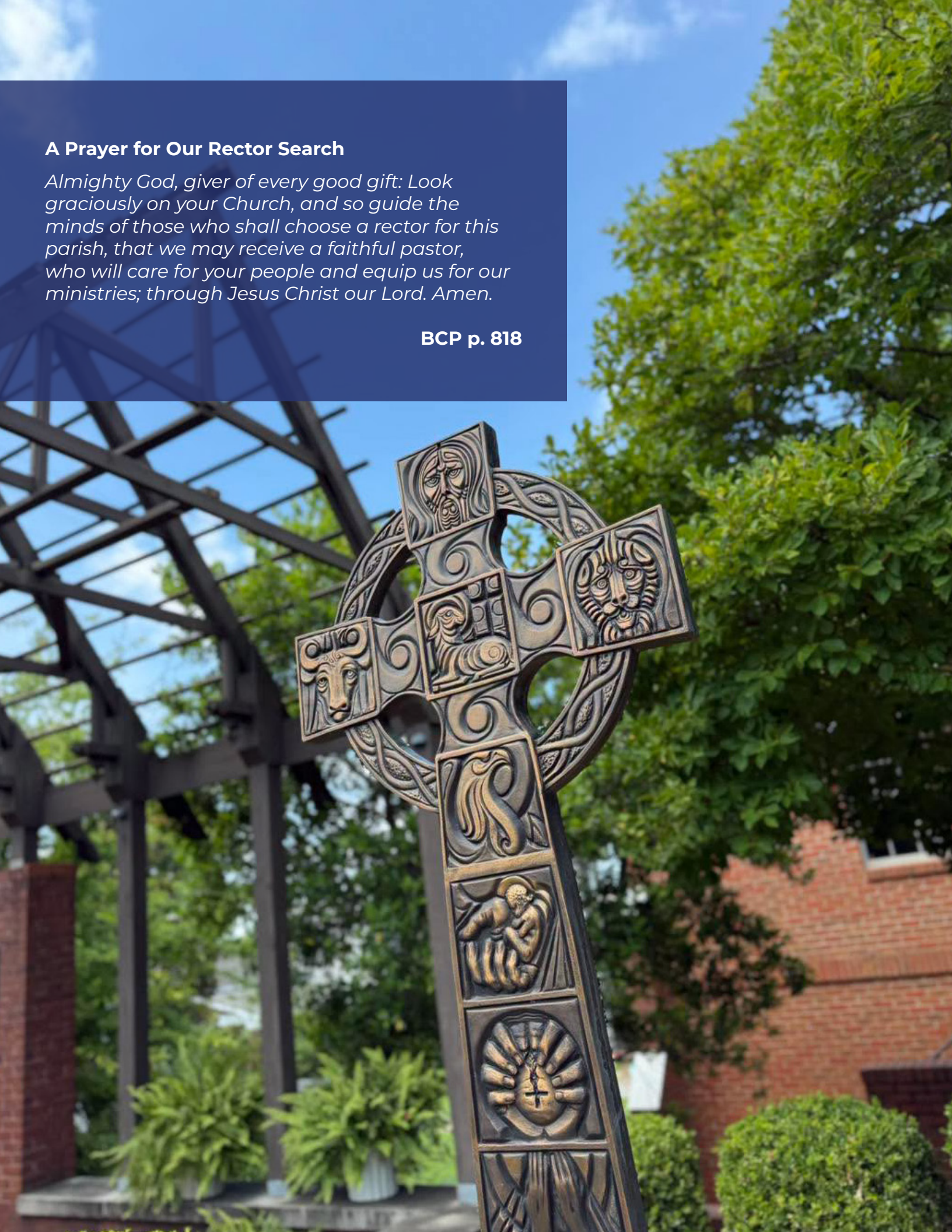
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
OF THE RESURRECTION

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION – STARKVILLE, MS

PARISH PROFILE





A Prayer for Our Rector Search

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.

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INTRODUCTION

A Letter from ECR

The Episcopal Church of the Resurrection (ECR) in Starkville, Mississippi, is a growing community of faith in which we celebrate and worship God, enjoy exploring our faith with one another, and work together to support and serve our neighbors. We are a welcoming congregation embracing all of God's children and working together to share the light of Christ in and beyond our place of worship. In this sense, we strive to live out our Diocesan Inclusion Statement to "respect the dignity of all persons, regardless of national origin, race, gender, age, or sexual orientation, and welcome and encourage them to fully participate in all areas of parish life." As a parish, we have made it our mission to seek Christ and to make Him known in a dynamic place of worship while creating a loving and supportive community that shares spiritual and physical help with others. We model this mission through our Eucharistic services. We worship with our whole hearts, and we seek to take the strength and inspiration we gain through that worship into our community.

The members of Resurrection believe that our next rector should be someone who is warm and welcoming, capable of providing compassionate pastoral care, and able to deliver inspiring, relatable sermons. We also seek someone who will strengthen our connection to the Diocese and other churches in the area. Our next rector should be committed to the service mission of the church while prioritizing spiritual growth across all age groups at Resurrection, as well as for his/herself. Lastly, we value an effective organizer who is capable of delegating when necessary, listening to the ideas of others, and seeking creative solutions to whatever challenges arise.

As members of ECR's Rector Search Committee, we are thankful for and humbled by the trust the parish has placed in us as we proceed through the steps. With more than 100 years in our church history, we are looking for a new rector who will build on this strong foundation and lead us as we continue to grow as a parish.

We genuinely feel a sense of excitement as we move forward together in this process. We pray that the information in this parish profile will spark the process of discernment and prayer in the heart of our next rector who will lead this vibrant and hopeful Christian community.

Yours in Christ,

ECR Rector Search Committee

WHO WE ARE

Episcopal Church of the Resurrection

ECR is a strong, caring, and inclusive faith community that traces its start to lay services on the campus of Mississippi State University in the 1880s. As a thriving parish in 2026, we welcome all people in worship, fellowship, and the various ministries we offer. Worship is at the core of life at ECR. Traditionally, ECR has held two Sunday morning services of Holy Eucharist, an early service that follows Rite I and a mid-morning service that follows Rite II.

With Mississippi State University located in Starkville, we regularly receive visitors whom we greet with warmth and kindness, especially during each service's sharing of the Peace. We also extend a welcome to visitors during a special segment of our parish announcements, inviting them to visit afterward and offering them a special ECR gift.

We cherish our relationship with the university and the city, both of which bring a stream of visitors and new students to ECR. Our college students participate in study groups, volunteer for service initiatives, sing in our choir, and embrace all parts of parish life.

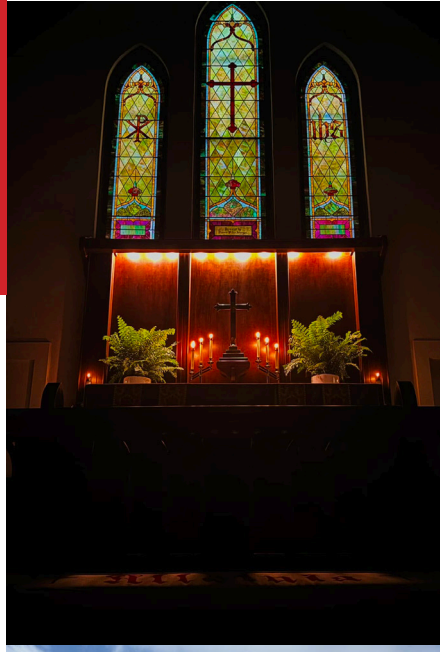
Resurrection's historic campus holds a visible presence in Starkville. Our campus sits at the city's highest elevation and is centrally located between downtown and the MSU campus at the intersection of two of the town's busiest streets. ECR's location reflects our mission to provide a literal and metaphorical light on the hill, offering worship, fellowship, service, and learning to everyone in our city.

Membership

The parish has grown steadily over the past 10 years, adding members and expanding outreach into the community. As of summer 2026, the active membership stands at approximately 225 and average attendance at the two Sunday morning services combined is 92. Twenty-two new members were confirmed just last year during the Bishop's annual visit, including several college students involved in our growing Canterbury Fellowship. It has been encouraging to see new parishioners welcomed with open hearts to ECR and becoming involved in parish ministries. Many are moving into leadership positions with only one member of our current vestry having been a member longer than 10 years.

There may be many reasons why membership at ECR is climbing, but one of the most significant is the number of activities and events each year that help foster inclusion and belonging. The Episcopal Church calendar, outlined in The Book of Common Prayer, has initiated several of our annual happenings. From Shrove Tuesday Red Beans and Rice and the Pentecost Picnic to the Easter Vigil Reception and Burning of the Green, we believe fellowship among our members is vital.

Other events include a bluegrass mass, game nights, fall fiesta, and our largest annual event and fundraiser, Oktoberfest. Attendance for this special occasion has increased year after year, with bratwurst and brew, live and silent auctions, local band entertainment, and lots of fellowship bringing people together. It's become an anticipated and celebrated community-wide fundraiser that provides support for local service programs and neighbors in need.







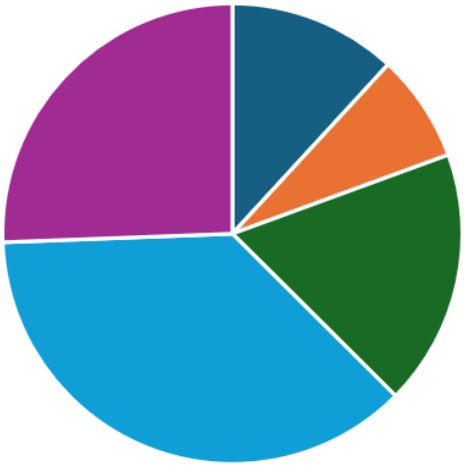








ACTIVE MEMBERS



ATTENDANCE

Average Sunday in-person attendance:
2023 -- 5,876 ÷ 52 weeks = 113
2024 -- 6,850 ÷ 52 weeks = 132
2025 -- 5,421 ÷ 52 weeks = 104

In-person attendance recorded in the Parish Register of Services for January 4 - August 9 (32 Sundays):
2026 -- 2,935 ÷ 32 weeks = 92

“My experience at ECR has been nothing short of amazing. The people and organizations here are some of the best I’ve ever been a part of.”

Community Involvement

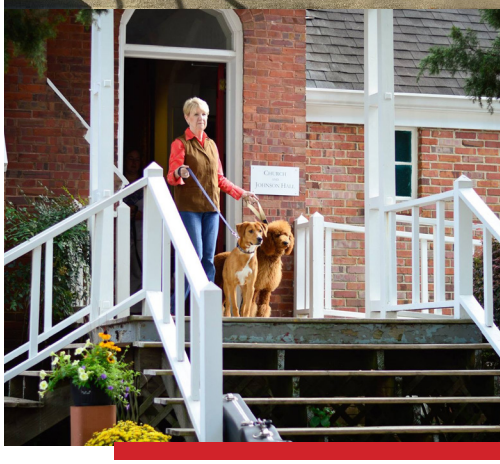
We host Casserole Kitchen, the only program in Starkville regularly providing hot meals to neighbors in need. Casserole Kitchen is a coalition of 17 churches led by ECR that provides three hot meals per week on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and at noon on Saturday. The group also offers excess food from restaurants, campus groups, and sporting event concessions through the “Second Servings” program for those lacking provisions they need at home.

A recent parish-wide effort that has been especially meaningful and successful is the sponsorship of a Ukrainian family who arrived in Starkville as war refugees with only their bags in tow. It has been a joy for us to help them settle into the community as they have become beloved members of our parish. And through them, we have been able to expand our reach to other local Ukrainian refugees who need help.

Our parish is dedicated to service and making our community stronger and better. From our talented choir and musicians who minister through beautiful, meaningful music to our thriving and energetic youth group that exudes inspiration and hope for the future, we are an active, loving, and giving congregation with the potential to do even more. With the Resurrection Chapter of the Daughters of the King covering us in prayer and keeping us connected in many ways, and our gifted Saint Anne’s Fiber Arts Guild supplying us with prayer shawls and prayer pillows, we realize that any gesture of service can make a huge difference. Additionally, the Saint Martha’s and Lazarus Guilds minister to parishioners in times of need.







What stands out to our family most about this church is the heart of its people. This is a congregation where people generously give their time and resources, support one another, and genuinely care about helping those in need. We have personally experienced that kindness and generosity, and I believe it says a great deal about the character of this community.

- Vasyl Shramenko







Spiritual Growth

We continuously look for new ways to attract families to ECR and are prioritizing our ministries to this demographic. Children are our future, and we enthusiastically welcome them for our array of programming. The Godly Play curriculum has been used for several years, and we look forward to expanding our children's Sunday School offerings with our new rector.

Our youth in 7th-12th grade participate in Sunday School and many are involved in the Episcopal Youth Community (EYC) on Sunday evenings. These teens also meet for breakfast and Bible study during the week. The parish has a robust group of college students—ranging from freshmen to graduate students—who not only attend services, but are also involved in Canterbury Fellowship. Our lay leadership has filled the role of chaplain to these young people and has revitalized this ministry in recent years.

Children and youth also actively participate in the liturgy, taking part as acolytes, while special programming throughout the year helps them continue to build a foundation for a life of faith. A children and youth pageant, various retreats, angel tree setup and gift buying, youth Sunday, children's choir, an Easter egg hunt, and Vacation Bible School are just a few of the activities annually planned. In addition, ECR regularly encourages the parish's children and youth to attend Camp Bratton-Green, operated by the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi. There, campers experience a mix of life outdoors while exploring their spiritual paths.

Besides these year-round activities and events, young people can attend special classes which prepare them to be confirmed or received. These classes focus on the explanation of Episcopal beliefs, practices, and history, while letting participants ask questions about these topics and discuss their faith.

ECR maintains a steady schedule of adult education programming. In the past year, we have offered Sunday School classes on the lectionary gospel readings, Richard Rohr's *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective,* and Greg Garrett's *My Church Is Not Dying*.

Our midweek Bible study group has recently worked through the Sermon on the Mount using the Bible Project's resources and read Richard Rohr's *The Universal Christ*.

We also host a monthly public speaker series called "Saints and Scholars." This program features experts from MSU and the broader Starkville community who deliver talks on religious and secular subjects. Recent topics have included Howard Thurman's theology, J. R. R. Tolkien, and anti-slavery politicians during the Civil War.







If I hadn't been born into ECR I'm not sure what my life would look like, but I know I wouldn't be surrounded by the loving community that I have today. I couldn't be more grateful to all of the mentors who sat beside me in those pews and invested in my life. This church, and the wonderful people within it, have taught me benevolence, resilience, and compassion; it's molded me into the person I am today, and the person I will strive to be tomorrow.

- Cameron Long McMillen



OUR CITY AND UNIVERSITY

The city of Starkville is located in northeast Mississippi and is part of what is affectionately called the "Golden Triangle," encompassing the counties of Oktibbeha, Lowndes, and Clay. Located in Oktibbeha County, Starkville is known as "Mississippi's College Town," with the city and Mississippi State University sharing a very successful town-and-gown relationship. While the recorded population of Starkville hovers around 24,000, that number doubles to nearly 49,000 during the university's academic year. The MSU Bulldogs compete in a wide range of Division I sports in the Southeastern Conference. We also host nationally renowned authors, artists, and speakers through MSU programming, and MSU houses the Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library on its campus.

Thanks to the dynamic atmosphere of a major research university and a city government both invested in a bright future, Starkville has the feel of a community shaped by many cultures paired with the charm and convenience of a small town. For three consecutive years, our city has earned *USA Today's* ranking as "Best Small Town in the South."

Starkville maintains a busy entertainment schedule with concerts, festivals, plays, and sports. For those wanting more, we are within a short drive to cities like Memphis, Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, and Jackson and slightly longer drives to Atlanta, New Orleans, and Nashville. Starkville is just 25 minutes from a regional airport that currently offers Delta and American airlines service.





School Options

We offer excellent education opportunities for families through public and private options. In 2026, the Starkville-Oktibbeha County School District was recognized as one of the nation's Top 100 "Districts on the Rise" by the Education Scorecard, a collaborative research project produced by Harvard University and Stanford University. The district also has earned an "A" rating for two years in a row from the Mississippi Department of Education. The Starkville-Oktibbeha County facilities include state-of-the-art buildings like the Partnership Middle School, located on the MSU campus, and soon will include a new high school that will sit adjacent to PMS.

Starkville Academy, the city's oldest private school, is an independent college-preparatory school educating students in grades Pre-K through 12th grade. It offers an intimate learning environment with small class sizes and a total enrollment of about 785 students. The recently completed Springer Center for Recreation and Performing Arts is enhancing academic course offerings in fine arts and supports recreational and competitive athletics at the school. Starkville Academy is accredited by the Midsouth Association of Independent Schools (MAIS) and the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS).

In addition to these two main options, the area offers parochial schools like Starkville Christian School and Annunciation Catholic School (Columbus), as well as home schooling communities.

Healthcare

Baptist Memorial Healthcare recently acquired the 96-bed local hospital which is now Baptist Memorial Hospital—Oktibbeha County. Baptist Healthcare, one of the largest systems in the South, has been busy since the 2025 Starkville hospital purchase. Expanded services, physician recruitment, and infrastructure improvements are currently underway in our community which fosters the health, prosperity, and well-being of all residents.

Infrastructure

The city of Starkville is ambitiously investing in and updating infrastructure to continue raising the quality of life well into the future. Recent and ongoing projects include the revitalization of Main Street and Highway 182, two of the busiest city streets. These projects include modernizing utilities, beautification designs, and placing an emphasis on making the city even more walkable. Also, the city has invested millions of dollars in recent years to improve and expand our city parks. The city's Cotton District and the new Crossroads District connect our town to campus with boutiques, restaurants, venues, and mixed-use living.





CHURCH HISTORY

Beginnings

The Episcopal Church of the Resurrection traces its origins to the campus of Mississippi State University. In 1886, Professor William Howard Magruder began holding lay services in his "section room" for students at what was then known as the Mississippi Agricultural & Mechanical College. As interest in Episcopal services grew in the early twentieth century, Bishop Theodore DuBose Bratton approved "The Mission of the Resurrection" in 1907. Members broke ground in downtown Starkville in 1910, planting what would become the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection (ECR) or simply "Resurrection" to longtime Starkvillians.

In 1913, construction crews completed Resurrection's nave which sits at Starkville's highest point, near the intersection of University Drive and North Montgomery Street. This elevation provides dramatic views of Starkville from the east, and its landscaped terracing adds to the overall beauty of the city's downtown. Rev. J. Lundy Sykes, priest-in-charge, formally opened the Church of the Resurrection on St. Matthew's Day, September 21, 1913, and Bishop Bratton consecrated the nave on May 7, 1916.

Sitting on a 3-acre campus in the heart of Starkville, Resurrection's exterior embraces a medieval revival brick design, with both pointed and Tudor arches, entryways on its northern and eastern sides, a twin-pylon bell tower that members added in the 1950s, and stained glass that helps fill the sanctuary with warm, golden light year-round.

Resurrection, the college, and Starkville grew during the 1910 and 1920s, and the mission increased its ministries to serve the increasing population of Episcopalians in the Starkville area. With regular lay services and Sunday School classes, Resurrection established a lasting footprint in Starkville for the Episcopal Church during the 1920s.

Growing in the Mid-Twentieth Century

Resurrection enjoyed prosperous times after World War II, as postwar growth in mainline Protestant denominations and thriving college enrollment brought more people through its doors. In 1951, members built the student center adjacent to the nave (now known as Johnson Hall). Under the leadership of Rev. A. Emile Joffrion, the congregation financed the construction of new offices and a nursery in 1953. In addition to the nursery, Resurrection established the Guild of the Christ Child and a chapter of the Young People's Service League (now the Episcopal Youth Community – EYC).

Stability and Parish Status

The 148th Council of the Diocese of Mississippi granted parish status to Resurrection in 1975, reflecting how much the membership roll and budget had grown over the 1960s and 1970s. Resurrection's sustained growth had also led to the purchase of real estate around Starkville, including a brick Craftsman bungalow on University Drive with a swimming pool (known as the "Episcopool." The home now serves as the parish offices, as well as a Sunday School space. Resurrection enjoyed a long period of stability in the 1980s and 1990s under the leadership of Rev. Bill Richter and Rev. David Johnson, as university faculty, students, and other community members continued to nurture the Episcopal tradition in Starkville. For two years, 1998-1999, Resurrection served as the sponsoring parish for the Honduras Medical Mission with the Diocese of Mississippi. Five team members from Resurrection joined thirty-five others from around the diocese on the mission to San Joaquin. This parish-wide effort assembled and packed medical and other supplies needed for the trip.

Devoted Ministries in the Twenty-First Century

Resurrection expanded its outreach to local and global communities as it entered the twenty-first century. By the year 2000, Resurrection had experienced growth in membership, and the parish undertook interior and exterior renovations. In 2004, Resurrection dedicated the first phase of the columbarium and memorial garden and completed additions in 2009 and 2010 for more families to inter their loved ones' ashes on our grounds.

Prayer has remained a guiding force for Resurrection throughout the years, and our members have prioritized spaces and ministries to engage in this practice. Resurrection's labyrinth is located within the memorial garden and provides a quiet space to walk, meditate, and pray. Additionally, a dedicated group of women established the Resurrection Chapter of The Order of the Daughters of the King® on December 4, 2005. From the original charter class to now, our Daughters meet monthly to pray, study, and serve our parish in a variety of ways.

New Traditions and a Faithful Future

Resurrection has grown in membership, ministry, and financial health over the last ten years. Recent new traditions include annual festivals and fundraisers like Oktoberfest, bluegrass mass and barbeque, and jazz mass with a red beans and rice dinner on Shrove Tuesday. These events bring community members through our doors who might not otherwise venture into a church service. ECR also began livestreaming the 10:30 Sunday morning services through its website in 2020 to navigate the lack of in-person services during the COVID-19 lockdown. We continue to stream those services today, and it is our prayer that those who are unable to join us in person may embrace our mission to seek Christ and make Him known in a dynamic place of worship and to create a loving and supportive community that shares spiritual and physical help with others.

> **My husband and I moved to Starkville in 1994. We entered the doors of this beautiful old church, and it became the center of our lives. The people were kind, loving, and accepting, and they welcomed us with open arms. In spite of being new and unknown, we were encouraged and supported to participate in every aspect of church activity, which we did! A true blessing!**
>
> - Babs Deas







We deepened our commitment to serving those in need in recent years. In 2019, Resurrection began hosting Casserole Kitchen, an ecumenical feeding ministry on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturdays at lunch. Thanks to the coalition of seventeen local churches, approximately 150 hot meals are available weekly. The parish also sponsored the Shramenko family's move from war-torn Ukraine to the United States in late 2023. In the process, parish members helped them navigate U.S. immigration services, set up their home, acquire jobs, and establish their family of five in the community.

Rev. Walton Jones, ECR's priest for the past ten years, was called to a new position in Tennessee in January 2026. Since that time, the vestry and staff have continued the important work of the parish with a multitude of faithful parishioners stepping up to volunteer in countless ways. Weekly services have continued with morning prayer led by lay Eucharistic ministers and Holy Eucharist led by Rev. Lynn Phillips-Gaines, Deacon, as well as supply priests from the Diocese. The search committee has worked tirelessly to complete the parish profile in anticipation of Resurrection's next priest.

I moved to Starkville over two years ago to live in the Goldton, an assisted living facility. As a cradle Episcopalian, I was anxious to begin my faith life at ECR. A friend connected me with some parishioners. Within weeks I had a regular ride to church (I don't drive anymore), was warmly greeted my new church family, many of whom would tell me their names because of my vision issues. I have been in two different Seasonings groups which are so much fun. After a Sunday service that is just ingrained in who I am and listening to our fantastic choir, hugs are often part of the leaving process. Thanks be to God.

- Jan Grady





LAND AND BUILDINGS

Our church grounds run from University Drive to Highway 182. There is a beautiful sanctuary nave, a house containing parish offices, Parish Hall/education building, and Canterbury Lodge. Johnson Hall, an addition to the main building, has a small kitchen and is ideal for our adult Sunday School, gathering before church, and small events/meetings. The vesting and nursery rooms connected to Johnson Hall were also a much-needed addition. The Parish Hall, which has a large kitchen, is the primary location for larger events/meals, and for choir practices, while Canterbury Lodge is the setting for many youth activities. ECR grounds also include our small swimming pool used for events such as the Pentecost Picnic in May when the pool opens for the summer.

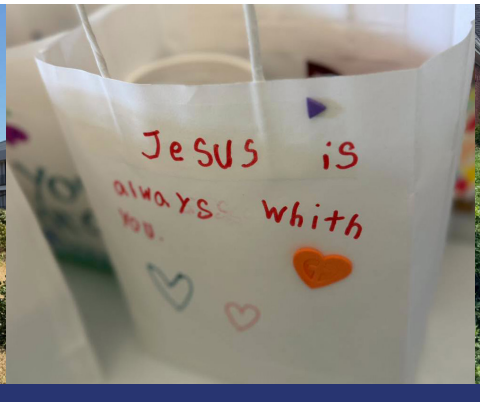
The church property of about 3 acres includes room for growth. Over the past few years, an architectural plan for expansion has been created and talks continue on use of the plans and fundraising.

STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

While we anticipate and pray for the arrival of our next rector, our staff and leadership continue ensuring our doors and hearts remain open to all. The eight-member vestry, our elected leadership, truly believes in the mission and vision for ECR, effectively managing its finances, stewardship program, staff needs, maintenance priorities, event oversight, and more. There are nine staff members, including an interim lay chaplain, nursery and youth education leaders, a property manager, an administrator/bookkeeper, organist, and music director.

We also are fortunate to have a parish property manager who has been responsible over the spring and summer for many of the very visible revitalization and renovation projects that have been completed. While taking care of weekly custodial needs, the manager has led efforts and been involved in the remodeling of the narthex and clergy office, installing fire and smoke detectors, moving the choir vesting room closer to the nave, and helping create an emergency management plan.







FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Pledgers and Total Pledged, 2023–2026

Annual trend in the number of pledgers and total amount pledged.

Year	Pledgers	Total Pledged
2023	86	358750
2024	94	385799
2025	86	414285
2026	89	431600

Bank Accounts — Balance Comparison As of Jun 30, 2026

Bank Account	Jun. 30, 2026	Jun. 30, 2025	Difference
General Checking	$139,815	$42,102	**+$97,714**
Discretionary Checking	$0	$1,774	**-$1,774**
Investments – CDs	$248,820	$238,802	**+$10,018**
Investments – Mutual Funds	$13,257	$0	**+$13,257**
Total Bank Accounts	**$401,892**	**$282,678**	**+$119,214**

The Episcopal Church of the Resurrection

Budget Overview — 2023–2025

Executive Summary

Category	2023	2024	2025	2025 vs. 2023
Total Income	**$509,361**	**$461,300**	**$594,879**	**+$85,518**
Total Expenses	$499,543	$462,808	$527,707	**+$28,164**
Net Operating Income	**$9,818**	**-$1,508**	**$67,172**	**+$57,354**
Operating Margin	1.9%	-0.3%	**11.3%**	**+9.4 pts**

Income by Source

Income Source	2023	2024	2025
Plate Giving	$30,000	$30,000	$28,112
Prepaid Pledges	$7,000	$7,500	**$44,500**
Prior Year Pledges	$4,000	$7,000	$0
Pledge Payments	$352,462	$354,500	**$371,024**
Interest Income	$3,800	$6,000	**$7,805**
Credit Card Cash Back	$1,200	$1,300	$672
Diocesan Chaplaincy Support	$110,899	$55,000	$59,733
Designated Income	$0	$0	**$83,033**
TOTAL INCOME	**$509,361**	**$461,300**	**$594,879**

Expenses by Category

Expense Category	2023	2024	2025
Personnel	$323,628	$282,926	**$252,305**
Program Expenses	$32,653	$32,150	$30,611
Facilities	$70,805	$70,975	**$99,860**
Outreach Expenses	$60,557	$63,307	**$71,632**
Office Expenses	$11,900	$13,450	**$24,386**
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$499,543**	**$462,808**	**$527,707**









ECR EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION







