



HOLY COMFORTER

PARISH PROFILE 2022





WELCOME

to Holy Comforter, a welcoming and dynamic community of worshippers located in Spring, just north of Houston. Our mission is "sharing Christ's message of hope, peace, and grace with all" - and we really do mean all! Our members span across the spectrum in terms of age, politics and theology, but we find common ground in Christ and working together for God's Kingdom.

In 2019, we moved into our beautiful new sanctuary, and just as we were getting settled in, COVID changed the world and the way we had to worship. In 2022, our "Year of Hope", we are excited to fill up our sanctuary again, dive back into the ministries and activities that have fed us and the community around us, and welcome a new rector who will lead us in this new phase of our parish life!

ABOUT HOLY COMFORTER

Address • 2322 Spring Cypress Road Spring, Texas 77388

Telephone • 281.288.8169

Email • office@holycomforterspring.org

Website • Holycomforterspring.org

Facebook • [HolyComforterSpring](https://www.facebook.com/HolyComforterSpring)

Instagram • [@hcecspring](https://www.instagram.com/hcecspring)

Twitter • [@HCECspring](https://twitter.com/HCECspring)





OUR MISSION

Sharing Christ's message of hope, peace, and grace with all

OUR VISION

Holy Comforter will cultivate the world around us for God's Kingdom by:

Welcoming the community to worship God

Offering innovative ministries and Bible studies for all ages

Joining together to serve the needs of others

Connecting to the world to spread the Gospel

Improving and expanding our campus

OUR VALUES

We believe that the Church is called to be an example to the world of a place where hungry people are fed, where children feel at home, and where all people - regardless of history or background - are invited to meet the living God. We feel called to give our time and resources, more often than we think we should; worship more than we don't; and pray always.

WELCOME TO SPRING, TX

Holy Comforter is proud to call Spring, Texas home. Conveniently located just 20 miles north of Houston, Spring is filled with highly-ranked schools, a bustling restaurant scene, plenty of entertainment and medical facilities. Split between Harris and Montgomery counties, the area is a quaint community with a suburban feel and access to all of the amenities of the city. Settled in the mid-1840's by German immigrants who began farming the land, Spring has since grown considerably. In 2015, Exxonmobil opened their 385-acre campus six miles north of Holy Comforter, bringing 8000 employees and generating 44,000 permanent jobs in the area. Spring residents benefit from its central location to The Woodlands, a popular destination for various entertainment options. A diversified home real estate structure offers new and used home selling prices with a variance that accommodates all buyers and renters. The community supports a professional fire department, an outstanding medical center with two level 2 trauma centers, as well as a pediatric level 2 trauma center, a number of neighborhood parks including the Arboretum, a library and many churches.

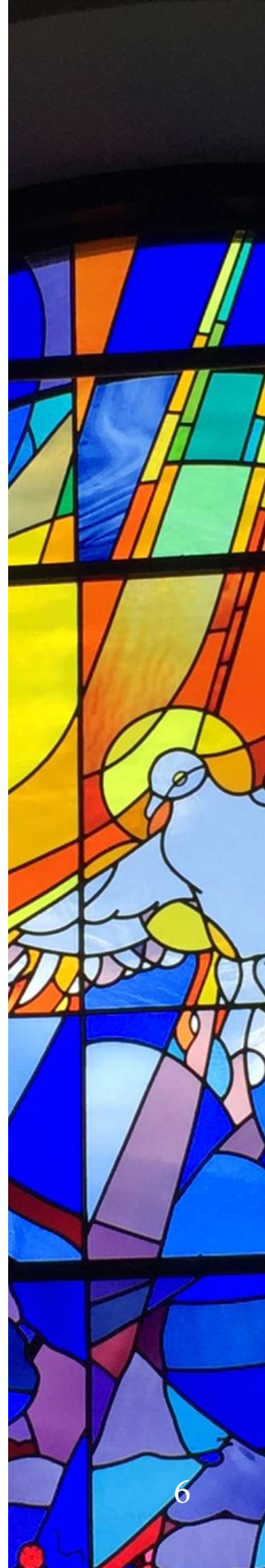


Houston, TX *Spring, TX*

THE RECTOR WE SEEK

We are seeking a Rector to serve as our primary pastoral leader, to build an inclusive community, and to lead Christian education and formation in the parish. Our ideal rector is a visionary leader that has the ability to work as an agent for social and institutional change in our parish and in our community, as we seek to have them better reflect Christ's messages of hope, peace and grace. The ideal candidate will:

- **get** to know our parish and take the insight gleaned to effectively lead the parish in a way that is compassionate, welcoming, and inspiring.
- **have** the ability to work with our lay leadership to clearly communicate our vision to the parish, and to empower laity to further that vision.
- **possess** strong written and verbal communication skills as both preacher and listener.
- **have** a passion for outreach, in order to support new and existing ministries.
- **have** an appreciation for the role of music in supporting the liturgy, and a commitment to expanding the role of music in our services.
- **welcome** and engage youth and children.
- **respect** and welcome persons of all age groups, sexual orientations, ethnicities, cultures, socio-economic backgrounds, abilities, and genders.
- **be** able to work effectively with people of varying backgrounds and perspectives, including a broad spectrum of political and theological beliefs.
- **understand** technology, have a willingness to learn new technologies, with the support of the Communications Coordinator, to conduct church operations and to utilize the Internet and social media platforms to more effectively carry out the mission of the church.
- **develop** new and exciting programs for visitors and new members.
- **have** experience as a priest in the Episcopal Church or a church in full communion with the Episcopal Church that is devoted to the missions and beliefs of the Episcopal Church.



OUR HISTORY

Holy Comforter is located on 6.5 acres of land north of the center of Houston, one and one-half miles west of Interstate 45 on Spring Cypress Rd. The church was founded by seven families in 1971. One of these families is still attending and is currently active in the church. The first worship service was held on Nov 7, 1971 in the Lexington Woods Subdivision with Bishop Bailey celebrating Holy Communion for thirty people. Services were held at this location until a building, purchased from St. Dunstan's, for one dollar, was moved to the current location. Bishop Bailey dedicated this building on Jan 28, 1973. Holy Comforter became a parish in September, 1979.

Phase 1 of the Master Building Plan resulted in the new sanctuary being completed in early 2019. The Rt. Rev C. Andrew Doyle officiated at the dedication and consecration on March 2, 2019. The remainder of the Master Plan consists of remodeling the Parish Hall and the old Nave, transforming them into business offices and educational/youth areas. The current educational building will be renovated.

Holy Comforter has been under the leadership of several clergy: the Rev. Archie Audrus from 1971-1974; the Rev Davis Hoster Jr. from 1974-1977; the Rev. Nicolas R.D. Dyke from 1978-1988; the Rev. John W. Price from 1988-1996; the Rev. Stephen Keith Ferguson from 1999-2011; and the Rev. Jimmy Abbott from 2012-2021.

The celebration of the church's 50th Anniversary will be held in the fall of 2022.

Image: The original Holy Comforter Episcopal Church prior to moving to our current location.



A photograph of a church interior. In the foreground, a dark wood pillar with a cross on top stands in the center aisle. The pews are filled with people, mostly seen from the back. The church has a high ceiling with a large stained glass window at the front. A blue overlay box is on the right side of the image, containing text about Sunday services.

SUNDAYS AT HOLY COMFORTER

8 AM Rite I Service without music

10 AM Rite II Service with traditional hymns

Live stream of our 10 AM service via the Holy Comforter YouTube Channel

PARISH LIFE



WORSHIP

Everything we do is an act of worship to a loving God. Worship is supported by members of all ages throughout the service.

- **Choir** | At the 10:00 service, our choir leads the congregation in traditional hymns accompanied by piano. Our choir is made up of paid and non-paid members.
- **Altar Guild** | Women and men 16 and older serve God in His House by preparing the Sanctuary for Worship, maintaining and caring for the sacred vessels, altar linens and vestments. Currently, the altar guild also arranges flowers and greens for special services rather than having a separate flower guild.
- **Ushers** | Our team of ushers welcomes everyone who walks into the narthex, distributes bulletins, handles and counts the offering, guides the congregation during communion, and counts attendance.
- **Acolytes** | Children and youth from 4th through 12th grade serve as crucifer and torchbearers at the 10:00 service and at special services. They also assist the deacon in preparing the table for Eucharist.
- **Lectors** | Lectors read the lessons and lead the congregation in reading the Psalm at all services.
- **Lay Eucharistic Ministers** | Adults distribute wine during communion at all services. At the 8:00 service and when there are no acolytes available, they also serve as crucifer and assist the deacon in preparing the altar.
- **Children's Worship** | During the 10:00 service and during many special services during the year, a team of adults lead preschool and elementary-aged children in a child-friendly liturgy.



WEEKDAY SERVICES

- Every Wednesday, Morning Prayer is held in the chapel and streamed online. This service is led by lay leaders who lead the liturgy and provide guitar-led music.
- Every weekend at three assisted living facilities in Spring, we host church services that align with Morning Prayer for Christians of all denominations accompanied with appropriate music.



SPECIAL SERVICES

Although some of these activities have been scaled back during COVID, Holy Comforter has many special worship services during the year:

- **Christmas Eve** | We have two services on Christmas Eve, the earlier of which includes a children's pageant.
- **Ash Wednesday** | In addition to several services throughout the day, we provide "drive-through ashes" and prayer.
- **Holy Week** | Traditional Palm Sunday service starting outside and processing into the church with palms; stripping of the altar on Maundy Thursday leading to an overnight vigil in the chapel by members who sign up for an hour at a time until noon Friday; Stations of the Cross on Good Friday; a big Easter Vigil starting with a Paschal fire outside built by our BSA Scouts; and finishing with Easter Sunday services.
- **Pentecost** | We celebrate Holy Comforter's "birthday" on Pentecost with a church picnic after the service.
- **Scout Sunday** | Every February, the Cub Scout pack and two Scouts BSA troops join us for worship and help during the service, as well as scouts who attend Holy Comforter but belong to other troops.
- **Church Has Left the Building** | Before COVID, we began a tradition of reserving one Sunday a year to serve the community on Sunday rather than worship together. Church members signed up to help with service-oriented ministries throughout the Houston area as a team, and we enjoyed living out our faith in service to the community.
- **Blessing of the Animals** | Every fall near the Feast of St. Francis, we have an outdoor pet blessing liturgy. We usually take up a collection of pet supplies for a local animal shelter as part of this service.



We provide a wide variety of options for Christian Formation throughout the week. Most of the classes meet between services on Sunday mornings, but there are several options during the week as well.

- **Adult Christian Formation** | The rector has traditionally provided topic-based series between services in the parish hall, although some series have been taught by lay leaders.
- **Parenting with Grace** | This long-running book study for parents meets in the Education Building. This group alternates between parenting/family and non-parenting books, all from a Christian perspective.
- **Children and Youth Formation** | Sunday School is held between services with classes for preschool, early elementary, late elementary, and middle/high school students. EYC (middle & high schoolers) also meet Sunday afternoons for study & fellowship.
- **Daughters of the King** | The mission of The Order is the extension of Christ's Kingdom through Prayer, Service and Evangelism. We pray daily for our Parish, people who have asked for prayer, and the spread of Christ's Kingdom. We aid our clergy as deemed necessary. This year we provided 16 quilts to Angel Reach, a non-profit that serves children who age out of foster care, and we will participate in Purses for the Poor by collecting gently used purses and donating them to area women who are in need. We also sponsor a Quiet Day.
- **Brotherhood of St. Andrew** | Our mission is to bring men and youth into God's kingdom through Prayer, Study and Service. Annual events include the Brotherhood Golf Tournament, Boys Retreat, Beacon, and Senior Parishioner Partner Service Project. All activities are open to all, except the Boys Retreat which is only open to men and boys.
- **Vacation Bible School** | Every summer, we host a free weeklong Vacation Bible School for elementary-aged children, regardless of connection to the church. These children spend several hours every day playing games, singing songs, and learning about God's love.
- **Small Group Studies** | Small groups meet for study and fellowship on different days throughout the week. Several of these groups have been meeting together for years.



CONNECT

Holy Comforter is a place where everyone is welcome, and we thrive when we have deep connections with each other. In addition to worshipping, studying, and serving together, we also like to relax and play!

- Our monthly book club is a safe place to connect with people and talk about the books and ideas we love.
- For several years, a group has met for breakfast after the early service at a local restaurant for fellowship.
- Every year, we have Christmas parties for youth & children that brings together families for a fun celebration, games, crafts, and food.
- After our previous rector left, our Vestry implemented a “Vestry Person of the Day” schedule to give the announcements and host a table in the narthex to meet people, providing an opportunity for anyone interested to talk to a vestry member about their questions and concerns.
- During this transition period, we formed a Parish Life Committee to coordinate activities to bring people together. In a short period of time, this group of enthusiastic parishioners has started a Sunday Lunch Bunch after the 10:00 service, hosted monthly events like game night and Bingo, and is planning other fellowship activities for our 50th anniversary.





SERVE

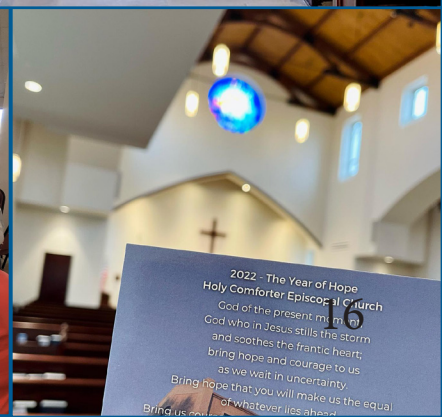
Holy Comforter believes that the church is called to make the world a better place in the name of a loving God. Our parish has partnerships with a number of local and global organizations that provide services for the poor, oppressed, and lonely. Here are some of the ways our parishioners serve the local and global community:

- We partner with three assisted living communities for worship and friendship.
- Our youth group takes two annual mission trips to serve the poor and needy within Houston and around the state of Texas. This summer, they will be going to St. Augustine in East Texas to help build and repair houses for low-income residents.
- We have a long-standing relationship Salyers Elementary School in Spring ISD to provide mentors, ESL tutors, and classroom assistants for the students, faculty, and staff.
- For years, we have provided volunteers and financial assistance to the 1960 Hope Center for the Homeless and St. Isidore's missional community.
- We partner with Tackle Life Ministries by providing space and volunteers for a community garden on our property. Tackle Life Ministries assists Spring area students by providing job search resources, targeted temporary financial support, and life coaching.
- Our Creation Care ministry provides resources about sustainability and stewardship of natural resources.
- Prior to 2020, our facilities were used by community groups for meetings throughout the week. We have continued hosting weekly AA and Al-Anon meetings, and we are looking forward to welcoming more groups back soon!
- Every fall, we prepare and deliver care packages for sailors coming through the Port of Houston.
- For many years, we have hosted quarterly blood drives to help those in medical need.
- We charter a Cub Scout family pack (boys and girls) and two BSA Scout troops. Our boys troop and pack have been a strong part of our community for years, and our recently-formed girls troop is currently the only BSA troop for girls in our local area.
- We have provided our parking lot for COVID testing and vaccination drives throughout the pandemic.

COMMUNITY

PARISH SNAPSHOT (2021)

TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS	497
AVERAGE SUNDAY ATTENDANCE	88
BAPTISMS	1
NUMBER OF ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICES	103
NUMBER OF IN PERSON WORSHIP SERVICES	199
NUMBER OF VISITOR CARDS FILLED OUT	17
INCREASES THROUGH MEMBERSHIP TRANSFER AND BAPTISM	20



CHALLENGES

- As with most parishes, Holy Comforter has seen a significant decline in service attendance over the past two years. While attendance is starting to increase as people get more comfortable with in-person activities, we know that it will take time to get back to where we were in 2019.
- Pledge commitments have declined since the pandemic and our prior rector's departure. The new rector will need to confront associated budget challenges; however, because of our successful history of growth at Holy Comforter, we know there is sufficient opportunity to rebuild and grow in our community under strong leadership.
- The new rector will need to be effective at resolving conflicts within the parish while simultaneously working to retain and grow our congregation.
- Our parishioners represent a broad spectrum of political and theological views.

NOTABLE OPPORTUNITIES

- In 2019, we completed a substantial capital campaign and construction project, resulting in the consecration of a new 350-seat nave and a very manageable \$500,000 debt remaining. Time and expense have also already been invested in a broader campus master plan for the future of our 7 acre campus.
- Our prior rector was very highly regarded and was personally responsible for attracting many new parishioners and families to Holy Comforter, establishing a legacy of strong leadership. The next rector will benefit from the many positive changes he made to the operations of the church.
- The new rector will have the opportunity to work with lay members who are committed to growing pastoral care, music, and outreach ministries. During this interim period, lay leaders have been active in helping people reconnect and re-engage with the church and the community.



FINANCIAL REPORT (CONTINUED)

	2022 Budget	2021 Actual	2021 Budget
Revenue			
Pledge Income	\$ 266,618	\$ 348,528	\$ 365,000
Other Unrestricted Income	\$ 55,690	\$ 58,952	\$ 45,225
Restricted Donations	\$ 6,000	\$ 35,213	\$ 60,000
Total Revenue	\$ 328,308	\$ 442,693	\$ 470,225
Expenditures			
Personnel	\$ 215,956	\$ 230,145	\$ 267,232
General & Administrative	\$ 61,893	\$ 66,945	\$ 73,355
Property	\$ 60,880	\$ 60,486	\$ 51,275
Diocesan Assessment	\$ 36,272	\$ 34,546	\$ 34,546
Christian Formation & Inreach	\$ 15,100	\$ 10,283	\$ 20,950
Outreach	\$ 4,600	\$ 7,517	\$ 11,200
Total Expenditures	\$ 394,701	\$ 409,921	\$ 458,558
Net Operating Revenue	\$ (66,393)	\$ 32,772	\$ 11,667
Other Income/Expense	\$ (9,709)	\$ 19,066	\$ (11,566)
Net Revenue	\$ (76,102)	\$ 51,838	\$ 101

	2022 YTD	2021	2020	2019
Average Sunday Attendance	101	54	236	211
Total Pledges	70	109	120	102
Pledged Gifts Received	\$ 54,167	\$ 348,528	\$ 362,216	\$ 380,257

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As of 12/31/2021 (Unaudited)

ASSETS

Current Assets

Bank Accounts	\$ 226,537
Investment Accounts	\$ 130,755
Other Current Assets	\$ 12,399
Total Current Assets	\$ 369,690

Fixed Assets

New Building	\$ 3,986,624
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 3,986,624

TOTAL ASSETS \$ 4,356,314

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Total Accounts Payable	\$ 1,526
Other Liabilities	\$ 7,738
Earmarked Funds	\$ 33,941
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 43,205

Long-Term Liabilities

Notes Payable (new building)	\$ 500,000
Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$ 500,000

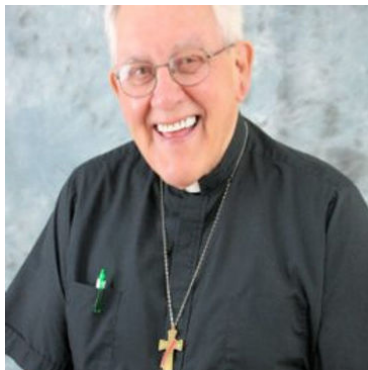
TOTAL LIABILITIES \$ 543,205

Equity

Opening Balance Equity	\$ 145,126
Permanently Restricted	\$ 17,226
Unrestricted	\$ 3,598,920
Net Revenue	\$ 51,837
TOTAL EQUITY	\$ 3,813,110

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY \$ 4,356,314

STAFF



THE REV. BOB LOWRY

OUR DEACON

Deacon at Holy Comforter. Under Deacon Bob's leadership, Holy Comforter has planted worshipping communities in six local nursing homes. Plus, he hosts a support group for the unemployed.



FAITH ALMOND

NEWCOMER MINISTER

Faith will help answer any questions you might have about Worship Services, Christian Formation, and membership. Faith will assist you in finding ways to get involved in the church.



KIM FAASSE

DIRECTOR OF FAMILY, CHILDREN, AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

Kim Faasse is the longest serving staff member at Holy Comforter. She oversees all the activities and Christian formation opportunities for families, youth, and children.



MIKE ADAMS

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR

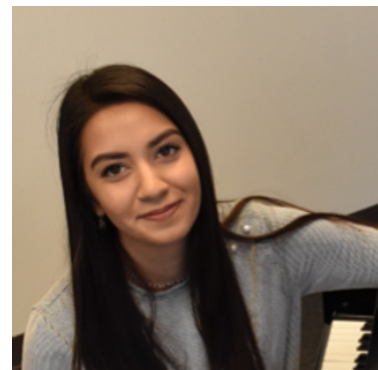
As Parish Administrator, Mike oversees the financial and administrative aspects of Holy Comforter. All questions regarding your financial contributions can be answered by Mike.



TAYLOR BRITTAIN

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Taylor is responsible for compiling the weekly church e-newsletter and website. She will handle the design of the graphics, social media, and the live streaming of Sunday Service for church communication.



ASHLEY ANDREEVSKA

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

A skilled pianist and teacher, Ashley brings great experience and education to our church's music program. She is on faculty at the International Music Academy and will soon pursue a Doctoral of Arts degree.

OUR VESTRY

The Vestry of Holy Comforter is composed of the Rector and nine lay members, elected at the Annual Meeting of the parish in rotating terms each year. A list of the current Vestry of Holy Comforter is provided below, together with the number of years each member has attended Holy Comforter:

- **Walter Foyt** | Senior Warden; 4 years
- **Don Esposito** | Junior Warden; 5 years currently plus prior membership in 1980s
- **Gwen Aldridge** | 8 years
- **Lindsey Beck** | 7 years
- **Richard Coull** | 8 years
- **Olga Garcia** | 13 years
- **Rick Harris** | 8 years
- **Shawn Henner** | 7 years
- **Teresa San Miguel** | 9 years



CAMPUS FACILITIES



THE NAVE | Consecrated in 2019, our nave has seating for 350 people and is the central location for worship at Holy Comforter Episcopal Church. Featuring a side chapel and choir alcove, two stained glass windows, high ceilings and breathtaking natural light.

THE EDUCATION BUILDING |

Located next to the Parish Hall, the Education Building is the hub for Christian Formation. We have a library, nursery, and meeting spaces for children, youth, and adults.



THE PARISH HALL | Home to the offices of the Holy Comforter staff, this location serves as a central gathering place for meetings, adult formation and coffee gatherings. The Rector's office is located in this building, as well the offices of our Newcomer Minister, Parish Administrator and Communications Coordinator

