



Christ Episcopal Church Slidell

Nov. 2024

Parish Profile

1534 7th St.

Slidell, Louisiana 70458

Church History

Christ Episcopal Church was established in 1906 as a mission in Slidell, Louisiana, served by a priest from the neighboring church in Covington. The little green chapel was built in 1922. The congregation then obtained its present location in 1953 with a large plot for the church/parish hall and a now-demolished rectory. In 1954, Christ Episcopal Church Slidell obtained a full-time priest and became a parish on January 20, 1958.

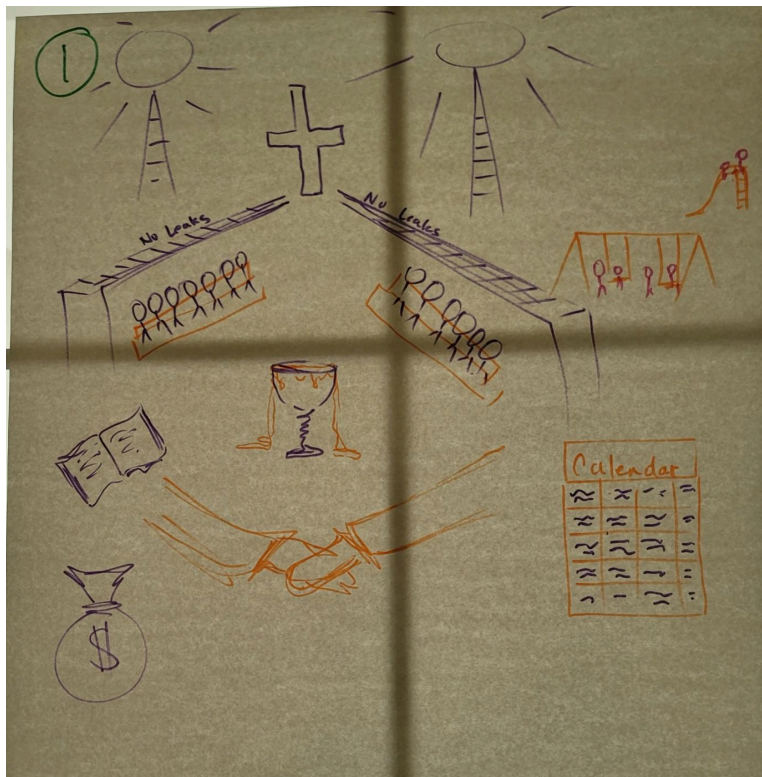


Construction on the current church and parish hall were completed in the spring of 1966. The adjacent Michigan Avenue property, including the present Wheeler House, was purchased in 1984, and the parish hall facilities underwent a major renovation in 2002.

From 1999 until Fr. Harry Jenkins arrived in 2011, the rector or clergy at the parish changed approximately every 2 years, which created several challenges for the church. With Fr. Jenkins' retirement on September 1, 2024, our congregation is in discernment and seeking a new priest.

Vision

We are planning and engaged in realizing our vision for our church. Depicted below from our 2024 Vestry Retreat, our vision includes a vibrant and active, multi-generational congregation growing through religious education and prayer, fully resourced, and actively engaged in a variety of outreach missions.



Our Church Community

Though we have an aging congregation, we have been successful in recruiting new families recently. Our attendance has also been steadily rising, following a sharp decline that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have a variety of outreach missions with opportunities for expansion. We are also working to improve our financial position and have made positive strides.

Strengths

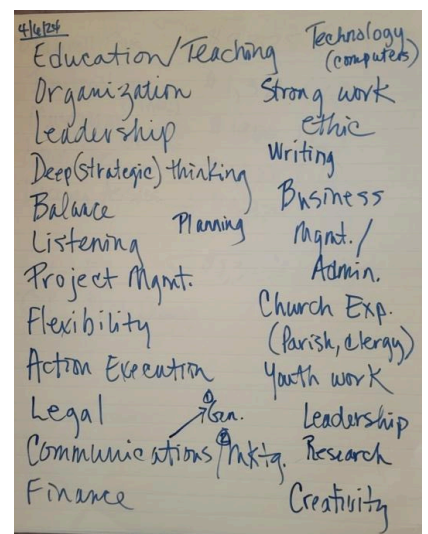
We are a very welcoming and accepting congregation with great community relations. Our services are beautiful and varied, and like most Louisianians, we find fellowship in food, friends, family, football and Mardi Gras.



Members of our Congregation
Celebrating Mardi Gras

Our People

We have a talented congregation with many skills, including education, leadership, planning, and finance. We have an active Men's Club, Altar Guild, Stewardship Committee, and Hospitality Committee. We have also reconstituted our Episcopal Church Women, Children's Church/Youth Group, and Choir in the past year, post-COVID.



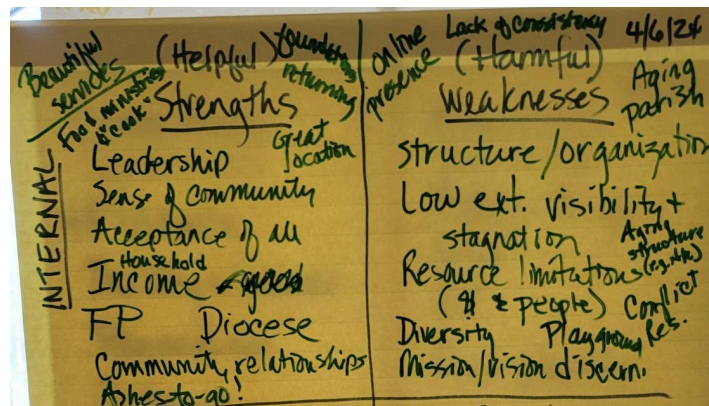
Vestry Talents



Our Choir

Focused Areas for Improvement

We have targeted areas for improvement, including building a better, more effective structure and organization, addressing our limited resources, and enhancing our online presence for clarity.



Self-Assessment of Strengths and Weaknesses

My Results **Survey Overview** Survey Details

Overview of Christ Episcopal Church

PRINT REPORT

Showing **1-12** of **12** items.

Section	Score	Users
I. VISION, MISSION, AND DISCERNMENT	■ Low Vitality: 1.94	5
II. LAY ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT	■ Moderate Vitality: 2.36	5
III. CONTEXT AWARENESS AND INCLUSION	■ Moderate Vitality: 2.16	5
IV. CHANGE READINESS	■ Moderate Vitality: 2.44	5
V. DEALING WITH DIFFERENCES	■ Low Vitality: 1.92	5
VI. SPIRITUAL LIFE AND WORSHIP	■ Moderate Vitality: 3.08	5
VII. FORMATION, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING	■ Moderate Vitality: 2.42	5
VIII. OUTREACH	■ Moderate Vitality: 2.68	5
IX. LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATION	■ Moderate Vitality: 2.54	5
X. STEWARDSHIP	■ Moderate Vitality: 2.48	5
XI. INTERNAL SUSTAINABILITY	■ Low Internal Sustainability: 2.04	5
XII. EXTERNAL SUSTAINABILITY	■ Moderate External Sustainability: 2.64	5

About the CVA

The Congregational Vitality Assessment is designed to provide congregations with an assessment of their health and sustainability.



Most Recent Congregational Vitality Assessment

Worship, Ministries, & Outreach

We strive to serve the needs of our diverse congregation, the City of Slidell, and Eastern St. Tammany Parish through our services, ministries, and outreach. Though we recognize that there is always room to improve, and we welcome new ideas, Christ Episcopal Church Slidell has developed long-standing ministries and traditions that serve our congregation and community well.

Engaging Services

We offer a variety of engaging services to meet the needs of our diverse congregation, including virtual church through live-streaming of our 10:30am services and morning prayer. We offer holiday services and unique worship opportunities, such as a Celtic Service and Instructed Eucharist. We also work to leverage our prime location in an active neighborhood by taking worship outside when appropriate, such as during the annual Pet Blessing and our Palm Sunday neighborhood processional.



Palm Sunday Neighborhood Processional



Easter Sunday at Christ Church



Easter Sunday at Christ Church Slidell



Celtic Service

Confirmation & Reception



Pet Blessing



Christian Education

We have multiple avenues for Christian Education and are very interested in expanding our education opportunities. Recently, we hosted an Instructed Eucharist for the community, as well as Newcomer's Classes, Children's Church, Children's Pray and Play, and a Lenten Supper Program. Our Java and Jesus adult studies covered multiple books and topics over the last year, including Episcopal 101, the Lord's Prayer, and the Sermon on the Mount. Below is a photo of our Children's Church.





Ministries and Outreach

Family REACH Alliance (Formerly Known as Family Promise)

Christ Episcopal Church Slidell has been a partner with Family REACH (Resources, Education, Advocacy, Compassion, and Hope) Alliance of Southeast Louisiana for over 10 years. The goal is to eliminate family homelessness in the region by creating a stable, supportive environment for families in crisis, helping parents maintain a sustainable livelihood and build a prosperous future for their children. We host families in our church facilities quarterly and are a critical component of our whole community integration and mutual support. As of August 2024, this ministry had already served 18 families (70 individuals, including 42 children) this year, providing 1,330 nights of shelter, 3,990 meals, and 3,471 volunteer hours.

The Do Something Project

The Do Something Project is a ministry supporting the unhoused on both the Northshore and in New Orleans. This is a ministry unique to Christ Episcopal Church Slidell and founded by two of our dedicated members who saw a need in the community and knew our congregation could help. Through this ministry, we provide food, clothing, and toiletries, along with regular visits and support, to the unhoused throughout our area.

Little Free Food Pantry

Our Little Free Food Pantry combats food insecurity in the local community by supporting those in need. Many would be amazed to see how much food leaves the pantry box in front of the church each day. The box is routinely stocked and available for those in need 24 hours/day, no questions asked! This ministry has become so vital to our community that non-members and other churches contribute food to our box and help feed those in need.

Medical Mission to Belize

This year, our church was able to support a medical mission trip to Belize. In addition, two of our parishioners participated in the actual trip, including our dentist who worked long days to improve the health of people in Belize.


Ashes to Go



Ashes-to-Go is a long-standing ministry of our Church that reaches many in our community each year. In 2024, we served over 2,000 individuals through our annual drive-thru Ashes outreach and collected more than \$2,000 in donations for the church.

Planning & Communication

We continue to work to improve planning and communication for better outreach to our members and community. Recently, members of our parish engaged in Pivot Training (sponsored by the Episcopal Church Foundation), assessments, and collaboration. The Vestry has also participated in multiple retreat/planning events where we are working on



our lay structure and processes. We also hired a part-time parish administrator to assist with continuity throughout this transitional period.

Our goal is to support you, our new priest. We've hosted multiple town hall meetings with detailed information on resourcing, and more recently to discuss our search for a new priest by interacting with the congregation and keeping them informed about the process. One opportunity still on the to-do list is to improve our online presence and technology implementation.

The Church Property

Our facilities and physical property are an asset and opportunity for our ministry and outreach projects. In addition to our church, we have a large parish hall (Comfort Hall), an adjacent residential home (Wheeler House), a Vigil Garden, and an open area that formerly housed a playground and community garden. Most of these properties presently remain underutilized, and we are actively engaged in exploration of ways to leverage them for additional missions, utilization, and/or fundraising for the church, including a Mother's Day Out or pre-school program. We are also in the process of renovating Wheeler House and hope to rent it to a family in early 2025 to generate additional revenue.

We host various partners from the community in our facilities, including a weekly Cajun Dancing Group, karaoke, and the Slidell Arts League.

Church Financial Health

We strive to be good stewards of our resources to ensure the long-term sustainability of our congregation. Although small, our church family is generous. We have paid a full-time rector for the past 12 years, even through salary and insurance increases, and through faith have managed to end each year with a balance in our operating account. Last year, we also paid our full Diocesan assessment and are on track to meet that goal again in 2024.

We were greatly impacted by the pandemic in 2020, but our church family is in a strong rebuilding period. We have seen new growth and life coming into the parish with new pledgers and regular givers. We recently celebrated the conclusion of a successful annual stewardship campaign, with a focus on continuing stewardship efforts throughout the year. The Diocese of Louisiana has also selected us to receive a salary grant to support our new rector (Grace Funds) that will provide a total of \$60,000 toward the first three years of salary for our new priest. We also anticipate additional revenue in 2025 from the rental of Wheeler House.

As we look toward the future of Christ Episcopal Church Slidell, the Finance Committee has often considered an endowment but until recently did not feel we were in a position to take that leap. However, we now believe an endowment may be the best way to secure Christ

We host monthly fundraising events. The Lenten Fish Fry events hosted by our Men's Club are known throughout the City of Slidell and even talked about on social media! In other months, we host barbecues and Friday food sales known as "No Cook Fridays." We also hosted a huge "Almost Anything Sale" at the beginning of August that included an indoor garage sale, plants, art, and food - raising nearly \$6,000 for the church!



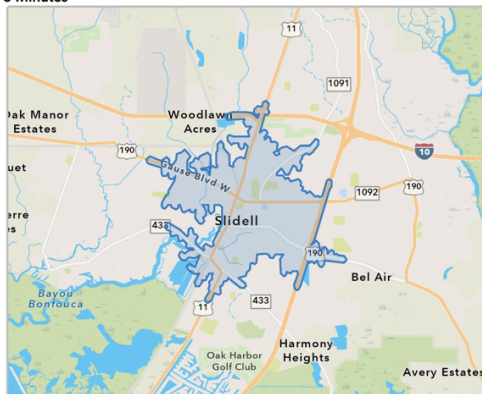
The Local Community

Christ Episcopal Church is located in Slidell, Louisiana on the Northshore of Lake Pontchartrain, across from New Orleans in St. Tammany Parish. St. Tammany had the largest growth of any parish in Louisiana between 2010 and 2022 with 38,699 new residents for a total population of 275,583 according to 2024 census data.

Christ Episcopal Church is also strategically located in the City of Slidell along a major city thoroughfare, 7th Street, and between an elementary, middle, and high school that are all within walking distance of the church. The surrounding neighborhood is well-established and transitioning from seniors to younger families, presenting great outreach and growth opportunities for the church.

Neighborhood Insights for Faith Communities
1534 7th St, Slidell, Louisiana, 70458

5 Minutes



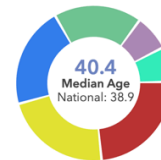
13,890
Total Population
(Current year)

0.12%
Population Growth
(Projected 5-yr)
National: 0.25%

5,326
Households
(Total)

Generational Predominance

- Millennial (Ages 24 - 41)
- Baby Boomer (Ages 58 - 76)
- Gen Z (Ages 6 - 23)
- Gen X (Ages 42 - 57)
- Silent / Greatest Gen (77+)
- Gen Alpha (Ages <6)



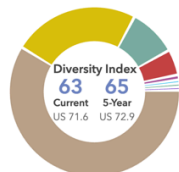
2.6
Household Size
(Average)
National: 2.5

\$51,961
Household Income
(Median)
National: \$72,414

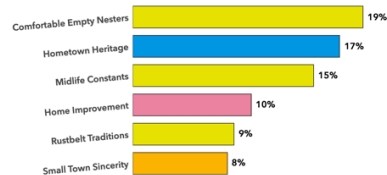
\$101,188
Net Worth
(Median)
National: \$155,942

Race and Ethnicity

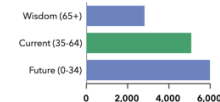
- White Pop
- Black/ African American
- Hispanic
- Multiple Races
- Asian Pop
- Other Race
- American Indian
- Pacific Islander



Top Lifestyle Segments



Generational Balance



0.3%
Pop. That Doesn't
Speak Any English
National: 1.3%

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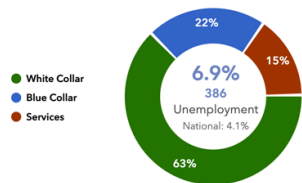
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Neighborhood Insights for Faith Communities
1534 7th St, Slidell, Louisiana, 70458

5 Minutes

Employment Type (Residents) 5,226 People



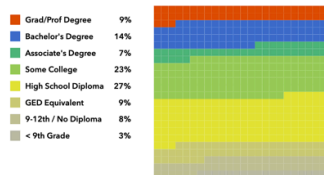
24
Schools

42%
Workers Age 16+
Who Commute
Over 30 Minutes
National: 38%

Daytime Population 19,666 People



Educational Attainment



31%
HHs with Disability
(1+ Persons)
National: 26%

170
Crime
Index
National: 100

59%
Religiously
Unaffiliated
National: 60%

\$24,853
Contributions to
Churches & Charities
Per 100 People
National: \$37,684

16%
Volunteered
for Charity
Last 12 Months
National: 17%

13%
Households Below
Poverty Level
National: 13%

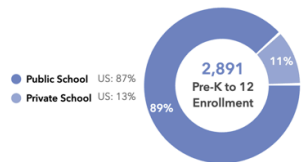
11%
Households Without
Internet Access
National: 12%

\$168,599
Home Value
(Median)
National: \$283,272

55%
Rent Burden
HHs w/ Gross Rent
30%+ of Income
National: 46%

15.4%
Mortgage Burden
HHs w/ Mortgage
30%+ of HH Income
National: 16.9%

School Enrollment



82%
Medical
Coverage
National: 81%

80%
Visited Doctor
Last 12 Months
National: 79%

Housing Tenancy 5,741 Housing Units



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Our Hopes for the Future

Our Parish Survey identified our top three areas of expertise most important for our new priest in charge: church growth and development, preaching and worship, and pastoral care. The top five traits we are seeking in a new priest are as follows: effective communicator, positive attitude, personable and outgoing, open minded, and relates to all age groups.

The top three themes that emerged from our focus group discussions were: **Welcoming & Inclusivity, Community Service & Outreach, and Youth & Family Engagement**. These areas reflect what our congregation values most and where we see our greatest strengths and opportunities for growth.

One of Christ Episcopal's greatest strengths is its **culture of welcoming and inclusivity**. Congregants consistently emphasized how newcomers are warmly embraced, creating a sense of belonging from the moment they arrive. Efforts like personal greetings, invitations to services, and in the past delivering welcome gifts (e.g., mugs, homemade bread/muffins, and cards) to new visitors' homes demonstrate/demonstrated the community's commitment to inclusivity. Additionally, the church's open embrace of diversity across race, ethnicity, gender, and age ensures that all feel accepted and valued, fostering a strong and united congregation.

Community outreach and service are central to our church's mission. Programs like Family REACH Alliance, disaster relief efforts (e.g., Hurricanes Katrina and Ida), food drives, and the "No Cook Friday" initiative were recognized for their significant impact on both the congregation and the broader community. Ashes-to-Go served over 2,000 community members last year. The church's commitment to helping others extends beyond its walls, with efforts to involve volunteers and partner with external organizations. These initiatives not only fulfill immediate needs but also raise the church's visibility and reinforce its role as a cornerstone of community support and compassion. Participants emphasized that efforts like this should be promoted more to community members via flyers, signage in front of the church, and on social media.

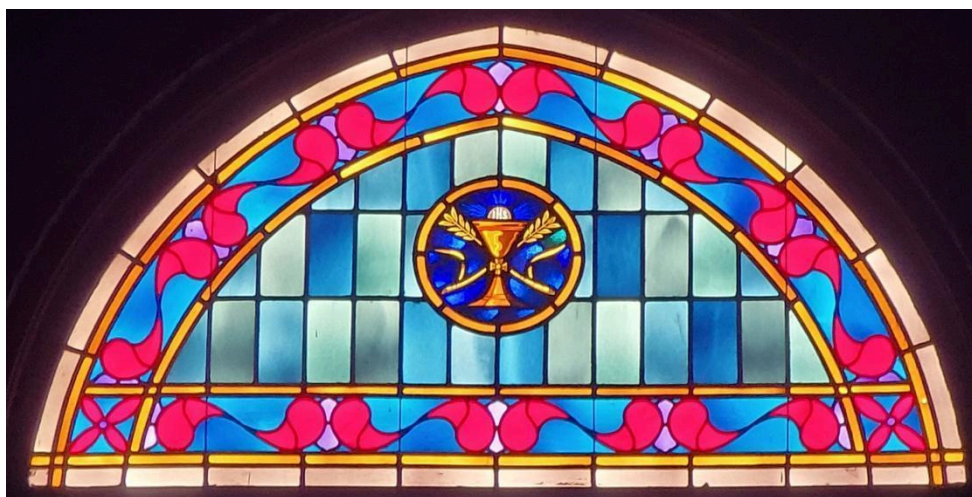
Youth and family engagement emerged as a vital focus for the church community. Programs such as Vacation Bible School, youth groups, Sunday School, and family-oriented events were frequently mentioned as key areas for growth opportunity. These initiatives provide meaningful opportunities for youth to participate, learn, and grow within the church, while also fostering a sense of closeness and connection among families. The church's ability to engage young people not only strengthens the congregation today but is seen as essential for ensuring its growth and sustainability in the future.

In conclusion, the survey and focus group discussions revealed a church community that places a high value on **welcoming and inclusivity, community outreach and service, and youth and family engagement**. The participants emphasized the importance of

making newcomers feel embraced and part of the congregation, ensuring that diversity is celebrated across all aspects of church life. The church's dedication to community outreach, through programs like disaster relief, food donations, and family support initiatives, demonstrates its mission to serve and positively impact the broader community. Additionally, active engagement of youth and families through various educational and leadership programs was identified as a key element of the church's strength and a priority for future growth. Together, these themes highlight a vibrant, compassionate congregation committed to fulfilling its mission and strengthening its role in the community.

Conclusion

Thank you for your interest in Christ Episcopal Church Slidell. We believe we are at a tipping point, poised to successfully grow and expand our mission to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ: Walking in Love. Making Jesus Known. And Transforming Lives.



Contact:

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