



Office for
Transition
Ministry

Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio (last updated Mar 11, 2024)

Holy Comforter Episcopal Church, North Carolina

320 E. Davis Street, PO Box 1336, Burlington, NC 27215, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

catherine.massey@episdionc.org

Weekly Average Sunday Attendance (ASA)	Number of Weekend Worship Services	Number of Weekday Worship Services	Number of Other per Month Worship Services
120	2	1	2
Current Annual Compensation	Cash Stipend	Housing / Rectory Detail	Utilities
\$75600			
SECA reimbursement	Compensation Available for New Position	Housing Available for	Pension Plan
	\$100000		We're in compliance with CPF requirements.
Healthcare Options	Dental	Housing Equity Allowance in budget	Annual Equity Amount
Negotiable	Yes		
Vacation Weeks	Vacation Weeks Details	Continuing Education Weeks	Continuing Education Weeks Details
One month, including 5 Sundays (standard)		2 (standard)	
Continuing Education Funding in budget	Sabbatical Provision	Travel/Auto Account	Other Professional Account
up to/including \$500/year	Yes		

Compensation structure negotiable w/in our \$100K budget.

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

Last summer, we launched a parish-wide survey to help the Vestry and prospective Clergy better understand the perspectives and needs of our parishioners. Parishioners were asked to identify Holy Comforter's strengths and what we do well. One ministry was mentioned more than any other – our partnership with Newlin Elementary School. Now in its 12th year, our partnership with Newlin Elementary, a nearby Title I public school, focuses on delivering literacy support, aimed at improving reading, writing, and spelling skills, as well as a Backpack Program, providing food each weekend for 65 children facing food insecurity, with plans to feed additional children in the works. We also support teachers through classroom aid and appreciation events, like a back-to-school luncheon. Holy Comforter initiated the financial and volunteer support of the partnership, but community members have since gotten on board. A memorable fundraiser was the “Great Grown-up Spelling Bee” which was a financial success and provided an occasion for fun and fellowship for our church community and beyond. Our partnership has served as a model and inspiration for other churches to adopt schools in the community.

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

Holy Comforter is centrally located in a rapidly growing part of the state, in easy driving distance to both the beach and the mountains. We have a vibrant university community, with both Elon University and Alamance Community College located nearby. The community outside our parish is rapidly evolving and we realize we must adapt. We are investing in technology. Our 10:30 am service is now consistently live streamed each Sunday, and we have talented parishioners dedicated to ensuring the quality of our live streams and recordings. We would like to expand our YouTube offerings more and we are currently revitalizing our website. We must attract new members, particularly younger members and families. We've greatly improved our programming for children in the last two years and we are seeing progress from those initiatives. Our parish also realizes that we need to be open to new ideas like alternative worship services and more varied music offerings. We are in a position to grow, and a new Rector will have an incredible opportunity to share their talents with the parish to help us meet the needs of future generations.

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

visionary, Loving Pastor, spiritual leadership, administration

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

Holy Comforter provides two Sunday services: an 8:15 am Rite II spoken service and a 10:30 am Rite II service featuring organ music and a full choir. During Lent, we observe Rite I. Our services are grounded in tradition, following the liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer, with occasional use of text from the Scottish Psalter and New Zealand Prayer Book. Music is vital to our 10:30 am worship service, drawing primarily on The Hymnal 1982 and supplementing with additional styles as appropriate for our congregation. In addition to Sunday services, we have traditionally offered a regular healing service, as well as occasional Evensong and Compline services. Children gather for Godly Play during a portion of each Sunday morning service. In addition to Sunday services, we have traditionally offered a weekly healing service, as well as occasional Evensong and Compline services.

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

Our parish is supported by strong lay ministers and highly involved parishioners. There are ample opportunities to serve and experienced lay ministers eager to mentor others. When asked the strengths of our church, a survey respondent said, "Our Lay organizers, our tremendous volunteers. These people keep the church running." We welcome all to participate in any of our many lay ministries, including acolytes, ushers, chalicists, readers, altar and flower guilds, and choir. To communicate church events and programs, Holy Comforter uses weekly and monthly newsletters (both paper and electronic), maintains a website (currently under revision), an Instagram account, and sends email blasts, as needed.

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

Margaret and Lawrence S. Holt donated our church building and property in memory of their daughter Emily, who died at age five. The name "Holy Comforter" signified the great comfort their faith and church community offered amidst their grief. More than 100 years later, our church continues to provide comfort to those who enter its doors. From formal programs, like an active Stephen Ministry, to more informal acts of kindness like a prayer shawl or fresh bread left on a doorstep by the Sunshine Committee, our parishioners support and care for one another. Our[JS1] [JS2] worshipping community provides many paths toward well-being, beyond Sunday services. These include a Men's Breakfast Group that faithfully meets each week, and an ECW group that immeasurably serves and supports the church and one another. The sense of community is alive at Holy Comforter. Parishioners can get to know one another through Parish Home Gatherings (rotating in-home dinners), lemonade on the lawn, picnics, receptions, and coffee in the parlor. Many events are intergenerational, but some are geared primarily toward children and youth.

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

Pastoral care is important to our parishioners. Survey responses indicate that our parishioners need a spiritual leader who will care for our congregation. We are accustomed to receiving home and hospital visits, counseling, and support in times of both joy and grief. We have lay eucharistic ministers who take the sacraments to those who are not able to attend services in person. We provide pastoral care and monthly services at two local retirement communities – Twin Lakes and the Village at Brookwood. Both members and non-members attend those services. Our 10:30 am Sunday service is streamed live on YouTube, which helps those who can't attend in person feel more connected to our church community.

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

Our campus, centrally located in the state, is often used by the Diocese for meetings and youth events such as the Bishop's Ball and youth conferences. We're fortunate to have beautiful facilities we can share with community groups, such as AA and NA, and a local theatre organization. We are proud to help sponsor LEAF (Lutherans, Episcopalians, And Friends), an active ministry for students at neighboring Elon University. Holy Comforter provides both financial and volunteer support to LEAF. In addition to this campus ministry, the parish is highly supportive of students and teachers at Newlin Elementary, as mentioned in an earlier response. We also collaborate with a Methodist congregation in hosting a weekly Community Breakfast for the hungry. We support Allied Churches of Alamance County, a non-profit organization that provides emergency shelter, an Empowerment Center, and a community kitchen for the hungry and homeless, and participate in Meals on Wheels and the local Foster Children's Christmas gifts program.

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

In recent years, we have focused more on revitalizing programs that suffered during the pandemic, instead of starting new ministries; however, we do have a new partnership that is flourishing. When a local Methodist congregation sought a space to feed the hungry each week at their community breakfast, we gladly opened our kitchen, gathering, and storage spaces to them. Today, approximately 100 people enter our doors each Sunday for a hot breakfast, program, and fellowship. Parishioner Frank Harris is our liaison for this program and keeps the parish informed through our newsletters.

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

Stewardship centers around our traditional Every Member Canvass, the annual pledge review which includes letters with pledge cards, along with articles in newsletters, personal testimonies, an emphasis on the theology of giving. Parishioners may tithe through offering plate gifts, bank drafts, and online donations. We understand that we need to adapt our giving strategies to acknowledge younger parishioners and their preferences in giving. In addition to pledging, members can contribute to décor and special music programs through annual Christmas & Easter campaigns, and we use loose offerings from 1 Sunday per month to support the Rector's Discretionary Fund. We consider the maintenance and preservation of our historic campus as a top priority for our stewardship efforts, & we have considered asking for assistance from the Diocese to help maintain our historic campus. Our stewardship extends to the planet, as we make every effort to use green products & have recently installed solar panels on the roof of our parish hall. Opening our church facilities for use by other community groups provides an opportunity to introduce the Episcopal church as an open & welcoming space for all.

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

We have learned that conflict typically arises when there is a lack of transparency and poor communication. In this time of transition, it is especially important to keep parishioners informed, as times of change can bring increased tension and anxiety. The current Vestry recognizes this and is committed to ensuring transparent communication, especially as we search for a new Rector. Our Senior Warden or another member of vestry provides weekly spoken updates each Sunday, and we also communicate through regular newsletter articles and quarterly reports. Our parish-wide survey was a first step in getting feedback and buy-in from parishioners, and vestry members' contact information is posted in each bulletin and newsletter. Parishioners are encouraged to reach out if they have questions or concerns

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?

Holy Comforter has always been recognized as a parish deeply engaged in the community, and with some relationships internationally. The general shift from parish-centered issues to more focus on national and global issues can sometimes be problematic, especially if those issues are political in nature. It is best when there is someone, usually a clergy person, who can facilitate discussions and offer a Biblical perspective. It becomes problematic when parishioners are not sufficiently drawn-in and feel viewpoints or programs are being forced on them. Once again, communication is key.



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Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
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Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
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Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
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Church School		Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School 6	Number of Students for Children School 10
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Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School 4	Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School	Number of Students for Adults School 10
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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: <https://www.holycomforterburlington.org/>

Media Links:

> <https://www.facebook.com/holycomforterburlington>

Online References:

> <https://www.youtube.com/echcburlington>

Languages Significantly Represented:

Provide Worship or Classes in:

References

Bishop:

**The Rt. Rev. Samuel
Rodman**

sam.rodman@episdionc.org

Diocesan Transition Minister

Canon Catherine Massey

catherine.massey@episdionc.org

Current Warden/Board Chair

Mr. Mark Thomas

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Search Chair

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader