



# St. Simon Peter Episcopal Church

## *Parish Profile 2023*



### **Our Mission as the Body Of Christ**

to know our faith .....

to live in truth and love .....

to serve the needs of all people .....

## St. Simon Peter Episcopal Church in Pell City, Alabama is seeking a Rector

who loves Jesus, is compassionate, caring, and generous. StSP is located in a vibrant lake community filled with parishioners who give back to their community, serve those in and out of the church, and have a passion to follow Jesus. We are seeking someone who enjoys fellowshiping with others (we often share meals and game nights), who is a strong relationship builder, who listens intently, and has a calling for pastoral care. We hope for a rector who can help us be formed as Episcopalians and who will proclaim the good news of God in Christ. This role may be the right fit for you if you love Jesus, enjoy outdoor activities like water sports, walking, and hiking, and would enjoy living in a growing lake community with easy access to big-town restaurants, museums, plays, and sports venues.



### You belong in this picture!

Could this be your home? We want to talk with you to establish a solid relationship that will serve our congregation, our community and the world, helping us to fulfill our mission:

*“to know our faith, to live in truth and love, to serve the needs of all people.”*



*“friendly people, beautiful church...  
Growing, a feeling of peace when you  
enter the church”*

**Are you the leader St. Simon Peter is  
searching for?**

We are a dynamic congregation, noted for being a leader in the community and offering diverse opportunities for worship and celebrating our faith.

We are financially sound because of a generous and caring congregation combined with professional money management. We need a leader who can draw out the best in us, keep us on a solid footing, and encourage us to do even more to reach both outward and inward serving all in our community.

*“I am grateful to be part of a Liturgical  
Church where throughout the year, we see  
every aspect of our relationship with God.”*

# Where We Are Located

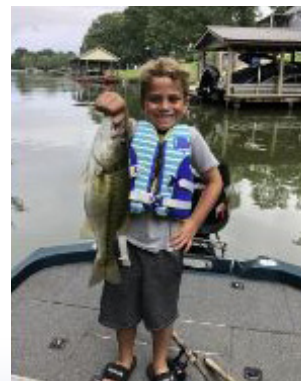
## Pell City Gateway to Lake Logan Martin

St. Simon Peter Episcopal Church is the only Episcopal Church in St. Clair County, Alabama, located at 3702 Mays Bend Road Pell City, AL. As one of the fastest growing communities in Alabama, Pell City offers easy access to big town James Beard Award restaurants, museums, Broadway plays, sport venues and the Bishop's office. Yet we pride ourselves in retaining that small town, hometown charm and feel. With three exits on Interstate 20, our town lies 35 miles east of Birmingham and 114 miles west of Atlanta. Pell City borders picturesque waters of Lake Logan Martin, an inviting scene to all who choose this place as home. The lake brings a variety of recreational activities and several businesses generated from them. Bass tournaments and water sports can be enjoyed all along our 275 miles of shoreline.

The Pell City School system has four elementary schools, one intermediate school, two junior high schools and one high school. Several of our St. Simon Peter young people have graduated from Pell City and have gone on to successful careers in engineering, law, urban planning, and the arts. The quality of our healthcare system is evidenced by our state of the art hospital, St. Vincent's St. Clair. Medical and Dental specialists from virtually all branches of medicine have a presence in our local clinics. Pell City is privileged to honor our Veterans with the state Colonel Robert L. Howard State Veterans Home. Our educational system is a leader in our state. Jefferson State Community College provides diverse educational opportunities for all our people (particularly in the health sciences where we are a leader in producing nurses). Pell City is proud to be active and involved with the arts through the Pell City Center for Education and Performing Arts. The CEPA Center is a multi-use venue housing a 2,000-seat sports arena and a 400-seat state of the art theater complete with orchestra pit.

Lakeside Park is home to our recently renovated Civic Center with updated facilities for indoor recreation and fitness enthusiasts. Lakeside Park also has a beautiful walking trail, outdoor pavilions, an outstanding playground, fishing, and boat launching and a Splash Pad.

<https://pell-city.com/>





Alpine Bay Golf Course

## Our Community: Pell City, Alabama

- Splash Pad Water Park
- Lakeside Park and Walking Trails
- Golf Courses - Pell City is home to its own 9 hole course. A 20 minute ride takes you to Alpine Bay, an 18 hole championship course designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr.

## Nearby Attractions

- Talladega Superspeedway – 12 miles
- Motor Sports Hall of Fame – 12 miles
- Barber Motorsports Museum and Park – a 15 minute drive drive from Pell City, the Museum contains more than 1,800 motorcycles and is recognized by Guinness World Records as the world’s largest motorcycle collection. The Barber Motorsports Park is an 880 acre multipurpose racing facility that annually hosts the Grand Am, Pirelli World Challenge, AMA Superbike and Vintage Racing Series and Festival and the Indy Car Race.
- Desoto Caverns – 24 miles
- Cheaha State Park – 52 miles
- Anniston Museum of Natural History – 35 miles
- Berman Museum (Anniston) - 35 miles
- Movie theater complex with bowling alley
- The St. Clair County Airport is three miles from the downtown area. It has a lighted, 5000-foot runway that can accommodate aircraft up to 30,000 pounds.
- The Pell City Center for Education and Performing Arts
- Artscape Gallery
- Pell City Library
- Primary Care Physicians, Specialists, Dentists, Chiropractic care
- Exercise/Gym facilities
- Pell City Civic Center
- Pell City Senior Center



CEPA Center



Cheaha State Park



Pell City Library

*“Peaceful serene setting that puts you at peace when you arrive at the Church grounds.”*



# Who We Are & What We Value

**T**here is a beacon of light and a symbol of God’s love that stands at 3702 Mays Bend in Pell City, Alabama. We are a vibrant congregation that seeks to share God’s love with the world. Every time we gather for worship, study, or fellowship, we do so as disciples of Jesus Christ. We are a community of faith that is grounded in his redeeming love. We pride ourselves on being welcoming and friendly. Through prayer, study, and fellowship we laugh, listen, and help each other, and along the way have found many gifts among us. We are young and old, local and transplants, often from other denominations, but bound by our common faith in Jesus Christ. The parishioners of St. Simon Peter are one of our strongest assets.

*“Our church is filled with members who serve the Lord and one another and focuses on the community of Pell City. We are welcoming and friendly to all who come through our doors.”*

Our parishioners share a deep love of the Episcopal liturgy and worship services. We embrace the ritual, rhythm, and historical continuity conveyed through the Book of Common Prayer, using Rite II. We have been tagged as having an “incense and boat shoes” style of worship: great reverence and appreciation for the high church tradition, while maintaining a casual atmosphere. There is healing Eucharist on Wednesday mornings. Our main service is on Sunday mornings at 9:30 am. Coffee hour fellowship and Sunday school follow this service.

When a baby cries, we smile and are grateful for its presence. Children are loved and hugged, and we know that the Spirit of Jesus is growing in their souls by sharing space with worshippers of all ages.





*“The most loving, caring, generous, nonjudgmental church I have ever attended.”*

The laity play a crucial role in the success of our Sunday worship service by serving as acolytes, lectors, crucifers, ushers and lay Eucharistic ministers. The altar guild and flower guild adorn the altar. After the service, visiting Eucharistic ministers take consecrated elements to homebound and hospitalized parishioners. Special seasonal services include Lessons and Carols, Advent, Christmas, Holy Week, Palm Sunday and Easter. Traditions like the Pancake Supper, Lenten Suppers and studies, stripping of the altar, blessing of the animals, and Celtic Service are important to our parishioners and community. We also treasure our once a month Birthday Sunday, where we bless those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries during the coming month. We approach our



*“The liturgy, traditional music, and Book of Common Prayer are very important to my family and me. I always find comfort in these things.”*

services with reverence, using beautiful church music that is liturgically appropriate.

We value sermons that challenge and inspire us to lead more Christ-centered lives, and many of us seek additional opportunities to deepen our understanding of the Bible and theology.

We value Christian Education and Sunday School, believing the Christian education program should be designed for people of all ages and should balance Biblical studies; the tenets, traditions, and values of the Episcopal Church; commitment to God, His people, and the world, as well as contemporary topics and issues. We have been growing in Christian Education and Sunday School participation, studies varying from the Book of Luke, Short Stories of Jesus, Listening for the Heartbeat of God: A Celtic Spirituality Study, Enneagram Study, Life is Calling and EfM.



*“I cherish the wonderful music that enhances our traditional worship.”*

Our choral tradition ranges in style from traditional English Anglican style music to spirituals and the occasional anthem from newer composers and arrangers. We use The Hymnal 1982 as our primary source for congregational singing, but we also include hymns and service music from other sources, developing a well-rounded hymnody to enhance our worship services. Our organist and music director, Justin Finch, and his choir of twelve volunteer singers put forth a magnificent and joyful sound. In addition to Sunday morning services, the choir’s established calendar includes a community service of Lessons and Carols, Christmas Eve, Celtic Service, hymn festivals, and various Easter related services. We are currently engaged in an exciting major project to make upgrades and renovations to our pipe organ that opens our space up for



*“Parishioners’ commitment to the success of the parish, diverse parishioner skill sets, parishioner volunteerism for ministries.”*

the possibility of hosting organ recitals, bringing visitors and members of the community into our beloved building.

Our main communication method, other than Sunday announcements, is a Tuesday ENET newsletter edited by our Parish Administrator. It is central to staying abreast of what’s happening at church during the week, and includes who is serving the next Sunday and who is having a birthday as well as announcements of interest to the whole parish. It also contains vital links to our webpage, Facebook page, and Tithe.ly for giving. The church has a website [www.stsimonpeter.org](http://www.stsimonpeter.org) and a Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/stsimonpeter> which are actively used. Sunday Services and Special Service are live streamed via Facebook. Our live stream ministry grew out of the necessity to reach people during the COVID-19 pandemic. Justin, single handedly, obtained a grant to purchase the original equipment, then

added additional components and upgraded our electronics to live stream our services on Facebook. Care is taken to produce a professional quality online worship experience every Sunday for those who cannot be with us in person.

Our church property comprises approximately six acres. Located on the property is the main church building, a parking lot for 88 vehicles, a children’s playground, and a memorial garden with a columbarium. The church nave and choir loft seat about 200 people. Just off the narthex is a small chapel for more intimate services. Our parish hall, with 3500 square feet of space, seats 80 at tables. Other spaces includes the church offices, a large kitchen, Sunday school classrooms and a nursery.



*“Commitment of Parishioners to ensure the ongoing success of St. Simon Peter Church.”*



# Ministry and Outreach

St. Simon Peter is known throughout the community for its outreach, even by people who know little else of the church. Over the past 25 years, we founded four ministries that have grown and become independent entities - The Christian Love Pantry food bank, Lakeside Hospice, the local Habitat for Humanity Chapter and the AARP Tax office. While these organizations remain special to us, they are only part of the picture.

## Coffee Hour

**Fellowship** We believe every congregation needs an opportunity to connect, and what better way to meet the other members of the Body of Christ than over coffee hour? After-church fellowship is an important part of every Sunday, whether we're treating ourselves to local donuts or a celebratory cake. Through this all-important ministry, new connections and friendships might be made, new insights shared, and we all get to practice what it means to be the Body of Christ, all different, and yet the same.



**Sunflower Field** is on church property across the street from the church. In 2022, we began a new tradition to grow sunflowers to share the beauty of creation with and to create visibility in our community. Funds raised were donated for the Ukrainian refugee relief.



## St. Simon Peter Blessing

**Box** was built and donated by the parish family. The guiding philosophy is "take what you need, leave what you can". Blessing Boxes nourish neighbors by feeding both those in need and those with a need to give. Each Sunday, offerings to the Blessing Box will be blessed at the altar during morning worship.



## The Little Free Library

began several years ago when a parishioner asked permission to build a Little Free Library on our property and the Vestry agreed. Currently there are more than 150,000 libraries across the globe, bringing books to people who might not otherwise be able to enjoy the pleasure of reading and learning.



**Painting for the Pantry** is a quarterly gathering of artists (and aspiring artists) which raises money for the Christian Love Pantry.



One of our artistic parishioners, Karla Shackleford, generously donates her time and created this well attended fun event that attracts people, both inside and outside of the parish and raises about \$2,000 per year for the Pantry.

## Gateway Community

**Garden** is on church property across the street from the church and is headed up by a parishioner and run by volunteers from the community. The Garden is dedicated to helping fight hunger in our community and provides hundreds of pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to those with food insecurity in our community.



## Annual Clothing Giveaway

is held in August; the call goes out for donated clothing, especially children's clothes. Shoppers from all over the community attend and are not charged.



### Prayer Shawl

**Ministry** knits and crochets prayer shawls for those who are sick, grieving or in need of encouragement. These shawls are given to parishioners or their family members or friends. Shawls are blessed during the Sunday service and are a visible prayer for the well-being of the recipient.



such as: veterans, youth, our neighbors affected by disasters and of course projects on our own property like the playground, new LED lighting throughout the church and solar lighting of the parking lot. Attendees are treated to a hearty breakfast ranging from pancakes and sausage to eggs benedict, prepared by our loyal core of volunteer cooks.



### Angel Tree Ministry

begins in December where we work with local Long-Term Care or Assisted Living facilities to bring the joys of Christmas to people who might not otherwise have a Christmas. It is a wonderful way to help those who are alone.



**Cursillo Group** was reestablished in the fall of 2022. Many members of St. Simon Peter attended a Cursillo Weekend.



**Education for Ministry (EfM)** is in its 10th year at St. Simon Peter and has graduated numerous people from the 4-year program. Currently we have 10 parishioners enrolled.



*“I love the loving and welcoming atmosphere & strong community outreach of St. Simon Peter”*

### Daughters of the King

meet monthly to join in prayer for our Church, Clergy, Parish, and for those who have special prayer requests. Members undertake a Rule of Life, incorporating the Rule of Prayer and the Rule of Service. The St. Simon Peter chapter is named “The St. Eleanor Chapter” in honor of Eleanor McPhillips, wife of the first rector.



While all worship services are “community services,” three annual services have become traditions in the community and regularly draw attendees from outside the parish.

- **Easter Sunrise Service**, held at a parishioner’s home on the Lake, regularly draws attendees who do not have a church home as well as members of the congregation.
- **Blessing of the Animals**, held on the Sunday closest to the feast day of St. Francis, attracts parishioners and visitors (and sometimes newspaper photographers) with their many and varied pets.
- **Lessons & Carols**, held in the traditional format on a Sunday in December, also attracts attendees from throughout the community. Our tradition has been to include ministers from other faiths as readers and include choir members from other churches.



**Women’s Lunch Outing** meets monthly at local and nearby restaurants for fellowship.

**Men’s Group** is a monthly gathering and now features a speaker from the community to bring us up to date on what is happening and new opportunities to reach out to others

**Episcochicks, billed as “strictly social,”**

invites all the women of the church to a monthly gathering that moves from home to home. The hostess has minimal duties and attendees bring either a bottle of wine or an appetizer and spend a few hours getting to know each other.



Donations come from parishioners, but also from others in the community. Shoppers come from miles around.



**Annual Church Picnic,** held at either the community park pavilion or at a parishioner’s lakefront home, is usually held in late spring or summer.

**Annual Fundraising Events**

- For two weeks in October, the parish hall becomes a market for our **White Elephant Sale.** Now in its thirteenth year, this event has been so successful that the amount raised by the sale is usually \$7,500 - \$11,000.

- Our other fundraiser is a **Dinner Dance/Silent Auction** held in February. Most recently, the theme has been Mardi Gras, featuring a New Orleans style buffet, plenty of dancing, and the crowning of a king and queen. Items auctioned cover a wide range of value including signed game balls from our state universities, and weekend getaways at choice destinations. The community looks forward to this evening of fun each year. Their support helps us net around \$7000. This past year we raised and donated \$9000 to Lakeside Hospice.



*“This parish is a family. This parish supports and is involved in the community. This parish is dedicated to outreach.”*





# History of St. Simon Peter

**S**t. Simon Peter Episcopal Church is tied to its geography and the development of the community in ways that continue to influence it to this day.

In 1903, St. Mary the Virgin Episcopal church was founded by the same man credited with founding Pell City, Sumpter Cogswell. When the community suffered from the Great Depression, the church lost most of its members. The church was closed in the early 1940's, and the parish was decommissioned.

In 1975, seven Episcopalians, including Episcopal priest the Rev. Julian McPhillips, met to discuss the idea of organizing worship services. The endeavor was quickly blessed by the presiding bishop. The group, which included three surviving members of St. Mary the Virgin, met in the lakeside, open-air Chapel in the Pines throughout the summer.

Over the next three years, the group would become a parochial mission of Talladega's St. Peter parish and move from outdoors to a local real estate office and eventually share rent free space with the Pell City Seventh Day Adventist Church. On January

1, 1978, St. Simon became a new independent parish of the Diocese of Alabama with 57 communicants and 85 baptized members. The Reverend McPhillips, priest-in-charge since

1975, became the first rector of the new parish. Over the next two years, the parish raised capital funds, acquired land, and constructed the first stage of the present building. On Christmas Eve 1980, the first service was held in the new building. The church received its magnificent pipe organ in 1982 and three years later the parish hall was constructed.

Over the decades the church has established a reputation

for service to the community and as an innovator of local outreach projects. St. Simon Peter organized and launched the local Habitat for Humanity, the original Lakeside Hospice, the Christian Love Pantry, the AARP Tax office. and more recently, the St. Simon Peter Blessing Box.

From its earliest roots the history of St. Simon Peter is one of growth from within our own God-given resources coupled with a willingness to give back to our local community in as many ways as possible.

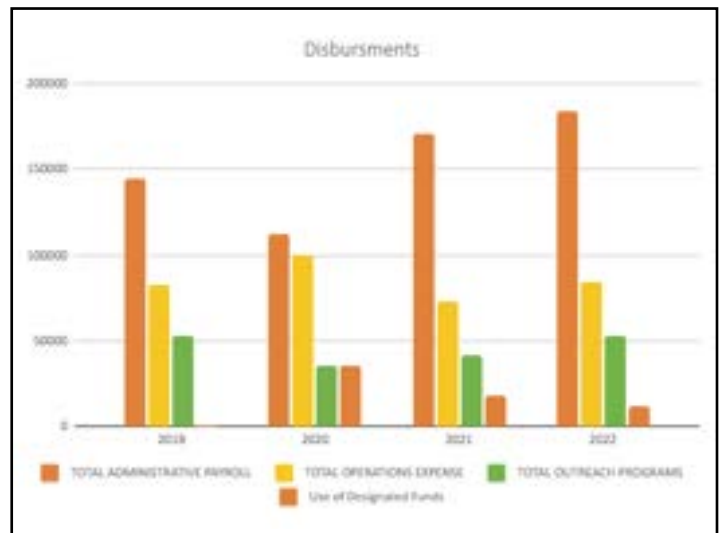
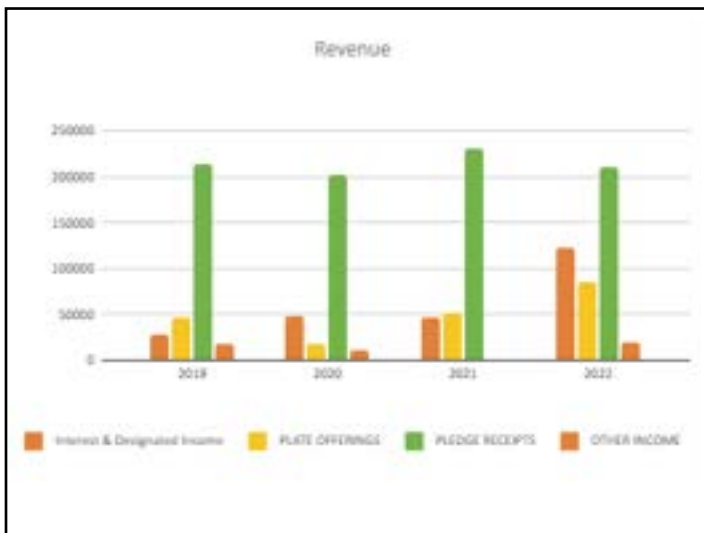


# Parish Statistics and Financials

The pandemic affected us during 2020 & 2021 in membership and financial growth, however we are blessed coming out of the pandemic, we have readjusted and once again shown healthy growth in membership of 7% (223 to 240). Similarly, the dollars pledged has increased 5.88% (\$194K to \$206K), while the pledges and plate offering received has increased 45% (from \$250K to \$297K). We were blessed to receive a very generous donation from a parishioner.

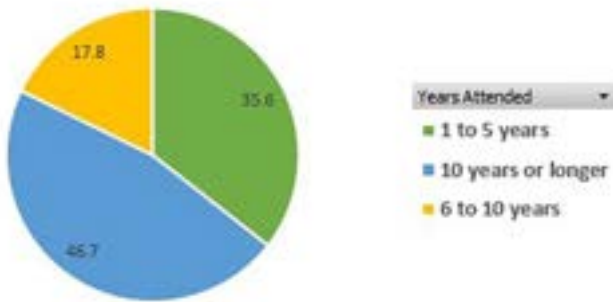
St. Simon Peter is financially sound and has no debt. The St. Simon Peter Foundation, initially funded by a generous bequest from the King Trust, strengthens St. Simon Peter's healthy outreach programs and our ability to participate in God's mission. The St. Simon Peter Foundation Committee manages expenditures from the Foundation and administers financial gifts intended for long-term use in the outreach ministries of this congregation. Management of the foundation allows funds to be distributed for outreach, education, and capital improvements, but not for ordinary operating expenses. As much as 5% of the principle can be distributed annually. Funds have been given to many groups, including the Legacy Building Campaign, tornado relief in St. Clair County, Episcopal Relief and Development, Camp McDowell building fund, The Christian Love Pantry, Kid's One Transport, Friendship Place, Children's Advocacy Center, Animal Savers of Pell City, Diocese of Alabama Care of Creation Tree Planting, and the local YWCA women's shelter. Monies distributed from the Foundation brings the parish commitment to outreach to an average of 22% of the budget over the past few years.

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Baptised Members	241	227	223	240
Average Sunday Attendance	92	70	56	66
Total Christian Education	54	48	48	72
Total Pledging Units	52	61	58	51
Pledges & Plate	\$250,134	\$219,254	\$282,830	\$296,975

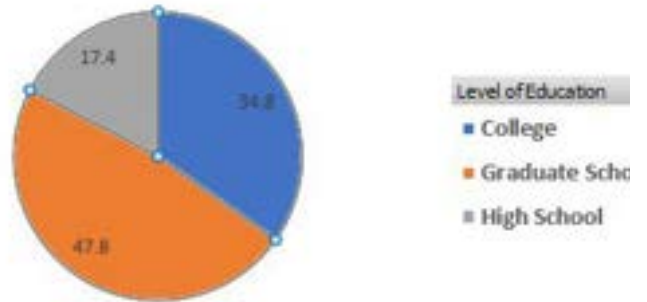


*“St. Simon Peter is a vibrant parish and a real hidden jewel of the diocese, and I am glad to be part of the community.”*

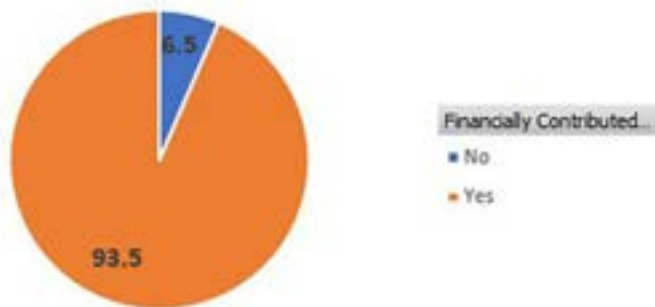
### How long have you attended StSP?



### Level of Education

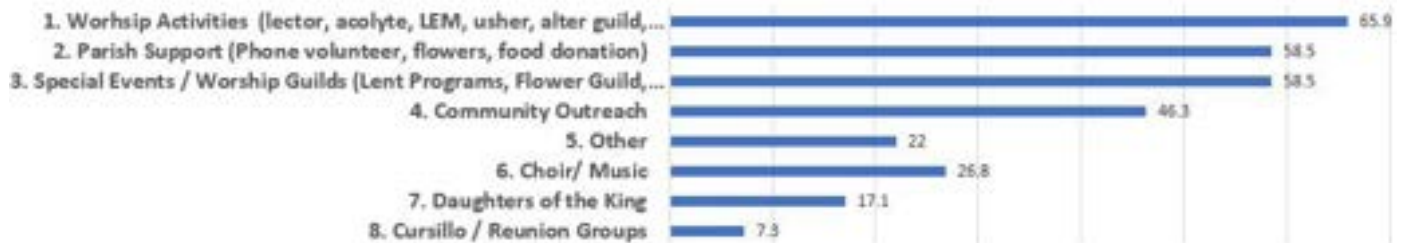


### Did you financially contribute to StSP last year?



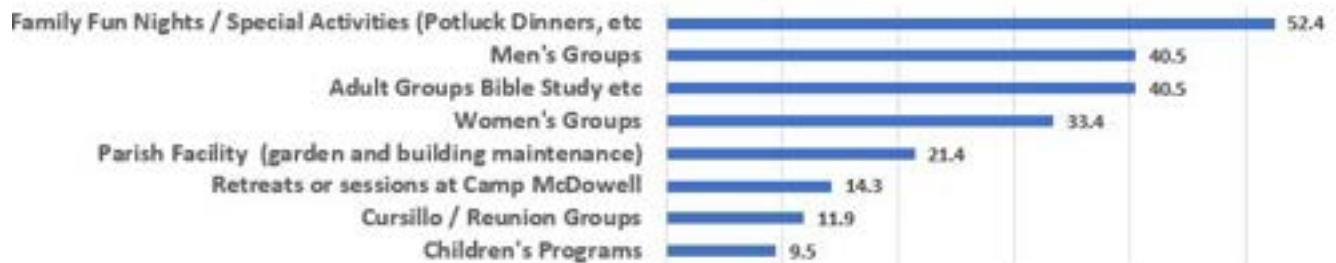
### Parishioners Involvement in Worship

survey results demonstrate an involved and participatory congregation



### Participation in Programs & Activities

survey results demonstrate an involved and participatory congregation





*"I love the Fellowship, spiritual education, and heart for the community of this parish."*





EPISCOPAL DIOCESE  
OF ALABAMA

## *The Episcopal Diocese of Alabama*

**W**elcome to the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama. Whether you came to this parish profile via a web search, a mailing, or a personal invitation, I am glad that you are here. As you read through these pages prepared by a congregation who is seeking new leadership, I hope that you will sense the warmth of our diocese, the imaginations of our congregations to envision God's dream for themselves and for their neighbors, and the desire to live faithfully into the call of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Our diocese stretches north to the banks of the fertile Tennessee River Valley, south to the state capital of Montgomery, west to historic rivers and farms of the Blackbelt and east to the booming Wiregrass Region. Our common life is enriched by a wide diversity of parishes who are drawn together in common prayer, worship, and service. Our history is deep and rich, but we are also boldly leading toward the future as our churches seek to preach the Gospel, welcome the stranger and care for the neighbor in ways both new and old. As you are discerning the next step in your ministry, know that we are praying for you. If the diocesan office can be of help to you as you look toward the future, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.



Blessings,

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Glenda S. Curry



### **St. Simon Peter Episcopal Church**

3702 Mays Bend Road, Pell City, AL 35128 • 205.884.0877  
[www.stsimonpeter.org](http://www.stsimonpeter.org) • <https://www.facebook.com/stsimonpeter>