

Our Parish Profile



St. Augustine of Canterbury Episcopal Church
3321 Wheeler Road
Augusta GA 30906
706-738-6676
<http://www.st-augustines.org>

Please join us on our journey of faith...
On the road to our new rector

The Mission of St. Augustine's

The mission of Saint Augustine's Episcopal Church is to proclaim the Gospel, baptize, teach, heal, and reconcile so that others may know the Good News of God in Christ Jesus and follow him as Lord and Savior.

Our Constant Prayer

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a rector for this parish, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

In October of 2008, our much loved rector of five years, Harriett Simmons, accepted the call to a new ministry. As a result, St. Augustine's is now seeking a pastor and priest who will walk with us, helping us to fulfill our calling as baptized Christians in the Episcopal Church as we minister to our community and to each other.

Our Search Begins...

Our process began with a parish survey, developed by the Search Committee with the assistance of Canon Rick Callaway from the Diocese of Atlanta.

In order to be effective in our ministry, we must honestly assess ourselves. While our parish is stable, valuing our worship, fellowship, and outreach programs, we realize that there is much work yet to be done if we are to move beyond our present status.

Survey Says...

It is clear from the results of our survey that we place high value on the sense of community within our parish.

Our commitment to outreach and priority on Christian Education programs was consistently mentioned by parishioners.

We are seeking a person who demonstrates the following strengths and characteristics:

- Compassion for others
- Willingness to listen to all sides of an issue
- At ease with a diversity of parishioners
- Ability to facilitate the leadership of individuals in the use of their God-given gifts and talents
- A well-developed sense of humor
- Ability to effectively shepherd and support our children and youth
- Ability to deliver inviting, engaging, and challenging sermons that connect scripture to our daily lives
- A thorough knowledge of scripture and Biblical theology

We also seek a rector with the following personality traits

Must be:
Approachable
Compassionate
A leader
Intelligent
Humorous

And with the following Qualifications...

- handles criticism calmly and forgives easily
- has an informal conversation delivery
- has theological views fairly stabilized
- strictly adheres to Budget Committee and Vestry approval for changes
- values communication with and approval of Vestry
- willingly tries new things as recommended by the Vestry
- regards the Bible as an interpretation of God's dealing with humanity
- delivers sermons that emphasize a biblical text

Some challenges before us...

We are an aging membership. We realize that we are losing our youth and college age members to well-funded, dynamic ministries. We have also lost young families with children to these programs. We need more young couples and families with young children. To draw them, we know that we must attract them with meaningful programs.

In the past few years, we have been faced with controversies regarding the ordination, marriage, and blessing of unions of gay and lesbian Episcopalians. This has had a predictable impact on members of all points of view. Some members have reduced or cancelled giving. Some have left the church completely. While we remain conservative as a whole, we are by no means of one mind on these issues. While a majority of our membership opposes, we do have members who support the ordination, blessing, and marriage of gay and lesbian Episcopalians.

Our declining membership has also changed our financial picture. With fewer pledges and with members withholding funds, we have fewer funds. This decline in revenue has placed a strain on those members who are pledging faithfully as well as the church's needs. Basically, fewer and fewer members cannot be expected to give more and more.

As we discern our sense of call, we ask God's blessing and guidance. We also look to the scriptures to guide us along our journey.

- ***Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. (Matthew 7:7-8)***

Our First Fifty Years...A History of St. Augustine's

We were organized as a mission in 1960. The first meeting place of the new congregation was in a community building in Daniel Village shopping center. The Rev. Herman Huff served as first vicar of the congregation.

Land for the construction of the church building was given by the Nixon family. The site selected was located at 3321 Wheeler Road. Mr. Gwinn Nixon and Mr. Scott Nixon were members of the mission council.

The first phase of construction began in 1962 when a multi-purpose building (our Parish Hall) was built on the property. It was during The Rev. Robert Battin's appointment as vicar that we were granted parish status.

In 1967, the second phase of construction was dedicated to the Glory of God and named St. David's Hall. By now the church buildings included the parish hall, kitchen, offices, and additional Christian education space.

Our third priest, the Rev. Alfred Mead, served as rector until 1977. During his ministry the third phase of the parish was constructed. This consisted of the new church building (Nave), additional education space, offices, and sacristy.

The fourth priest and third rector of the parish was the Very Rev. Neal Phelps called in 1977. The covered walkway between the church and the parish hall was begun and completed in 1990. An addition consisting of the new nursery, youth area, new kitchen and handicap accessible bathroom facilities was completed in 1994.

The large front wall is built of local stone, which is not normally used for that purpose, since it cannot be readily cut and shaped. To acquire this stone in the colors and hues desired, it was necessary to use stones found on the earth's surface and not from the local stone quarry. All the stones were picked up by hand from areas around the quarry and transported to the site for use.

The Magnificent Bell Tower

In the early 1960's, the beautiful bell tower was constructed due to the generosity of Mrs. Nixon, in loving memory of Gwinn Henry Nixon.

The Mohler Pipe Organ

The organ, almost 30 years old, was given by all members of the parish in memory or thanksgiving for family members or some special occasion. The initial gift to begin the pipe organ fund was contributed by Mr. and Mrs. P.B. Watts.

Risen Christ

The original crucifix which hung in our sanctuary was replaced with a larger, Risen Christ in 2008.

The original crucifix now hangs in St. David's Hall.

Church Facilities

St. Augustine's has many resources available to assist with spiritual needs. In addition to the beautiful sanctuary, we also have a chapel, library, choir room, vestry room, nursery, six classrooms, and a youth room.

St. Bridgid's Chapel

We also have five offices that are maintained by the rector, parish deacons, parish secretary, and parish administrator.

The parish hall is perfect for social occasions.

The unique stained glass windows were completed in May of 1975.

The Garden

Located in the middle of the church grounds is an elegant Memorial Garden.

The Choir

St. Augustine's Choir is a group of 12 to 15 singers who provide music for the 10:30 a.m. service and other special services throughout the year.

The Choral repertoire covers all major periods of music and coordinates music with the lessons of the day.

Parish Staff...

St Augustine's provides a full range of parish employees to support the needs of our parishioners.

The Rev. Dr. Ellen Francis Poisson, OSH, is the Interim Priest.
Four Deacons assist with spiritual needs: Jim Aton, John Warner,
Lynn Anderson, Faye Forbes

Parish Administrator, Nancy Moak

Secretary, Carolyn Gaynor

Musical Director, Eugenia Glover

Church Treasurer, Don Reif

L.D. Newman, Church Chancellor

David Simmons, Stewardship Chairman

Lillian Thomas assists in the office as a part time secretary.

The Vestry

To support the staff, our church also has a twelve person vestry which includes Senior Warden, Gary Jones, and Junior Warden, Charlie Bragg. Ten additional voting members include: Sean Brady, Pat Burau, Henry Harris, Mike Gaynor, Joyce Long, Bill Macuch, Diane Sheffield, Ray Sigg, David Simmons, and Lillian Thomas.

Parish Life Activities

Wholesome, Christian activities that bring the parish together, are an important aspect of life here at St. Augustine's.

We have always honored a long tradition of fostering fellowship through parish life activities.

Other Parish Life Activities...

A few other activities include Mardi Gras, Oktoberfest, The Augusta Antique Show, St. Augustine's Men's Cookouts (Grillers and Chillers), Foyer Groups, Mother-Daughter Tea, and our Annual Parish Picnic kicks off the Church Season in the fall.

Children's events include All Hallows Eve Party, July Jamboree, Easter Egg Hunt, and Augusta Greenjacket Baseball games. Pictured here are parishioners at one of the annual parish weekends at the Kanuga Conference Center.

Worship

For many, the Eucharist is central to their faith and a high point of their worship. All baptized Christians are welcomed at the Lord's table.

Every Sunday, we begin worship quietly with the 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite One. This service does not include music. One lay minister and a Deacon assist with this service.

The 10:30 a.m. Rite Two worship service is generally regarded as a family service with the largest number of parishioners attending. This service features both music and the choir.

During communion individual prayers by the priest or deacon either for the communicant or someone else may be offered.

Two lay ministers and at least one Deacon assist with the 10:30 a.m. Eucharist.

- There is a prayer team of healing intercessors available in the Vestry Room to pray for and with parishioners after the 10:30 a.m. service.
- We also offer a healing Eucharist service on Wednesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. This service is held in the chapel, followed by Wednesday morning Bible Study.
- All men of the parish are invited to meet for Monday Morning Bible Study from 6:45-7:45 a.m. in the Vestry Room.

Holy day services such as Easter, midnight mass on Christmas Eve, Good Friday, etc. have traditionally been Rite Two. Incense has been used more sparingly in the past few years, usually on Easter and Christmas Eve mass.

There is a traditional afternoon Eucharist with a children's pageant during the Christmas season. Some special services have been tied in with major parish life events such as Mardi Gras and Oktoberfest.

The Altar Guild is active and very experienced. This group meets on a regular basis to discuss various service related items and for spiritual direction.

Acolytes are an important part of our Rite II services. The 8:00 a.m. Eucharist has a priest server. The 10:30 a.m. service normally has candle bearers and a crucifer in addition to a server.

Sanctus bells are used and there is a unique ringing of the outside courtyard bell from the altar area after the blessing of our Lord's body and blood during both services.

Communications

Recognizing the need for open lines of communication and vehicles necessary to deliver news and information to the parish on a timely basis, the leadership of the church and the hard work of its members are ensuring that this challenge is met.

The St. Augustine's website, www.st-augustines.org, is continually evolving and is a source of information for members and newcomers. It contains worship schedules, current programs and services, who we are, what we believe, ways in which we can serve, and links to Episcopal Church related sites.

The church office uses email to contact all members who have email access with the latest parish and diocese news.

A monthly newsletter, *Canterbury Tales*, is mailed to members and keeps everyone up to date with schedules, events, news, and important dates.

Recently, a sound system was added which ensures that services can be heard by all parishioners.

Christian Education

- **“Spiritual Formation”** (formerly Sunday School) is held each week from 9:30-10:15 a.m. Each Sunday begins with a gathering at 9:15 for all ages to focus on the scripture(s) of the day and music.
- **Children from Preschool – 8th grade** participate in weekly lessons based on at least one of the lectionary readings for the day. In this Episcopal based curriculum, *Living the Good News*, the lessons are fun, interactive, and filled with art, drama, and music.

There are many activities for children to participate in throughout the church calendar year-Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost.

- Blessing of the animals
- All Hollow's Eve Eucharist (dress in costume)
- December Sing-a-long
- Christmas Pageant
- Mardi Gras
- Easter Egg Hunt

- Birthday party for the church on Pentecost Sunday

Youth

Rite-13 begins by helping the youth focus on themselves and others in the group.

Journey to Adulthood (J2A) helps teens really walk the walk of faith. They perform service and mission work in the community. They work to prepare for their Confirmation. They experience a pilgrimage and seek a deeper understanding and relationship with God.

YAC is “Young Adults in the Church” and is an opportunity for all youth following Confirmation to continue their faith journey within the context of a parish community.

Episcopal Young Churchpersons (EYC) is for youth in grades 6-12 and meets most Sunday nights. The youth play games, look at scripture, pray for one another, and have a great time getting to know one another and God.

Adults

Adults gather in the parish hall each Sunday morning for a special interest offering. The parish clergy and others lead classes on several different themes throughout the year such as book studies, Bible study, faith, history of the Episcopal Church, and topics following the liturgical year.

Intergenerational Sunday School

Several times a year there are lessons for all ages:

- Thanksgiving
- Advent Four (Happy Birthday Jesus Party)
- Lent One (Burying the Alleluias)
- Palm Sunday (Liturgy of the Palms)
- Easter Sunday (Resurrecting the Alleluias!)
- Feast of St. Augustine of Canterbury (Sunday closest to May 26)
- Pentecost Sunday

New this Calendar Year...

- **Children’s Chapel** to be held during the 10:30 a.m. service. Led by clergy or laypersons, children will leave the church after the processional and first prayer and return at the exchange of the peace. The main idea of this service is to teach children the meaning of the service.

- **Book Studies** in the evening during a weekday. This would allow for small group discussions in an environment more inviting and less threatening for inclusion of friends who may not be churchd.
- **Topics of Interest**
The first being Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University. This course is open to the community.
- **The Canterbury Club**
A fellowship program for young adults in their 20's and 30's.

Outreach

- At regular intervals, we serve at the Master's Table, a soup kitchen in downtown Augusta.
- A blood drive is held each February.
- The week before Easter we send dinners to the needy and shut-ins.
- In the fall, coats and sweaters are collected for the clients at Gracewood State School and Hospital.
- The Angel Tree at Christmas provides toys and clothes for needy children.
- Wounded Warriors provides personal items, snack foods, and CD's for patients at both Eisenhower and the Veteran's Administration Hospitals.

The Diocese of Georgia

"Always ready to work and serve"

- The beginning of the Church in Georgia is well stated by Dr. Henry Malone in his book, "The Episcopal Church in Georgia," published in 1960.
- In the opening chapter he writes, "An ordained minister of the Church of England stepped ashore with Georgia's first colonists in 1733, and this church has served its people ever since."
- The Diocese of Georgia is one of 116 dioceses that comprises The Episcopal Church.
- Our diocese covers the southeast 32,994 square miles of the state of Georgia.
- It has nearly 19,000 baptized ministers, 188 of whom are ordained.
- We work, study, and pray in congregations ranging in size from 20 to 1500 communicants.
- To learn more please go to www.georgia.anglican.org

Local Information

- Augusta was founded in 1736 as a trading outpost during the Colonial times and is the second oldest and second largest city in Georgia.
- The charm of the classic South is woven throughout Augusta's tree-lined streets and majestic antebellum homes.

While Augusta is known worldwide for the Masters and the coveted green jacket, she is also known as the "Garden City" of the South, full of history, atmosphere, Southern charm, and activities to engage everyone's interest.

Located along the Savannah River there are opportunities for the outdoorsman to meander along the banks of the Savannah on the Riverwalk, canoe down the Historic Augusta Canal, or venture into the swamps of Phinizy Swamp.

In recent years, Augusta has become a center of medicine, biotechnology, and military. The Medical College of Georgia, the state's only public health sciences graduate university, employs over 7,000 people. Along with University Hospital, the Medical District of Augusta employs over 25,000 people and has an economic impact of over \$1.8 billion.

Along with the Medical College of Georgia, the city's three largest employers include the Savannah River Site (a Department of Energy nuclear facility) and the U.S. Army Signal Center at Fort Gordon.

Educational opportunities are numerous and include Augusta State University, a part of the University of Georgia System and Paine College, a private Historically Black University affiliated with the United Methodist Church and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

Some companies that have facilities or distribution centers in Augusta include CareSouth, T-Mobile, Solo Cup Company, Automatic Data Processing, International Paper, NutraSweet, Teleperformance, E-Z-Go, Elanco, Club Car (Worldwide Headquarters), John Deere, Procter & Gamble, and Kellogg's.

For additional information about Augusta please visit:
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augusta.Georgia>

Financial Stewardship

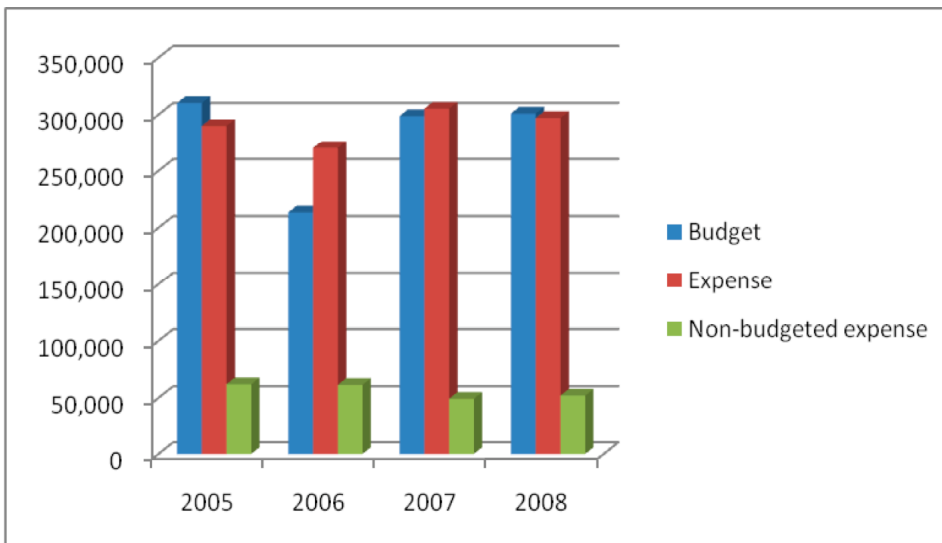
- The fiscal year is the calendar year. Stewardship is ongoing all year with an emphasis in the fall on pledging.

- Members are asked to prayerfully consider their financial circumstances and to make a pledge to the church.
- The finance committee then draws up a budget for the following year based on the pledged amount and recommends it to the vestry for approval.

Summary of Pledges for 2004-2009

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Pledging Units	133	94	109	117	93	77
Pledged Amount	330,000	260,216	288,032	311,015	287,248	242,870
Average Pledge Amount	2,481	2,768	2,642	2,658	3,089	3,154

Budget vs. Expense



We know that God has already chosen a rector for us...
We believe that while we are seeking our rector, our rector is also seeking us.

Are you seeking us?

If so, please send your letter of interest to one of the following addresses:

- **joylong@comcast.net**

- **Joyce Long
St. Augustine Search Committee
4708 Brookgreen Road
Martinez, GA 30907**