



Office for
Transition
Ministry

Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio (last updated Nov 11, 2020)

St. Mark's, Troy, Central Gulf Coast

401 W. College Street, Troy, AL 36081, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

mgfairhope@gmail.com

Weekly Average Sunday
Attendance (ASA)

89

Number of Weekend
Worship Services

1

Number of Weekday
Worship Services

3

Number of Other per Month
Worship Services

3

Current Annual
Compensation

\$43500

Cash Stipend

\$43500

Housing / Rectory Detail

Utilities

SECA reimbursement

Compensation Available for
New Position

Housing Available for

6

Pension Plan

**We're in compliance with
CPF requirements.**

Healthcare Options

Full family

Dental

Yes

Housing Equity Allowance in
budget

Annual Equity Amount

Vacation Weeks

4

Vacation Weeks Details

Continuing Education Weeks

Other

Continuing Education Weeks
Details

Continuing Education
Funding in budget

\$1001-\$2000/year

Sabbatical Provision

Travel/Auto Account

Yes

Other Professional Account

Value of Rectory and utilities is approximately \$20,000 annually. The pension base is \$63,500.

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Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

In a recent survey, members provided a remarkably long list of examples, reflecting the number of good things that have been happening in our community. They noted the food pantry, jail ministry, pancake supper, ethnic diversity, inspiring sermons, a new organ, outreach to the LGBTQ community, hiring and ordaining Fr. Curt Kennington, restoring the rectory, holding a pandemic-driven outdoor service in the city park, Vacation Bible School, growth in confirmations and children's programs, and even funerals. All reflect the common threads of love, service to others, and fellowship. A unique moment demonstrating this love occurred on Palm Sunday of 2019 when an early morning tornado caused severe damage in the neighborhood. The doors of St. Mark's were opened for neighbors to find electricity and coffee, and for children to play in safety. Volunteers cleared trees from roofs and boarded up windows in the neighborhood. Breakfast was served, and food arrived for lunch. Teenagers went door-to-door with invitations, and city crews ate with members and neighbors. In the evening, Fr. Curt and Bishop Russell gathered our dirty and weary group for Evening Prayer, and we were fulfilled.

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

St. Mark's is preparing itself for the future in both immediate and long terms. During this COVID-19 pandemic, the vestry has adjusted its budget, and members are giving their time and talent to outfit the church with fiber optics to improve the quality of our online, streaming services. We want to keep our members engaged and fulfilled, however they participate at this time. In addition, church leaders and members are very aware that they are an older, well established congregation. Several members have volunteered to work on a strategic plan, with the help of the vestry, rector, and diocese, to ensure that St. Mark's is viable into the next generation. Last but not least, a survey of members revealed that 94% of members are satisfied or very satisfied with the effectiveness of the church's leadership. This bodes well for the future of St. Mark's.

Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community.

strong, fun, Loves God and people; inspiring preacher and pastor; listener; strategic thinker; kind

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Describe your liturgical style and practice for all types of worship services provided by your community.

The liturgical style at St. Mark's is traditional, trending toward high church, especially at the Holy Eucharist which is observed at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings. Our worship is guided by the Book of Common Prayer and Hymnal 1982 (Rite II). Our former priest also held a Wednesday noon service of the Holy Eucharist in our small chapel. This was less formal than the Sunday service. Music is central to our celebration. As a church located in a university community, St. Mark's benefits from our organist holding a doctorate in music education. Our choir leader is a retired member of the Troy University music faculty specializing in voice/opera. That said, our choir is open to all, and reading music is not a requirement. Other services offered regularly via social media during the pandemic are lay-led morning and evening prayers designed to maintain a church community when in-person worship is limited or not an option. During Lent, we hold Wednesday-evening events with simple dinners prepared by members of the parish, followed by guest speakers and finishing with Compline led usually by church members.

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

St. Mark's strives to ensure that church activities and ministries are open to all—members and non-members alike. This is accomplished in several ways. 1. Each fall, we “wipe the slate clean” at our annual Rally Day (which can last for several weeks) by offering sign-up sheets to solicit volunteers for all ministries, from ushering, to jail ministry, to “Lay Weeders,” who help landscape and maintain our beautiful campus. We are very deliberate in encouraging members to step out of their comfort zones to seek new avenues of ministry. 2. In a similar vein, periodic announcements are made from the pulpit and through the church newsletter and weekly emails promoting ways to get involved in our various ministries. 3. As a smaller church, St. Mark's by its nature is attuned to opening up ministries to others. In some cases, the continued health of the ministry is dependent on recruiting new blood with new ideas. Last but not least, St. Mark's well-known food pantry and jail ministries provide wonderful opportunities for involvement and diversity.

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

At St. Mark's, we consider ourselves a loving family. We help one another, pray for one another, celebrate one another, and consider one another's needs. We are volunteers who give our time and talents easily, and we gladly dig into our pockets when needed. We have been described as “... a good and generous people who will do anything for a member of the congregation and prove time and again that we all belong to God.”

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

St. Mark's is known in the Troy community for its outreach through the food pantry, jail ministry, campus ministry, fundraisers for the American Heart Association, and more. As our 2020 stewardship slogan says, "At St. Mark's, we are known for our giving," and that giving takes many forms. In addition, members of St. Mark's are involved in activities of the diocese and larger church, such as the United Thank Offering.

Describe your worshipping community's involvement in either the wider Church or geographical region.

As the northernmost parish in the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, St. Mark's is isolated geographically from the diocesan central office, but that has not been a barrier to active involvement by our members. Several of our members are engaged active on diocesan committees, and at least one member serves on the national board of an Episcopal ministry. Further, members of St. Mark's are active volunteers and leaders in activities such as Cursillo weekends and men's and women's retreats.

Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

St. Mark's has established and become known for its food pantry. In its beginning, the food pantry occupied a large closet, and members of St. Mark's followed a shared shopping list to keep the pantry supplied. The food pantry now occupies an entire room in the Seabury House, where administrative functions and the college ministry are also based. Food and supplies are donated by members, and volunteer leaders also use financial contributions to purchase food in bulk from the Montgomery Area Food Bank. Each month St. Mark's is able to feed 75-100 families through three distribution locations: the church office, the Charles Henderson Child Health Center, and the Boys and Girls' Club. Please contact Dr. Judy Dye for more information: jdye@troycable.net or 334-268-8824.

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

Each fall, St. Mark's holds a financial stewardship campaign to fund church operations for the subsequent year. The vestry projects the budget for the upcoming year and appoints the campaign chair. The chair then leads the campaign, communicating with and encouraging members and providing them with pledge cards. Pledge cards are submitted to the treasurer, who is the only person to see individual pledges. On a specified date, usually near Thanksgiving, the parish will designate a Sunday for ingathering pledges. St. Mark's has experienced several consecutive years of record stewardship, and this success is attributable to a positive culture of stewardship. Parishioners are comfortable giving to St. Mark's because of the vestry's history of responsible budgeting and stewardship of funds. In addition, the stewardship chair is respectful of the varying financial situations of members.

What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

While St. Mark's has been relatively free of major conflict over the last several decades, two examples stand out, one intra-congregational and the other external in nature: 1. Almost 20 years ago, the rector created internal strife by removing the U.S. flag from the sanctuary, saying its placement near the altar violated best practice for worship as well as the canons of the church. The membership of St. Mark's includes several military veterans that did not embrace this move. After some discussion, a compromise was struck and the flag was returned to the sanctuary, albeit in a different place than before. Because all parties in the church were willing to discuss this, a brushfire was prevented from turning into a major conflagration. 2. The external conflict occurred in 2003 when the Rev. Eugene Robinson was consecrated as an Episcopal Bishop in New Hampshire. The conflict at St. Mark's mirrored that of parishes across the nation. Our bishop and rector made sure the local parish met several times on this matter. Our small church's willingness to be open on the subject mitigated the damage to the local parish and even prevented at least two families from leaving the church.

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?

St. Mark's experienced seismic change in the early years of this century, as its most prominent member retired and moved away. This parishioner was involved in all aspects of church life, and his family's financial and other support dwarfed that of others. His exit became a case study of a parish handling change poorly and then rebounding to handle it well. The parish floundered for the better part of two years, as members went through several predictable stages of change—denial, melancholy and then determination. It was not an easy road to travel. The situation was resolved through a combination of long-time church members deciding to lead more aggressively, coupled with the arrival of several new families whose members had been prominent in other Episcopal parishes. Thus, they were comfortable with helping shoulder the burden—and they were familiar with the importance of tithing. A heavy dose of prayer didn't hurt, either. Today, St. Mark's has experienced several consecutive years of record stewardship and the church maintains its spiritual and financial health. The lessons learned were obvious—shared responsibility makes for a healthy church.

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Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Rev. Curt Kennington	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2017-01	2020-01

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Rev. Jeff Byrd	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2017-01	2007-01

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Rev. Thack Dyson	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge		

St. Mark's has an active college ministry, the Canterbury Club; offers an annual, popular Vacation Bible School; and provides Sunday School for all ages.p

Church School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School
	2	8

Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School	Number of Students for Adults School
1	8	3	15

Day School	Number of Students for Day School	Number of Teachers for Day School	Number of Total Staff for Day School

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Worshipping Community Web site: www.saintmarkstroy.org

Media Links:

Online References:

www.saintmarkstroy.orgwww.facebook.com/stmarkstroy/

Languages Significantly Represented:

English

Provide Worship or Classes in:

English

In the fall of 2020, the search committee conducted a survey of the parish. The results are published on the website at saintmarkstroy.com/search.

References

Bishop:

850-434-7337

**BISHOP RUSSELL
KENDRICK**

Diocesan Transition Minister

251-459-4169 mgfairhope@gmail.com

Rev. Canon Massey Gentry

Current Warden/Board Chair

334-268-8824 jdye@troycable.net

Judy Dye

Previous Warden/Board Chair

334-670-7892 dporter@troy.edu

Diane Porter

Search Chair

334-372-7567 teri@troycable.net

Teri Williams

Parish/Institution

334-471-4246, 334-581-1077 caleb@calebdawson.com

Caleb Dawson

Local Community Leader

Mrs. Baker is a member of the city council. Contact c/o KW Plastics
800-633-8744 or stephanie.baker@troyal.gov**Stephanie Baker**