



Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio
(last updated May 12, 2025)

St. George's Episcopal Church, West Tennessee

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 07/11/25.

Contact:
rcourtney@episwtn.org

Love God and love your neighbors: Taking care of our parish family is very important at St. George's. The Pastoral Care Committee is active and growing in support of our family members spiritually, emotionally and physically. We send cards and visit or phone regularly, provide transportation, shop, provide food and take home-communion. When we learned a parishioner was ill and unable to drive but needed to go to rehab appointments for several months, we sought drivers. Soon, we had more drivers than needed. An unexpected outcome was the drivers got to know their brother in Christ better and build a deeper bond that outlived the crisis. In another case, we were asked by a member facing serious surgery to set up an email group of friends to keep all updated on her recovery. This freed her from receiving many phone calls and texts so that she could rest and heal. Being a part of this ministry has built friendships for both those giving and receiving help. We have great cooks, nurses, cleaners, organizers, listeners, writers, and even more talents to be discovered. By loving and supporting our family we are showing God's love to everyone.--Connie Douglas, chair Pastoral Care

How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

St. George's Episcopal Church is preparing for the future through deep support of our Children, Families, and Youth Ministry. The Church is taking active steps to maintain the current momentum of fostering and developing the spiritual formation of our youth. The Church has a phenomenal Youth Ministry Director and a great team of adult volunteers who routinely teach chapel and participate in youth activities and events. We are witnessing the spiritual growth of our youth happen in "real time." A large contingent of active EYC members will be leaving for college in a few years. As these young people transition to young adults, how can the Church keep them engaged and add other young adults to our parish? The Church's Children, Families, and Youth Ministry has this in its vision. This Ministry is planting and feeding the seeds of establishing a culture of discipleship, stewardship, and service to inspire our youth to continue God's work throughout their adult lives. These things are the building blocks for developing future leaders, in our Church and in the world at large.--Courtney Felts, Junior Warden, EYC parent volunteer

collaborative leader; strategic thinker; visionary and compassionate shepherd; committed to intergenerational ministry; inspiring homilist; values and embraces the full liturgical and sacramental life of the Episcopal Church



Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio
(last updated May 12, 2025)

St. George's Episcopal Church, West Tennessee

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 07/11/25.

Contact:
rcourtney@episwtn.org

St. George's year-round services include two Sunday Communion services at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. on most Sundays, both Rite II. Our liturgical style is broad church, traditional and accessible to people of different faith traditions. However, occasionally we have incense and aspergillum sprinkling of holy water, but they are not regularly a part of our scheduled weekly services. Choral evensong is sung several times throughout the year, and we have special services throughout the liturgical year particularly during Lent and Advent. Music for all regularly scheduled services is traditional with congregational singing led by a choir of approximately 24, including 4 section leaders. Some are paid. Historically, the parish has enjoyed fine music with three of the last four Directors of Music having completed doctorates in music. We have trained Altar Guild, Lay Eucharistic Ministers, Acolytes and Ushers/Greeters who prepare for and/or serve at both services.--Angela Saunders, former music director and vestry member

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

The Stewardship Committee, using the following strategies, leads the way in helping people be stewards of their spiritual gifts by participating in various ministries. Communication: Describe ministry opportunities using the language of spiritual gifts and our church vision-"Gather, Discover, Serve"; Spotlight ministries that need volunteers on bulletin board and in church newsletter; Organize a monthly "Ministry Minute." A volunteer shares about a ministry in the church service; Have ministry heads record videos of their ministry location and activities to share with the congregation, so that people can visualize the ministry. Recruitment: Partner with the Newcomers Ministry to find out what ministries newcomers might be interested in trying; Mini-Ministry Fairs, where three ministries have a booth set up during a parish meal and people may sign up to "test drive" their ministry (try it out one time). Formation: Spiritual Gifts Assessment tool given to the congregation; Adult Formation Class emphasizing using spiritual gifts in ministry.--Perry Pennington, former Senior Warden, former member of stewardship committee

As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

St. George's cares for our spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being through various groups' programs.

In addition to Sunday services, there are two weekly Bible studies, and the Education for Ministry program. Our DOK chapter prays daily for those on its prayer list and on Sundays offers in-person prayers. A weekly Tai Chi class provides exercise for all ages and levels of fitness for our parish and the community. For those battling addiction, there are several 12-step programs: AA, ACAA, and SA. Our Pastoral Care Committee is the initial help for parishioners who are struggling emotionally. Pastoral Care sends cards and makes phone calls monthly to the ill and/or house-bound. They provide meals as well as transportation to appointments, Sunday services, and other activities. Periodically art classes are offered providing an arena for those who find self-expression through art therapy. Communicants needing further emotional support can receive counseling from interim rector, Rev. Dorothy White, who may refer them to professionals in the congregation or several area mental health facilities.--Virginia Baird former vestry member, choir member, and church librarian



Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio
(last updated May 12, 2025)

St. George's Episcopal Church, West Tennessee

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 07/11/25.

Contact:
rcourtney@episwtn.org

How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

Given St. George's size, we find it more efficient to partner with others for some of our larger ministries.

Along with other churches in Germantown, we host guests from nearby Memphis at a partner congregation's space in the Room in the Inn. Two nights each month, November through March, St. George's with a team of over 60 volunteers hosts an average of fourteen guests. At the end of March, we had served over 1000 homeless persons by driving, preparing meals, doing laundry, serving as overnight shepherds and doing other tasks needed to host our guests. There are other ways St. George's serves beyond its own worshipping community. We have teams who cook for and host "More than a Meal" at Grace St. Luke's, the 4th Sunday of each month. We partner with Collierville Food Bank for Lenten and Christmas food drives each year and have donated literally thousands of pounds of products for each drive. Finally, St. George's has nearly 30 years of amazing ministry for inner-city youth at Emmanuel Center through Operation Joy where last year we provided a new winter coat for a child and a Christmas meal food box for 40 families. John Remsen, St. George's coordinator Room in the Inn

St. George's parishioners are involved in the wider church by serving on the Bishop & Council and the Diocese of West Tennessee Endowment Committee. In our wider geographical community, we initiated and continue to be the coordinator of "A Labor of Love" each fall. With four other churches in Germantown we paint, clean, deliver meals, and so forth for those who are unable to help themselves. There are numerous other areas of involvement that are described elsewhere in these narratives; however, St. George's Episcopal preschool is one of the most thriving and vibrant ministries of the church serving our wider community. Our clergy interact, teach and minister to our students and their families. Whether with small groups of children in their individual classrooms, or united with their parents in the sanctuary for our monthly All School Chapel services, our clergy deliver the message of God's love for all. Also, our Christmas Pageant and Graduation ceremony provide other opportunities for clergy to interact with the preschool community and to share the inclusive welcome and beauty of St. George's Episcopal Church.--Sarah Bettendorf, Director of St. George's Episcopal Preschool

Our EYC group plays a special role in serving our community through its five-night, six-day "Mission in Memphis," a local mission trip of service, fellowship, and memory making. In 2023 we had seven youth and four chaperones. In 2024, we had 22 youth and four chaperones and rented two passenger vans to get around town! The youth spend the nights at St. Columba Episcopal Camp where they share meals and spend time around the campfire for Evening Compline. The missions have included Meals on Wheels, Fayette County Animal Rescue, Room in the Inn, and a prayer service with lunch for a group of adults with disabilities. There is a day of fun sprinkled in the week with Ziplining and water activities at St. Columba as well. The parish supports the mission week, and this year the youth are hosting fundraisers to help offset some of the cost of the 2025 mission trip. The youth eagerly await the annual "Mission in Memphis" trip which they describe as "the best week ever." Contact Karrie LaCroix Director of Children's and Youth Ministries



Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio
(last updated May 12, 2025)

St. George's Episcopal Church, West Tennessee

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 07/11/25.

rcourtney@episwtn.org

What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

Stewardship at St. George's is shaped by parishioner generosity and creates the ethos of a caring faith community. Though the mechanics of securing gifts have varied, parishioners predictably pledge during stewardship campaigns, meet capital needs as they arise, and support outreach. In 2025, our annual stewardship campaign was changed to a year-round stewardship. We seek to involve a broader base of lay people and more consistent, personal contact throughout the year to emphasize the on-going importance of being a good steward. Outreach has always been important to stewardship at St. George's, and it too has evolved. For over 25 years, we have given tens of thousands of dollars in outreach to the Memphis community, first from the Antiques Arcade and now from No Sweat Soirée, an online shop for local goods and services. The evolution of stewardship at St. George's highlights two key aspects that have remained unchanged: St. George's parishioners generously share their time, talents, and resources. Their acts of giving strengthen and knit together parishioners as a vibrant and joyful community of faith.--Leslie Darr past Jr. and Sr. Warden, chair of Arcade and chair of No Sweat

Like any organization, St. George's has had and will have conflicts. Some were minor. Others were more serious. In 2002 the church engaged in an ownership dispute with the school. The dispute was ended by arbitration with the entire campus being sold to the school; however, in the process the vestry were sued individually and collectively. St. George's old campus was deconsecrated and we began anew on a new campus in 2004. In God's wisdom and grace, a new priest answered the call to St. George's. He focused us on the future and what we could build together if we trusted God, and loved one another. Many of our current parishioners have no first-hand knowledge of this conflict in St. George's life. Nevertheless, they share the benefit of what we learned: Respect and love for one another, openness to sharing ministry and worship, and willingness to work with each other to advance the kingdom of God are not for the clergy or the laity alone. They are for everyone in the parish to do together as the body of Christ.--John Planchon current and past vestry member and Discernment Committee chair

What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

The pandemic forced St. George's to rethink the worship service when normal physical interactions were no longer possible. Our Church quickly figured out ways to create virtual services. As the responses to the pandemic evolved, the Church instituted different avenues to begin in-person worship (masks, hand sanitizer, intinction vs the common cup, etc.). Many of the changes instituted remain today. Communion allows for both the common cup and intinction, and the weekly services are posted on YouTube allowing all parishioners the opportunity to feel a part of the larger worshipping community. When our previous Rector announced her departure, many Church members were concerned about the immediate and future direction of the Church. At multiple parish meetings, you can easily feel the excitement now within the Church surrounding our future. From openness to feedback on the musical selections to requests for volunteers in specific ministries, the parish has been filled with an overwhelming sense of love and commitment to each other. Our interim rector has repeatedly pointed to the eagerness to serve and love as one of the greatest things about St. George's.--Jon Sharp, vestry member



Ministry Portfolio

*Full Portfolio
(last updated May 12, 2025)*

St. George's Episcopal Church, West Tennessee

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 07/11/25.

Contact:
rcourtney@episwtn.org

Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Dr. Dorothy Sanders Wells	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2013-11	2024-04

The Rev. Gary K. Sturni	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2004-11	2013-08
-------------------------	-----------------------------------	---------	---------

The Rev. Paul Donald White, Jr.	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2002-09	2004-07
---------------------------------	-----------------------------------	---------	---------

Church School Yes	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School 4	Number of Students for Children School 8
----------------------	---	---

Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School 2	Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School 12	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School 7	Number of Students for Adults School 50
--	---	---	--

Day School Pre-K	Number of Students for Day School 89	Number of Teachers for Day School 19	Day School 21
---------------------	---	---	------------------



Ministry Portfolio

*Full Portfolio
(last updated May 12, 2025)*

St. George's Episcopal Church, West Tennessee

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 07/11/25.

Contact:
rcourtney@episwtn.org

Worshipping Community Web site: <https://stgchurch.org>

Media Links:
www.youtube.com/@StGeorgesGermantown

Online References:
facebook.com/stgchurch

English

Provide Worship or Classes in:
English

References

Bishop:
The Rt. Rev. Phoebe A. Roaf

Diocesan Transition Minister
The Rev. Cn. Rob Courtney 901-937-4782; 901-240-6633; rcourtney@episwtn.org

Current Warden/Board Chair

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Search Chair

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader