
MINISTRY CONTEXT AND DESIRED SKILLS

WHAT ARE YOUR COMMUNITY'S HOPES FOR THIS POSITION?

The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd seeks a priest who reflects the spirit, joy, and community of this vibrant parish. Our mantra is “creative, curious, and faithful.” In our recent Congregation Assessment Tool (CAT) survey, members identified preaching, strategic leadership, and pastoral care as the most critical abilities for our next priest.

Faithful: We need an experienced, proactive leader with a clear vision for our parish. We seek someone who personifies empathy, professionalism, and commitment, builds trust, navigates challenges, and empowers staff. He or she will set the tone of worship, ensuring that members feel known, seen, and accepted; open to a wide range of liturgy and music. Our priest should invite others into the decision-making process and encourage engagement. We respond well to thoughtful, relevant, and well articulated sermons and communications from the rector and staff. Our next priest should be an experienced administrator with a record of increasing membership and stewardship to maintain long-term parish stability.

Curious: Our parish has had an influx of young families, some new to The Episcopal Church, who appreciate our approach to faith and worship. Our top CAT priority was to implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the parish. Our second CAT priority was to provide more opportunities for spiritual formation at every stage of life. We pride ourselves on our local and international outreach and want a priest who will seek additional outreach opportunities in the Norfolk community. Outreach to young people is important. Both Old Dominion University and Naval Station Norfolk are located close to our church, and our priest should explore partnerships with those organizations.

Creative: Our creativity is visible inside and outside our parish walls, especially evident in the thoughtful changing displays in our narthex windows that have been reported on local news. Also, our alliances with local arts and theater troops are significant. We are blessed with a phenomenal choir and music program. Growing the choir and continuing our close relationship with Norfolk State University music students is important.

Our priest oversees a large, aging facility. Monetizing unused space is essential. Good Shepherd's priest and vestry must creatively explore potential tenant opportunities.

Good Shepherd is seeking a priest who will lead our faithful community in our next chapter.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Adaptive Leadership, Administration, Collaborative Leadership, Congregational Development, Strategic Planning

MINISTRY SKILLS

Church Growth, Community Building, Formation, Innovative Ministry, Mission, Pastoral Care, Prayer & Spirituality, Preaching, Stewardship, Worship & Liturgy

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

English

LANGUAGES WRITTEN

English

LANGUAGES REQUIRED TO LEAD WORSHIP

English

1. What is your organization's mission and focus?

Describe your core mission and ministry priorities. What values guide your work, and what is your community or organization striving to embody in this season of ministry?

The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd describes itself as “Creative, Curious, and Faithful.” As one of ten Episcopal congregations in the city of Norfolk, VA, we see ourselves as having a broad, rather than narrow mission and vision as a church. We have membership that spans all age demographics from very young children to active members who are in their 90’s. The three descriptors say something about what might be unique about our identity and priorities.

Creativity is evident in connection to the arts. We are known in the community for large, creative artwork and creative projects. Our members produce huge art displays, oversized puppet design, construction and theatre at city parks and museums, and lead art formation programs for other Episcopal agencies (Mission of the Holy Spirit). Past formation programs have included poetry workshops. We have alliances with arts and theatre groups who use our building for their meetings and even office spaces. These include cooperative performing arts groups whose specific focus is on marginalized communities.

Curious reflects a focus for young adults and families who have come seeking faith without the black and white certainty of evangelical Christianity, who have been a part of our growth over the past 5 years. Preaching and relationships with people exploring the parish have featured an openness that enables engagement with questions and problems of our culture.

Faithful has been evidenced in our worship and our outreach to the community. Our members have a generous spirit that is seen in our stewardship and in our funding of ministry outside our walls. Outreach has increasingly featured not just money but personal involvement. Examples include working with a local elementary school, almost monthly feeding ministry in some of the dark corners of our city, and support for local children and families in need.

Our congregation’s focus is also reflected in our most recent Congregation Assessment Tool (CAT). Our top goal is to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church. The attributes of creative, curious, faithful, and community reflect our high energy and high satisfaction described in the CAT as transformational. The Church of the Good Shepherd has an outward focus, a distinct mission, and an influx of young members who want to participate in and witness this transformation.

2. How would you describe your ministry context?

Share about the setting and community you serve. What are the unique characteristics of your context - such as urban, rural, or suburban dynamics; multi-faith or multicultural environments; community partnerships; or social and cultural factors that shape your ministry?

We are best described as a neighborhood Church in a suburban, relatively affluent setting. We are not a very diverse congregation in terms of ethnic or economic measures. We share our building space with more diverse groups and develop numerous community relationships with groups who think of us as their home. 12-Step groups, Scouts, Theatre groups, Children's Hospital of the Kings Daughters (CHKD), and other community and ministry groups know we are eager to make space and resources available.

We are unique in that both Old Dominion University and Naval Station Norfolk, the largest naval base in the world, are located within miles of Church of the Good Shepherd.

In the most recent CAT survey, a top priority for young members (under 35 years old) was to work to renew and revitalize the community around the church by building coalitions with partners that share this vision and commitment.

3. How would you describe your congregational/diocesan leadership culture?

Reflect on how your community approaches leadership - what styles and qualities you value in clergy, how leadership is shared between clergy and laity, and how you navigate change and challenges.

Good Shepherd is full of solid, effective core leaders and yet post-pandemic, most of our ministry is staff driven. We need to work to redevelop better lay structure to empower that leadership to be more effective. The congregation is very open to change and trusts strong leadership. It appreciates good leadership that can cast vision and communicate it well.

The CAT Readiness for Ministry Performance Indices indicate that over 70 percent of the respondents think that the church does a good job helping each member understand that they are called to ministry. While over 90 percent of the respondents think Church of the Good Shepherd provides opportunities for members to engage in active ministry within the church and to the world.

4. How would you describe your congregational/diocesan liturgical styles and practice?

Share how worship is shaped in your community - what influences your liturgical life, how you balance tradition and innovation, and how liturgy reflects your theology and context.

We have a “broad Church” liturgical style — not high or low — but with an openness to liturgical experimentation. Over the past 5 years we have used many different Eucharistic Prayers all fitting within the BCP order for worship. We have used the Samuel Wells “Eucharistic Prayers” regularly in recent years (with approval of the bishop). The congregation loves thoughtful liturgy to help them grow in understanding of their faith.

Musically we are very open. We’ve used piano, organ, and occasionally drums. Music comes from all traditions, including Hymnal 1982, World Library Publications (WLP), Lift Every Voice and Sing (LEVAS), and contemporary music, while maintaining a fairly traditional approach of presentation and leadership. We are especially open to involvement of children and youth in worship. Our style is NOT an overly formal, quiet, solemn environment. It is more truly a joyful community worshiping Christ— or at least that is the goal. We like tradition — AND like innovation— creative sense plays here.

The most recent CAT results indicate that from a theological perspective, Church of the Good Shepherd respondents hold more progressive views regarding the nature of the scripture, the role of conversion in social change, and their relationship to the historic declarations of the church. Likewise, respondents indicated that they are more flexible and adaptable to the degree in which the church is able and willing to adjust in the way it goes about its ministry. Similarly, the worship and music indices reflect the vibrancy of the worship experience.

5. How does your congregation/diocese approach cultural identity and inclusion?

Reflect on how your community engages diverse cultural identities, fosters belonging, and responds to the needs of a diverse or evolving population.

Good Shepherd approaches cultural identity and inclusion through a combination of hospitality, creative engagement, community partnerships, and service. While our congregation itself reflects the demographics of our surrounding neighborhood and is not especially diverse in terms of ethnicity or socioeconomic background, we intentionally seek to build relationships that extend beyond our own membership and welcome people from many different backgrounds.

This commitment includes outreach to military personnel, people experiencing homelessness (Norfolk Emergency Shelter Team), children and families in need (Mission of the Holy Spirit, Laundry Love, Sewell's Point Elementary School), older adults and those facing food insecurity (Hope Foundation and Rise Against Hunger).

The arts have also become a defining feature of our parish life, with large-scale community art projects, theater collaborations, and poetry workshops that invite all our neighbors to join in (Teens with a Purpose). We have welcomed choirs from other cultures, including Haitian musicians, and our youth have gone on missions to Malawi, Honduras, Belize, and Bolivia.

For more than a decade, we have cultivated a relationship with Norfolk State University, a historically black university in an urban area of Norfolk. It has grown into a vibrant collaborative exchange with the NSU Music Division, culminating with an endowed music scholarship.

We intentionally share our facilities with a wide variety of community groups, including 12-Step programs, Scouts, theater organizations, children's organizations, and other nonprofit ministries. Many of these groups represent communities more diverse than our own and have come to regard Good Shepherd as a welcoming and dependable home.

The common thread for the above is hospitality expressed through action.

We recognize that cultural inclusion is not a destination but an ongoing calling. Our guiding aspiration is fittingly expressed in a prayer from the Book of Common Prayer often shared within our parish: "Enrich our lives by ever-widening circles of fellowship and show us your presence in those who differ most from us, until our knowledge of your love is made perfect in our love for all your children."

This prayer reflects our continuing commitment to growing in hospitality, deepening relationships across differences, and becoming a community where all people are welcomed, valued, and invited to participate fully in the life of Christ.

6. Other Information

Use this space to share any additional details about the role or organization that would help candidates discern their fit - such as organizational culture, special projects, or unique opportunities and challenges.

The Church of the Good Shepherd embodies its mantra of "creative, curious, and faithful". Our church is a neighborhood church, a tightly knit community with members of all ages. We are uniquely situated just miles from Naval Station Norfolk, the largest Naval Base in the world and Old Dominion University. We seek to expand our neighborhood by encouraging sailors, civilians, and students to join our community. In the past, we have participated in outreach projects with ODU's Canterbury House and coordinated with the Naval Station's chaplain to host luncheons for deploying sailors. We pride ourselves in our commitment to community collaboration. We have developed relationships with organizations such as Norfolk State University and are actively involved in creative programs that connect the church with the wider Hampton Roads community. Our collaboration with the NSU music department is notable, having recently culminated with an endowed music scholarship.

Our congregation is multi-generational with members whose parents and children have been baptized, confirmed, and married in this church. We have members who remember attending services in the original church built in 1917. As we look to the future, we recognize the importance of strengthening our ministries of pastoral care and Christian formation for children and youth. We seek a priest who will inspire and equip us to deepen these essential ministries while building on the rich legacy of faith that has shaped our parish for generations.

Our congregation is warm, welcoming, and eager to serve. When opportunities arise, people step forward with a genuine desire to help. One of our greatest opportunities for growth is helping laity identify their gifts and find meaningful ways to be leaders. We are seeking a priest- in- charge who will take the time to get to know the congregation, listen, and develop our strengths to lead and guide our ministries. Our building is unique in that it has a very large footprint housing Loch Meadow School and other tenants. Going forward, it is important to monetize unused space. We look for our new priest-in-charge to identify new and creative ways to optimize the use of this large building. We seek a priest in charge who will build relationships, grow our congregation, and expand our spiritual knowledge. We are ready to work with a priest-in-charge who can help us build on our strengths and expand our capacity to serve both our congregation and the wider community.

MINISTRY MEDIA AND LINKS

Parish Website	https://goodshepherdnorfolk.org/
Parish Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/gsnorfolk/
Welcome Video	https://vimeo.com/1069702284?fl=pl&fe=ti
YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/@gsnorfolk
Camp Imagine-Better Together 2026	https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.flipsnack.com%2F5FEEC76F8D6%2Fcamp-imagine-better-together-202&data=05%7C02%7Cgail.winn%40townebank.net%7Cca8c77eb5d3f43164f1508deed771f56%7C92a82883791a48e4ab55e1badde91977%7C0%7C

NARRATIVES

2. Describe a recent ministry experiment or innovation in your congregation/diocese.

What did you try, why did you try it, and what did you learn - whether it "worked" or not?

In 2026, our Associate for Parish Life Formation successfully secured a \$6,000 grant to launch Camp Imagine, a two-week summer camp designed to engage children through creativity, performance, community, and belonging. From its inception, Camp Imagine inspired broad participation across the congregation. Parishioners stepped forward as volunteers, mentors, activity leaders, and supporters. Many donated meals, supplies, time, and energy to ensure the camp's success. This collective effort reflects our congregation's deep commitment to nurturing young people and creating welcoming spaces where they can learn, grow, and thrive.

Camp Imagine serves children from across Hampton Roads, bringing together participants from diverse schools, backgrounds, and experiences. The program fosters a joyful and inclusive environment where every child feels seen, valued, and encouraged. Through music, puppetry, storytelling, games, and other creative activities, campers build confidence, celebrate their unique gifts, and develop meaningful relationships with one another.

Collaboration is a cornerstone of the program. Camp Imagine partners with the Underground Performing Arts Collective (UPAC), which regularly rehearses at Good Shepherd and offers inclusive programming that welcomes nonverbal performers. The camp also works closely with Teens With a Purpose, creating meaningful opportunities for young people to share their talents with the broader community.

The two-week experience culminates in a public performance during the camp's final days. Campers showcased their creative work through puppetry, music, storytelling, and artistic expression as part of a larger community gathering connected to Teens With a Purpose's Poetry in the Park event. These performances not only celebrate the children's creativity and accomplishments but also strengthen relationships among families, community organizations, and the church.

Camp Imagine has also served as an effective outreach ministry, introducing new families to the Church of the Good Shepherd and creating opportunities for lasting connections within the congregation.

The excitement surrounding Camp Imagine has sparked plans for a Winter Camp, which will provide future opportunities for engagement through programs and creative experiences. By creating these connections, the church can continue fostering a sense of belonging, supporting children's growth, and deepening engagement with families throughout the year.

7. How does your congregation/diocese approach pastoral care?

Reflect on how your community walks with one another and with neighbors through life's joys and challenges - what guides your approach?

The Church of the Good Shepherd seeks a priest who values pastoral care as a vital expression of Christ's love and who will provide compassionate spiritual leadership to our parish family. Our congregation treasures a culture of caring in which no member walks through life's joys or challenges alone.

After the pandemic, some of the structural system for lay pastoral care has not been rebuilt. Thus, one priority for the priest-in-charge will be organizing leadership and training volunteers for various elements in our pastoral care ministry. Our priest will provide pastoral care through visitation, prayer, encouragement, and spiritual guidance during times of illness, hospitalization, grief, family crisis, and other significant life events. Equally important, our priest will foster a ministry of shared care by equipping, encouraging, and supporting trained lay volunteers to serve alongside the clergy. Parish pastoral care should include lay people who do home visitations, home Eucharists, hospital and nursing home visitations, prayers, food support and sometimes transportation for people as needed, funeral receptions, and other elements as needed.

We seek a priest who will:

- Demonstrate a warm, approachable, and compassionate pastoral presence.
- Build meaningful relationships with parishioners of all ages and stages of life.
- Lead, train, and mentor a team of lay pastoral caregivers who meet regularly to learn about the needs of the parishioners and be trained by the Rector in various elements in our pastoral care ministry.
- Encourage a culture of hospitality, empathy, and confidential care throughout the parish.
- Help identify those in need of support and ensure that no member of our church community feels isolated or forgotten.
- Inspire parishioners to discover and use their spiritual gifts in caring for one another.

We believe that pastoral care is a shared ministry between clergy and laity. We hope to call a priest who will nurture this ministry, empowering others to serve with compassion while providing faithful pastoral leadership. Through this partnership, our parish will continue to grow as a caring, welcoming, and Christ-centered community.

9. What does stewardship mean to your congregation/diocese, and how do you practice it?

Describe how your community approaches generosity, resource management, and financial discipleship.

Generosity

As with most churches, stewardship often means giving financially. We have a robust Stewardship Campaign in the fall and over the past two years have been very intentional in our conversations about what it means to pledge to the church. As a result, the number of pledges has increased and more people who are able to give closer to an “average” amount are doing so. (This practice is in contrast to the older model that relied on a few donors to carry the weight.) The Stewardship Committee also spearheads the Legacy Society, a planned giving designation that has been in place for several decades. The committee organizes special events to thank and recognize these parishioners and hosts informational programs to introduce other members of the congregation to the many ways to give financially to the church.

Resource Management

Good Shepherd has a healthy endowment and updated documents to guide us with distributions and gifts. At quarterly parish meetings, the Treasurer and Budget & Finance Committee report on our budget, current challenges and celebrations.

Financial Discipleship

Good Shepherd is blessed with treasures, but we do realize that stewardship is also giving of time and talent. As shown in recent survey results and town halls, our parishioners value involvement and giving back. We acknowledge the benefit to an overall “theology of stewardship” from which to work. Plans are to meet with Rev. Bob Randall, Interim Rector, and key church leaders in late summer/early fall 2026 to create such a framework.

11. What has been your congregation's/diocese's experience leading or navigating change?

Ministry often requires change. Reflect on a time your community embraced or navigated change - when it went well, when it didn't, and what it taught you about shared leadership.

Good Shepherd has seen a lot of change over the last six years. As with other churches, COVID struck us hard and we were not able to hold our in-person services, including several funerals. Most if not all of our ministries were put on pause.

At the same time, we parted ways with our minister. The Vestry called this a period of "Crisis" as we reorganized under unfamiliar circumstances. We called a Priest-in-Charge, our first female full-time priest. This was her first time leading a congregation. It seemed as if everything was different and new.

For a number of reasons, some parishioners did not return to church after COVID and many of them stopped volunteering at church altogether. The Vestry was down to just six members from a one time high of twelve. The volunteer Treasurer resigned and most of the staff was let go. Lay committees were not operational and our attendance was lagging; as far as family attendance, only one family of two small children was a regular at worship. And along with people challenges, our large aging building was requiring maintenance, namely, with the roof and HVAC system.

A lot of changes had to be made: we decided to stop the weekly arrangement of altar flowers by the over-stressed Flower Guild; we combined the two Sunday morning worship services into one; we created a new model for the Buildings & Grounds and the Budget & Finance Committees; and we contracted with an outside accounting firm to handle our bills, reports, and daily financial matters. A system of more checks and balances was implemented across the board, including formal Vestry approval for major projects.

It's fair to say that "feathers were ruffled". But slowly, the changes paid off. We hired a very capable Administrative Assistant to help manage the building. A volunteer Treasurer stepped up and worked with the Stewardship committee to increase parishioner pledges. New young families began coming to church like never seen before. We created a more comfortable seating area for them at worship, included the children in the service, and developed a number of programs to introduce new members to each other and the church ministries. We held town halls and quarterly parish meetings to make the congregation more aware of major purchases, renovations, and contractual agreements with outside vendors. The leadership practiced intentional offerings of transparency and trust. As one former Senior Warden commented, we are thriving, but it has not been without challenges.

12. What are your current strategic priorities or plans for the future?

Share about any existing strategic plans, visioning processes, or future priorities your community is pursuing. How do these goals reflect your mission and the needs of the people you serve? What hopes or aspirations are guiding your ministry in this season?

We have multiple, long standing strategic priorities. These are not necessarily written or included in a formal mission and vision statement. However, church members endorse these priorities and support them as seen in their active participation in related activities. These priorities include:

Continued growth in the number and diversity of church members. We seek continued congregational vitality, welcoming members of all ages. Continue being a welcoming church that allows members to be identified, seen, and heard.

Discipleship that includes a growing community of faith rooted in Jesus and transforming life daily through spiritual formation. Expanding Christian education for persons of all ages.

Long-term financial well-being, fiscal stability and increased stewardship.

A long- term commitment of our incoming priest-in-charge with near and other visions for our congregation.

Our current top five priorities are: reaching new families with children, expanding Christian education at all levels, strengthening pastoral care, fostering meaningful relationships within the congregation, and developing healing ministries for people facing hardship.

The Church is formulating a plan for attracting new members, particularly young families, which it sees as key to long-term growth. Children 3-7 participate actively in worship and attend our interactive Children's Chapel in the first part of the service. Older children age 8+ serve as acolytes/readers.

Community Outreach is an important part of life at Church of the Good Shepherd. We have an active Outreach Committee that identifies and organizes activities not only to aid our local community/neighborhood, but on an international level as well. Participating in these initiatives creates meaningful relationships within our church and community. These relationships include: Sewells Point Elementary School partnership; feeding the Homeless through H.O.P.E. Feeding Ministries and annual "Gingerbread and Jazz" fundraiser; Anne Redfern Scholarship – annual scholarship awarded for a music student at Norfolk State University; Camp Chanco sponsorship for two campers each summer; American Red Cross blood drives with neighboring churches; Five Talents - funding education/microenterprise programs in South Sudan; building space rented/used by community groups

We look for our incoming Priest-in-Charge to embrace these priorities and supporting activities.