

7/1/2021

EPISCOPAL CHURCH of the HOLY SPIRIT

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Editor's Note

Holy Spirit, as is the case for all of NJ, the nation, and the world, has modified our activities to reflect the Bishop approved protocol to maximize the safety of our parishioners, clergy, and community. We have reopened to in-person church services, addressed our protocol with our out-side groups that meet in our church, and regularly monitor our ability to continue safely in our planned activities.

We chose to discuss the normal activities in this report that were conducted by Holy Spirit prior to the pandemic to reflect our desire to fully reactivate our calling to serve the congregation and community once it is again safe to do so.

THE CHURCH of the HOLY SPIRIT MISSION

We seek to provide spiritual nourishment for all who enter this household of God, encouraging them to follow their own spiritual pilgrimage through worship, fellowship, and study. Upheld by the Holy SPIRIT, we reach out to all people of the greater Tuckerton area. Join us as we connect with God, build community, and transform lives.

WELCOME AND THANK YOU

We are seeking a new full-time Priest in Charge to share with St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Waretown, NJ through an official affiliation between the two churches. Together we are seeking a Priest in Charge who can offer inspirational and relevant sermons, provide warm pastoral care, guide us as we build a strong team with the energies, resources, and initiatives of both churches to expand our community outreaches, Christian education, and membership growth. Our churches have officially started their transitions through the development and approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreeing to pursue an affiliation for the purpose of sharing a Priest in Charge and developing a unified pastoral leadership team. The challenges of this undertaking are many for the first Priest in Charge of this affiliation and the rewards are significant. Southern Ocean County is a rapidly growing part of New Jersey's shore coastline that is especially attractive to the new retirees and relocating employees to safer and less congested communities. We are located within a two-hour drive to Philadelphia and New York City.

Our joint search committee is creating documents describing who we are, what we do, and what is important to us. Upon review of these documents, we hope that you will be encouraged to inquire further to determine if the affiliation of St. Stephen's and Holy Spirit Churches meet your expectation of your next calling to office.

Each church has developed a hybrid model of in-church and internet services for our members and friends. More info on these services and internet connections are at our respective websites.

We hope that you will develop a clear concept of the position and a better understanding of our two parishes. If you are moved by the St. Stephen's / Holy Spirit Churches partnership to make an application as Priest-in-charge, kindly direct your inquiries to Ms. Rhonda Jackson, Diocese of New Jersey (acting Transition Officer).

Most Sincerely,

Jim Heller, Church of the Holy Spirit
Discernment Committee Chair (609-857-3335)
Louise Wagner, Chaplain
Kathie LaRocca

Glenys Baulderstone, St. Stephen's Church, Discernment Chair

Rhonda Jackson, Search/Transition Consultant

INTRODUCTION

Our Episcopal congregation has a history of over 70 years serving the greater Tuckerton area. Begun in the parlor of a small, private home in 1947, our church has grown steadily. Through our spiritual and financial determination, and the support of the Diocese, we acquired our spacious church located in the heart of Tuckerton in which we joyfully worship today. Our retired Vicar (Mother Martha McKee) guided us through the devastating effects of super-storm Sandy and leaves a sound community of faith with a keen interest towards further growth and greater community outreach. We are fortunate, indeed, to have Father Walter Hartt as our Associate Priest and Fr. Don Muller as our Long-Term Supply Priest worshipping with us each Sunday during this period of transition.

HISTORY

From parlor to house to office building to present church. Such is the historical progression of the Church of the Holy Spirit. Starting as a vision of one Ms. Mary White of Tuckerton, who offered her parlor as a sanctuary for Sunday services, the church has had many transitions since the 1940's. In 1960, the congregation moved to a house in Parkertown and there became officially a mission under the name of the Church of the Holy Spirit. As the congregation grew, the house became too small. In 1979, the parish purchased an office building in Tuckerton and held services there until a former Catholic church on Main Street became available. With the help of the Diocese, the sale went through. The parishioners of are now worshipping in the Church of the Holy Spirit – Episcopal, which Bishop George Counsell dedicated in 2006.

WHO WE ARE: CLERGY, VESTRY, AND STAFF

Long Term Supply Priest (2019)
Associate Priest
Deacon

The Rev. Canon Donald Muller
The Rev. Walter Hartt
vacant

Senior Warden
Junior Warden
Treasurer
Vestry

Mr. James Wack
Ms. Christine Bobinski
Ms. Kathy Haines
Mr. Dennis Laffey
Ms. Louise Wagner
Ms. Barbara Lansing
Ms. Barbara Bermel
Ms. Lynn Robbins
Mr. Jim Heller
Ms. Elaine Paul
Mr. Matt Holmberg
Ms. Patty Martin

Clerk
Organist
Parish Administrator

WORSHIP

The Church of the Holy Spirit has an active congregation made up of thoughtful, caring people who are doing God's work both within the church and also in the community. We worship together on Sunday's at 9:30 am, using the book of common prayer, and we lift our voices in praise with hymns from the 1982 Hymnal and LEVAS. The third Sunday of each month is *quiet Sunday*, as we worship without music. Coffee hour follows all services, providing time to socialize with our church family and welcome visitors. Weekday Holy Communion is also held at noon on Wednesdays in the chapel. Bible study classes meet weekly in the library in the undercroft.

Currently, in light of the pandemic, we are meeting on Sundays at 0930 employing our Bishop approved protocol. At this writing, we are also planning to add the Wednesday noon services shortly.

We implemented streaming our church services on our Facebook page at the start of the pandemic and plan to continue this practice after we return to normal operations for the many new followers we have reached.

Special events Sundays and Holy days offer additional opportunities for worship and celebration.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
Ash Wednesday services
Ashes-to-go blessings for commuters
Lenten Bible study and soup suppers
Maundy Thursday service with foot washing
Vigil in the chapel garden
Good Friday services
Easter Sunrise services at Tip Seaman Park
Pentecost Celebration and Holy Spirit day
Blessing of the animals
Veteran and Active Military Sunday
Boy Scout Sunday
Girl Scout Sunday
UTO In-gathering Sunday
Annual Nativity Display at Christmas

MUSIC

The choir of Holy Spirit has grown in strength and number under the leadership of Mr. Matt Holmberg. Heavenly music can be enjoyed every first, second, and fourth Sunday and all Holy days. We are also graced with guest singers and instrumentalists from time to time.

PARISH LIFE

Church of the Holy Spirit is a very energetic and busy place. Our parish prides itself on its many outreaches and in-house activities.

Our volunteers: A devoted group of individuals responsible for all aspects of support to the clergy in the conduct of our services. These include our Altar Guild, lay Eucharistic ministers, readers, choir, ushers, and coffee hour hosts.

Episcopal Church Women (ECW): All woman who are members of the Church of the Holy Spirit are members of the ECW. These women support the church in various ways. Our three major goals are outreach, fellowship, and spirituality. The woman's major outreach programs are Angel Tree – which provides Christmas gifts for needy students and residents of Providence House, a shelter for abused woman; and Nursing Angel – an outreach for nursing home patients at Easter. Fellowship is accomplished through card and game get-togethers and arranging our annual parish-wide Christmas dinner. Spiritual development is ably led by Louise Wagner and is fostered through attendance at retreats and prayer groups.

Visitation: Our Clergy and lay Eucharistic ministers visit local nursing home facilities regularly. Parishioners also visit the homes of those who have difficulty traveling to church.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION and FORMATION

Education and Bible study are important components of parish life. Bible study groups meet weekly in the library. The Clergy offers classes for First Communion, Confirmation, and Baptism. During Lent, Lenten Study classes meet weekly in the church and also in the homes of parishioners. Two sessions are offered, one in the afternoon and one in the evening to accommodate everyone's schedule.

Additionally, Holy Spirit sponsors an active candidate for the diaconate, Ms. Jamie Smith.

Holy Spirit Church is a central location for meetings and workshops sponsored by the Diocese of NJ.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Monthly Residents Community Dinners: Begun in 2008, this popular monthly outreach program serves to feed the body and soul of our local residents. Chefs from within the parish and the community prepare complete dinners for 50 to 70 diners throughout the year. Fellowship and good food are important parts of this outreach.

During the pandemic restrictions, we partnered with a local eatery to provide safe, takeout meals for holidays and special events in the community. We also worked with the local food bank of Tuckerton to augment their supplies during the special time of need for local families by providing food tickets that were distributed with the allotment of food to our needy.

Priest-in-charge's Discretionary Fund: These monies are budgeted annually by the Vestry and distributed by the Priest-in-charge to those in special need.

Support Groups: Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous meet regularly in our Church four times per week.

Civic Groups: Holy Spirit Church hosts the local Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops who meet weekly in our undercroft. They also take part in our fund raising and outreach activities.

Blood Drive: Holy Spirit Church initiated our first blood drive in 2018 with active participation by the congregation and community. A second drive was held in October with the hope of it becoming a regular event.

Greeters Table: Set up at fund raising events, this outreach informs interested attendees about our church and introduces them to our clergy.

Spirited techies: These parishioners maintain our web site: www.holyspirittuckerton.org and Facebook page. They also compile and edit our monthly newsletter sent to the congregation and community.

National Night Out: Holy Spirit Church sponsors a table at this popular community event.

Laundromat Tickets: When Holy Spirit members were informed of the need, especially during the pandemic, we started in 2020, this valued program that distributes pre-purchased tokens to be used by our community to launder their clothing.

Holiday Dining Tickets: Started this year to achieve the objectives of our community dinners, our Vestry conceived of a new program to work with our local restaurants and pre-purchase dinners to be safely picked up at the participating restaurant. We successfully reached 70 families with this successful program for our first Thanksgiving in 2020.

Grocery Gift Tickets: Started in 2020, our Congregation pre-purchases small denomination grocery tickets and distribute them when needed to our local residents.

Tuckerton Elementary Support - To help our local schools meet the challenges of the pandemic our vestry member Barb Bermel collaborated with teachers and staff members of Tuckerton elementary school. Our vestry recently approved the sponsorship of three art student's classes as recommended by the school for this extracurricular program. Barb has also coordinated with the teachers and staff to identify a list of annual school supplies that Holy Spirit will donate as a "giving tree" event.

FUND RAISING ACTIVITIES

The Holy Spirit family is very active in raising funds to help meet our financial needs, serve our community, and strengthen our relationships among our congregation. The following is a list of the events planned in earlier years.

- Two gift auctions
- Blueberry festival
- Attic sale
- Pancake supper
- Dine around restaurant fund raisers

Grocery gift cards
Specialty bingo
Recycled ink cartridges program
Christmas fund raiser
Bus trips to Sight and Sound Theater
Dine-around at local restaurants
Kauriga musical concert

These activities typically supplement our pledge and plate income.

Finances and Statistics

Our financial forecast for 2020 and 2021 is a bold statement of our desire to regroup, restructure, and regain our position in the diocese and community. Our pledge/plate anticipated contributions dropped slightly in both number of pledges and amount pledged in 2021. Fortunately, our strong financial position (no debt, and ample savings for contingencies) allowed us to maintain our goals for the near future. We are pleased with the number of members that have returned for in-church services after closing our church for five months during the first onset of the pandemic. We also have three new attendees to our services that we have welcomed and many new followers to our Facebook Sunday services.

The Vestry is taking a positive approach for the near term and has decided; with the endorsement of the both Congregations, Vestries, and the Bishop; to enter into an affiliation with our nearby St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Waretown, NJ (15 miles) to jointly commence this discernment for a shared full time Priest-in-Charge. The actual working budget and number of members is the combination of both churches to accurately reflect the overall responsibility of the Priest in Charge. We are very open to discussions that support both congregations and the Priest-in-charge's future needs.

Our knowledge of the housing and commercial growth in this area and the successful community participation in our numerous fund-raising events indicate a future of growth. We are eager to enact future plans for growth in the number of parishioners and financial levels through active outreach, targeted advertising, and unique community events to better present Holy Spirit Church to our neighbors.

Budget of The Church of the Holy Spirit 2020

Budget of The Church of the Holy Spirit 2021 (Est)

** The annual budget numbers are considered for official use only and are not provided here for wide public dissemination. **

STRENGTHS and BLESSINGS

Holy Spirit Church is a warm, welcoming Church, steeped in Anglican tradition. Our newcomer message says it all: *We seek to provide spiritual nourishment for everyone that enters this house of God, encouraging them to follow their own spiritual pilgrimage through devotion, study, and worship of God.* We hope that you will consider joining us!

Tradition: Holy Spirit Church is a well-established congregation meeting in the greater Tuckerton / Little Egg Harbor area now for over seventy years. We practice a traditional Anglican service sharing common values and an open, accepting attitude coupled with a strong sense of community.

Facilities: We are blessed with a church building situated on a beautiful, central lot on Tuckerton's Main Street. The building includes a beautiful, serene 100-person sanctuary with choir/children's loft, a large community hall with a recently remodeled kitchenette, library, numerous storerooms, offices, classrooms/small meeting areas, large 100 person undercroft (located under the sanctuary) with co-joining professional kitchen (w/o dishwasher), and a small, charming chapel for weekday services. We installed solar panels to reduce our footprint on the electrical power grid and lower our monthly utility expense.

Activities: The Holy Spirit family is a busy group! We offer many opportunities for fellowship and service. Our bakers have “street cred”, and their blueberry pies and waffles are especially sought after. Our volunteer cooks, led by our “Iron Chef” (Senior Warden Jim Wack) sponsor monthly community dinners provided at no cost for our residents and congregation members. Our Episcopal Christian Woman's (ECW) group is well attended and active in community events. Grace O'Connor ably leads our fund-raising efforts that typically include; auctions, special dinners, bazaars, bus trips, lectures, and most recently, an Attic Sale held on our grounds and in the undercroft.

Outreach: To quote one parishioner, “we are small in number, but mighty in heart!” Our clergy and lay leaders take the gospel to the local nursing centers each month. Our monthly bulletins are distributed throughout the community, we have instituted special programs for Ash Wednesday, Blessing of Pets, honoring our veterans, and our Boy and Girl Scouts. Our Clergy is a member of the Ministerium (local ministers) that meet regularly to address the needs of the community.

Growth: Ocean County is experiencing an enormous growth that started approximately 15 years ago with the construction of homes and areas attractive to seniors retiring from New Jersey and surrounding states. This growth is now in its second phase with younger retirees (boomers and Xers) purchasing the homes of the original residents. There is also a vibrant young adult community seeking the rural, seashore setting with good schools and strong community values. We understand that our Church must actively seek new members. It is our strong desire to find a Priest-in-charge able to lead us in this growth. Our near term (5 year) goal is to grow our church younger membership and our annual funding. Our long-term vision supports an active, well established church for the communities we represent and one that meets our new Priest-in-charge's spiritual and personal goals.

CHALLENGES and CONCERNS

The greatest challenge facing Church of the Holy Spirit today can be summed up in one word - GROWTH

Congregational Growth: Holy Spirit Church shares the same challenges of all churches in the Diocese and state. Holy Spirit has experienced growth spurts linked with the expanding housing market. Unfortunately, we have also experienced losses resulting from natural disasters and toll of the aging process on our congregation.

As our congregation is now skewed toward senior resident's that have lived in the area over ten years, we especially seek the membership of younger families and new retirees in our effort to grow and sustain our church long term.

Financial Growth: Although our financial growth remains a concern, proudly we are free of debt and are able to discharge our obligation to our New Jersey Diocesan Marks of Mission Commitment. 2020 was a very challenging year, socially and financially. We had to adjust for our loss in fund raising; however, our stable pledge numbers and sustained amounts reflect the desire of our congregation to support our church and efforts in the community. We are hopeful that the implementation of the vaccinations and the resulting return to normal life with the reopening of the local businesses will result in higher pledge offerings for 2021/2022. We are confident in the strength of our commitment to make this offer in 2020 for a new 1/3-time Priest-in-charge and ability to maintain this financial commitment consistent with our five-year planning.

Growth within the Community: We would like to expand our reach to include more people living in our area. Our congregation includes many who were not originally Episcopalians but have found a place of worship in our Church. There is always need for further community involvement on everyone's part from the parishioners, from the Vestry, and from our new Priest-in-charge. I think all would agree that Mother Martha, through her compassion to the Superstorm Sandy victims and her active involvement with nursing homes and homeless shelters set Holy Spirit in good standing. We will maintain that high standing in the interim period to your arrival. We must open wide our doors and make it known that *the mission of Holy Spirit Church is to help all who serve the Lord and provide the nourishment necessary for their own spiritual journey.*

EXPECTATIONS OF THE NEW PRIEST-IN-CHARGE

St. Stephen's and the Church of the Holy Spirit seek to call as its Priest-in-charge someone who knows God's presence in his/her life, reacts to it, and is skillful at sharing it with others. We are searching for a leader to inspire our congregations to continue doing God's work within our parish communities and beyond. We realize our Priest-in-charge will be a full-time position, but will be shared between the two churches, and that it will require a knowledgeable balancing of these needs with the resources available. We consider these areas most important to the spiritual health and growth of our parish:

Worship: We seek a Priest-in-charge who will lead varied, enriching, and inspiring services drawn from the richness of our Anglican tradition. His/Her sermons should address the biblical passages and history explaining its relevance to both the past and present.

Pastoral Care: We seek an evangelist who is outgoing and personable, who will visit existing and new parish members and who will be available for crisis, spiritual, and personal counseling. In order to facilitate this, we desire that they live within reasonable commuting distance and that they efficiently utilize the assistance of their Associate Priests, Deacon, and lay persons.

Team Building: The Priest in Charge will be responding to a calling representing a unique opportunity to oversee two separate churches that have committed to this joint venture. As a starting point, our churches have each approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that has been reviewed and endorsed by Bishop Stokes and are eager to explore the benefits afforded by this association.

Outreach: We seek an ecumenical leader who will participate in both secular and interfaith ministries and who will help us respond better to the needs of the greater Southern Ocean County community. He/She will also coordinate the use of lay people in this mission.

Education: We seek a teacher who continues their own professional and religious development and shares a commitment to Christian education for all ages and has experience working with congregations to develop curriculum and programs.

Growth: We seek to attract new parishioners to grow to our full stature. A community builder can assist us in growing our parishes, skilled in both ecumenical and community interaction.

Youth Programs: We seek a leader who is skillful in developing and implementing youth programs. We view young families as a vital part of our community, and an important part of our growth and future.

Management and Administration: We seek a candidate who will supervise part-time secretaries at each church and oversee the development of weekly service bulletins, the monthly newsletters, the church websites, and any recurring and special reports required by the diocese.

COMMUNITIES

Tuckerton / Little Egg Harbor / Parkertown / West Creek / New Gretna

The Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit is located on the main street of the quaint, picturesque Borough of Tuckerton, New Jersey, at the southern tip of Ocean County and in the midst of the surrounding communities. Founded in 1699, much of the town has a distinctly nautical Victorian flair and many homes date to the eighteenth century and earlier. Many of the shopping, inns, and restaurant areas are in keeping with the same Victorian theme. New businesses are opening in this once-sleepy town that is coming into its own. We are thirty minutes from Atlantic City, twenty minutes from Long Beach Island, and convenient to

Philadelphia and New York Cities. In 2016, Tuckerton had a population of 3,378.

The Township of Little Egg Harbor covers some 43 square miles that surround Tuckerton to the north and west causing the two towns to mesh almost seamlessly. The Mystic Islands and Osborne Island sections of the township border the Great Bay shoreline and offer homes with boating facilities. Little Egg population continues to grow, with a population of 20,818 in 2016. Tuckerton and Little Egg Harbor are connected to the NJ Parkway system at Exit 58 with easy access in both north and south directions.

Our children attend the Pinelands Regional High School and Junior High School. There are several local grammar and middle schools throughout the neighborhoods. New Jersey has several universities and colleges, including Princeton University, Rutgers, Rowan, and Stockton all within commuting distance.

We have five active adult communities that just recently completed construction. Affordable housing is also available within the region. Our recreation, standards of living, and the positive outlook of the residents makes Ocean County the fastest growing county in the state. Culture is nearby at the Noyes Museum of Art, the Stafford Performing Arts Center, the Albert Music Hall, and the re-opened, off-Broadway, SurfFlight Theater. Do pick up a free local Sand Paper at the Seaport to see a sample of the events that occur year-round in the area. Ocean County is blessed with many state and county parks, miles of well-marked hiking trails, kayak and canoe launch points, and numerous sport fields throughout our pinelands, lakes, rivers, and bay shores. Shopping is nearby in our local stores or at larger stores like Walmart, Tractor Supply, and West Marine store. Manahawkin is a short drive up the parkway (no tolls) and offer many retail stores and restaurants.

Parkertown and West Creek border our northern boundaries and New Gretna is to the south. These are smaller communities that add a unique bay atmosphere to the region with their ease of access to the bay and their small-town appeal.

Finally, bay sports are abundant in the area for all to enjoy. There is great bay and ocean fishing for all sizes and types throughout the year. Crabbing, clamming, and hopefully, re-bedded oysters are available. The Bays are great locations for all types of boating with shallow, protected waters and nearby gathering points for swimming, dining, or just admiring each other's boats.

DIOCESE of NJ

The Diocese of New Jersey was founded in 1785 and elected its first bishop in 1815. Holy Spirit is one of 144 churches within the lower two-thirds of the state that comprise the Episcopal Diocese of NJ. The Right Reverend William (Chip) Stokes, our diocesan bishop, was elected in May 2013 and consecrated in November 2013.

SUMMARY

In summary, we seek to grow our community of faith, broaden our worship experience, strive to

be inclusive of all, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, rejoice in proclaiming the power of the Lord. We seek a Priest-in-charge to lead us, work with us, and help us reach our goals together.

/s/ Discernment Committee

