



Episcopal Church of the Advent Parish Profile 2019

Mission Statement

To love and serve God and our neighbors by offering to the people of Tallahassee meaningful worship services rooted in the tradition of Episcopal liturgy and music, a high-quality education to young children in our day school, opportunities for fellowship, and outreach ministries that serve the community and the world.

Vision

To be an inclusive and accepting congregation that welcomes all who want to love God by serving the community through programs of outreach and giving.

History

In 1858, The Right Reverend Edward Hamilton West, the Fifth Bishop of Florida, envisioned a need for a new Episcopal parish on the north side of Tallahassee. In December of that year, Bishop West called The Reverend Harry B. Douglas to address this need. Father Douglas, who at that time was Director of Camp Weed, the Diocesan Youth Camp, began the process of organizing a mission church, which would grow into the Episcopal Church of the Advent.

Services began on Sunday, March 1, 1959, in what was then Yon's Hardware Store at the intersection of Thomasville and Betton Roads. Incorporating an old door on concrete blocks as an altar, an altar cloth borrowed from St. John's, a service book from the Chapel of the Resurrection, and candlesticks from Holy Comforter, 44 congregants participated in this initial service.

At that time, the congregation of St. Clement's Episcopal Church in the neighboring Town of Lloyd had experienced such a serious decline both to the membership and the



structure that Bishop West declared St. Clement's to be inactive. In June 1959, he made the building available as a home for Church of the Advent.

A six-acre site on Piedmont Drive in Tallahassee, donated by Dr. and Mrs. C. K. Wall, became the new home for this historic 1895 Gothic-style church building consecrated by Bishop Weed in 1910. Extensive restoration by congregants led to rededication as St. Clement's Chapel of the Episcopal Church of the Advent on Advent Sunday, 1959. Construction continued with a Rectory in 1962 and dedication of Advent Church and Parish Hall in April 1966. On April 16, 1966, The Episcopal Church of the Advent became the fortieth parish in the Diocese of Florida.

With the establishment of Advent Day School in 1971, a significant educational outreach and evangelical resource became available to the congregation and to Advent's ministry in the Tallahassee Community.

In 2006, a significant percentage of the congregation and its two priests expressed their displeasure with National Church decisions about the inclusion of gay people in clerical leadership by leaving Advent Church. Needless to say, this resulted in a challenge to the stability and growth of the membership. It is to the credit of remaining members and several new clergy that that the congregation moved beyond this separation event and remains on a path to full recovery and growth.

Our Worship



Advent celebrates three weekly Eucharistic services. On Sunday, early worshippers gather at 8:30 am in St. Clement's Chapel for a quiet, contemplative service without music. At the 10:30 am Eucharist, the service includes a full choir. Both services typically follow Rite II, except for special occasions. There is also a Healing Eucharist with anointing and laying-on-of-hands every Wednesday at noon in St. Clement's Chapel.

Our worship is greatly enhanced by an excellent music program. During the 10:30 am Sunday service, music is provided by our choir director and choir members who have performed works by Schubert, Durufle, and Mozart, among many others. Although most music is accompanied by organ and piano,



other instruments are included on special occasions. Special music has included Advent Lessons & Carols; Morning Prayer; Evensong; and choir concerts, often accompanied by instrumentalists, including a string quartet, French horn, trumpet, and cellos. Most hymns are selected by the choir director from the Episcopal hymnal.

Advent Parish Day School

Advent Parish Day School is a thriving, vital ministry of the Episcopal Church of the Advent. Established in 1971, the school has a long history of excellence. Advent offers accredited early childhood educational programs for students 18 months to 5 years of age. Advent has a well-educated and experienced staff. In addition to the



foundational classroom curriculum, our school offers a unique program of special activities (cooking, science, art, music, movement, and chapel) that enhance the regular school day.

Advent supports the Day School in several ways. The largest fundraiser of the year is a Silent Auction in the fall that brings together parishioners, parents, and community members for a fun evening to raise money for needed renovations and upkeep of the school property.



Advent Church and its Day School recently reconstituted the school's Board of Directors, which is led by a dedicated group of day school parents and Advent leadership. The Board was created in 2018 with a goal of fostering good communication between the Church and the Day School, providing solid leadership, and allowing more input in Day School decision-making by parents. By-laws adopted by the church govern the operation of the day school.

Fellowship and Ministries



A strong web of friendships unites the congregation of Church of the Advent. There are many opportunities for Advent parishioners to participate in ministries and fellowship activities with one another.

Sunday Adult Education: Sunday Adult Education is offered weekly immediately following the 8:30 am service.

Bible Study: Each Thursday morning, Advent offers Bible Study, a very popular program that often fills the Vestry Room. The group usually discusses the readings for the upcoming Sunday and get insights and interpretations from our Rector and other biblical scholars.

Book Study: On Friday mornings, the Book Study group meets to discuss books, lectures, and other published materials on various Christian topics.

Sunday Breakfast: Breakfast is prepared and served on the second and fourth Sundays between services by the Mighty People of Advent and is available for a nominal fee.

Children's Church: Each Sunday just before the sermon at the 10:30 am service, children learn a simple lesson and participate in a craft or activity related to the message. They return to the church in time to participate in Holy Communion with their families. Nursery services are also provided for families with young children.

Daughters of the King: The Daughters of the King meets on the third Sunday of each month immediately following the 8:30 am service.

Episcopal Church Women: The Episcopal Church Women meet on the evening of the fourth Tuesday of the month and provide support to Advent and the Day School. The group holds fundraising opportunities to support local and international charities.

Forum: A monthly Forum held on Wednesday evenings allows parishioners the opportunity to gather after a meal to learn about and discuss timely topics. Most recently, parishioners were presented with a report from the four members who traveled to Cuba to visit our sister church in Los Arabos.

Vacation Bible School: Advent partners with Holy Comforter Episcopal Church to offer Vacation Bible School for children ages 5-10 in the summer.

Church Ministries: There are many ways in which our parish members serve Advent for each service. Parishioners can serve on the Altar Guild, or as choir members, lay ministers, lectors, acolytes, ushers, and offering counters. Each Sunday, Eucharistic Lay Visitors deliver the Eucharist to members who are homebound.



Annual and Seasonal Activities

Advent has several large programs that allow parishioners opportunities to give their time for the benefit of others.

Silent Auction: The annual Silent Auction is the biggest fundraiser in support of Advent Day School. The ticketed event offers an evening of dinner and drinks with the opportunity to sponsor the event, donate services or goods, or bid on dozens of donated items. The event



regularly raises in excess of \$25,000, which is used for technology updates, renovations, and other improvements to the Day School.



Rummage Sale: One of Advent's largest fundraisers is the summer Rummage Sale, coordinated by the Episcopal Church Women (ECW). Parishioners and others donate items, then volunteers spend weeks organizing and pricing the items in the Parish Hall. The event spans two days and draws hundreds of people from the community.

Leftovers are donated to charitable organizations in town, and the proceeds are divided among local charities designated by ECW.

Breakfast with Saint Nicholas: This event was new in 2018, with the goal of teaching children about the gift-giving of the historical Saint Nicholas. Advent parishioners served breakfast, provided music, and arranged for a surprise visit by St. Nick.



Bowls & Brews: New in 2019, this event was an opportunity for anyone in the community to compete in a chili cook-off. The church provided child care and presented a family movie to the children. Parishioners donated breads and desserts, and volunteers organized the logistics. There were 15 entries including another local Episcopal Church team and students from local culinary schools. Money raised during the event will fund a diversity scholarship for the Day School.

Outreach Ministries

The Outreach Committee coordinates the various local, national, and international outreach missions of the church community.

Grace Mission: We contribute financially and through volunteer work to Grace Mission, an Episcopal



mission in midtown addressing the physical and spiritual needs of poor and homeless people in Tallahassee. One Saturday a month, Advent sends a team of volunteers to prepare breakfast for those who visit the Mission.

Emergency Care Health Organization (ECHO): On the first Sunday of every month, we collect cans of chili to contribute to ECHO, the leading faith-based social service agency in the area. For that we are known as “The Chili Church.”

A Full Summer: Advent provides assistance to A Full Summer, a food packaging event that brings together volunteers who donate time and money to package meals for needy children who do not receive school lunches over the summer.

Companion Church: In 2018, Advent established a companion parish relationship with La Trinidad in Los Arabos, Cuba. Part of our support helps with the maintenance and upkeep of a Living Waters of the World water filtration system that provides safe water for the entire community. A group of Advent



parishioners and others visited the church in January 2019 for a week of shared

activities and relationship building as well as bringing much needed supplies and financial support.

Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD): A percentage of our offerings support Episcopal Relief and Development, which is an organization to facilitate healthier, more fulfilling lives in communities struggling with hunger, poverty, disaster, and disease. Parishioners also individually designate offerings to specific relief efforts through ERD with hunger, poverty, disaster, and disease.



Teddy Bear Sunday: In 2019, Advent held its first Teddy Bear Sunday to collect stuffed animals for the Tallahassee Police Department. Officers keep stuffed animals with them in the event they are called to a crime where a child is present and needs something to hold for comfort.



In the past, Advent has participated in other programs, including Habitat for Humanity, Kairos Prison Ministry Teams, the Tallahassee Equality Action Ministry, Refuge House, Food for the Poor, and disaster relief through the Red Cross.

We hope to continue to expand our program of outreach and giving and feel this outward focus to do God’s work in the community helps bring us closer together as a church family.

Stewardship and Financial Information

Below is a three-year summary of pledge revenues and parish expenditures. The parish currently carries virtually no debt and has paid off its mortgage.

Item	2018	2017	2016
Pledging Units	92	93	95
Pledge Totals	\$299,051	\$290,982	\$293,602
Church Operating Budget	\$508,246	\$428,291	\$442,045
Day School Operating Budget	\$1,039,015	\$943,961	\$862,628

Our Hopes and Dreams

After completing the Holy Cow! congregational assessment and a series of focus groups with our members, the search committee believes that the parish should focus on engaging in long-term planning and developing a comprehensive strategic plan for church development and growth. The congregational assessment results in November 2018 revealed that our members have three main priorities:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
- Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.
- Expand outreach ministries that provide direct services to those living on the margins of society.

The Rector We Seek

We seek a Rector who has strengths in four important areas:

- Preaching - Able to inspire and connect people to God's word
- Strategic Leadership – Ability to cast a vision and lead the church toward realization of the vision
- Pastoral care – Aptitude to engage people empathetically and care for persons in times of need
- Teaching/Training – Capacity to deepen understanding, form character, and equip members with new skills.

Staff and Leadership

During this time of transition, our parish is led by the Rev. Dr. Richard W. Effinger. Fr. Rick has been a blessing to us, particularly his expertise and interest in providing outstanding educational opportunities, loving pastoral care, and energetically initiating and supporting new opportunities for fellowship and outreach. Our staff also includes a fulltime parish Administrator/Bookkeeper, part-time Sexton, a Choir Director/Organist, and a part-time office volunteer. The Day School has a full-time director and reporting

to her an office manager and over thirty teachers who staff both school-year and summer programs.

The Rector works with a Vestry comprising nine members who are elected for rotating three-year terms at the annual parish meeting in January or February of each year.

Our Parish Grounds



The Church of the Advent is located on six beautifully landscaped acres in a middle-class, suburban, residential area of northeast Tallahassee, between Live Oak Plantation and the Waverly Hills neighborhood. The parish property is adjacent to Roselawn Cemetery. The physical plant consists of five buildings: Advent

Church, St. Clement's Chapel, two buildings housing Advent Parish Day School, and a combination church office/activities building/parish hall. There is on-site parking available on both sides of the property. A Memory Garden for cremated remains is on the grounds. The Vestry is currently working on renovating the Memory Garden, a process that should be completed in 2019. A Buildings and Grounds Committee takes care of landscaping and maintenance of the church property.





Our Community

Tallahassee, located in the Florida panhandle, is the capital city of Florida. It is home to [Florida State University](#) and its [National High Magnetic Field Laboratory](#). It is also the home of [Florida A&M University](#), the fifth largest historically black university, and [Tallahassee Community College](#), which serves as a feeder school to both universities. With its population of more than 190,000, Tallahassee is known for its inviting hospitality, beautiful parks and [gardens](#), and canopy roads. There are numerous opportunities to enjoy Tallahassee's history, heritage, culture, and festive nature, including [7 Days of Opening Nights](#), [Springtime Tallahassee](#), the [Red Hills International Horse Trials](#), LeMoyne's [Chain of Parks Art Festival](#), and a beloved downtown Winter Festival. Tallahassee is named the [No. 9 South's Best City](#) in *Southern Living* magazine's South's Best Awards, and is the only city in Florida to be recognized in this category.

Diocese of Florida

The [Episcopal Diocese of Florida](#), which covers 25 counties in north Florida, comprises 63 congregations, 13 parochial schools, and more than 14,000 households. When originally formed in 1838, the Diocese comprised the whole state of Florida. It is now one of four Dioceses in the state. The current Diocesan Bishop of Florida is the Rt. Rev. Samuel Johnson, who was consecrated in 2003. Since 1951, the cathedral church has been St. John's Cathedral in Jacksonville. The Diocese is the home to the [Camp Weed & Cerveney Conference Center](#), centrally located on approximately 500 acres near Live Oak.

Contact Information



The Episcopal Church of the Advent and Advent Day School
815 Piedmont Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32312

Phone: (850) 386-5109 | Fax: (850) 385-7225

Email: adventure@advent-church.org

Website: <http://www.advent-Church.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AdventChurchTallahassee/>

Rector Search Committee Chair: Dr. Mark Baird

Email: adventbaird@gmail.com