



We are Christ Church

The Episcopal Church in Norcross, Georgia



We are one

A group of people, including a priest, a woman, and a young girl, gathered together in a church setting. The priest is in the foreground, wearing a white cassock and glasses, looking down at a young girl. The woman is to the left, looking down at the girl. The girl is in the center, smiling. Other people are visible in the background.

We are family

**"The first Sunday
we visited Christ
Church, we knew
we had found
a home."**

We are a diverse and accepting parish with members hailing from around the world and from various denominational backgrounds. We do not profess to have all the answers, and we are not afraid to ask questions. Christ Church is a place where you can come as you are, wherever you are on your spiritual path, and join together to do the hard work of living out the rather difficult, counter-cultural teachings of Jesus. We cheer each other's successes and stand with one another when life is challenging. We have certainty that no matter what, we are not alone.

We are evolving

OUR HISTORY

1978

The Rev. Joel Hudson becomes the Vicar of Christ Church Episcopal, Norcross Mission.



1979

We find a home at the corner of North Peachtree and Park Drive.

1985

We commit at least 10% of our budget to outreach, cementing our history of outreach.

1988

We join with 13 local churches to start the Norcross Cooperative Ministry.

1991

We purchase the first location of what will become Rainbow Village.

1998

We purchase our current church site.

2000

The Hispanic Ministry is created.

2007

Haiti partnership is formed.

2009

The Rev. Ceci Duke is hired.

2018

The Rev. Mimi Guerra is hired.

2020

As COVID-19 forces closures, we get creative and offer virtual services and small groups.

2022

The Rev. Ceci Duke retires, ushering in our next chapter.



We are faithful

WORSHIP

We are a community with a rich variety of liturgical programs and ministries that have grown from a shared life of worship in Jesus Christ. The Episcopal liturgy is central to who we are and how we stay anchored in Christ.

We have three Sunday services: an intimate and contemplative 8:00 am service, a 10:30 am service with a full choir, and a 1:00 pm liturgy celebrated in Spanish. We offer an informal bi-monthly service at noon on Wednesdays with a hands-on healing and Eucharist. We live-stream the 10:30 and 1:00 services each Sunday as well as lay-led Morning Prayer throughout the week.

Lay Ministries

- Acolytes
- Altar, Flower, and Sewing Guilds
- Lay Eucharist Ministers, Lectors
- Music and Choir
- Ushers
- Vergers and Thurifers

Other Services

- Blessing of the Animals
- Blessing of Backpacks
- Christmas Eve Services
- DOK Day of Prayer
- Thanksgiving Day
- Lessons and Carols
- Easter Eve Vigil
- Maundy Thursday with Foot Washing
- Ash Wednesday
- Our Lady of Guadalupe
- The Presentation, First Communion, and Quinceañera Celebrations



We are committed to equality

OUTREACH

From the start, our church has embraced outreach, and we commit at least 10% of our budget to community support. In the early years, most funds were used to take care of individuals or families needing assistance, plus providing baskets of food for families during the holidays.



In 1988, with 13 other churches, we founded the Norcross Cooperative Ministry, now known as the **Neighborhood Cooperative Ministries**.

Today it serves the needs of 50-70 at-risk families in Gwinnett County each day. Our church continues to support this ministry as one of our three key outreach commitments.



RAINBOW VILLAGE

In 1991, we refurbished a house with a \$10,000 dona-

tion from the church and a \$25,000 donation from Josh Costell, a member of Christ Church. The house offered shelter to one or two families in need, and also provided health care, education, vocational assistance, financial counseling, and spiritual growth. Thirty years later, **Rainbow Village** is a campus with five apartment buildings, 30 apartments, and a community center. Christ Church still supports this ministry financially and helps furnish apartments for new residents.



The original Rainbow House (1991)



In 2007, Christ Church began providing twice-yearly clinics for two communities in Haiti with a partner parish. Between 2008 and 2016, the clinics served between 750 and 900 patients every six months. In 2015, **Haiti Companions** became an independent charitable organization. In one year, it serves nearly 3,000 patients. Christ Church continues to support the parish and school of St. Joseph of Arimathea.



Schoolchildren from St. Joseph d'Armathée, Gressier, Haiti

OUTREACH

The church has also operated a Thrift Shop for over 40 years, selling clothing, household goods, tools, furniture, decorations, and most anything else under the sun for pennies on the dollar. We provide backpacks and school supplies to families in need. We gather food for children whose families rely on school-provided lunches over breaks and make sandwiches to share with the Church of the Common Ground. Our Sewing Guild creates and sells beautiful quilts to raise money for our ministries.

We're one of the Diocese's Jubilee Ministries, recognized for working to meet basic human needs and build a just society. We are dedicated to helping people in need, within the church or in the larger community. Thousands

of families have been helped with food, transportation, shelter, legal assistance, and acts of kindness both great and small from Christ Church parishioners and Outreach programs. The Parish is particularly proud of its role in developing and sustaining long-standing ministries.



We are Diverse

HISPANIC FAMILY

The composition of our membership mirrors the fact that nearly half of the population in Norcross is of Latino or Hispanic descent, and our home city sits in the 4th most diverse county in the country.

In October 2000, under the direction of bilingual ministers, we created a Hispanic Ministry. It later grew to become a congregation under The Reverend Jeffrey Cave. By 2016, The Reverend Napoleon Brito helped grow the Spanish service to 220 attendees. As the congregation grew, so did support for finding ways to unify our two church families.

In July 2018, The Reverend Mimi Guerra became the Associate Rector. True to her grassroots approach, Mimi started visiting places frequented by the Hispanic community to increase membership and establish ties to the community. During the post-COVID reopening, she worked tirelessly to ensure the Hispanic community overcame their fears and received the vaccines by combating misinformation, personally taking immigrants to COVID vaccine sites, and bringing vaccines to Christ Church. Her efforts were recognized by media outlets as far away as California.

Reverend Mimi has also done extensive work to unify our Anglo and Hispanic congregations. Finding common ground on food, a passion both cultures share, she organizes events that lure large crowds with authentic Mexican food, where attendees get to know and develop an appreciation for each other's culture. We currently have several combined bilingual services each year. In August 2022, she was appointed by Bishop Rob Wright as Hispanic Missioner for the Diocese of Atlanta. She continues to lead Sunday worship at Christ Church and St. Bede's in Atlanta.



We are party people

PARISH LIFE

Just like our liturgical programs feed our spiritual journeys, our relationships with one another deepen when we break bread, dance, and play together. Our parish life fuels the family-like bonds that define our community and that is the number one thing members mention as the reason they attend Christ Church.

Over the years we have gathered in our Parish Hall for wine-tasting events, soup suppers, and funeral receptions. We have hosted breakfasts with local civic leaders and gathered for tamale-making lessons and eaten heaps of biscuits and sausage gravy on Easter mornings. Our tremendously talented cadre of singers and actors (dubbed the "Christ Church Players") put on annual productions of musicals like *Smoke on the Mountain* and dramatic readings of plays like *A Christmas Carol*, a tradition we continued in a tent outside during COVID.

It is through these events that our church extends the hospitality we proclaim in our liturgy. We also find ourselves fed so that we might do the work we are called to do together, both our Spanish and English-speaking families.

"I don't mind going if a lunch is provided...but I must be fed."

— Charles Dickens, Honorary Parishioner



We are life-long learners

FORMATION

The muraled halls of our education wing have been home to a variety of children's programs including Godly Play, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, and our lectionary story-based Sunday school. Our Director of Christian Formation hosts the Children's Chapel during the sermon for both our Anglo and Hispanic services.

We offer our youth lectionary-based lessons during the Anglo Sunday school hour and Youth Group every Sunday evening. Sunday school is not currently a part of the Hispanic family's tradition. We are currently offering a confirmation class that includes adults and youth from the Anglo and Hispanic families. The youth pilgrimage has been a cherished tradition. In June 2022 for the first time, we took youth from both our Anglo and Hispanic families on a pilgrimage to Ireland.

Adult formation offerings include a Newcomers class, Adult Sunday school, a Lenten series, Education for Ministry, and a Wednesday morning Bible Study in a hybrid format. In June 2020, we began a virtual

racial healing group that has read books like *White Fragility*, *Caste*, and *The Sum of Us*. More than 50 people living in five different states have attended since it began.

Despite our rich history of devoted learners, we face an immediate challenge in our youth program as we have very few youth in grades 6 – 12. They do not attend the same schools nor do they have many of the same interests, which makes it hard to create community. Prior to the pandemic, momentum was building, but we are now in a rebuilding phase. Volunteer support has also waned. Profound impact is possible should our new rector be willing to lead an adult education class or ongoing Bible study, to participate in youth group or Happening, or to craft innovative family-friendly worship.



We are a praying church

PASTORAL CARE

Prayer is the cornerstone and foundation of all of our Pastoral Care ministries which include:

- Prayer Ministry, including crafting prayer shawls
- Stephen Ministers
- A greeting card ministry
- Eucharistic Visitors
- Funeral receptions
- The Grace chapter of the Order of the Daughters of King (DOK)
- Labyrinth prayer and meditation
- Prayer Drop Ins
- A healing prayer ministry
- Classes on both prayer and healing

We also have an active Helping Hands group in which volunteers provide food and rides to our nondrivers and members recovering from surgery. Most of these ministries continued throughout COVID. Healing prayer continued by phone and transitioned into a thriving online community.



We are a welcoming community

GROWTH

Christ Church Norcross is home to our parishioners. Our goal is to be a home to our community as well. Visitors are welcomed by a pair of greeters at each service and given a welcome bag, and we have a small children's table located in the first pew with Play-Doh, crafts, and books to keep small children busy before and after Children's Chapel.

Prior to COVID, we averaged between 250-300 in attendance at our three Sunday services, and since opening our doors again in Spring 2021, we are slowly building our attendance again to pre-pandemic numbers.

Like most churches at this particular time, we have an aging population, but we also have a beautiful Christian education wing and the desire to teach and inspire future generations of God's love for every human being.

In Spring 2023, we launched Invite-Welcome-Connect, offered through the Diocese, which provides a parish-wide education that "equips and empowers individuals and congregations to practice evangelism, hospitality, and connectedness." We are also participating in Genesis II: Re-Vision and Renew through the Atlanta Diocese to examine new ways of being an integral part of our community and surrounding area. The program explores reimagining, reaching out, and relating to our community in Norcross. We are looking forward to seeing how these endeavors will further our relationship with our community and build new opportunities to show God's love.



Invite • Welcome • Connect



GENESIS II
Re-Vision and Renew



We are well-founded

CLERGY



Liz Hendrick
Interim Priest-in-Charge
Served as the canon pastor at
the American Cathedral in Paris.



Mimi Guerra
**Priest Associate & Hispanic
Missioner for the Diocese**
A native of Mexico with a passion
for outreach.

STAFF



Araceli Hernández
Sexton
A mother with an eye for
detail.



Beth Holland
Parish Administrator
A 5th generation cradle
Episcopalian.



Jenn Jordan
Choir Director
The matriarch of a music
and theater dynasty.



Karen Bass
Director of Christian Formation
A native Tennessean with
a history of volunteering.



Rosa Hernández
Thrift Shop Manager
A retail pro who loves
spoiling her volunteers.



We are in touch

COMMUNICATIONS

Led by parishioners with marketing backgrounds and a passion for connecting with others, the Communications Forum brings together the talent of writers, artists, social media experts, photographers, and staff to spread the Good News and follow Jesus' example.

Leveraging traditional church communication staples like flyers, bulletins, and an outdoor LED sign, along with new tools like social media and electronic newsletters, the Forum finds ways to foster growth and increase our community's engagement with innovative projects like a weekly video update filmed and produced by lay leaders and shared on Facebook, YouTube, and the CCE website. We also actively promote Christ Church's message of God's love and our core belief in inclusivity at community events and fairs.



We are stable

STEWARDSHIP



Stewardship at Christ Church uses the “Holy Currencies” lens to guide our allocation of the Currencies of Relationship, Wellness, Time and Place, Gracious Leadership, Truth, and Money which we have been blessed with. We focus on giving all year, not just during the pledge drive. The work is led by members of our forum, but it is practiced by all of us.

We are also called to embrace God's original commandment to keep the earth and participate in its loving repair.

Our Creation Care forum maintains a community garden, has led Sunday school classes and book studies, and sponsors events aimed at reducing and reusing.

The transition phase of our church life has taken a lot of energy, and our new Rector can help keep a light shining on ALL the Currencies, creating a culture of giving that goes beyond financial commitments. Stewardship is the Holy Spirit flowing through every person, everything we are, and everything we do at Christ Church.

FINANCES

	2019	2020	2021	2022
General Operating Revenue	\$730,400	\$719,771	\$565,576	\$593,416
Expense as % of General Operating Revenue				
Total Staff Expense	67.63%	63.88%	71.87%	55.22%
Property Expense	19.45%	12%	21.16%	14.39%
Outside Disbursements	12%	11.99%	14.30%	13.13%
Office Expense	3.08%	3.56%	3.75%	3.91%
Congregational Life	1.57%	1.03%	2.42%	1.45%
Surplus (Deficit)	-4.87%	-0.14%	-20.07%	1.64%

As of December 31, 2022 we had \$355,429 on deposit.

We are well kept

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

The Buildings and Grounds Forum is the way our volunteers support the maintenance and updates needed to keep our church buildings and grounds clean and in working order. Our relationships with one another deepen around our dedication to the upkeep of our property.

This Forum is made up of three independent work groups: the Flower Guild maintains the gardens, the Lawn Rangers maintain the lawn, and the Buildings and Grounds committee maintains the Church buildings and oversees special projects.

In 2022, the Forum repainted the offices and updated flooring and lighting, replaced the roof and gutters for the entire building, and replaced 8 HVAC units with new high-efficiency systems.

The Forum members take great pride in making our Church grounds beautiful, efficient, and welcoming.



We are well located

GWINNETT

Gwinnett County is the fourth most diverse county in the country and the largest county in Georgia (437 square miles).

The county is just 45 minutes from Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport and 30 minutes from downtown Atlanta.

According to the Georgia Department of Labor, 450,909 Gwinnett County residents were employed in 2020, and the unemployment rate was 6.3%.

The county has many advantages:

- 80% of the U.S. population is within a two-hour flight
- Gateway to metro Atlanta from the north and northeast
- Easy access to the University of Georgia
- Minutes from scenic Lake Lanier
- Home to 16 municipalities

NORCROSS

Norcross is located in the southwest corner of Gwinnett County. The population nearly doubled from 2010 to 2020, reaching nearly 17,000 inhabitants. The largest racial and ethnic groups are Hispanic (40%), Black (23%), and white (20%). Norcross is located close to Peachtree Corners, Berkeley Lake, and Duluth.

Christ Church is the only Episcopal church in Norcross. Our parishioners drive an average of 15-20 minutes to attend service and other activities. We are one of five Episcopal churches in Gwinnett County.

Christ Church is a five-minute walk to downtown Norcross, home to many shops and restaurants.



We are the Diocese of Atlanta

The Diocese of Atlanta is a diverse and expansive faith community, with 117 communities focused on worshipping a living and loving God and working for a better world in the name of Jesus Christ. More than 50,000 members in 11 convocations spread across 75 1/2 counties in north and central Georgia make up the Diocese.

Our Diocesan Purpose Statement, adopted at Annual Council 2015, informs all aspects of our common life: "We challenge ourselves and the world to love like Jesus as we worship joyfully, serve compassionately, and grow spiritually."

We are a Christian community blessed with vibrance, variety and vitality. Our diocesan bishop, The Right Rev. Robert C. Wright, was elected in June 2012 and ordained and consecrated on Oct. 13, 2012.

The Offices of the Bishop are at the Cathedral of St. Philip in Atlanta. The Diocese has more than 200 clergy under Bishop Wright's oversight, plus an abundant supply of lay leaders and ministers.

The Diocese of Atlanta was carved from the Diocese of Georgia in 1907. As part of The Episcopal Church, the Diocese is connected to the worldwide Anglican Communion of 70 million people in 38 provinces. The Diocese is also engaged in a special companion relationship with the Diocese of Cape Coast in West Africa.

The Diocese of Atlanta actively supports the ministry of The Episcopal Church and its presiding bishop, The Most Reverend Michael Curry.



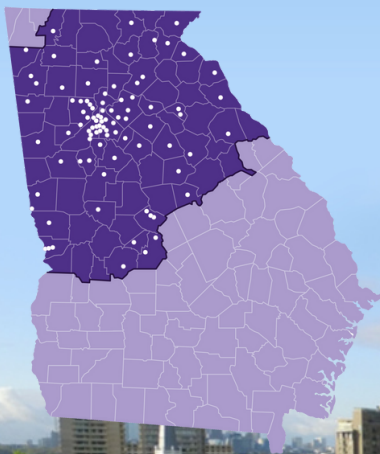
EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ATLANTA

Stay Connected

www.episcopalatlanta.org



Bishop Wright



We are ready

A NOTE TO OUR NEXT RECTOR

We're working on our future. Christ Church's parishioners agree that our next rector should:

- **Make** the necessary changes to attract and retain families, children, and youth
- **Bring together** our Anglo and Hispanic families as one family
- **Preach and lead** with relevance and conviction
- **Create** more opportunities for parishioners to create meaningful relationships
- **Foster** an inclusive and all-welcoming community
- **Find** ways to bring back those who disengaged during the pandemic
- **Increase** the relevance of our church within our city and county
- **Actively pursue** social and racial justice

Our parish is living proof that with resilience, hard work, and faith, the children of God can accomplish anything we set our minds to, and we are ready to grow spiritually and in number.

If in these divided and polarized times what you see is opportunity, if you're ready to lead a community to its full potential, then perhaps God is calling you to lead Christ Church.

Please submit materials to the Diocese of Atlanta's online application system [here](#) (link).

We are ready!

ARE YOU?