Saint John’s Episcopal Church
Rector Search  Parish Profile – 2020

4200 S. Atlanta Place
Tulsa, Oklahoma
Saint John’s Episcopal Church
Tulsa, Oklahoma

- Who We Are
- Where We Are
- Where We Came From
- Where We Are Going
Who We Are

Saint John’s Episcopal Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma, is a community of faith with a tradition of great preaching, outstanding music and strong support for Christ’s mission in the world. Established in 1951, in what is now mid-town Tulsa, the parish has the second highest pledged income in the Diocese of Oklahoma, the third highest average Sunday attendance, and a membership roll close to 1,000.

Saint John’s has long been home to diocesan, civic, professional and charitable leadership. Rectors have been elected deputies to the General Convention and attended the Lambeth Conference as a volunteer, and lay leaders have served as Diocese Chancellor, on the diocesan Finance Committee, and on the diocesan Council. The church has been home to federal judges, university trustees, a mayor of Tulsa, a U.S. Attorney, leading physicians, professors and senior business leaders in the community. The parish has a close connection with Holland Hall, an Episcopal school in Tulsa. The rectors and other members have served as trustees and the Headmaster is an active parish member.
Saint John’s By the Numbers

Like many churches, Saint John’s is currently attempting to transition from its older, established membership to serve more diverse age groups with a new mission of better serving the needs of its parishioners and the community in the decades to come.

- Saint John’s 3-mile service radius is comprised of over 82,000 souls, and like many cities, the number of Tulsa single-parent households is increasing: children aged 5-17 are projected to increase by 2.2% over the next decade. At the same time, married couples will decrease slightly, and people aged 65 and over will increase by 3.6%

- Over the next 10 years, more than 81% of Saint John’s service area will be comprised of Generation X, Millennial or Gen Z demographic segments, so we must be prepared to address those changes to grow membership and discern new ways to do God’s will in Tulsa.

Understanding our congregation’s demographical data is important as we plan our path forward. Saint John’s recently completed a parish-wide survey, which provided a good “snapshot” of the 194 responses (which translates to about 82% of an average worship attendance):

Attendance and Proximity: Of those surveyed, nearly half (49%) have attended Saint John’s over 20 years while 18% have been attending less than 5 years. Over 80% live within nine miles of the church.

Gender and Race: The respondents trended female (64%) and nearly uniformly identified as white (98%).

Age: The ages of our respondents trended older, with 61% being over 65 years old. Only 10% of our respondents were less than age 45.

Education: 85% of those surveyed have attained a bachelor or higher degree. 84% of households represented in the survey consisted of 2 or fewer people.

Income: Approximately 75% of our respondents were fairly evenly represented in the $35K to $300K per year of income range. Our average respondent gave 1.34% of their income to the church. For reference, this put Saint John’s in the bottom 15% of the churches in the Holy Cow! database.

Attendance: Nearly all (89%) of our respondents attend church at least twice a month and many (37%) reported weekly attendance. Over 50% reported the same attendance trend compared to years past and only 18% report attending less than they have in the past compared to the 26% who report higher attendance.
## St. John's Episcopal Church of Tulsa
### Operating Revenue & Expense

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Worship

Worship is at the center of all we do at Saint John's. There are many ways you might spend your Sunday, but choosing to worship – connecting with God and a community of friends – helps each of us live the rest of the week a bit differently. Through worship and music, we are called out of our everyday lives and into an encounter with God in Christ.

The Episcopal Church is a liturgical tradition, which means we are rooted in an ancient rhythm of prayer. We follow the Book of Common Prayer, which helps us know what to expect each time we worship. Over time, the familiarity with liturgy allows you to focus on your spiritual life and a real encounter with God. It gives you words and a framework for a life of prayer.

At present, because of the COVID-19 pandemic we offer various online services so our parishioners can find just the right fit. The building is currently closed but church is open!
Monday - Friday
Morning Prayer
8:30 a.m.

Evening Prayer
5:30 p.m.

Sundays
Holy Eucharist – with organ and choir
10 a.m.

Choral Evensong
5:30 pm
Ministries and Outreach

Saint John’s is committed to community outreach. We have a very loving congregation that enjoys working and celebrating together. Many ministries and organizations within the church have had active memberships for several decades, with meaningful efforts centered on worship, study and service.

We share God’s grace with others – both inside the church and in the greater community – through a variety of outreach efforts in addition to financially supporting numerous Tulsa helping agencies. Our ministries include:

- Altar Guild
- Acolytes
- Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers (LEM)
- Ushers
- Saint John’s Players
- Volunteers
- Needlework Guild
- Habitat for Humanity house building
- Feeding the Homeless (Iron Gate and Day Center for the Homeless)
- Beth Dunkin Bible Study
- Boy Scout Troop 153 (approximately 80 members)
- Brotherhood of St. Andrew
- Senior Single Group
- Daughters of the King
- St. Barbara’s Guild
- The Saint John’s Gift and Bookstore
- Caring and Loving Listeners
FEATURED MINISTRY: Prayers & Squares
Saint John’s Prayers & Squares quilt group, one of the few in Oklahoma, makes quilts to provide hope, grace and support for people undergoing difficult times (health issues, family emergency, etc.). When a parishioner requests a quilt for a friend, family member or acquaintance, members of the church come up to tie knots in the quilt and say a prayer. To date, more than 1,200 quilts have been presented to others – including several people in distant states and those of other faith groups.
Saint John’s Music Program

Music is an important part of parish life. In the past year, the parish completely paid for and had installed a new, purpose-built, state-of-the-art Schoenstein organ, under the oversight of our organist/choir master, who holds a master’s degree in organ performance from Julliard. The organ was designed specifically to accompany traditional Anglican choral music. The stenciled pipe façade was featured on the cover of the February 2019 edition of The Diapason.
Music Staff

Joseph Arndt, Music Director
Michael Bedford, Organist/Choirmaster Emeritus

Church Choirs and Music Programs

Saint John’s Choir
Mixed choir offering traditional anthems, Anglican chant, mass settings, Evensong canticles, and an annual performance of Handel’s Messiah.

Choristers
Choir of girls ages 7-18 and boys ages 7-voice change. Open to all children both in and outside the parish.

Saint John’s Singers
This choir leads the congregational singing at the Family Eucharist and offers occasional anthems. Open to all adults, especially people new to music and singing.

Schola Cantorum
Choir of men, offers Gregorian Chant and Renaissance motets for Rite I High Mass.

Handbell Choir
Three octave ensemble of ringers. Open to all.

Saint John’s Players
Saint John’s Players serve God with their talents to perform musicals, plays and an annual Boars Head Feast.

Music at Midday
This music concert series at the church just celebrated its fifth season. Attendance continues to be strong with 60-95 people at each recital, which feature Tulsa area and visiting musicians and singers performing in the church nave. The meal that follows each performance continue to be prepared by a dedicated group of church volunteers.
Christian Education

Christian education is an important part of parish life. Usually, two adult classes are offered at 10 a.m. Sunday, along with multiple Bible study classes during the week. The parish has recently completed an evaluation of its youth education program by outside consultants. As a result, the church’s newly employed youth and children’s directors, along with parental support from the Kids Booster Club, have begun a revamped Sunday School program.

All our Sunday Schools start at 10:10 a.m. following the Family Service reception in our Common Room.

Nursery
Our nursery opens at 9 a.m. and accommodates children between the ages of 0 to 4. Our goal is to allow children to not only have a safe environment to play in but to also help them grow in understanding of God and how loving He is.

Elementary
Our Elementary Sunday School consists of children Pre-K through 6th and focuses on building a foundation for children to read the Bible and follow its teachings, specifically through games and activities relating to Biblical stories.

Youth
Our Youth Classes build off the foundation of our Elementary Sunday School and teach how to apply the Bible to real world scenarios. The goal is to strengthen relationship with Christ and community with fellow Christian youth.
Youth and Family Ministries

Family Service
In a typical church, there are three programs running at the same time: the adults’ service, the youth service, and the children’s service. Here at Saint John’s, we want to challenge the typical system and combine the three into one family service. Our Family Service is a modified Holy Eucharist Rite II traditional service that allows for intergenerational worship. Our goal is simple: introduce children, youth and adults to our rich tradition to encounter God and begin a relationship with Him. We meet Sunday mornings at 9 a.m.

Junior and Senior High
A junior and senior high youth group meets on Sunday evenings.

Young Adults
Pub Theology is offered the first Saturday of every month. Join Saint John’s young adults at Kilkenny's Irish Pub, 1413 E. 15 St. for fellowship and discussion at 6:30 p.m.
Financial Info

Saint John’s has active finance and investment committees of experienced finance and business professionals who oversee the parish’s endowment funds, which are managed by the Trust Company of Oklahoma. Growth of the endowment is a vestry priority. The parish has no debt, and six years ago completed a capital funds campaign.

Last year was challenging financially for Saint John’s, as 2019 pledges and contributions were under budget and expenses were over budget. However, this campaign saw increases in the percentage of members who pledged as well as an increase in the amount of their pledging. Funds were used from the church’s Rainy Day Fund for the shortfall. Additional education expenses were funded from the Designated Fund for Education. The church has approved a balanced budget for 2020.

We are optimistic about the finances in the coming year and excited about the enthusiasm around our strengthened Stewardship efforts – a new long-term Stewardship committee was formed in 2019 to develop new programs to reach out to members in new ways and to recognize throughout the year the many programs and stories to show how the church’s funds are utilized within the church and outside its walls. In 2020 we intend to continue developing our legacy programs and yearly pledging in both amount pledged and number of active pledgers.
Church Staff

The Reverend Samuel Colley-Toothaker  
*Priest in Charge*

The Reverend Susanne Methven  
*Associate Interim Rector*

Debra Ainley  
*Senior Associate for Finance and Parish Operations*

Carteena Robohm  
*Administrative Assistant to the Rector*

Joseph Arndt  
*Organist/Choirmaster*

Mary Waller  
*Communications Director*

Diana Carter  
*Associate for Communications*

Amanda Davies  
*Associate for Communications*

Josh Corsaro  
*Associate for Youth and Family Ministries*

Naomi Flagg  
*Administrative Associate for Finance and Operations*

Robert Parris  
*Associate for Parish Facilities*

Tony Boydston  
*Associate for Parish Facilities*

Mayra Duarte  
*Associate for Parish Facilities*
Where We Are

Facilities & Grounds

Saint John’s has been blessed with a beautiful campus facility with outstanding buildings. The look and location of our building symbolize the past and present of Saint John’s Church: Limestone. Gothic. Majestic. Spacious. A manifestation of the church boom of the 1950s, Saint John’s was a boom parish in a boom suburb from the day it began as a chapel. Conceived in 1951, St. John’s grew quickly into a self-supporting parish.

Besides its beautiful nave, the building also features on the ground floor Powell Hall (a chapel for small services), the David Fox Library, a bookstore, the large Common Room and a large commercial-grade kitchen. A separate ground-level entrance gives access to the columbarium. The basement houses the music/choir room, the nursery and numerous classrooms, while the third floor features the staff offices and conference rooms.

The grounds include the former rectory (a multi-purpose facility). The grounds also feature the Garden of Remembrance (a garden repository for ashes), a playground for children, a large lawn and two parking lots.
The parish is committed to the upkeep of our facilities and grounds. Recently, under the supervision of the Junior Warden and the Buildings and Grounds Committee, the church pews were replaced, lighting, drainage and guttering were renovated, the stained-glass windows were re-covered, and other maintenance and repairs were made.

Major renovation of the sanctuary was done during the church’s 40th anniversary, and classroom remodeling took place to celebrate the 50th anniversary. Other major recent renovations include the addition of an antiphonal organ and, most recently, the replacement of the church’s original pipe organ with a state-of-the-art Schoenstein pipe organ.
About Tulsa

Tulsa is the second-largest city in the state of Oklahoma and 45th most populous city in the United States. As of July 2018, the population was 403,035, an increase of 11,129 since the 2010 Census. It is the principal municipality of the Tulsa Metropolitan Area, a region with 991,005 residents in the MSA. The city serves as the county seat of Tulsa County, the most densely populated county in Oklahoma, with urban development extending into surrounding counties.

Tulsa was settled between 1828 and 1836 by the Lochapoka Band of Creek Native American tribe. For most of the 20th century, the city held the nickname “Oil Capital of the World” and played a major role as one of the most important hubs for the American oil industry. Historically, a robust energy sector fueled Tulsa's economy; however, today the city has diversified and leading sectors include finance, aviation, telecommunications and technology. Two institutions of higher education within the city have sports teams at the NCAA Division I level – Oral Roberts University and the University of Tulsa.

The city is situated on the Arkansas River between the Osage Hills and the foothills of the Ozark Mountains in northeast Oklahoma, a region of the state known as “Green Country.” Considered the cultural and arts center of Oklahoma, Tulsa houses two outstanding art museums, full-time professional opera and ballet companies, and one of the nation's largest concentrations of art deco architecture.
Opened in April 2013, the Woody Guthrie Center in the Tulsa Arts District is Tulsa's newest museum and archive. In addition to interactive state-of-the-art museum displays, the Woody Guthrie Center also houses the Woody Guthrie Archives, containing thousands of Guthrie's personal items, sheet music, manuscripts, books, photos, periodicals, and other items associated with the iconic Oklahoma native.

The archives of Guthrie protégé, singer-songwriter Bob Dylan will also be displayed in Tulsa when a new facility designed to showcase The Bob Dylan Archive is completed.

The city has been called one of America's most livable large cities by Partners for Livable Communities, Forbes, and Relocate America. FDI Magazine in 2019 ranked the city no. 8 in the U.S. for cities of the future. In 2012, Tulsa was ranked among the top 50 best cities in the United States by Business Week.

For those looking for outdoor activities, the Tulsa area offers more than 80 miles of pedestrian and bicycle trails. Tulsa’s newest riverfront park, Gathering Place, is designed as a vibrant and inclusive space, blending nature with an urban setting. It was recently named the Best New Attraction in the U.S. by USA Today.

For more information, go to:

See You in Tulsa: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftxH75SwJwQ
Tulsa is open for business: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cy4tvwn_W8s
The Gathering Place: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBCMkWQI_6E
Philbrook Museum: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWVkKkWn7l4
Gilcrease Museum: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-1w4Yu2o4s
Tulsa Children’s Museum: https://vimeo.com/126536254
Where We Came From

Saint John’s is the kind of church one would expect to find in a city like Tulsa – a city that has accomplished so much in such a short time, and whose history reads like fiction.

Just 22 years after its incorporation – when its population was approximately 1,000 – the federal census listed Tulsa among America’s 100 largest cities! It is a story of growth perhaps unparalleled in American city history.

Saint John’s own history is not dissimilar.

Dr. Edward H. Eckel, rector of Trinity, the original Episcopal congregation in Tulsa, was a legendary planner and builder. On Dec. 1, 1948, under a plan he devised, a five-acre tract, carved from a 120-acre cotton farm bordered by gravel roads, was purchased as the site of Saint John’s Episcopal Church.

The first building constructed on the property was a vicarage into which Father C. Clyde Hoggard and his family moved in February 1950. Nine months later, 133 persons who had attended weekly sessions in the Office of Instruction were confirmed at Trinity Church.

Work began that year on the Chapel Hall, and upon its completion in 1951, Father Hoggard conducted a Nov. 18 celebratory christening of the new building with five services.

But Saint John’s suddenly hit an unexpected rough patch. Its just-finished Chapel Hall proved woefully inadequate to accommodate everyone who attended Sunday services. This was particularly true of the insufficiency of classrooms for what was reported to be the largest Sunday Church School in the Diocese – although Saint John’s was new, and just a chapel.

That dilemma prompted the vestry and Father Hoggard to petition for Saint John’s to be elevated from the status of “chapel” to “mission,” and on May 17, 1952, the Right Reverend Thomas Casady, Diocesan Bishop, decreed that Saint John’s “would be accepted as a parochial mission of Trinity Church, Tulsa.”

Only six months had passed since the Chapel was dedicated.

After just a year and a half as a mission, the vestry proposed, and the congregation approved, an application to become a parish of the Diocese of Oklahoma. On February 2, 1954, Saint John’s held its first meeting as the newest parish of the Diocese of Oklahoma.

Saint John’s, now in its 66th year as a parish, is Oklahoma’s third-largest Episcopal Church. The church has been blessed by the spiritual guidance of clergy, strong lay leadership and what might be considered a fortunate accident of geography.
Where We Are Going

We are excited about the future at Saint John’s and look forward to deepening our relationship with God and improving how we serve each other and the greater community.

Every church goes through “up” and “down” cycles, times that are vibrant and times that show things need to be reinvigorated. While Saint John’s is a “rock star” in the Oklahoma Episcopal diocese and a beacon for people seeking a deeper relationship with Christ, the church is also just now moving out of one of those troughs and seeking to become vibrant again.

Recent surveys and focus groups have begun the hard work of highlighting areas we need to keep at the forefront: rebuilding confidence in church leadership by increasing transparency, designing new ways to engage the community through “boots on the ground” outreach, rebuilding and expand relationships with all parishioners, and offering more opportunities for youth in the community to engage through us.

How are we starting to accomplish all of these things?

To identify our strengths as well as areas where we need to improve our efforts, the church recently completed a parish-wide Congregation Assessment Tool (“CAT”) with the help of Holy Cow! Consulting (“Holy Cow!”). We received a total of 194 responses, which translates to about 82% of an average worship attendance. We feel this has greatly helped us to address longstanding issues that might have been holding us back and better prepare Saint John’s to move forward in exciting new directions with the right leadership.
Holy Cow! Survey highlights
The survey asked questions on a wide range of topics such as hospitality, morale, and spiritual vitality,

Our church’s top three priorities, as decided by survey respondents, are:

- To make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church
- To develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church
- To create more opportunities for people to form meaningful relationships, such as small groups or shared meals.

Hospitality: Like many churches (Episcopal as well as every other denomination), the greatest struggle for our congregation at Saint John’s regarding Hospitality is about welcoming folks from different walks of life. Of those surveyed, more than two-thirds agree that our church welcomes and is enriched by persons from different walks of life, but a slightly smaller number feel that members in our church have not been prepared to personally welcome guests in worship services – a fact that has led to discussion of several solutions, including classes and sermons on how to welcome visitors and new members effectively. The good news is that more than 80% feel that being part of this church community has given new meaning to their lives.

Spirituality: At Saint John’s, spirituality plays an important part in our parishioners’ lives. Of those surveyed, more than 90% feel their spiritual experiences often impact the way they look at life, and 96% experience the presence of God in their lives. A high majority of our congregation also say they work to connect their faith to all the other aspects of their lives.

Engagement in Education: Ongoing learning is definitely important to members of Saint John’s. More than 85% of those surveyed understand they have a spiritual responsibility for life-long learning and formation. A majority feel Saint John’s provides opportunities for education and formation in a variety of ways, but that same number also feel our church needs to work harder to provide high quality education that is appropriate to every age and stage of life. This is definitely an area we are working on, since it is an important component to any healthy church.

Worship and Music Commentary: The worship experience is central to the vitality and growth of a church, and research suggests that when the worship experience of a congregation is vibrant, members also tend to feel energized about the work of the church. According to the survey respondents, music plays a huge and important role in Saint John’s worship experience! Nearly 90% say that music at our church is outstanding in quality and appropriate in style to our congregation. Almost the same number believe the worship services at our church are exceptional in both quality and spiritual content.
What We Seek in a Rector

As part of our recent parish survey, Saint John’s conducted several “small group meetings” in February 2020 to dig further into the results and seek additional feedback from members on topics that were important to them.

In addition to addressing issues like building community within the church and outreach, members were asked:
Which of these characteristics do you feel it’s important a new rector possess?

- Be a good shepherd to the flock
- Be a good leader to the organization
- Be a good change agent

The more than 60 members that participated in these small group meetings provided answers that undoubtedly mirror the thoughts of the entire congregation and vestry:

A new Rector will have his or her own particular strengths and challenges, but we would like a mature, responsible adult who leads thoughtfully into the future.

Every one of those three characteristics is important. We certainly appreciate good preaching and meaningful sermons, servant leadership, loving care for all in and outside the church, a person who fits our Episcopal tradition, but also someone with forward-thinking ideas that celebrates our diversity and helps us become more involved in the community.

Here are a few of the members’ actual comments regarding a new rector:

- A good leader will be a good shepherd, speak the truth, and be inclusive.
- Mature, responsible adult to lead us into the 21st century
- More sermons about life or world issues.
- Our rector’s ministry should extend into the community.
- All are important.
- I’m particularly interested in our new rector being a good change agent. We need to keep the conversations going – not stay comfortable, not stay where we’ve always been.
- How could we not want all 3?
Our Diocese

The Rt. Rev. Poulson Reed was elected Bishop Co-Adjutor on Saturday, December 14, 2019 and on August 8, 2020, will assume leadership as the sixth Bishop of Oklahoma, a diocese that covers the entire state of Oklahoma. The Diocese of Oklahoma comprises 16,000 baptized members and approximately 150 resident clergy in its 68 congregations. Outreach is a priority in Oklahoma. The Diocese has a long history of support in a variety of ministries throughout the state addressing the needs of people and communities. Ministries include feeding programs, after-school mentoring, mission camps, and a very active prison ministry.

Multi-cultural ministry is also a priority in the Diocese of Oklahoma. From the days of the Rev. David Pendleton Oakerhater, deacon and first Native American to be included in the Episcopal Church's Calendar of Lesser Feasts and Fasts, Oklahoma has inherited an active ministry to Native Americans in the state, primarily through Oakerhater Episcopal Indian Ministries Center in Watonga. In recent years Oklahoma has also assumed a leadership role in ministry to the growing Hispanic community in Oklahoma through Latino ministries at Santa Maria Virgen Mission in Southwest Oklahoma City, the fastest growing congregation in the diocese, and through the Latino Episcopal Community that meets at St. Dunstan's, Tulsa.

There is a long tradition of effective youth work in the diocese. A diocesan summer camp program at St. Crispin's Conference Center provides nurturing, education, and fun for young people from grade three through high school. There are Episcopal schools throughout the diocese which serve children in preschool through high school.

Episcopal residential facilities for the elderly include Ardmore Village in Ardmore and St. Simeon's in Tulsa. Both of these facilities have undergone major expansion and renovations during the last few years. Each facility provides excellent care to the residents and their families.

The Diocese of Oklahoma is recognized nationally as a leader in the renewal of the diaconate and for its emphasis on the shared baptismal ministry of all Christians. Although young in years (celebrating its 80th anniversary as a diocese in 2017), it is one of the most financially sound dioceses in the country. Through prudent stewardship, it has been able to invest significantly in special ministries, including strong campus chaplaincies at two universities throughout the state.

In recent years, the Diocese of Oklahoma has developed a reputation for dynamic, collegial, innovative clergy, working in partnership with our diocesan staff to grow our churches in discipleship and spiritual health. Our diocese includes two of the fastest growing churches in the country.

The Diocese of Oklahoma seeks to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.
APPLICATION PROCESS
Submit the following application materials: (electronic submission preferred)
- Resume/Curriculum Vitae
- A copy of your updated OTM profile
- A “Letter of Interest” that highlights why you believe you may be called to serve as Rector of St. John's Episcopal Church, Tulsa, OK.

Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma
Attn: The Rev. Canon Eric Cooter
Canon to the Ordinary
924 N. Robinson, Oklahoma City, OK. 73102
Email: canoneric@epiok.org
Questions: 405/232-4820

Applications must be received by September 1, 2020