

Parish Profile

Church of the Good Shepherd Nashville
Nashville, TN



Our Mission.

We seek to make disciples of Jesus Christ through the hope and hospitality of God's Kingdom.

Our Vision.

We desire to be an Anglican parish in and for West Nashville, a Christlike, Kingdom-minded people, rooted in the Scriptures and Sacraments and formed by the Holy Spirit, as saints together.

Welcome.



Dear Prospective Rector,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for your interest in the Church of the Good Shepherd. We are a young Anglican parish in Bellevue, a growing suburb just west of Nashville, Tennessee. Our community reflects the character of this rapidly expanding region—people from many places, professions, and church traditions who have found themselves drawn together by a shared desire to pursue Christ.

One passage of Scripture captures how we understand our life together: Jesus' words in John 15, "Abide in me, and I in you ... apart from me you can do nothing." This image of the vine and branches has become the working vision for Good Shepherd's next chapter. We are not striving for status, influence, or novelty. Instead, we desire to be a community that remains deeply rooted in Christ—nourished by his grace and bearing the fruits of vulnerability, gratitude, and care.

Founded in 2020, Good Shepherd began gathering during the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. What started with online meetings and backyard worship eventually grew into a vibrant congregation that now meets weekly in Bellevue.

Our worship reflects both reverence and approachability. Word and Sacrament are central to our life. Vestments, procession, and traditional liturgical elements sit naturally alongside acoustic music, contemporary artistic expression, and a warm, unpretentious atmosphere.

Like many churches, our story includes both joy and hardship. Our congregation has walked through moments of grief, disagreement, and leadership transition in recent years. These experiences have left wounds, but they have also clarified our identity. Many who remained did so because they believe deeply in this community and in the work God is still doing here.

Today, Good Shepherd finds itself in a season of healing and renewed hope. We are rebuilding trust, strengthening our roots, and looking toward the future with humility and expectation.

We are prayerfully seeking a rector who will join us in abiding in Christ—someone who will shepherd this community with wisdom and gentleness, nurture spiritual growth, and help us bear lasting fruit for the sake of God's kingdom and our neighbors. If the Lord may be calling you to this work, we would be grateful to continue the conversation.

Grace and peace,
Fr. Art Going
Interim Rector

“As a founding member, Good Shepherd holds a deeply personal place in my heart. It has been one of the greatest honors of my life to witness the Holy Spirit at work among us—bringing life, purpose, and unity to what began as a small group of friends, followers of Christ, meeting faithfully each week on Zoom in the early days of the COVID pandemic. In a time marked by isolation and uncertainty, God formed us into a community rooted in prayer, friendship, and trust in His leading.

As we grow in number, we also grow in faith—learning how to walk together through joys and sorrows, challenges, and moments of grace. We lean heavily on prayer as we discover what it truly means to be Christ-like and Kingdom-minded people in daily life. Today, Good Shepherd is a vibrant parish, united in our desire to make disciples of Jesus Christ through the hope and hospitality of God’s Kingdom.

It is a blessing to be a member of a resilient parish who listens for God’s voice and faithfully continues its mission. I am grateful for where God has brought us and excited to follow wherever the Holy Spirit leads us next.”

Janie Ledyard
Founding Member



Who We Are.

Becoming like Jesus for the sake of others.

Good Shepherd Nashville is a young, gospel-centered parish in the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), part of The Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others (C4SO), planted in 2020 and rooted in the Bellevue community of Nashville, Tennessee. We are an evangelical Anglican congregation—committed to the authority of Holy Scripture, the historic faith of the Church, and the transforming grace of Jesus Christ. We have organized our common life around a single animating conviction: that everything the Church is called to be and do flows from *abiding in Christ*.

That phrase—*abiding in Christ*—is not our brand. It is our theology. It comes from the words of Jesus in John 15: “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.” We take these words with full seriousness as the Lord’s own description of what Christian life and Christian community are. We are branches. We cannot generate our own life. Everything good that grows in us and among us comes from our connection to him.

This is not a call to passivity. It is the most demanding of invitations—demanding precisely because it requires us to stop substituting our own energy, ingenuity, and institutional momentum for the life of the vine. Good Shepherd is a community that is learning, slowly and often imperfectly, to receive before it acts, to rest before it strives, and to trust that the ordinary means of grace are not a maintenance strategy but an inexhaustible gift.



Our Identity.

Evangelical Anglicans Rooted in Grace

We are evangelical in the historic sense: we believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ—his atoning death, his bodily resurrection, his living lordship—is the center of everything. The forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Spirit are not just the beginning of Christian life but its permanent and inexhaustible foundation. We live, as a congregation, by *the amazing grace of God's boundless kindness*. We never assume we have moved past the need to hear it afresh.

The gospel evokes our praise. In worship, we confess that we have been given everything and forgiven everything, so that we lack nothing except faith to believe it. We will cultivate Christ-centered worship that is faithful to the rich heritage of the church and open to a broad range of liturgical and musical expressions—but always beautiful, lively, inviting, and celebrative.

We are Anglican in the classical sense: we worship within the liturgical tradition of the *Book of Common Prayer*, shaped by the cadences of Scripture, Creed, and Sacrament. We believe that faithful Anglican worship is both *beautiful* and *reverent*—marked by the gravity of drawing near to the holy God—and *celebrative* and *glad*, marked by the freedom of those who know they are beloved.

We are an ACNA parish, and we embrace the theological renewal that has called Anglicanism back to its evangelical and orthodox roots. We are not defined by what we have left behind, but by what we have received: the faith once delivered to the saints, now entrusted to us in this place and in this moment.

Our Mission.

Bearing Kingdom Fruit Through Ordinary Faithfulness

What the first Christians discovered—and what our Anglican tradition has always trusted—is that fidelity to what God has already given generates imagination and freedom rather than constraining them. The Acts 2 community did not have a strategic plan. They devoted themselves to four practices—the *apostles' teaching*, the *fellowship*, the *breaking of bread*, and the *prayers*—and the Spirit produced from those ordinary things extraordinary fruit: awe, generosity, glad hearts, and a daily harvest of souls.

These were not programs. They were the channels through which Christ's life flowed into his people—the *ordinary means of grace*. Week after week, generation after generation, the Holy Spirit has done his slow, faithful work of transformation through these ordinary things. Good Shepherd is committed to these same four practices as the irreducible shape of our common life.



The Apostles' Teaching

The gospel changes lives. We are called to grow into the likeness of Christ. The pattern of the gospel is to invite persons to come and follow Jesus Christ and thereby to enter into a process of repentance and conversion by which they reorient their lives around the virtues of God's kingdom. We will be a church with an open door to those who seek to come to know Jesus, with a clear path for those who seek to follow him. We want to be led by men and women who are servants first, touched personally by the transforming power of Christ, and passionate to make the same possible for others.

Scripture is not merely a resource for sermon preparation; it is the living Word through which God forms his people. We preach the gospel, teach the faith, and expect the Word to do its formative work over years and decades of patient attention.

The Fellowship

The gospel creates a new community. We want to extend the welcoming heart of Jesus through all our ministries. We will not only speak the gospel but will be devoted to embodying the gospel—welcoming, loving, caring for, supporting, and encouraging one another, enjoying one another’s gifts, bearing one another’s burdens, so that no one suffers alone or falls through the cracks, so that all may rejoice together. We want to guard against becoming a busy program-driven church, careless about relationships.

The gospel makes us a people for others. We do not want to become an ingrown fellowship, preoccupied with ourselves. With deep respect and great hope for all people, we will be devoted to reaching out to our neighbors with valuable help and the good news of Jesus. We will love Nashville, our city, and seek the flourishing of its people. We will give ourselves away—our time, energy, money, and talents—as we partner with the Lord in his redemptive mission.

The Breaking of Bread

The gospel sets a table before us. The Eucharist is the heartbeat of our common life. Week by week, at the Table, we receive the life of the vine: bread and wine, Christ’s body and blood, given for us. The rhythm of the liturgy is the rhythm of gift — we come empty, we are filled, we go out, and we come empty again. In this way, the Table teaches us the one lesson the Christian life is always re-learning: that we have been given everything and forgiven everything, and that gratitude, not productivity, is the atmosphere in which the Church lives and moves. We do not want to be a parish driven by scarcity thinking or anxious striving. We are learning to work from a place of rest rather than rest from work.

The Prayers

The gospel pushes us to our knees. We confess that we are completely insufficient for the work of the gospel. Our attitude as a church will be one of demonstrated dependence on the Holy Spirit. We want to live by the Spirit, keep in step with the Spirit, and seek to be filled by the Spirit in all we do. Embracing our weaknesses, we will gladly anchor all our efforts in kingdom-centered prayer. We will pray to discern God’s will, to align our will with his, and for grace to do his will. We will pray to release our anxiety and to take refuge in the Lord. We will seek to give thanks in all circumstances. We will especially pray for the desire, courage, and opportunity to share the good news of Jesus, alive with a vital trust in the promise of Jesus to be with us always.

Our History.

A Story of Hope and Resilience

Good Shepherd's story is short, but it has not been easy. In just a few years, we have known both the joy of real growth and the pain of real loss. Through it all, we have come to believe this more deeply than ever: God is faithful—even when we are not.



2020 Founded in Crisis

We began in March 2020, as the world shut down. While most churches were scrambling to adapt, we were just beginning—gathering online and then in backyards, learning how to be a church without ever having been one in person.

What could have been a setback became a strange kind of gift. We were forced from the beginning to ask what actually matters. Without a building, without programs, without precedent, we learned to center our life on Word, Sacrament, prayer, and one another. By the end of that first year, we found a physical home at Bellevue United Methodist Church (where we still rent space) and began to take root.

2021-2023 Early Growth

People came—some searching, some skeptical, some deeply hungry for something more grounded and real than what they had previously experienced in church. We grew into a diverse, engaged community shaped by Anglican worship, thoughtful teaching, and a shared desire for authenticity over performance.

There was energy. There was momentum. There was a sense that something meaningful was taking shape.



2025 The Turning Point

In 2025, everything changed. A leadership crisis led to the resignation of our founding rector, and the impact was immediate and personal. Some left. Others stayed but struggled. Trust was shaken. Questions surfaced that had no easy answers.

It was painful. There's no way to soften that.

But it was also clarifying.

We were forced to confront what our church was truly built on. And what we discovered—slowly, sometimes reluctantly—was that our foundation held. Our life was not ultimately tied to one leader, but to Christ himself.

We became smaller. But we also became more honest, more grounded, and more aware of our need for God's grace. What was once assumed had to become real.

Healing is still happening. We are not rushing it. But we are no longer the same church we were—and in many ways, that is a gift.

2025-2026 Rebuilding and Refining

In this season, we have been quietly, steadily rebuilding. Under the wise interim leadership of Fr. Art Going, our worship has remained rooted and reverent. Our leadership has been stable. Our people have leaned in rather than drifted away.

We have chosen depth over distraction—focusing on formation, discipleship, and the slow work of becoming a healthier church. We have made space for honest conversation, not to reopen wounds, but to allow trust to grow again.

What has emerged is not something new, but something clearer: we are a people learning to abide in Christ, trusting that ordinary faithfulness—over time—bears real fruit.

Where We Are Now.


2026

We are not a perfect church. But we are a healthy one.

We are smaller than we once were, but more unified. More realistic, but also more hopeful. We know who we are, and we are no longer trying to be anything else.

We are not in crisis. We are in a season of opportunity.



A close-up photograph of a hand pouring water from a silver chalice into a white baptismal font. The font is surrounded by a variety of flowers, including a large yellow chrysanthemum and several small purple flowers. The background is softly blurred, showing a wooden door and a person in a white garment.

“I love good Shepherd because of the community, events, and openness. This church is able to go through many changes and adapt to them. Good Shepherd is always open to improving.”

Reese
6th Grade

Sequence of Events.



2020

March

Good Shepherd launches online during the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown

November

First in-person service at Bellevue UMC

2021

Staff expansion begins to assist with worship, music, and children's ministries



2022

Growing attendance and membership

Staff additions (administrative and pastoral) and ministry development



2023

Peak attendance and engagement

Strong ministry programming

School shooting at Covenant Christian School in Nashville (affected several Good Shepherd families who either attended or taught there)





2024

Continued growth and stability with new staff changes in the children's and music ministries

Suzie Anderson ordained as Associate Rector

2025

June

Founding rector suspended

July

Resignation announced

August

Fr. Arthur Going begins as Interim Rector

September

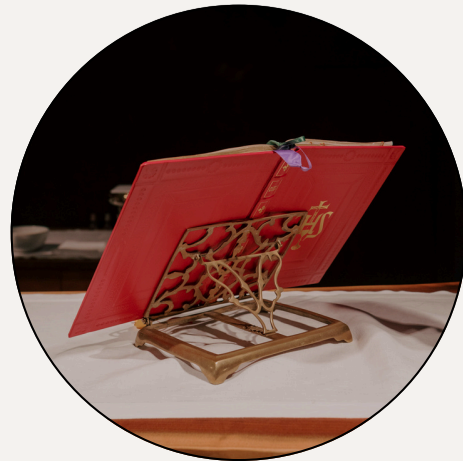
Director of Children's Ministry resigns

October

New Director of Children's Ministry named

December

12 members confirmed by Bishop Jeff Bailey



2026

January

Rector search begins

Future

Ready for next chapter with new rector

Our People: Branches Abiding in the Vine

What holds Good Shepherd together is not similarity, but a shared commitment to Christ. We are centered on Word, Sacrament, prayer, and fellowship. We approach Scripture with reverence and curiosity, come to the Sacraments expecting grace, and pursue relationships marked by honesty and care. We pray with real hope that God is at work among us.

Good Shepherd is a church learning to abide in Christ—together—trusting that steady, ordinary faithfulness will bear lasting fruit.

Our Location

Good Shepherd is in a fast-growing area of Nashville, shaped as much by the pressures of change as by a deep desire for rooted, faithful Christian life.

Located in Bellevue, a suburb in the southwestern corner of Davidson County, our parish reflects the character of a city experiencing rapid growth, cultural diversity, and economic opportunity. Bellevue itself offers a quieter, more accessible expression of that growth, drawing families, professionals, and transplants from across the region.

Many say that life in Bellevue and West Nashville embodies the charm and feel of a “small town.” It’s not unusual to see friends from church or school at the library, the grocery store, or the local coffee shop. Bordered by the Harpeth River and dotted with parks and greenways, Bellevue (meaning “beautiful view”) offers a safe, slower pace that’s well-suited for all ages and stages.

Our Demographics

Our members come from a wide range of backgrounds, vocations, and life stages. While not highly diverse ethnically, we are meaningfully diverse in experience and perspective. Many come from evangelical, Roman Catholic, or mainline traditions and are newly discovering Anglican worship, bringing both enthusiasm and a desire to grow in depth.

Good Shepherd has about 100 regular adult attenders and members, representing approximately 45 households.

All Parishioners	145	Women	54%
Households	45	Men	46%
Children and Teens	45	Weekly Worship Attendance	90-100 adults 25-30 children
Generational Breakdown	Boomer : 10% Gen X : 30% Millennial : 24% Gen Z: 8% Gen Alpha: 28%	Weekly Visitor Attendance	10-15 adults
		Average Attendance for Mid-week Special Events	25-30

Our Ministries.

Sunday Morning Eucharist

Anchoring our rhythm of ministry is Sunday morning worship. For our weekly liturgical Anglican worship service, we draw from a range of authorized liturgies — most commonly the 2019 *Book of Common Prayer*, but at times also the 1979 and Kenyan rites — depending on the season and pastoral context.

Our worship includes vesting and procession, following the rhythm of the Christian year. While rooted in historic Anglican form, the feel of our parish is communal, joy-filled, and accessible. We value reverence without rigidity and seek to hold together beauty, theological depth, and warmth.

Our musical worship blends traditional hymns with contemporary and grassroots songs that support the liturgy in telling the story of God each week. Music is most often led on guitar, with a rotating team of gifted lay leaders who serve faithfully and collaboratively, contributing to a culture of participation rather than performance.

Child & Youth Formation

Our children's ministry is currently being restructured with the appointment of a new Director. This is an exciting season of renewal as we seek to strengthen discipleship for our youngest members and better equip families to cultivate faith at home.

Adult Formation

During Advent and Lent, we offer church-wide classes focused on spiritual formation and connection. These seasons provide intentional space for theological reflection, prayer, and shared learning across generations.

Men's and Women's Ministries

The men and women of Good Shepherd enjoy both formal and informal opportunities for Bible study, retreat, and fellowship. Both groups usually hold three to four events each year that blend teaching and learning with fun activities.

Table Groups

Table Groups are one of our primary pathways for connection. These geographically based groups gather around meals, prayer, and friendship. Each group has its own personality — some lean more social, others incorporate spiritual exercises or discussion, and some gather for Compline.

We see Table Groups as a vital expression of parish life and hope to expand this ministry in the coming season by raising up additional hosts and leaders.

Fellowship & Hospitality

Community is one of Good Shepherd's greatest strengths. Care is expressed tangibly — through meal trains, practical support in times of need, and the regular practice of sharing meals in one another's homes. The culture is relational and welcoming, neither cliquey nor forced.

When someone is new, a leader will often personally invite them into their home and intentionally connect them with others who share similar interests or life stages. We value organic relationships rooted in genuine hospitality.

On feast days and special occasions, we often gather beyond Sunday morning — at local breweries, for parish potlucks, or other informal celebrations — creating space for the wider community to be together.

Hospitality forms the backbone of our parish culture. It is not merely an event but a shared value woven into the life of the church.



Justice & Mercy

Good Shepherd supports two missionary families who were formerly based within our parish. One now serves among Somali communities in Seattle, and the other — after 25 years of service in Ethiopia — are here in Bellevue continuing to support their ministry work in the field. We maintain relational and financial support for both.

Locally, we partner with our area food bank and with The Aloe Project. Each month, members of Good Shepherd help lead Aloe's Saturday children's program, building relationships and responding to emergency needs as they arise. This partnership has become a meaningful and focused expression of our local outreach.

Our Leaders.

Good Shepherd is served by a dedicated team of staff and vestry who have played a vital role in shaping the parish. Throughout the past year of transition, these leaders have given generously of their time, prayer, and service, sustaining the life of the church with faithfulness and care.

Staff

The Rev. Art Going

Interim Rector

Laura Griffith

Director of Child & Youth Formation

The Rev. Suzie Anderson

Associate Rector

The Rev. Derek Axelson

Deacon

Isabelle Aleixo

Director of Operations

Benjamin Walker

*Sound Technician &
Audio Ministry Support*

Vestry

The Vestry is a group of five lay leaders representing a broad cross-section of the Parish. The Vestry typically meets once a month.

- **Mary Bernard**, *Sr. Warden* (elected 2024)
- **Blake Tidwell**, *Jr. Warden & Treasurer* (elected 2021)
- **Tabitha Walton**, *Secretary* (elected 2025)
- **Janie Ledyard** (elected 2020; re-elected for second term in 2023)
- **Logan Treat** (elected 2025)

Who We Seek: A Faithful, Rooted Shepherd

With deep convictions and fresh wounds, Good Shepherd is not simply looking to fill a pulpit. We are seeking a pastor—someone with the maturity, warmth, and spiritual rootedness to shepherd a congregation that has been through real loss and is learning how to heal well.

After a season of transition, we know that what we need most cannot be manufactured by credentials or charisma. We are looking for a person of genuine faith, humility, and love for people—someone whose leadership flows from a life deeply formed by prayer, Scripture, and the grace of God in Christ.



Theological and Spiritual Qualities

Our next rector must be anchored in the historic Anglican faith, committed to the authority of Scripture and the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church. A prayer-centered life and sacramental conviction are not optional for us; they are foundational.

We are seeking a Word-centered preacher and teacher—someone who opens Scripture with depth and clarity, whose preaching is shaped by the Gospel rather than by cultural trends or personal ambition. We value a love for Anglican tradition that is formative rather than rigid: someone who treasures the liturgy because it shapes us in Christ.

Above all, we are looking for a friend of God. Before competence or vision, we hope for a rector who tends carefully to their own soul—whose spiritual practices are sustaining rather than performative, and who leads from rest rather than hurry.

Pastoral and Leadership Gifts

The word our congregation returns to most often is *shepherd*. We long for a pastor who knows how to be present—in hard conversations, at hospital bedsides, and around kitchen tables. We need someone who is attentive not only to Sunday worship, but to the quiet, faithful work of walking with people over time.

Warmth, humility, and approachability are essential. These are not secondary virtues for us; they are load-bearing ones. After what we have experienced, we will be watching for a rector who listens before acting, earns trust before leading, and understands that their first year among us is primarily about relationships, not restructuring.

Personal Integrity and Health

Because of our recent history, we are attentive to the whole person. We are looking for a rector who demonstrates emotional, spiritual, and relational health—someone with appropriate accountability, healthy boundaries, and a servant's heart.

We are cautious about ambition that treats the parish as a platform rather than a people. Stability of presence and a willingness to make a long-term commitment matter deeply to us.

We need a leader who can hold tensions well: conviction and compassion, tradition and mission, depth and accessibility. Our congregation includes lifelong Anglicans and those encountering the prayer book for the first time. We are looking for someone who can hold that diversity with grace.

We also value a heart for discipleship. We want to grow deeper, not just larger—to equip the whole body to share in the work of ministry, and to cultivate generosity, stewardship, and shared ownership of parish life.

Cultural Fit

Good Shepherd is rooted in the Bellevue neighborhood of Nashville, and we care deeply about this place. We hope for a rector who loves this context and can help us engage our neighbors with clarity and grace—neither retreating in fear nor accommodating uncritically.

We are a church in transition, still being formed. We are looking for someone energized by the slow, faithful work of building something together—someone ready to shepherd, not manage; to abide, not perform; and to trust, as we do, that ordinary faithfulness bears extraordinary fruit.

A Closing Invitation.

Good Shepherd is a parish rooted in the ordinary means of grace—Word, Sacrament, prayer, and shared life—learning together how to abide in Christ with honesty and hope. Our story has been shaped by growth and loss, joy and pain, faithfulness and repentance. Through it all, God has proven steady, and our life together has been refined rather than undone.

Today, Good Shepherd is a healthy, grounded congregation. We are not large, but we are deeply connected. We are not flashy, but we are faithful. Our people are engaged, generous, and eager to grow—not by chasing novelty, but by deepening their life in Christ. Our worship is reverent and accessible, our ministries are relational and sustainable, and our leaders are committed to the long work of healing and formation.

As we look toward our next chapter, we do so with clarity about who we are and what we are seeking. We are not asking a new rector to rescue us, reinvent us, or accelerate us. We are seeking a shepherd: a pastor who loves Scripture and the Sacraments, who is at home in Anglican worship, and who understands that trust is built slowly through presence, humility, and care. We long for a rector who delights in forming disciples, equipping leaders, and walking patiently with people through all seasons of life.

If you are discerning a call to lead a congregation that values depth over performance, faithfulness over urgency, and relationship over platform—this may be a place where your gifts and calling can take root. If you are drawn to the quiet, joyful work of pastoring a people who are learning to abide in Christ together, we invite you to prayerfully consider this call.

We believe God is already at work among us. We are hopeful about the future—not because of our own strength, but because Christ remains faithful to his Church. If you sense that God may be inviting you into this shared work, we would be honored to hear from you.



How to Apply

We invite you to apply and enter into discernment with us as we seek our next rector.

Please submit these items to:

rectorsearch@goodshepherdnashville.org


- Resume
- Spiritual Autobiography
- Digital audio or video files of at least 3 sermons
- Headshot

Application Deadline: May 8, 2026

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Mary Bernard, Sr. Warden, at (615) 319-5185.

Rector Search Committee

- Blake Tidwell, *Vestry*
- Tabitha Walton, *Vestry*
- Andy Warren
- Will Mattingly
- Genie Vaughn
- Sally Chambers-Rhea
- Eddie Decker

A silver tray with a white napkin, a glass, and a fork. The napkin is folded and has a decorative pattern. The glass is partially filled with a liquid. The fork is placed on the tray. The background is dark and out of focus.

What I love most about Good Shepherd is going to class, because of Jesus. Oh, one more thing, the service. I like the cookie things (body) and dipping it into the sauce (blood).

Julien
4 years old

