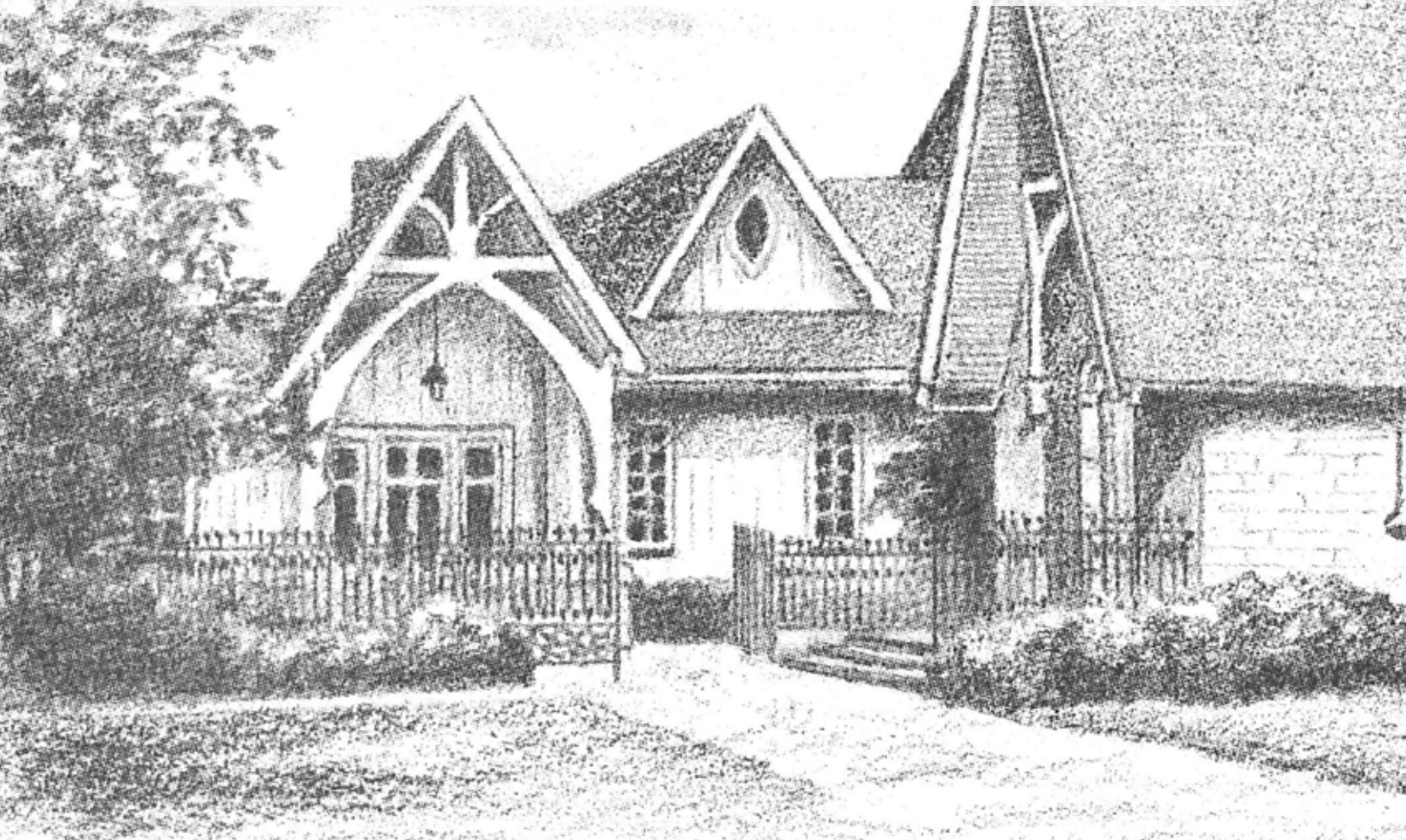
Faithful Through Every Season

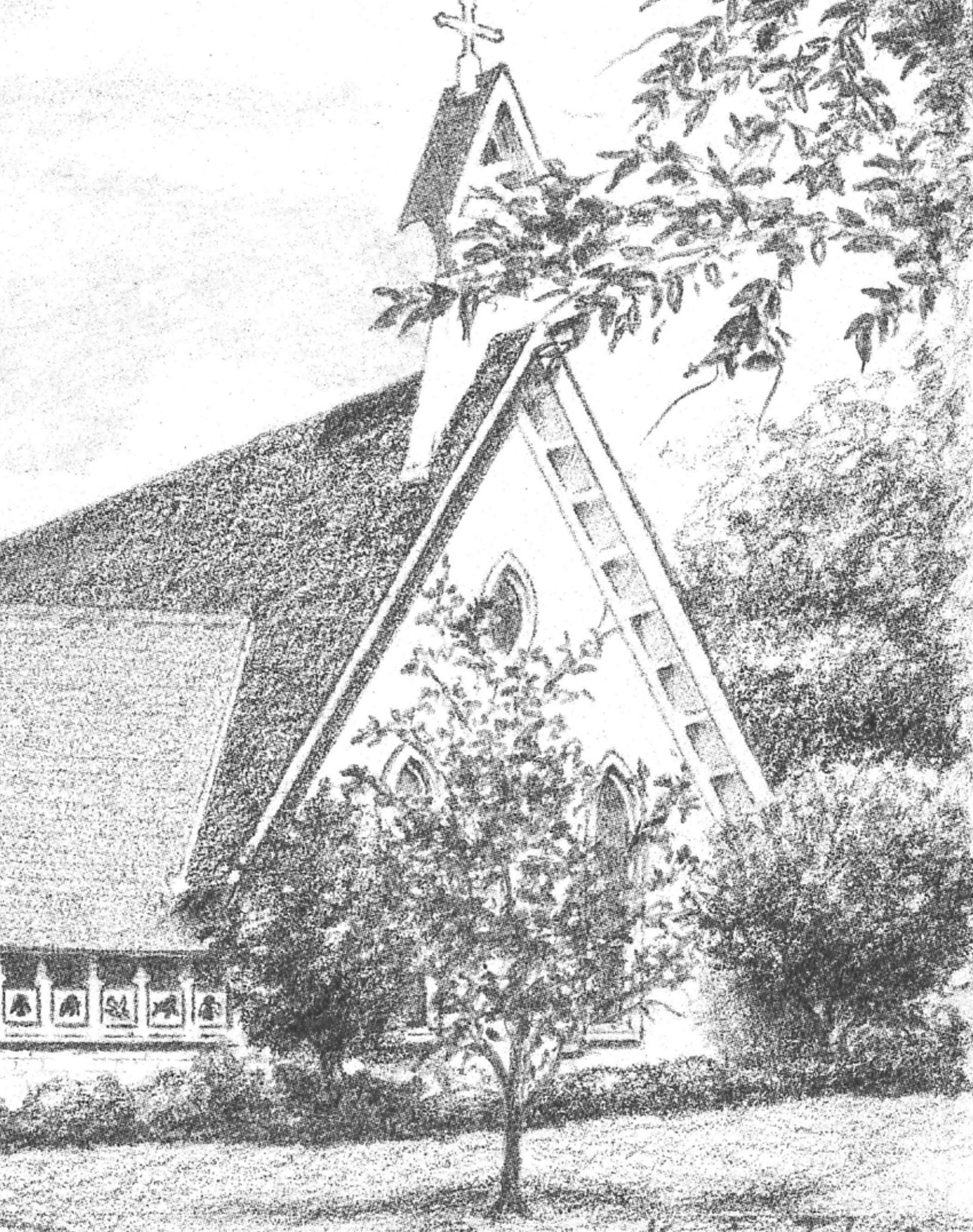
Holy Comforter's story is one of faith, perseverance, and a steadfast commitment to serving God's people. Founded in 1864 during one of the most difficult periods in our nation's history, the parish has continually adapted to meet the changing needs of our community, while remaining firmly rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Over more than a century and a half, Holy Comforter has worshiped in three locations, each move reflecting not simply a change of address but a response to the growth and movement of the community it serves. From its earliest days on Perry Street, to decades of ministry on Goldthwaite Street, and finally to its present campus on Woodley Road, the congregation has consistently followed God's call to be present where people live, work, and seek hope.

As Montgomery changed, Holy Comforter changed with it. New buildings were added, ministries expanded, schools were established, and parish life flourished as generations of faithful clergy and lay leaders built upon the foundation laid by those who came before them. Throughout every season of growth, transition, and renewal, Holy Comforter has remained committed to worship, service, Christian formation, and compassionate outreach.

Today, Holy Comforter honors its rich heritage while looking confidently toward continued growth in the future. The same spirit of hospitality, resilience, and faithful service that shaped the parish in 1864 continues to guide its many ministries today as it seeks new opportunities to share Christ's love with Montgomery and beyond.





Karin Johns

Who We Are Today

Inspired By Christ's Call To Love Without Exception

Holy Comforter is a welcoming Episcopal parish rooted in the Anglican tradition and inspired by Christ's call to love fully and without exception.

On Sunday mornings you'll hear the choir in rehearsal praising God with voice and instruments; friends greeting one another by name, and often with hugs; children eagerly gathering to ring the bell that welcomes all to worship; and the familiar rhythm of the Book of Common Prayer drawing us together around Word and Sacrament. Reverence and joy exist side by side, reminding us that worship is both the heart of our parish life and the beginning of our call to serve the world.

We are a congregation of many backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences, yet we are united

by something greater than our differences—the love of Christ. Here, people are encouraged to ask questions, grow in faith, serve generously, and discover the joy of belonging to a caring Christian community.

One of Holy Comforter's greatest strengths is simply the way we care for one another.

Life together extends far beyond Sunday worship. Parish dinners, semi-annual potlucks, coffee hour, game nights, fellowship meals, and informal gatherings create countless opportunities to build lasting friendships and walk alongside one another through every season of life.

We often say that we may not all think alike, but we genuinely love one another.





Where Ministry Takes Root

Holy Comforter has long been a place where ideas for serving others are welcomed, nurtured, and given room to grow. Throughout our history, parishioners have recognized needs within the community and responded—not always knowing where a ministry might ultimately lead, but trusting that faithful beginnings can grow into something lasting.

That spirit has taken many forms. A preschool founded at Holy Comforter later found a new home at the Episcopal Church of the Ascension, where its ministry could continue in a location better suited to its needs. Holy Cross Episcopal School also began at Holy Comforter and for many years served children and families throughout Montgomery.

That same spirit continues today. What began as a food pantry in a closet has grown into a significant shared ministry with a local Presbyterian congregation, serving neighbors throughout the community. Many Colors Arts Collective grew from a desire to create a place of belonging and creative expression for adults with special needs, offering a ministry unlike any other in the surrounding area.

Some ministries remain within our walls. Others joyfully grow beyond them. For Holy Comforter, the measure of a ministry has never been whether we keep it, but whether it continues to serve God's people. We are grateful to be a place where new ideas can take root, faithful people can nurture them, and ministries can grow wherever God may lead.

Ministries

Ministries That Build God's Kingdom

The ministries of Holy Comforter belongs to the entire parish.

Parishioners faithfully serve as members of the Altar Guild, Flower Guild, Choir, Readers, Intercessors, Ushers, Communication Ministry, Online Worship, Greeters, Morning Prayer Officiants, and numerous other worship ministries that enrich our common life. Pastoral Care and Home Communion ministries extend Christ's presence to those unable to gather with us each week.

Whether serving at the altar, behind a camera, arranging flowers, visiting parishioners, or offering hospitality, every ministry is a reminder that God has given each of us gifts to build up the Body of Christ.





Holy Comforter Families

Bringing Generations Together in Faith

Families are an important part of the life of Holy Comforter, and our ministries continue to grow in response to the needs and interests of our children and parents. Rather than relying on one-size-fits-all programming, we seek opportunities that bring generations together in faith, friendship, and service. Children are welcomed not simply into programs, but into the life of the parish.

Monthly gatherings provide a shared meal, fellowship across generations, and age-appropriate Christian formation. Seasonal Advent and Lenten activities, outreach projects, and creative learning experiences help children and adults alike discover the joy of growing together in Christ.

Outreach



Love and Serve One Another

Our faith comes alive as we serve others.

Holy Comforter actively serves our communities through ministries that nourish body, mind, and spirit. Whether providing food through our Food Pantry, cultivating vegetables in the Community Garden for our Food Pantry, providing a place for adults with special needs through meaningful arts and community activities in the Many Colors Arts Collective, or enriching the community through the Kaleidoscope Music Series, we seek to reflect Christ's compassion in tangible ways.

Our members also serve through Kairos Prison Ministry, Kairos Outside, Cursillo Reunion Groups, and by opening our campus to organizations that promote education, music, encouragement, and support. We believe every act of service is an opportunity to share God's love.





Montgomery and the River Region

The River Region offers a unique blend of history, culture, natural beauty and opportunity. Centered around Alabama's capital city, the region includes vibrant communities, many school systems, thriving arts, higher education, and a rich quality of life for individuals and families alike.

Montgomery is a city where history continues to shape the future. From nationally recognized museums and performing arts to parks, restaurants, and community events, the city offers countless opportunities to learn, grow, and serve. At the same time, the surrounding River Region provides welcoming neighborhoods, nearby lakes, rolling countryside, and a strong sense of Southern hospitality.

Holy Comforter is grateful to call the River Region home. Our parish is committed to serving this diverse and growing community while building relationships that reflect Christ's reconciling love and offer hope for generations to come.



Holy Comforter is proud to be part of the Diocese of Alabama, a community of Episcopal congregations united in worship, discipleship, and service. Guided by the Diocese's vision of seeing the face of Christ in every person, we join with churches throughout Alabama in proclaiming the Gospel and serving our communities.

The Diocese is entering an exciting new chapter under the leadership of the Rt. Rev. Richard T. Lawson III, who was consecrated as the 13th Bishop of Alabama in June 2026. Bishop Lawson brings a deep connection to Alabama and to the life of the Diocese, having begun his ordained ministry here before serving congregations in Tennessee and Colorado. His return to Alabama brings both a familiarity with our shared history and a fresh perspective for the future.

Across the Diocese, congregations are encouraged and supported in strengthening parish life, developing faithful leaders, deepening relationships, and finding new ways to share Christ's love within their communities. Holy Comforter values being part of this larger Episcopal family and looks forward with hope to this new season of ministry together.

What We Offer

A Family Rooted In Christ

Holy Comforter offers something that cannot be measured by attendance or programs—a church family where people are welcomed without pretense, loved without condition, and encouraged to become who God created them to be.

Here you will find beautiful worship, authentic friendships, opportunities to serve, thoughtful Christian formation, and a congregation that embraces diversity while remaining united in Christ.





Our Vision and Mission

OUR VISION

We aspire to be an open, warmly accepting Christian community.

OUR MISSION

Holy Comforter's mission is to serve the parish and community with programs that support the whole person, body, mind and spirit and to maintain a safe, joyous, restorative space where all are welcome.





Holy Comforter Statistics

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Baptized Members	227	221	217	200	222
Average Sunday Attendance	39	45	49	47 +7	52 +9
Number of Pledge Units	56	53	50	42	44
Total Income	420,862	320,142	327,042	465,107	349,116
Annual Expense Budget	351,783	323,234	350,798	299,582	305,476

Note. Income comes from pledges, plate offerings, grants and other sources. The plus number under the attendance is online average attendance. It was not reported prior to 2024.

"Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony."

Colossians 3:14



PARISH PROFILE

2026

2911 Woodley Road, Montgomery, AL 36111
www.holycomfortermgm.org
search@holycomfortermgm.org
334.281.1337



Prayerfully Seeking Our Next Rector

Holy Comforter is prayerfully seeking a rector whose character reflects the values that have shaped this parish for generations. More than a dynamic personality or impressive résumé, we hope to welcome a priest whose ministry is grounded in authenticity, humility, compassion, and a deep love for God's people.

We seek a priest who listens before speaking, builds relationships before making decisions, and leads with wisdom, grace, and emotional maturity. Someone who is comfortable walking alongside people through life's greatest joys and deepest challenges, recognizing that faithful ministry begins with presence long before it begins with programs.

Our next rector should appreciate the richness of Episcopal tradition while remaining open to thoughtful growth and new opportunities for ministry. We hope to welcome a collaborative leader who values consensus, encourages participation, and inspires others to discover and use the gifts God has given them.

Most of all, we seek someone who genuinely enjoys being with people—someone who finds joy in parish life, embraces diversity, welcomes newcomers, and shares our desire to build a community where every person knows they are loved, valued, and invited to grow in faith.

We are praying for our next rector to help us become all that God is calling us to be.



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE
HOLY COMFORTER
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"Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me."

Psalm 25:4–5



RECTOR SEARCH
2026

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Vocation Hub Profile - Complete Narrative Draft

Compiled from the committee-edited Ministry Context responses, parish survey results, Listening Sessions, and parish-profile materials.

Ministry Context and Desired Skills

What are your community's hopes for this position, and what qualities in applicants will help you live into them?

Holy Comforter enters this next chapter with gratitude for who we are and genuine hope for who God is calling us to become. We are a close-knit, welcoming congregation with a strong sense of community, a commitment to thoughtful Episcopal worship, and a deep desire to share Christ's love through hospitality, pastoral care, and service. Our hope is not to become a different church, but to build faithfully upon the foundation that already gives Holy Comforter its distinctive spirit.

We seek a rector who will first come to know us—our people, our history, our ministries, and the community we serve—and then help us discern together where God is leading. We value collaborative leadership rather than leadership imposed from above. Our next rector should be comfortable empowering lay people, encouraging new ideas, strengthening existing ministries, exploring new ways of serving and guiding change with patience, wisdom, and sensitivity.

Pastoral care is especially important to our congregation. We hope for a priest who is compassionate, approachable, emotionally intelligent, and genuinely present in the lives of parishioners. We also seek a thoughtful and engaging priest whose sermons are grounded in Scripture and the Gospel while speaking meaningfully to everyday life.

Holy Comforter is committed to being a place where people of different backgrounds, ages, experiences, and identities are genuinely welcomed and valued. Our next rector should embrace that spirit of inclusion and help us continue to offer a Christian witness of love, grace, and belonging within the wider Montgomery and River Region communities.

Looking toward the future, we recognize opportunities and challenges in growing our congregation, welcoming new members, strengthening ministries for children and youth, expanding Christian formation, maintaining financial sustainability, caring for our campus, and increasing our visibility in the community. We seek a rector with the energy, administrative ability, creativity, and pastoral heart to help us address these needs without losing the warmth, relationships, worship, outreach, and distinctive character that make Holy Comforter home.

Recommended Leadership Skills - Select 5

- ✓ Collaborative Leadership
- ✓ Congregational Development
- ✓ Administration
- ✓ Leadership Development
- ✓ Change Management

These five best reflect the full profile: shared clergy-lay leadership, intentional growth, sound administration, development of lay leaders, and the ability to guide change without losing Holy Comforter's identity.

Recommended Ministry Skills - Select 10

- ✓ Pastoral Care
- ✓ Preaching
- ✓ Church Growth
- ✓ Children/Family Formation
- ✓ Community Building
- ✓ Outreach
- ✓ Worship/Liturgy
- ✓ Stewardship
- ✓ Intergenerational Formation
- ✓ Scripture Study

These choices emphasize the areas that recur most consistently across the survey, Listening Sessions, parish profile, and narrative responses. Financial sustainability remains important, but Administration already captures part of that need; the ten ministry selections are therefore reserved for the strongest ministry priorities.

Ministry Context Narratives

1. Describe your core mission and ministry priorities.

Holy Comforter's mission is to serve the parish and community with programs that support the whole person, body, mind and spirit and to maintain a safe, joyous, restorative space where all are welcome.

Holy Comforter understands its mission as living out the Gospel by welcoming all people, growing together in faith, caring for one another, and carrying Christ's love beyond the walls of the church. We are rooted in the Episcopal tradition and believe that worship, fellowship, formation, pastoral care, and service are all essential parts of a faithful Christian community.

Hospitality and belonging are central to our identity. We seek to be a church where people of different ages, backgrounds, experiences, and identities are welcomed, respected, and invited into the full life of the parish. For us, welcome means more than opening our doors. It means building relationships, helping newcomers find meaningful ways to participate, and creating a community in which people know and care for one another.

Outreach is another important expression of our faith. Through our Food Pantry, Community Garden, Many Colors Arts Collective, Kaleidoscope Series and other partnerships and ministries, we seek to respond to the needs of our neighbors and remain engaged with the wider River Region community.

As we look toward the future, our ministry priorities include strengthening Christian formation, nurturing intergenerational relationships, continuing our commitment to pastoral care, and encouraging greater participation in the ministries of the church. We also hope to grow our congregation while maintaining the welcoming, inclusive, and relational character that parishioners value deeply.

At the heart of these priorities is a simple conviction: our life together should reflect the love of Christ—in our worship, in the way we care for one another, and in the way we serve our neighbors.

2. Share about the setting and community you serve.

Holy Comforter serves in Montgomery, Alabama and the River Region. Montgomery is shaped by history, change, diversity, and contrasts. Our parish is located outside the city center in an area where neighborhoods of differing economic, racial, cultural, and social experiences exist within close proximity. Rather than viewing our location simply as an address, we see it as part of our calling.

Our congregation reflects some of the diversity of the community around us. Holy Comforter includes people of different ages, backgrounds, life experiences, perspectives, and identities who have found a spiritual home together. We strive to be a place where differences do not have to disappear in order for genuine Christian community to exist. What binds us together is our common life in Christ.

This setting has helped shape a ministry of welcome that is especially important to us. We recognize that many people approach churches cautiously because they have experienced exclusion, judgment, or a sense that they did not belong. Holy Comforter seeks to offer something different: a place where people are received with dignity, where questions are welcome, and where relationships can grow across differences.

Our location also places us near neighbors with very different needs and resources, calling us to look beyond ourselves. Ministries such as our Food Pantry, Community Garden, Many Colors Arts Collective, and Kaleidoscope Series allow our campus to become a place of nourishment, creativity, connection, and service. We also open our doors to community organizations and look for opportunities to build relationships throughout Montgomery.

Montgomery itself provides a particularly meaningful context for this ministry. In a city whose history continues to shape conversations about race, reconciliation, justice, and community, we believe Holy Comforter can offer

a faithful Episcopal presence grounded in the Gospel and expressed through hospitality, compassion, service, and love of neighbor.

We do not see ourselves as a church serving only one neighborhood or one group of people. We hope to be a place where people from many directions can meet at the same table.

3. Reflect on how your community approaches leadership — what styles and qualities you value in clergy, how leadership is shared between clergy and laity, and how you navigate change and challenges.

Holy Comforter values leadership that is collaborative, relational, and grounded in mutual trust. We look to our clergy for spiritual leadership, pastoral presence, thoughtful guidance, and a willingness to make decisions when leadership is needed. At the same time, we believe the ministry of the Church belongs to the whole congregation. Our parish is strongest when clergy and laity recognize one another's gifts and work together toward a shared purpose.

Our size makes lay leadership particularly important. Parishioners serve throughout the life of Holy Comforter—in worship, outreach, pastoral care, fellowship, formation, administration, and the care of our campus. We value a rector who recognizes those gifts, invites people into ministry, develops new leaders, and gives parishioners both the encouragement and responsibility to serve well. We do not expect our rector to do everything; we hope for a leader who helps all of us better understand what God may be calling us to do.

We have learned that change is most successful when people understand why it is needed and have an opportunity to participate in the process. Holy Comforter has experienced significant seasons of transition throughout its history, and those experiences have strengthened our resilience. We can embrace new ideas, but relationships and communication matter greatly in how change is introduced and carried forward.

We also recognize that a close-knit congregation can have differing opinions and strong personalities. We do not always agree, nor do we believe healthy Christian community requires us to do so. We value leadership that listens carefully, communicates clearly, addresses challenges rather than avoiding them, and helps us remain centered on our common faith and mission.

Our hope is for a rector who will lead with us—someone confident enough to provide direction, humble enough to listen, and wise enough to recognize that clergy and laity bring different but equally important gifts to the work God has given us.

4. Share how worship is shaped in your community — what influences your liturgical life, how you balance tradition and innovation, and how liturgy reflects your theology and context.

Worship is at the heart of our life together at Holy Comforter. Our liturgical life is grounded in the Book of Common Prayer and the rich traditions of the Episcopal Church, with Holy Eucharist, scriptures, sermons and music drawing us together as the Body of Christ.

We value worship that is reverent without being rigid—rooted in tradition while remaining warm, accessible, and alive. Rite II is familiar and meaningful to our congregation, and traditional music continues to be an important part of our worship. Our choir and musicians enrich our common prayer and help create worship that is both beautiful and participatory.

Sermons are a very important part of our spiritual life. We value sermons that are grounded in Scripture and the Gospel, thoughtfully prepared, and connected to the realities of everyday life. We hope worship both comforts and challenges us, deepening our relationship with God and preparing us to carry the Gospel into the world.

While we cherish Episcopal tradition, we are not opposed to thoughtful innovation. We have incorporated Morning Prayer, live streaming and online participation, seasonal and intergenerational experiences, occasional use of portions of the New Zealand prayer book and occasional contemporary music. We believe new expressions are most meaningful when they complement rather than replace the traditions that give our worship its grounding and identity.

Our theology is perhaps most visible when we gather around the altar. People who come from different backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and circumstances receive the same grace and share the same table. In that common worship, our differences remain, but they do not define us.

At Holy Comforter, worship reminds us who we are, whose we are, and how we are called to live when we leave the church doors.

5. Reflect on how your community engages diverse cultural identities, fosters belonging, and responds to the needs of a diverse or evolving population.

At Holy Comforter, we believe our common life is enriched by people who bring different backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and identities to the same community of faith. We do not expect uniformity in order to experience unity. Instead, we seek to create a place where people can bring their whole selves to church, grow in relationship with God and one another, and know that they have gifts to contribute. As our congregation grows and changes, we want to become even better at helping newcomers move from being visitors to becoming active members of the community.

For us, belonging is more than being greeted on Sunday morning. It happens when someone is remembered, invited to the table, included in conversation, encouraged to participate, and eventually discovers a place within the life and ministry of the parish. Our size allows relationships to develop naturally, but we also recognize that genuine hospitality requires intention. We thoroughly enjoy opening our doors to the entire community by hosting events like the Rainbow Chorus Concerts and sponsoring city-wide interfaith prayer services supporting victims of violence and sexual abuse.

Holy Comforter has long sought to provide a church home for people who may not always have felt fully welcomed elsewhere. We believe the Church should be a place of grace and dignity for all people, including those of different races, cultures, ages, socioeconomic circumstances, sexual orientations, and life experiences. This commitment is not simply a response to changing culture; it grows from our understanding of the Gospel and the unconditional love of God.

Our diversity also calls us to listen. We know that being inclusive is an ongoing practice rather than an accomplishment. As Montgomery and our own congregation continue to evolve, we want to remain attentive to voices and needs that may be different from our own, strengthen relationships across generations and cultures, and continue learning how to serve our neighbors faithfully.

We believe the Church is at its best when there is room at the table—and meaningful work in the Kingdom—for everyone.

6. Use this space to share any additional details about the role or organization that would help candidates discern their fit — such as organizational culture, special projects, or unique opportunities and challenges.

Holy Comforter is a parish where relationships matter. We are small enough for people to know one another, notice when someone is missing, celebrate together, and respond when someone needs care. We enjoy being together, and laughter, conversation, shared meals, and friendship are as much a part of our common life as the programs on our calendar. A rector who becomes part of that life—not simply the person who leads it—will find a congregation eager to build a meaningful relationship with its priest.

We also know that our next chapter will require energy and imagination. We want to grow, particularly among younger adults and families; strengthen formation for children, youth, and adults; improve communication and newcomer engagement; care responsibly for an aging campus; and continue building financial sustainability. We see these not simply as problems to solve, but as opportunities to discern what faithful ministry can look like in a changing church and community.

Our congregation brings significant gifts to that work. Holy Comforter has committed lay leaders, established ministries, a spirit of service, a willingness to participate, and a campus that already serves both parish and community life. We are not looking for a rector to arrive with all the answers or to carry the work alone. We are looking for someone willing to ask good questions, listen carefully, recognize the gifts already present, and help us imagine what might be possible.

Perhaps the most important thing for a candidate to understand is that Holy Comforter has a personality. We are thoughtful but not formal with one another, diverse but deeply connected, rooted in tradition but willing to explore new possibilities. We care about worship and ministry, but we also care about enjoying the people with whom we share them.

The opportunity here is not to remake Holy Comforter. It is to love this parish, lead alongside its people, and help us become more fully the church God is calling us to be.

Narrative Responses

1. Describe your congregation's theology or spiritual identity.

Holy Comforter's spiritual identity is rooted in the Anglican tradition and centered in the grace and love of Jesus Christ. We are shaped by Scripture, the Book of Common Prayer, the sacraments, thoughtful sermons, music, prayer, and a common life in which faith is practiced as well as proclaimed.

We believe every person is created in the image of God and has a place at Christ's table. That conviction shapes the way we worship, serve, welcome questions, and live with differences. We do not expect everyone to think alike; we seek unity in Christ rather than uniformity of opinion.

Our spirituality is both sacramental and practical. We encounter Christ at the altar and seek to recognize Christ in our neighbors—through pastoral care, fellowship, feeding ministries, the arts, community partnerships, and ordinary acts of kindness. We are a congregation of seekers as well as believers, grateful for tradition while remaining open to continued growth in faith.

2. Describe a recent ministry experiment or innovation in your congregation/diocese.

"Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and life to everything." Plato.

The 162-year-old rafters of Holy Comforter Church reverberate and ring with joy during monthly music concerts in our Kaleidoscope Series, begun in 2024.

From resonant, elegant solo vocalists, to emotional and inspiring choral performers, to powerful and varied instrumentalists, the artists share their gifts of beautiful music and diverse backgrounds with parishioners and community members.

The series has opened the door to an especially meaningful relationship between our parish and the phenomenal choir from Alabama State University, a Historically Black University (HBCU) in Montgomery, home of the Civil Rights Movement. As the singers have stirred our souls musically, we have stirred up meals to share with them – always a hit with college students!

The Kaleidoscope Concert series was created by Holy Comforter accompanist/choir director Dr. Kristofer Sanchack, and features professional musicians, including many of his colleagues on the ASU music faculty. Beyond the performances, the musicians often share both serious and lighthearted historical tidbits from the lives of the composers and their music genres. Audiences have an up-close and personal opportunity to experience unusual instruments, including recently the marimba and special drums. That afternoon, the musician kept the audience in rapt attention as she answered their many questions. Such interaction and discussion continue in after-concert receptions, where all are welcome to share conversations and refreshments.

Through the sharing of inspiring music, a little education, lots of fun, inclusive conversation and the chance to meet new people, the Kaleidoscope Concert Series brings our parish a unique continuing opportunity to practice authentic hospitality with friends old and new from across the city and region.

3. What is a ministry risk your congregation has taken, and what came of it?

Visit Holy Comforter Episcopal Church any Monday or Wednesday and you'll find the once-empty Sunday school wing abuzz with activity. You'll hear enthusiastic singing along with the strumming and drumming of musical instruments, while in the art studios a playlist accompanies artists painting, or arm-deep in clay projects, or creating mosaics with colorful tesserae tiles. Laughter and chatter abound.

What a difference three years makes!

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, Holy Comforter found itself hanging on by a thread – both financially and in terms of membership. In the midst of that turmoil and uncertainty, the question became clear: would we stand frozen in time or even fade away? Or, would we step out in faith to breathe new life into our beloved church and community – and if so, how?

The answer came after deep and serious reflection into the talents, hopes and dreams present in our church family. Long devoted to witness through outreach, we agreed that being of service to a special, underserved local population could offer hope for a more abundant future for all involved.

And so, Many Colors Arts Collective (MCAC), an arts-focused day program for adults with cognitive and neuro-diversities, came into being. Program participants were often homebound and isolated. But, at Many Colors, they carry the title of Artists in Residence and are recognized as productive, infinitely valued individuals.

Two of the four staff members are behavior therapists who assess each artist and help create a safe, enjoyable space where all can thrive and acquire life skills in a supportive atmosphere. A devoted group of more than 20 volunteers finds joy and fulfillment befriending the Artists in Residence, who blossom and find new self-reliance under the guidance of the professional Artist Mentors and Program Friends. These valued volunteers come from within our parish and from throughout the region to take part in this unique, non-sectarian program that promotes diversity and inclusion.

In preparation for this exciting yet daunting project, and with the guidance of our Rector, Rosa Lindahl, the Vestry, and ultimately the entire parish, agreed to venture forth with the pledge of a financial promissory note to establish Many Colors. Since then, through its affiliation with Holy Comforter, Many Colors has gained 501(c)(3) nonprofit status.

A generous and dedicated MCAC Board of Directors has chosen to see that Many Colors grows sustainably with a step-by-step approach. In 2025, they initiated the Annual (Capital) Campaign; a huge success that exceeded its goal. They have used the website successfully as part of their financial and marketing strategies. And recent partnerships with the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, other local arts organizations, a library, and a private school are raising awareness of Many Colors in the wider community. Many Colors Artists gain invaluable experiences and joy from these collaborations.

Beyond the Annual Campaign, generous grants, financial and in-kind gifts, in addition to monthly fees paid by participating families, are helping maintain and grow the program. Scholarships are available for those Artists who qualify.

A popular and successful annual art exhibition of the Many Colors Artists' works brings additional public awareness and income. The Artists are over the moon at these events, happy to be together, and proud to receive accolades and words of encouragement from their families and the visiting art patrons. The event further validates their status as artists by distributing a significant percentage of the sales revenue to each Artist.

As the program has gained momentum, Many Colors is now able to pay Holy Comforter a monthly fee to help cover facility rental and utilities. Eager to expand its initial vision and dedication, Holy Comforter is expanding art and music studio space and a "gathering room" for Many Colors to a large second floor area. A recently installed commercial chairlift will accommodate Artists and volunteers with mobility problems.

Stepping out in faith is an ongoing choice that has brought us opportunities and challenges and growth. Above all, it has taught us to lose ourselves in the joy and exploration of the arts, and to find ourselves in the loving company of special friends.

4. How does your congregation discern and adapt to the changing needs of your community?

Holy Comforter discerns best through listening: to one another, to the community around us, and to the needs that become visible through ministry. Our parish survey and Listening Sessions are themselves examples of this practice. They have helped us name both what we cherish and where greater attention is needed.

We see changing needs in the desire for stronger formation for children, youth, young adults, and adults; more opportunities for intergenerational fellowship; better communication; intentional newcomer engagement; and continued community outreach. Rather than assuming one program will answer every need, we hope to remain flexible and build ministries around the people God actually brings to us.

Discernment for us means honoring what is fruitful, being willing to adjust what is not, and asking how our gifts can best serve the present moment.

5. How does your congregation sustain its spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being?

Our well-being is sustained through worship, prayer, relationships, and the simple practice of showing up for one another. Holy Eucharist, Morning Prayer, preaching, music, Christian formation, and opportunities for spiritual practices provide grounding for our life of faith.

Equally important are the relationships that surround worship. Coffee hour, parish meals, potlucks, game nights, fellowship lunches, Cursillo connections, and informal gatherings give people space to laugh, talk, celebrate, and support one another.

Pastoral Care and Home Communion extend that community to those experiencing illness, grief, isolation, or an inability to attend worship. We understand spiritual health not as something separate from emotional or physical life, but as a shared life in which people are known and accompanied through every season.

6. In what ways is your congregation engaged in the wider Church or local community?

Holy Comforter's engagement extends in several directions. Within Montgomery, our Food Pantry, Community Garden, Many Colors Arts Collective, Kaleidoscope Series, and use of parish facilities by community organizations create practical connections with neighbors. Our Food Pantry is a joint ministry with Immanuel Presbyterian. Parishioners also serve through Kairos Prison Ministry and Kairos Outside.

Within the wider Church, members participate in Cursillo Reunion, Episcopal Communicators, Lifelong Learning and diocesan life. As a parish we value our place within the Diocese of Alabama. We see these relationships as reminders that Holy Comforter's ministry is larger than Sunday attendance or the boundaries of our campus.

Our goal is not simply to be known in Montgomery, but to be useful—to offer our people, property, creativity, and resources in ways that reflect Christ's compassion.

7. How does your congregation approach pastoral care?

Pastoral care is one of Holy Comforter's clearest priorities. Parishioners value a priest who knows the congregation personally, is accessible during illness, crisis, grief, and important life transitions, and is willing to visit those who cannot come to church.

Care is not understood as the rector's responsibility alone. Pastoral Care and Home Communion ministries, friendships within the parish, meals, calls, visits, prayer, and the attentiveness of fellow parishioners all contribute to a culture in which people notice and respond to one another.

Our hope is for clergy who will strengthen that culture: offering sacramental and spiritual care themselves while also equipping lay people to participate faithfully in the ministry of presence.

9. What does stewardship mean to your congregation, and how do you practice it?

Stewardship at Holy Comforter is the faithful use of what God has entrusted to us: time, abilities, financial resources, relationships, buildings, and opportunities to serve.

Our parish has a strong culture of volunteer ministry. Members serve in worship, music, outreach, pastoral care, hospitality, formation, administration, the Food Pantry, Community Garden, Many Colors, and many other areas. Our campus itself is also a stewardship responsibility—both something we must maintain and something we can share with the community.

We are candid that financial sustainability is an important concern for the future. We believe stewardship grows when people are connected to ministry that matters to them. As one survey response expressed it, we support with our treasure the things we treasure in our hearts. Our task is to keep strengthening that connection between generosity, participation, and mission.

10. How has your congregation experienced and addressed conflict?

Holy Comforter is a close-knit parish made up of people with different personalities, backgrounds, perspectives, and opinions. That richness inevitably brings disagreement from time to time. We do not believe Christian community requires everyone to think alike.

Our best experiences of working through differences have depended on relationships, listening, clear communication, patience, and remembering the larger purpose that holds us together. We value leadership that does not ignore difficult matters, but approaches them calmly and respectfully, giving people room to be heard without allowing disagreement to become the center of parish life.

We continue to learn in this area. Our aspiration is not a parish without conflict, but a parish capable of moving through it with honesty, grace, and love.

11. What has been your congregation's experience leading or navigating change?

Change is part of Holy Comforter's story. Since 1864, the parish has moved from Perry Street to Goldthwaite Street and ultimately to Woodley Road as Montgomery and the congregation changed. Ministries have begun and ended, buildings and programs have evolved, and generations of clergy and lay leaders have carried the parish through periods of growth, challenge, and renewal.

Recent years have reinforced that resilience. Parishioners describe being encouraged to look in new directions and imagine what Holy Comforter could become beyond what it had been, while still preserving the character people love.

We have learned that change is easier when its purpose is clear, people are included, and what is already good is respected. We are willing to move forward, but we want change to build upon our foundation rather than erase it.

12. What are your current strategic priorities or plans for the future?

Our current priorities are clear even as the specific plans continue to develop. We want to grow the congregation, particularly among younger adults and families; strengthen Christian formation and Bible study; develop ministries for children and youth; deepen intergenerational fellowship; and help newcomers become active participants in parish life.

We also want stronger communication and greater visibility in Montgomery, continued investment in outreach, responsible financial planning, and thoughtful care of our facilities.

Underlying all of these priorities is a desire for sustainable growth. We do not measure success simply by becoming larger. We want to become stronger in discipleship, participation, generosity, community connection, and our ability to serve. The next rector will have an important role in helping laity turn these shared priorities into a focused path forward.

13. How does your congregation incorporate accessibility and inclusion in your shared life?

Holy Comforter understands inclusion as both a theological commitment and a practical responsibility. We seek to make room in parish life for people of different ages, backgrounds, abilities, identities, experiences, and levels of familiarity with the Episcopal Church.

That means more than stating that everyone is welcome. It includes helping visitors understand our worship, making it easier to navigate the campus and parish life, providing online access to worship, taking Communion and pastoral care to those unable to attend, and inviting people into ministries where their gifts can be used. We added a handicap accessible bathroom, now have unisex bathrooms and installed a chair lift to provide access to our second floor.

We also recognize that accessibility is ongoing work. Our campus is aging, and our survey identified clearer physical navigation and continued attention to facilities as areas for improvement. We want our practices and our physical space to communicate the same message: there is a place for you here.

14. Has your congregation participated in or hosted multilingual or cross-cultural worship?

Our source materials do not identify a regular multilingual worship ministry, so we would not want to overstate our experience in this area. Holy Comforter does, however, understand itself as a culturally and socially diverse parish and values worship in which people from different backgrounds and identities gather around one table.

We would welcome opportunities to deepen cross-cultural relationships and to learn from the languages, traditions, and experiences of the people God brings into our parish and community. For us, the important starting point is openness: listening well, extending genuine hospitality, and allowing our common life to be enriched by people whose experiences differ from our own.

15. How does your congregation use technology in ministry?

Technology has become an important extension of Holy Comforter's ministry, particularly through livestreamed worship and online greeters. These tools allow homebound parishioners, travelers, prospective visitors, and others who cannot be physically present to remain connected to worship and parish life. Survey responses show that members do make use of online services, and online ministry is also an area in which parishioners have expressed interest in serving.

We see technology as a tool for connection rather than a substitute for community. Looking ahead, stronger digital communication can help us keep members informed, introduce newcomers to Holy Comforter, make Episcopal worship easier to navigate, and increase awareness of parish ministries and events throughout Montgomery.

17. What theological convictions shape your congregational ministry?

Several convictions consistently shape Holy Comforter's ministry. We believe Jesus Christ calls us to love God and love our neighbors; that every person bears the image of God; that grace is a gift rather than something earned; and that the Church is called to embody Christ's love in both word and action.

We believe the sacraments and common prayer form us for life beyond worship. The table we share on Sunday sends us into the world to feed, comfort, welcome, teach, create, reconcile, and serve. We believe lay people as well as clergy are called to ministry, and that every person has gifts that can strengthen the Body of Christ.

We also believe unity does not require sameness. Our life together is grounded not in agreement on every issue, but in our shared commitment to Christ. These convictions give us both roots and room to grow.

Required: Reflect on key moments or experiences that have shaped or challenged your congregation's theological understanding or self-identity.

Holy Comforter's identity has been shaped by more than 160 years of adapting without losing its center. Founded in 1864, the parish has lived through profound changes in Montgomery, worshiped in three locations, established and reshaped ministries, and experienced repeated seasons of transition and renewal. Each chapter has asked the congregation to discern what must remain rooted and what must be allowed to change.

More recent experiences have deepened our understanding of Holy Comforter as a place of grace, healing, and belonging. Parishioners speak with particular conviction about welcoming people who may have felt judged or excluded by churches elsewhere. That has challenged us to understand hospitality not simply as friendliness, but as a Gospel practice.

Our current transition is another formative moment. The survey and Listening Sessions have required us to name honestly both our strengths and our vulnerabilities: a loving community and active outreach alongside concerns about growth, formation, finances, communication, and the future of the Church.

Through these experiences, our self-understanding has become clearer. We are not called to preserve Holy Comforter as a museum of what it has been, nor to discard the traditions that formed us. We are called to remain rooted in Christ, open to the people God sends us, and willing to follow faithfully into the next season.



Vocation Hub Profile

The Vestry must approve this document before being sent to the Canon to the Ordinary.

Name of Worshipping Community: Church of the Holy Comforter, Montgomery

Diocese: Alabama

Position Title: Rector - Full Time

Financial Overview

If applicable, provide key financial details that may help candidates understand your community or organization's context. This could include information about endowments, annual operating budgets, special funding initiatives, or other unique financial considerations. This field is optional and intended for communities where financial context is an important part of discerning leadership needs.

[See Parish Profile for overview of financials and yearly budgets](#)

Compensation & Benefits

Compensation available for new position (\$): \$ 90,000 - \$ 120,000

Additional compensation (describe): None

Is there a rectory? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Please provide details about the rectory (beds/bedrooms and any additional information)

N/A

Healthcare (check one):

☒ Full Family ☐ Clergy +1 ☐ Clergy only

Dental (check one): ☐ N/A ☒ Yes ☐ No

Vacation Weeks (standard is 4 weeks / 5 Sundays): Yes, Standard 4 weeks/5 sundays

Continuing Education Weeks (standard is 2 weeks): Yes, Standard 2 weeks

Annual Continuing Education funds (\$): Funds budgeted as part of yearly budget

Sabbatical Fund: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Travel/Auto Account available? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Phone/equipment details Cell Phone and Laptop provided for Rector

Other professional account available? ☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, describe: _____

Other benefits or comments: _____

Ministry Context and Desired Skills

What are your community's hopes for this position, and what qualities in applicants will help you live into them? *Share your vision for the next chapter of your ministry and describe the gifts, skills, and leadership style that would best support your organization in reaching its goals. (2500 characters max)*

Leadership Skills (max of 5)

☐ Adaptive leadership ☒ Administration ☐ Appreciative Inquiry

☐ Buildings/Grounds ☒ Change Management ☐ Church Governance

☒ Collaborative Leadership ☐ Conflict Management ☒ Congregational Development

☐ Finance/Accounting ☐ Fundraising ☐ Capital Campaigns

☒ Leadership Development ☐ Organizational Development

☐ Personnel/staff development ☐ Servant Leadership ☐ Strategic Planning

☐ Other _____

Ministry Skills (max of 10)

☐ AAPI Ministry ☐ Academic/Theology ☐ Adult Formation ☐ Advocacy Ministry

☐ African Descent Ministry ☐ Asset Based Community Development

☐ Campus Ministry ☐ Chaplaincy ☒ Children/Family Formation

☒ Church Growth ☐ Church planting ☒ Community Building ☐ Creation Care

☐ Cultural Competency ☐ Digital Ministry ☐ Discipleship ☐ Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

☐ Ecumenical Cooperation ☐ Evangelism ☐ Federal Ministries/Military ☐ Fine Arts/Music

☐ Formation ☐ Grief/Loss ☐ Hospice Care ☐ Hospital Chaplaincy ☐ Indigenous Ministry

☐ Innovative Ministry ☐ Interfaith cooperation ☒ Intergenerational Formation

☐ Interim Ministry ☐ Latino Ministry ☐ LGBTQIA+ Ministries ☐ Mission

☐ Multicultural Ministries ☒ Outreach ☐ Parish Day School ☒ Pastoral Care

☐ Prayer/Spirituality ☒ Preaching ☐ Racial Reconciliation ☐ Recovery/Addiction Ministries

☒ Scripture Study ☐ Spiritual Direction ☒ Stewardship ☐ Teaching ☒ Worship/Liturgy

☐ Youth and Young Adult Formation ☐ Other _____

[See Attachment for Narratives.](#)

Ministry Context narratives (each question allows for 2500 characters maximum)

1. Describe your core mission and ministry priorities. What values guide your work, and what is your community or organization striving to embody in this season of ministry?
2. Share about the setting and community you serve. What are the unique characteristics of your context - such as urban, rural, or suburban dynamics; multi-faith or multicultural environments; community partnerships; or social and cultural factors that shape your ministry?

3. Reflect on how your community approaches leadership - what styles and qualities you value in clergy, how leadership is shared between clergy and laity, and how you navigate change and challenges.
4. Share how worship is shaped in your community - what influences your liturgical life, how you balance tradition and innovation, and how liturgy reflects your theology and context.
5. Reflect on how your community engages diverse cultural identities, fosters belonging, and responds to the needs of a diverse or evolving population.
6. Use this space to share any additional details about the role or organization that would help candidates discern their fit - such as organizational culture, special projects, or unique opportunities and challenges.

Narrative Responses [See Attachment for Narratives.](#)

*This section offers a set of optional narrative questions for your congregation to reflect more personally on your ministry journey, values, and vision. You are encouraged to respond at least **twelve** questions that resonate with your community. Any questions left unanswered will not appear in the version of your profile viewed by potential applicants. These reflections can offer meaningful insight into your unique needs and approach to ministry.*

(each question allows for 2500 characters max)

1. Describe your congregation's theology or spiritual identity.
2. Describe a recent ministry experiment or innovation in your congregation/diocese.
3. What is a ministry risk your congregation has taken, and what came of it?
4. How does your congregation discern and adapt to the changing needs of your community?
5. How does your congregation sustain its spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being?
6. In what ways is your congregation engaged in the wider Church or local community?
7. How does your congregation approach pastoral care?
8. How is your congregation preparing for the Church of the future?
9. What does stewardship mean to your congregation, and how do you practice it?
10. How has your congregation experienced and addressed conflict?
11. What has been your congregation's experience leading or navigating change?
12. What are your current strategic priorities or plans for the future?
13. How does your congregation incorporate accessibility and inclusion in your shared life?
14. Has your congregation participated in or hosted multilingual or cross-cultural worship?
15. How does your congregation use technology in ministry?

16. In what ways has your congregation grown in cultural competency?

17. What theological convictions shape your congregational ministry?

Required question: Reflect on key moments or experiences that have shaped or challenged your congregation's theological understanding or self-identity. *(2500 characters max)*

Please return completed profile to The Rev Canon Katie Pearson: kpearson@dioala.org