

**Parish Profile  
Holy Trinity Episcopal Church  
Auburn, Alabama  
August 2013**

**Purpose, Audience, Organization, Methodology**

Upon the resignation of the Reverend John Fritschner, who served as rector of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church for over 17 years, Holy Trinity's vestry appointed a Self-Study Committee charged with producing this Parish Profile. The primary purpose of this self examination process was to articulate the values, character, strengths, and needs of the parish as the first part of an extended "discernment process." Under the guidance of the Diocese of Alabama this is the recommended process which, with the help of the Holy Spirit, a new rector is called to serve a parish.

In producing this Profile several methods were used to encourage parishioners to share their views, including a parish survey completed by 184 parishioners and a values clarification exercise attended by 74 parishioners. The Survey, a statistical summary of which can be found in Appendix E, included both defined response and free response questions. The open-ended questions produced a large number of diverse and passionate statements. A number of those statements are included herein to illustrate key findings. While not all of the diverse and sometimes conflicting views of Holy Trinity could be included, the Self-Study Committee believes that what follows is a reasonable and fair expression of who we are as we embark on the rector discernment process. The organization of this profile is based largely on the five "Values Statements" that emerged from the values clarification exercise, as shown in bold below.

**What Do We See As Our Central Purpose?**

First, as we took this collective look at ourselves, we came to believe that our mission statement, adopted in 1995, remains accurate: "Holy Trinity Episcopal Church is an inclusive community worshipping in the Anglican tradition, seeking to live the Gospel through faith and action." Given the recent near-schism in the worldwide Anglican Communion, we wish to make it clear that we do not use the term "Anglican" in its contemporary politicized sense. We are firmly part of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America (henceforth, "the Episcopal Church"). Although there is a range of political beliefs in our congregation, we at Holy Trinity are inclusive when it comes to matters of religion.

In our values clarification exercise, conducted June 22, 2013, 74 parishioners, working in small discussion groups, explored the question: "What is our fundamental purpose as a church community?" Here is our consensus response: **Our core value is to strive to make Holy Trinity a "thin place" where the curtain between this earthly life and God's mysterious purpose is ever more transparent. We believe the fundamental purpose of church life is to lead us closer to God, a connection that lies beyond words and rational understanding, thereby enabling us to connect with others on a deeper, more spiritual level.** We are here to grow in our relationship with God and Christ, and we find the "Anglican tradition," its liturgy and Book of Common Prayer, to be our preferred order for deepening that relationship.

**At Holy Trinity We Value An Open, Diverse, Inclusive Community.**

Most of us have a deep love for Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. We feel valued and included as a part of a religious community where openness and acceptance of diversity creates an atmosphere where we feel "seen" and accepted for who we are at this moment in our life journey. It is a place of dignity, reverence, and stability where we also feel accepted as we grow, change, and age. In our June 2013 values clarification exercise, this experience was summarized as follows: **Holy Trinity parishioners, over time, feel at home, included, valued, and connected to a community that is accepting of diversity of thought, opinion, geographical origin, age,**

**lifestyle, family type, and race/ethnicity.** Here are a few representative responses to our parish survey that articulate this widely held sentiment: “Getting to know each other, sharing our similarities and differences really makes me feel much more a part of the church body.” Also, “I value being able to worship in a relaxing, non-judgmental environment, even with varying opinions and perspectives.” Another parishioner wrote, “I value the kindness and warmth with which every parishioner and guest is greeted by the whole church and priest.” Another wrote of valuing “The family feeling -- it mirrors the family feeling of the local community. As a whole, we are a very non-judging community.”

A close reading of the above highlighted value statement suggests that feeling accepted is not always immediate (note the “over time” phrase), nor is every kind of diversity mentioned. The statement does not mention economic diversity. Although we have parishioners and families who struggle with poverty, and families who are at the opposite end of the economic spectrum, most parishioners are either comfortably retired, or work hard at good jobs and make a secure living. Our annual budget of nearly \$600,000 – plus an endowment that exceeds \$1.25 million -- reflects the general lack of economic struggle at Holy Trinity. Although we do not mention political views in the above statement, there is a range of views at Holy Trinity. As one parishioner wrote, “Diversity also includes political beliefs and values, and I don’t see anything in our church’s belief system (see the Nicene Creed, Catechism) that suggests a particular set of political views and values should be promoted as ‘truth.’” In other words, because we value diversity of thought, we eschew espousal of any political “agenda” from the pulpit. Several survey respondents echoed this view.

Holy Trinity has made strides in recent years in welcoming newcomers and providing more opportunities for fellowship for the whole congregation. In responding to an open-ended question in our Parish Survey (summarized in Appendix E) an increase in fellowship activities outside of Sunday worship services was cited as the most meaningful recent development at Holy Trinity. These fellowship activities have been facilitated by the recent completion of the event lawn and expansion and renovation of the parish hall. Nonetheless, we are still working to improve our ability to help established members recognize and reach out to newcomers, and to help all members connect with a ministry or small group. Our survey responses suggest that some newcomers find Holy Trinity to be a rather impersonal place, at least for a time. In the words of one of our newer members, “Holy Trinity is becoming more welcoming, but we need to keep this up. It is difficult to get to know anyone in this parish if you are new. There have been great strides; let's not slack on this.” The idea of an established hierarchy, relatively insulated from the concerns of the average parishioner was also suggested, most strongly expressed in the comment that “nothing ever changes around here except the buildings and grounds.” Closely related was a more widespread view that we need to increase communication about important events, expenditure of our resources, and milestones, all in a manner that promotes openness and awareness. Our weekly printed and electronic newsletter, “Holy Trinity Highlights,” and more informative website ([www.holytrinitychurch.info](http://www.holytrinitychurch.info)) have improved parish-wide communication, but there is a general feeling that we must do more to help us stay connected to one another. As one parishioner wrote, “Holy Trinity needs to attract a rector with a commitment to lead this parish in building its own capacity to love one another; to nurture relationships among groups, young and old, newcomers and old timers, new Episcopalians and cradle Episcopalians. Before we can minister outside of the parish, we must first desire to minister to those we sit by each Sunday.”

### **We Love Being Episcopalian.**

Holy Trinity parishioners love most things about our church. There is, among most of us, a deep love of the Episcopal liturgy and worship services, both Rite I and Rite II. We approach these services with dignity, reverence, and, at the 11 a.m. Sunday service, with beautiful and liturgically appropriate church music (survey responders overwhelmingly loved Holy Trinity’s music program). We embrace the ritual, rhythm, and historical continuity conveyed through the Book of Common Prayer. Sunday morning worship feeds and centers us. The value statement reflecting this sentiment that emerged during our values clarification exercise was: **As parishioners we**

**value what we see as a uniquely Episcopal approach to worship and spiritual growth that includes ritual, liturgy, prayer, orderliness, Bible study, knowledge, and a willingness to think about, wrestle with and discuss what are, ultimately, profound and mysterious questions of meaning.**

In a manner that is consistent with our openness to diversity and sense of being accepted for who we are, we do not expect to be told what to believe. We want sermons that challenge us and inspire us to lead more Christ-centered lives, and many are seeking additional opportunities to deepen their understanding of the Bible and theology. There were many articulate and passionate statements in support of a uniquely Episcopal approach to worship, including “I would hate to lose what I can only describe as ‘liturgical coherence’ in Sunday worship -- music, preaching and readings working together for a meaningful message.” Also, “I value the beautiful and quiet and formal liturgical service, sitting in the pew quietly looking at the beautiful stained glass and meditating, or kneeling and praying quietly before the service begins. The decorum and dignity of the liturgy is most important to me.” Another wrote, “I want Holy Trinity to continue to worship in the Anglican and Episcopal traditions. While changes and growth are sure to occur, I do not want us to try and be the Church for all people in Auburn.”

A number of parishioners mentioned concerns related to the recent addition of a third Sunday service. For many years Holy Trinity had 8:00 am and 10:00 am Sunday worship services. The 8:00 am service used Rite I and had no music; the 10:00 am service used Rite II and included hymns and the choir. In 2012 we added a third Sunday service, moving the worship services to 7:30 am, 9 am, and 11 am. Some church members felt the addition of a third Sunday service weakened ties between those who worship at 7:30am and those who worship at 11:00 am.\* The change in service times prompted others to voice a desire to see at least some elements of “High Church” incorporated into our regular services, not only at Easter or Christmas Eve or other special services. A few even suggested using Rite I at least one Sunday a month at the later two services: As one parishioner put it, “I don’t want my children to miss out on hearing the beautiful phrasing from Rite I that I knew as a child.”

### **We Also Value Beauty.**

Holy Trinity parishioners value beauty as an important part of our worship experience and as a visible expression of God’s presence in the world. In our values clarification exercise this value was summarized as: **We value aesthetic beauty as an expression of and vehicle for spirituality and holiness. We care about beauty and serenity and a resulting sense of awe and peacefulness as important manifestations of God’s presence and as a way to deepen our connection to God’s mystery. We particularly value the centering and deepening effect of the beauty and dignity of the Episcopalian liturgy, our music ministries, and worship spaces.** The beauty of our sanctuary, parish hall, and grounds matters very much to us. We have been willing to invest our resources in building a new sanctuary (completed in 1998 at a cost of \$ 1.6 million), expanding the undercroft to create more Sunday school, EYC, and Flower Guild space (completed in 2007 at a cost of \$248,000), and more recently in renovating our parish hall, playground, event and parking areas (completed in 2012 at a cost of \$785,000 with a remaining debt of \$200,000 - to be retired in 2014 through capital campaign pledges). Our master plan includes reconstruction of the Holy Trinity Day School space and expanded space for fellowship and Christian education. With expansion of our facilities, parishioners want to maintain our core value of inclusiveness. As one parishioner put it, “Holy Trinity has historically been a welcoming, family-oriented community. This is a huge asset and special treasure not always found in parishes I have attended. With the renovation of the parish hall, the addition of the event lawn and relocation of the playground, that same welcoming and open atmosphere has not diminished with the steady growth of our parish in recent years. With the prospect of continued growth, I hope that newcomers will continue to find the same warmth that we now know.”

### **Outreach Needs Strengthening.**

---

\* We recently added a Korean language service, Sundays at noon, led by a Korean priest.

Holy Trinity parishioners value and understand the centrality of being Christ's hands in the world. The value statement that emerged, however, is somewhat nuanced: **We value expressing a compassionate Episcopal voice and presence both within the parish and in the larger community. As members of our church and as compassionate individuals, we value the freedom to participate in outreach and inreach activities that express our Holy Trinity values and those of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. These activities typically express our commitment to social justice, and to expressing our compassion and generosity without evangelizing.** The nuances are that some parishioners feel comfortable expressing their generosity and compassion for the needy and hurting in our world individually, not through the church. As one parishioner put it: "As for 'faith-based' outreach and community service I find work that appeals to me as a Salvation Army volunteer." In general, Holy Trinity parishioners do not view outreach as a vehicle for evangelism. Sharing our bounty is merely part of whom we are and what we are called to do as Christians.

Holy Trinity participates in a number of outreach programs including our annual medical mission to Haiti, our contributions to and participation in the Community Food Bank and Habitat for Humanity programs, our college book scholarship program, participation in the Sawyerville summer youth program, and significant funding of community outreach projects from our endowment income, to name a few. Nonetheless, some parishioners do not seem to experience us as an outreach *community*. In this regard many older parishioners mourn the loss of an outreach program where the ECW and an active parish outreach committee, Community Ministries, responded to requests for help from the local community. One stated this as follows: "I feel the lack of our former outreach committee left a real hole in parish life." Another stated this dilemma somewhat differently. "As a parish we need to re-evaluate outreach and all of our public-facing ministries. We need to identify our core causes and, as a parish, figure out how to best promote and support them. We need to be able to say that we understand our mission and what we are saying with our support." It seems that while we, as a parish and as individual parishioners, engage in a number of outreach activities, both individually and within the church, many feel that a certain quality of experience is missing. The theologian Frederick Buechner once wrote, "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." In the end, it may be that Holy Trinity's current outreach activities, for many parishioners, still leave too much space between our abundant gladness and the world's "deep hunger." This is one area we hope our new rector will help us as we continue on this part of our spiritual journey.

### **Christian Formation is Central and Can Be Strengthened Further.**

Over and over again, in responding to our parish survey, parishioners stated how valuable and important our youth programs are to the character of our parish. Most expressed a desire to see these youth programs continue to grow. For example, "I value most . . . our attractiveness to young families just starting to make a church life together - our uncontroversial acceptance of all types of families - our programs for children, youth and college students." Another wrote, "I feel the commitment to youth programs has brought many young couples to our church." And, "The youth of our church are our future. We need to inspire and teach them; help them grow in Christ. And we need to set the best example for them." Another summed it up as follows: "I really feel that Holy Trinity needs to focus on youth development and expanding Sunday school classes and/or Bible studies for all . . . children need a reason to want to come to church. Many times the youth seem to disappear and attend other churches once they reach the teen years." And, "I think there's great potential for even more integration of children, teens, and adults to explore their spiritual journey TOGETHER. We need a young adults group and a time when the college students, young adults, and all family/older parishioners come together. I think the college and young adult members often feel separate from the rest of our congregation." Holy Trinity has a healthy level of age diversity, with many young families, and we are delighted that we are an attractive congregation for these families. We understand that families with children are a major source of vitality as we grow into the future.

Parishioners' views of our efforts to advance *adult* Christian Formation and deepen adults' theological and spiritual understanding were more mixed. One states, "Christian Formation is not

as strong as it should be, especially for adult parishioners. CF is not just for Sundays; other days should be included in the program – EFM (Education For Ministry), Bible studies, etc. need to be considered.” Another writes, “I believe we need to focus on Christian Formation across the board. While we tend to emphasize Christian Formation for our children, we need to offer more for adults, both on Sunday morning and during the week.” Some see changing this as a key role of a new rector: “I hope to be inspired and challenged in my individual spiritual growth and development, but I also would love someone who could inspire and lead Holy Trinity as a church community to live beyond Sunday morning and grow more fully into its potential to be a light to the community and world around us.”

A number of parishioners described Holy Trinity as a “Sunday morning church.” It might be just as accurate to describe most of us as members of a “Sunday service church.” Participation in adult Sunday school, EFM, and Bible study is not proportionate for a parish of our size. When one considers the stated central purpose of our church life as “leading us closer to God,” this seems an area of growth with substantial promise.

### **Holy Trinity is a Parish in Transition.**

It seems to be almost axiomatic that organizations, including parish churches, do not exist for long in a steady state: they either thrive and grow or they decline and wither away. Holy Trinity is located in a vibrant and growing community, and yet the parish has experienced only modest growth in membership and operating budget (see Appendix C). And although average Sunday attendance in 2001 was 256, and had not changed by 2005 (255), in the past five years there has been slow but steady growth in average Sunday worship attendance (from 262 worshipers in 2008 to 306 in 2012). Most parishioners seem surprised to learn that Holy Trinity has not shown greater overall growth, since there has been an influx of new members, including a number of younger families. One way to understand this is to acknowledge that for the past 18 years Holy Trinity has been a church in transition. In connection with this transition, we have had three capital campaigns and the physical disruption associated with three related construction/reconstruction projects. In his book *Beyond Business as Usual* Neal O. Michell describes churches of Holy Trinity’s size as being at the upper end of a somewhat fraught transition between a “pastoral size” church and a “program size” church. During this transition a church must figure out how to create, sustain, and provide leadership for “quality programming” that interconnects and supports parishioners in their faith journeys. Several of the challenges articulated above by parishioners can be seen as symptomatic of the process of making this transition. Smaller churches lack the human capital to sustain dynamic programming, often burning out key participants who become overly involved in such efforts. We are of sufficient size that many parishioners are available to serve in key roles. This enabled our previous rector to successfully establish the practice of rotating leadership and membership on key ministries, such as altar guild and flower guild. He also consolidated outreach giving under the direct control of the vestry.

On its face, Holy Trinity’s growth and attendant turmoil is much preferred to the alternative. It is also heartening to note that most Holy Trinity parishioners embrace growth and the prospect of welcoming our next rector, believing that these changes will provide greater opportunities for spiritual growth. Even those who mentioned missing the family feel of a small parish seem to welcome growth. One stated “I pray for a rector who will help us accept and respond affirmatively to new directions for Holy Trinity and will help me face inevitable life challenges and transitions as an older parishioner.” A number of parishioners expressed an understandable concern that, as we continue to grow, we not lose those qualities we most treasure about ourselves. “I cherish our openness and the fact that we are a welcoming parish, and I hope that doesn't change.” Nonetheless, Holy Trinity seems at times to feel like a church in the process of completing its transition from a relatively small church, where most everyone knew or at least recognized one another and where each member felt a personal connection to the rector, to a larger church where one’s connection to the church -- beyond being collectively “fed” by shared Sunday morning worship -- occurs primarily through small mission groups (Bible study, flower guild, vacation Bible school, choir, etc.) led primarily by lay members. With the vision and leadership we hope for from our next rector, we look forward to completing this important

transition in the life of Holy Trinity Church.

### **We Have Many Hopes and Expectations For Our Next Rector.**

This section is a narrative representation of the survey responses we received from almost 200 parishioners when they were asked about the skills and talents they most seek in our new rector. Two approaches were included in our Parish Survey. First, the Self-Study Committee listed 16 rector skills and talents, and asked respondents to select the seven that they viewed as *most* important, and three that they viewed as *least* important. The Committee hoped that by forcing respondents to make such difficult choices – since all of the skills and talents were important for a new rector – that this would prompt respondents to think more deeply and broadly about rector qualities and also understand that no rector is likely to possess all of these qualities. Second, respondents were asked to answer a series of free-response questions including what strengths they desired in a new rector, and their personal needs of a new rector. The open-ended questions provided additional opportunity for input regarding desired rector qualities, and comments were often eloquent, heartfelt, moving, and informative. A statistical summary of the findings from our Parish Survey can be found in Appendix E.

In the “skills and talents” portion of the survey, the single-most important quality parishioners seek in their new rector is the ability to provide pastoral care by responding to people at significant moments in their lives, especially in times of adversity. Not surprisingly, based on the clear value that “we love being Episcopalian,” parishioners also want our new rector to be able to convey theological coherence through well-planned Episcopal liturgy, to have an ability to impart a deeper understanding of God’s word and relevance through various channels, and to present inspiring, relevant, and Bible-centered sermons. We seek a rector with an ability to lead us toward a deeper spiritual life. Stepping beyond the “internal,” parishioners also want our new rector to strengthen our outreach to those in need beyond Holy Trinity, and continue to build and strengthen our youth programs. Parishioners clearly want our new rector to establish an atmosphere of open, accepting and inclusive fellowship. Underscoring earlier responses, parishioners have valued recent developments at Holy Trinity. These include opportunities for fellowship outside of Sunday services as well as renewed emphasis on Christian Formation and youth ministry. These are the same areas that Holy Trinity parishioners want to see improved under our new rector’s leadership. Specifically, there is a desire for more emphasis on youth development and Christian Formation and outreach beyond Holy Trinity, including stronger ties with St. Dunstan’s Episcopal Student Center. There is also a strong desire – clearly expressed in the open-ended questions -- that we must continue to welcome newcomers, attend to the needs of our elderly and disabled members, and make everyone feel included thus ensuring strong community among all members, even as we continue to grow. This is particularly relevant since we have instituted three Sunday services.

Responding to what strengths we most seek in our new rector, parishioners again emphasize the importance of great preaching and informed commitment to traditional liturgy. Almost equally strong was a desire that the new rector be “approachable, friendly, a good listener and have a good sense of humor.” On a practical note, we also seek a rector with excellent administrative, financial and leadership skills. With strong desires for pastoral care and inclusiveness, this was the most balanced response of all the questions. In response to a similar question, we clearly stated that we want a strong and intelligent spiritual leader and preacher who is an inclusive, approachable consensus builder.

### **Concluding Thoughts.**

In doing our self-study at Holy Trinity we have tried to provide a document that presents as faithful a picture as possible of who we believe ourselves to be at this critical point in our history. We do so with confidence that our considerable strengths and gifts as a parish will shine through and attract parishioners and rector candidates who wish to share and contribute to this corporate spiritual journey. This is an exciting and promise-filled moment in our collective life as members of Holy Trinity’s version of the “Body of Christ.” We invite your participation in this continuing journey.

## **Holy Trinity Self-Study Committee, August 2013**

Sandra Clay  
Fran Cronenberg  
Lanette Fargason  
Robin Fellers  
Susan Griffith  
Philip Lewis, Chair  
George Littleton  
Margaret Nicolosi  
Martha Norman, Vestry Liaison  
Tom Sparrow  
Jeff Stallworth  
Jack Walls  
Lee Wilkins

### **APPENDICES:**

#### **A. The Auburn-Opelika Community.**

The Auburn/Opelika area is a diverse, active and vibrant community. Auburn has a small-town feel while being home to a major university. The area is an enlightening and inspiring place to live, work, raise a family and retire. Some of things that make our area special include the following:

1. We are an eclectic, culturally diverse community: Our community is home to people from many nations and cultures, with more than 80 nationalities represented on the faculty at Auburn University. Children attending the Auburn City Schools speak a total of 42 languages.
2. Auburn City Schools are among the best in the nation: Newsweek ranked Auburn High School as the #2 Best High School in the State in 2010; AHS students consistently score above the state and national averages on college admission tests. Auburn High School has been an International Baccalaureate world school since 1997, and is one of only 11 high schools in the state to offer the program. The Auburn City Schools were recently named the “1<sup>st</sup> SMART Showcase District in the U.S.”
3. The area offers excellent recreational opportunities: Both Auburn and Opelika have excellent Parks and Recreation departments offering facilities, classes, organized sports leagues and special events. The Billy Hitchcock Miracle Field in Opelika serves the needs of more than 200 special children and adults. The Yarbrough Tennis Center opened in 2007 and features six indoor courts, 12 outdoor courts with stadium seating, and 16 clay courts. The Center is home to the AU Tennis Team and is available for public use. In 2008 *Golf Digest* named the Auburn/Opelika area the #1 place for public golf in the United States. Golfers can enjoy their game year round at several top-rated courses, including Grand National, Saugahatchee Country Club, Moore’s Mill Golf Club, Auburn Links at Mill Creek, Indian Pines Golf Club, and the Auburn University Club.
4. Auburn-Opelika is strategically located: Located in Lee County, Alabama, the communities of Auburn and Opelika are situated along I-85 and AL highway 280, convenient to Atlanta, GA (110 miles), Montgomery, AL (50 miles), Columbus, GA (35 miles) and Birmingham, AL (120 miles). The Florida and Alabama Gulf Coast beaches are less than a 4-hour drive away. The climate is temperate, with short, mild winters.
5. There is a rich and growing cultural environment: Cultural offerings and activities abound, including performances from Auburn University’s music, choral and band departments, the Auburn University Telfair Peet Theatre, the East Alabama Arts Association, the East Alabama Community Ballet, the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Auburn, the Jan Dempsey Arts Center and many more.
6. There are many opportunities for outdoor recreation: With a warm climate much of the year, there is much to do in the great outdoors in east Alabama. Lake Martin, in nearby Dadeville, offers fishing, boating, sailing and other water sports. With an abundance of white-tailed deer, turkey and other game, hunting is a popular sport as well. Other popular outdoor recreation areas include Chewacla State Park, the Tuskegee National Forest, the Louise Kreher Forest Ecology Preserve, and numerous other small parks. The area has been designated a Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists.

7. The area has excellent healthcare resources: The area's healthcare center is East Alabama Medical Center (EAMC), a 340-bed acute-care regional referral center with a 26-bed skilled nursing facility, located in Opelika. EAMC offers comprehensive cancer care, cardiology and cardiovascular surgery, neurosurgery, orthopaedics, psychiatric care, and women's and children's services. The hospital has 150 physicians on its medical staff, representing more than 30 different specialties. EAMC was recently recognized by both The Joint Commission (TJC) and Premier as a top performer in key quality measures, and for improving quality and the patient experience while controlling costs.

8. Fitness is a priority: If staying healthy and fit is one of your goals, there are several choices available to you, including HealthPlus Fitness Center, the Opelika Sportplex and Aquatic Center, and the Auburn University Recreation and Wellness Center, which is scheduled to open in the fall of 2013.

### **Fast Facts**

- Auburn University has more than 25,000 students and more than 1,100 full-time faculty members.
- The Auburn/Opelika area is the 11<sup>th</sup> fastest-growing municipality in the United States.
- Auburn has a population of 54,566; Opelika has a population of 27,092; and the overall population of Lee County is 147,257.
- The average annual temperature is 64°F. Over the course of a year, the temperature in the Auburn area typically varies from 37°F to 89°F and is rarely below 24°F or above 95°F.
- Lee County's largest employer is Auburn University with more than 6,000 staff and faculty members, followed by East Alabama Medical Center with approximately 2,700 employees.
- Other leading employers in the neighboring area include Hyundai (near Montgomery) and Kia (West Point, GA). These two major automobile companies also have led to the development of several smaller "feeder" industries. With the establishment of these industries in the area, we have seen the cultural diversity increase as the Korean population has grown.

Those interested in learning more about the community and its resources may consult the following websites:

Information about municipal government can be found at the city's website: [www.auburnalabama.org](http://www.auburnalabama.org). Related information about Auburn's well-respected public school system is available at [www.auburnschools.org](http://www.auburnschools.org).

Information about Auburn University (by far the largest employer in Lee County) is available at [www.auburn.edu](http://www.auburn.edu).

Also, a large, comprehensive portrait of Auburn produced by the Economic Development office at City Hall (therefore, informative but also somewhat of a marketing piece) is available here: [www.auburnalabama.org/ed/pdf/communityprofile.pdf](http://www.auburnalabama.org/ed/pdf/communityprofile.pdf)

To learn more about other faith communities in and around Auburn, here is a link to 30 other churches and their websites:

[www.yellowpages.com/auburn-al/churches-places-of-worship](http://www.yellowpages.com/auburn-al/churches-places-of-worship)

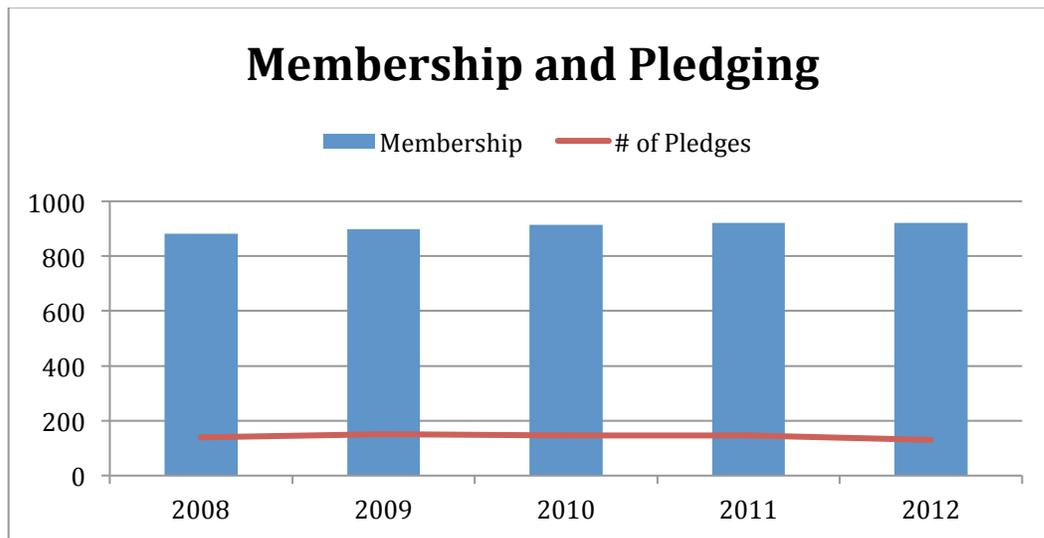
### **B. Parish History: Holy Trinity Episcopal Church**

Holy Trinity takes its name from its two predecessors in the community of Auburn, Alabama: Trinity Church, first mentioned in the Diocesan record in 1849, and its successor, Church of the Holy Innocents, which was begun as a mission in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and assumed permanent parish status in 1946. Thus, Holy Trinity is part of over 160 years of an Episcopal presence in Auburn. Until 1957, that presence was especially marked by its dual service to the townspeople of Episcopal persuasion and to the students of the college that eventually became Auburn University. After 1924, services were held in the church building on East Magnolia Avenue, then constructed in the distinctive Tudor style it still retains today. The growth of the college and its student population, especially after World War II, placed considerable strain on the ministry of the single church, and in 1955 Bishop C.C.J. Carpenter mediated an arrangement, with some

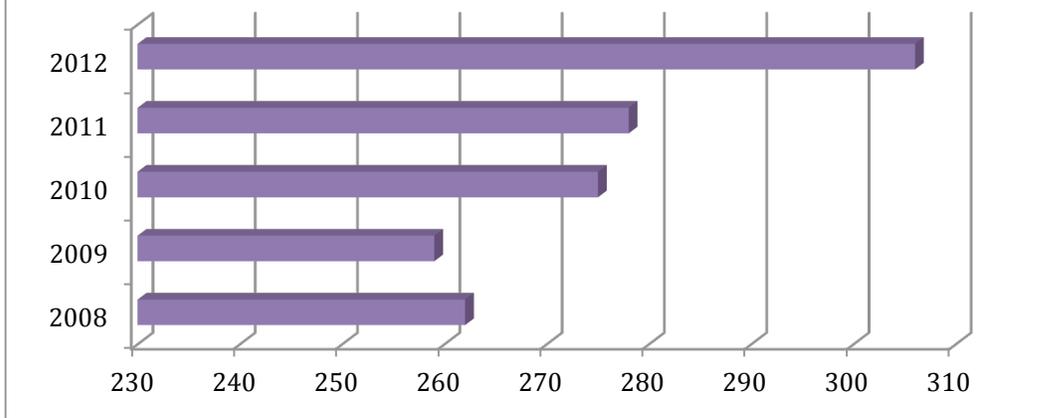
Diocesan fiscal support, that named the site and mission of Holy Innocents primarily to serve students, with the parish identity moving to a separate physical location. Within two years, this transition was completed: the student church eventually became known as St. Dunstan's of Canterbury Episcopal Chapel, and the new church assumed the name of Holy Trinity and moved some six blocks southward to its present hillside setting.

In 1957, Holy Trinity embraced 165 communicants and 105 church school pupils. In addition to its growth in average Sunday service attendance and total communicants over the past six decades, the church's physical structures have evolved from the initial rectory and parish hall-church school to the long-envisioned completion of a nave and additional education-administrative spaces. While this numerical and physical growth suggests the continuing vitality of our parish life within the expanding Auburn community, the evolution of the human and Christian identity of Holy Trinity may be found both in its efforts to maintain "a holy and reasonable" response to the needs of the less fortunate, and also to what has often during these last 60 years been troubling social and political tensions. The parish has been fortunate in the thoughtful leadership of its laity and vestry members, and of course, in the high quality of spiritual devotion rendered by its priests: The Rev. James P. Woodson (1957- 1973), the Rev. William P. McLemore (1973-1986), the Rev. Gid Montjoy, IV (1987-1995), and the Rev. John B. Fritschner (1995-2012). Each priest in his own way has sustained the development of community outreach, whose numerous recipients, plus the hundreds of children educationally nurtured since 1966 by the Day School, have extended the religious and cultural boundaries of our parish vision.

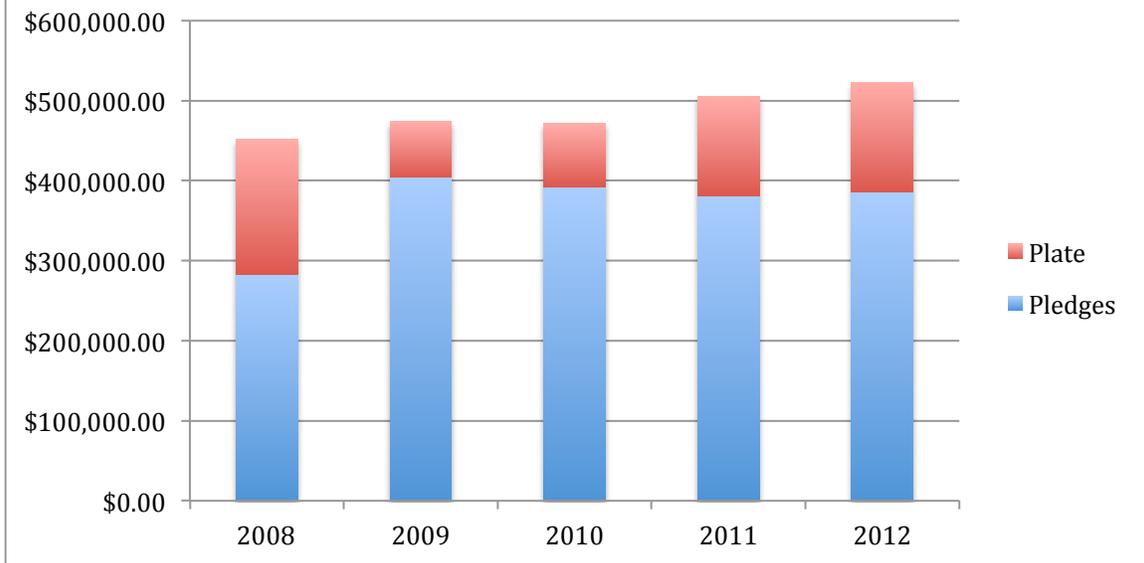
### **C. Participation and Giving Trends For Holy Trinity Church.**

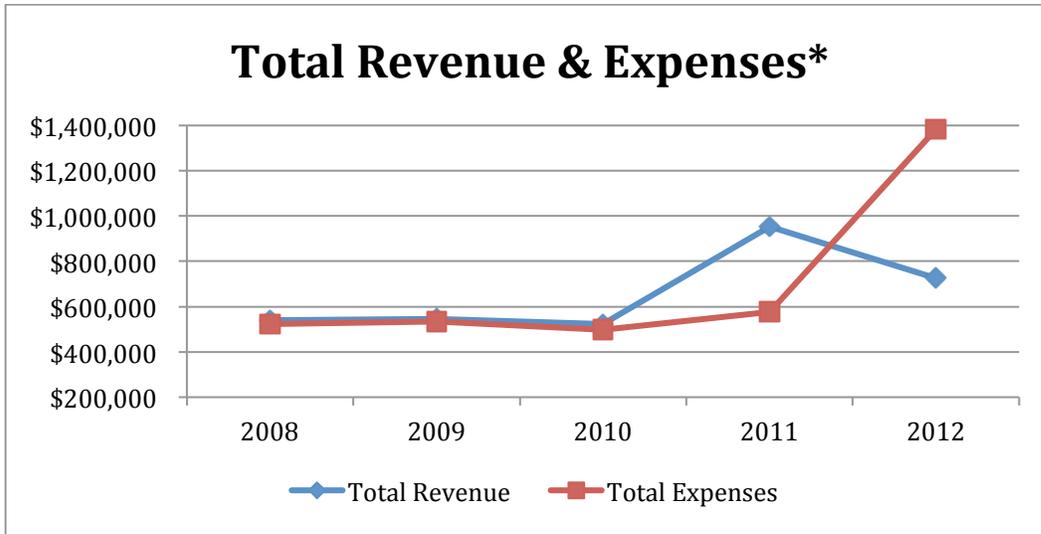


## Average Sunday Attendance



## Annual Giving





\*Total Revenue includes pledges, plate, and capital campaign receipts  
 Total Expenses includes, in 2011 and 2012, construction expenditures

#### **D. The Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Alabama.**

**September 2012**

**T**he Diocese of Alabama is rooted and grounded in the mission of Jesus Christ. We see ourselves as a missionary people committed to spreading the gospel and sharing in the ministry of Jesus Christ for the reconciliation and healing of the world.

The Diocese of Alabama is among 27 domestic diocese that showed growth in 2011 and 2012.

The ACTS 2 Capital Funds Campaign raised over \$6 million for ministry development and expansion throughout our diocese, including land for new parishes, a conference center chapel at Camp McDowell, Campus Ministry expansion at Montevallo, a communications staff member, and lay ministry certification program. The Diocese of Alabama was among 27 domestic dioceses that showed growth in 2011 and 2012. Currently the diocese has a baptized membership of over **28,000** parishioners and a growth trend is expected to continue well into the 21<sup>st</sup>

century as new urban/suburban parishes are being planned at a rate of one new parish every three years and the exploration of a “Fresh Expressions” ministry initiative in 2013.

The Diocese of Alabama is Eucharistic ally centered. The sacrament of Holy Eucharist is the worship norm at the principal services of Sunday throughout the diocese. The 1979 Book of Common Prayer is the liturgical customary for the diocese and the 1982 Hymnal is universally in use and is supplemented with other hymnals such as the *Alleluia III*, *Wonder, Love and Praise* and *Lift Every Voice*.

The diocese strongly supports the ordination and deployment of women and diverse persons.

All baptized persons are regarded as ministers living out the baptismal covenant in the world. The diocese and the parishes are called to nourish and support the laity in their individual ministries in the family, the church and the world. The bishops and clergy support and encourage lay participation in the

**Thirty-nine ordained deacons communicate the needs of the world to the church in the Diocese of Alabama. A third class of deacons will be ordained in the fall of 2011.**

liturgical life of the parish as lectors, chalice administrators, Eucharistic ministers as well as music ministers. In 2000, the renewal of the ordained order of Deacons became a reality. Currently thirty-nine ordained deacons are serving in the Diocese of Alabama.

The diocese has vigorously encouraged and supported local parishes in outreach ministry. The diocese has sought to address the underlying problems of hunger, unemployment, and racism with initiatives focused on the Black Belt area of the diocese, including the Sawyerville Day Camp and Jonathan Daniels pilgrimage. Over the years parish-based outreach has grown and is now extensive. Through its Department of Outreach and Mission, Parish Based Outreach Grants have been available to assist in the funding of local faith based initiatives in many of our parishes. Since 1969 the diocese has had a high commitment to the Companion Diocese Relationship Program and over these years has had a formal relationship with the Diocese of Namibia in Southern Africa, the Dioceses of Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Sao Paulo, Brazil, and the Diocese of South Dakota in the United States. In 2006 a companion diocese relationship was established with the Episcopal Church in Haiti. Parishioners from Alabama have been extremely active in Haiti, providing hurricane relief, nutrition programs, construction projects, and most recently earthquake relief. A number of medical missions are planned for the coming year.

A major focus of formation and renewal within the diocese is the Cursillo movement. This lay-led movement was begun in the diocese in 1979. With the full support and encouragement of the bishops, this program for spiritual renewal has reached into almost every parish. Small groups meet weekly for mutual support and there are monthly gatherings on citywide or convocational levels for continued growth and sharing among participants. Kairos, an ecumenical weekend program for spiritual renewal within prisons has been a direct outreach of the diocesan Cursillo movement. In recent years, Kairos Outside, a program for spouses and families of those incarcerated, has also grown in the diocese.

Lifelong faith formation is seen as an on-going process for all baptized Christians. The funding for two full time diocesan staff positions, Youth Ministries and Lifelong Formation Coordinators, illustrates the commitment to support the spiritual nourishment of individuals seeking a deeper relationship with Christ. A strong parish and diocesan-based Youth Ministry and more recently our YADA (Young Adults in the Diocese of Alabama) program provides a strong focus on formation for the next generation of leaders.

Camp McDowell is known as the heart of the diocese and serves as host to summer camp, numerous retreats, conferences, workshops, educational and renewal opportunities to support people as they strive to live out the Baptismal Covenant.

The leadership in the diocese seeks to take a collaborative stance in decision making. The Diocesan Council functions similarly to the way a vestry functions in relationship to the rector of a parish. It is a body which deliberates consults, guides and acts to assist the bishops in the nurture and extension of Christ's Church.

Since 1981 the diocese has been funded by a voluntary program of giving rather than by assessments upon the parishes. While maintaining the standard of voluntary giving, beginning in 2001, the long-range goal calls for parishes with income of more than \$150,000 to pledge 15% to the work of the Church through the diocese and parishes with income under \$150,000 to pledge 10% to the diocese.

Mindful of the importance of unity, the diocese has been a strong supporter of the ministries of the entire Episcopal Church and continues to exhibit this support through the acceptance and payment of the apportionment asked of us and participation at all levels. We assign this high priority to the budget of General Convention because of its missionary outreach both within the United States and around the entire Anglican Communion. At the same

**A major focus of formation and renewal within the diocese is the Cursillo movement.**

**The diocese has been a strong supporter of the entire Episcopal**

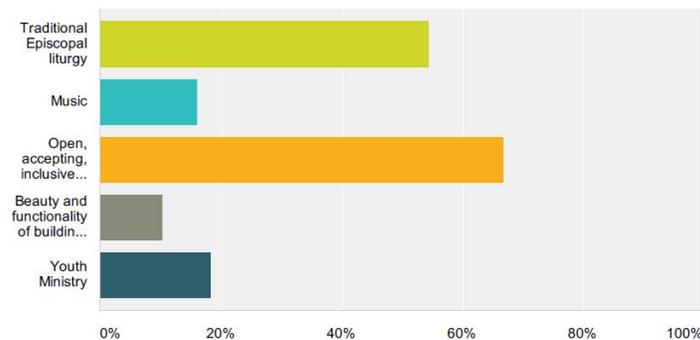
time the diocese strives to maintain the realistic growth of the salaries of its clergy and full time lay employees, along with the most recent benefits prescribed by the General Convention.

**I**n summary, the diocese of Alabama is, at its heart, a diocese centered in mission. We strive to live the Baptismal Covenant, to equip all of our people to do the work of God as we proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ. Our bedrock belief is that the Lord calls us to live the gospel of grace joyfully as we share life with all the Lord’s creation.

+John McKee Sloan  
Bishop of Alabama

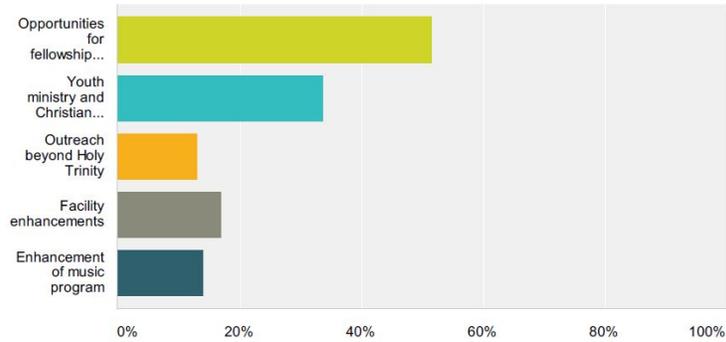
## **E. Summary of Parish Survey**

### **1. What specific things do you cherish about Holy Trinity that you do not want to lose?**



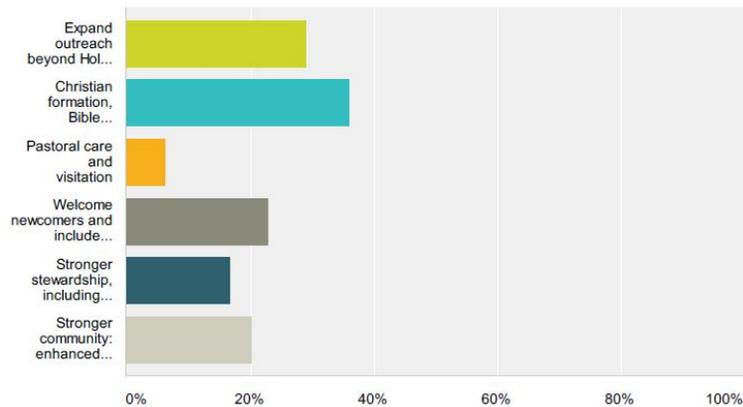
| Answer Choices                                   | Responses |
|--|-----------|
| Traditional Episcopal liturgy                    | 54.35% 75 |
| Music  | 15.94% 22 |
| Open, accepting, inclusive fellowship            | 66.67% 92 |
| Beauty and functionality of building and grounds | 10.14% 14 |
| Youth Ministry                                   | 18.12% 25 |
| Total Respondents: 138                           |           |

### **2. What developments or activities in the life of Holy Trinity in recent years have been most meaningful to you personally?**



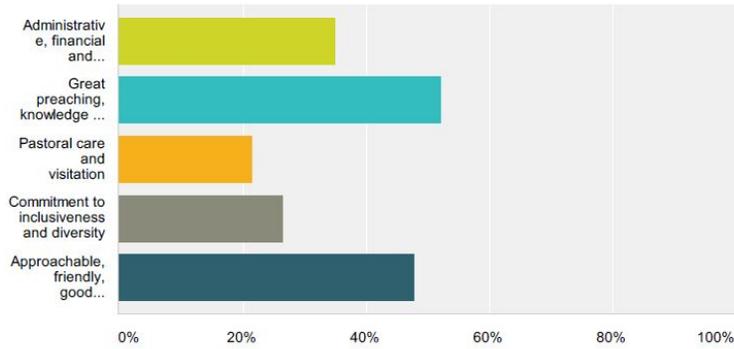
| Answer Choices  | Responses |
|---|-----------|
| Opportunities for fellowship outside of Sunday services | 51.49% 52 |
| Youth ministry and Christian formation                  | 33.66% 34 |
| Outreach beyond Holy Trinity                            | 12.87% 13 |
| Facility enhancements                                   | 16.83% 17 |
| Enhancement of music program                            | 13.86% 14 |
| Total Respondents: 101                                  |           |

### 3. In what areas does Holy Trinity need to grow and develop in the years ahead?



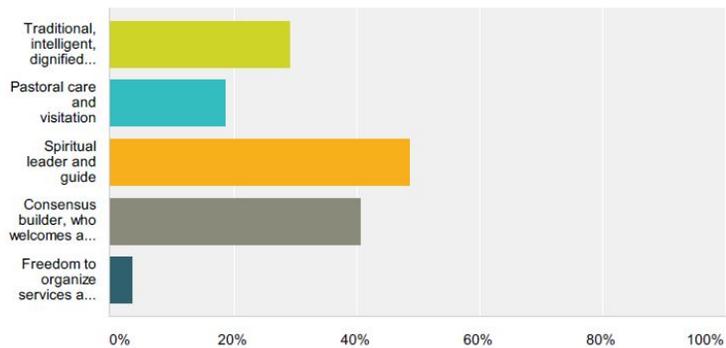
| Answer Choices   | Responses |
|--|-----------|
| Expand outreach beyond Holy Trinity, including St. Dunstan's   | 28.95% 33 |
| Christian formation, Bible studies, EYC & youth development  | 35.96% 41 |
| Pastoral care and visitation   | 6.14% 7   |
| Welcome newcomers and include everyone - discourage cliques  | 22.81% 26 |
| Stronger stewardship, including opportunities for "hands on" giving and more transparent church finances | 16.67% 19 |
| Stronger community: enhanced blending of total membership and coordination among three services          | 20.18% 23 |
| Total Respondents: 114   |           |

### 4. What strengths are you most seeking in our new rector?



| Answer Choices   | Responses |
|--|-----------|
| Administrative, financial and leadership skills                                    | 35% 49    |
| Great preaching, knowledge of liturgy, commitment to traditional Episcopal worship | 52.14% 73 |
| Pastoral care and visitation   | 21.43% 30 |
| Commitment to inclusiveness and diversity  | 26.43% 37 |
| Approachable, friendly, good listener, good sense of humor                         | 47.86% 67 |
| Total Respondents: 140   |           |

**5. The most important needs that I, personally, hope to have filled by our next rector are:**



| Answer Choices   | Responses |
|--|-----------|
| Traditional, intelligent, dignified preaching, liturgy and Eucharist | 29.20% 33 |
| Pastoral care and visitation   | 18.58% 21 |
| Spiritual leader and guide   | 48.67% 55 |
| Consensus builder, who welcomes and listens to and includes everyone | 40.71% 46 |
| Freedom to organize services as he or she chooses                    | 3.54% 4   |
| Total Respondents: 113   |           |