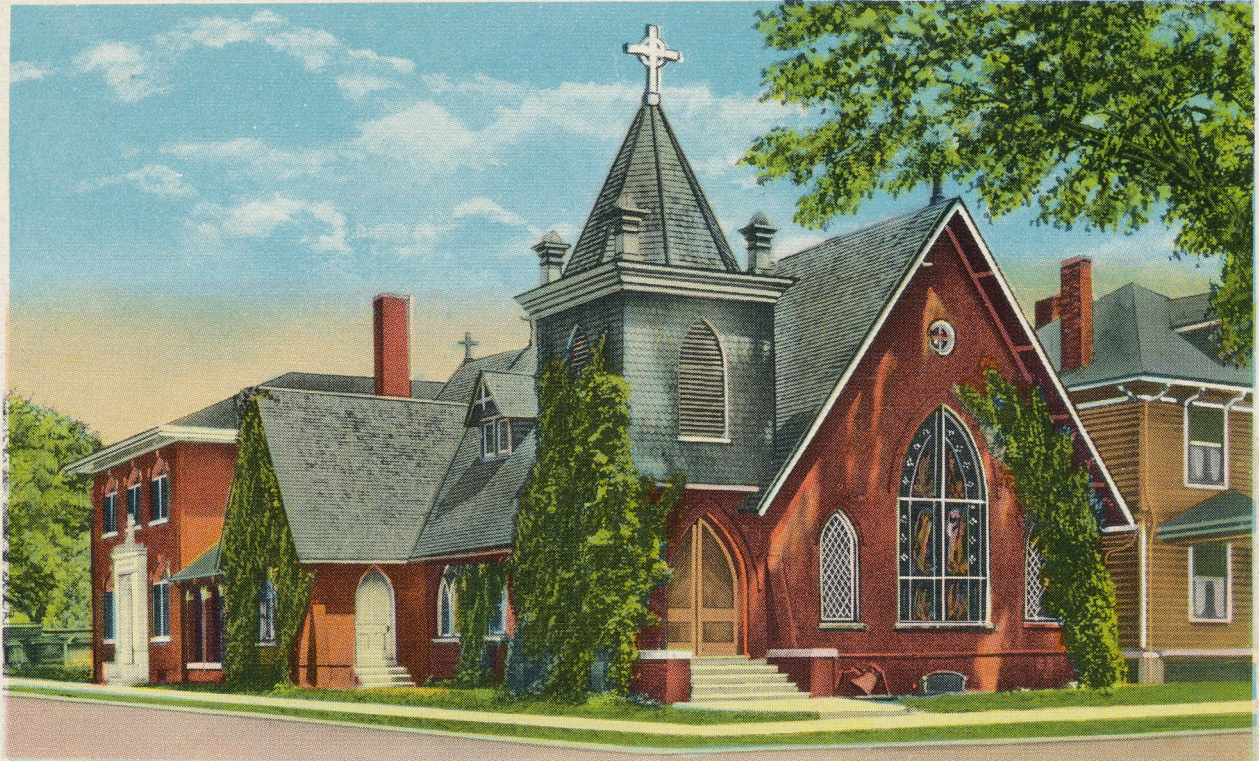


Episcopal Church, Clarksdale, Miss.



St. George's Episcopal Church

106 Sharkey Avenue
Clarksdale, Mississippi

Dear Friend,

I am writing to you as one who has known the congregation of St. George's, Clarksdale, for more than forty years as a neighboring rector, diocesan Bishop and, in retirement, as frequent Sunday supply priest.

My experience with the people of St. George's has been one of great affection and an appreciation of their deep devotion to the Lord. I have also been impressed by their strong desire to be an instrument of healing and hope in their community. In years past I took some of their outreach ideas and incorporated them into my own congregation.

The ease of their personal relationships with one another and the warmth and generosity that they so easily extend are great gifts that I have always appreciated. What is often missed in observing their gracious life together is the surprising philosophical and theological diversity within the congregation. Their capacity to carry such diversity within a loving community is a model for the wider church.

I watched with great interest the transformation of the St. George's Day School into an instrument of grace and reconciliation within the community of Clarksdale. The commitment to the school in time, energy and personal finances said a great deal to me about who they are as a congregation. I grieved much when the school became no longer financially viable.

There is strong lay leadership within the congregation, and during the times of clergy vacancy that leadership has been especially strong. Several past and present members have held significant diocesan leadership positions. That leadership capacity will be a great gift to the next rector.

The region of the Mississippi Delta has a well-deserved reputation for gracious and warm hospitality. Located within the heart of the Delta, St. George's personifies that regional gift of grace, and their next rector will find a community of open hearts and spirits, eager to know more fully the loving embrace of our Risen Lord.

If you have questions, or wish to talk to me more about St. George's, please feel free to contact me. The Search Committee will share with you how I may be reached.

I pray God's presence and guidance in your discernment process.

Faithfully,
+Duncan M. Gray III
IX Mississippi (Resigned)

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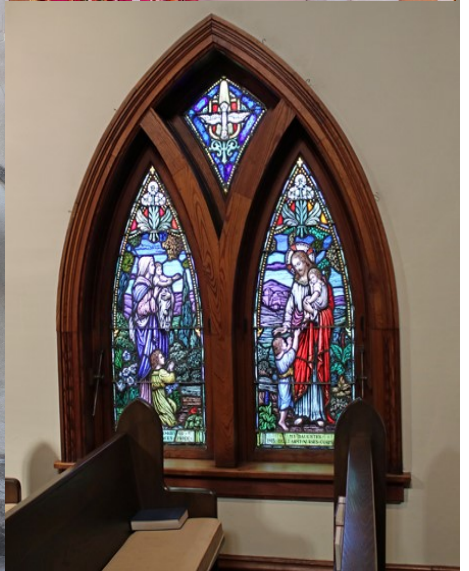


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History of Our Church

The Episcopal Church in Clarksdale, Mississippi, dates back as early as 1892, when a group met together in a plantation cabin. Two years later, the Diocesan Council officially recognized St. George's mission; and in 1901, a lot located at First Street and Sharkey Avenue was purchased. Three years later, the cornerstone for the church was laid, and in 1905, the mission was admitted as a parish.

The Reverend Alfred Todhunter, St. George's first resident priest, served from 1902-1908. Since Reverend Todhunter's years at St. George's, the Church has been blessed with 12 more rectors. Rectors with long tenures include the Reverend Walter Dakin (1917-1932); the Reverend E. Lucian Malone (1936-1957); the Reverend Charles Chambers (1958-1967); the Reverend Richard Clark (1971-1980); the Reverend Ben Nelson (1986-1998); the Reverend Randall Sartin (1998-2008); and the Reverend Jason Shelby (2009-2019). St. George's church is fortunate to have the Reverend Sylvia Czarnetzky serving as our interim rector during this transitional process.

Through the generosity of parishioners, St. George's church facilities have grown and improved. The church's beautiful stained glass windows were gradually added as memorials until every available space was filled. A state of the art Ott organ and a columbarium were also installed.

In 1919 the first rectory was purchased adjacent to the church. While Mr. Dakin was rector, his soon-to-be famous grandson, Tennessee Williams, lived in the rectory with his mother and grandparents. Eventually this rectory was converted into what serves as our church office today. Renovations were made in 2006. The upstairs portion of the church office was recently renovated into a museum paying tribute to Tennessee Williams and his accomplishments.



Ministering to Ourselves and Others

Describe your liturgical style and practice.

At St. George's Episcopal Church, our services are Eucharist-oriented. Each Sunday, we worship at 10:30 a.m. according to Holy Eucharist Rite II with occasional Lenten use of Rite I. St. George's uses the 1979 Book of Common Prayer as its guide. Led by our organist and choir director, our church choir makes a joyful noise unto the Lord each Sunday at the 10:30 a.m. service using the 1982 Hymnal. We welcome all baptized Christians to join in the Eucharist. Though our services lean toward a more "formal" style, we value warm, family-friendly worship.

We are not a "smells and bells" church except very occasionally. When we have a full-time rector, our Sunday services include an 8:30 a.m. communion service and a 5:30 p.m. communion service both without music. There is also a healing service on Wednesday mornings also without music.

How do we incorporate others into our ministry?

We encourage parishioner participation both at St. George's and in all our ministries. In worship services, our members serve as lay readers, ushers, choir members, acolytes, and on altar guilds. Some are called to serve by leading small group Bible studies while others serve on the Vestry and/or various committees which enable our church to operate efficiently. Through ECW, Operation Christmas Child provides shoe boxes of Christmas gifts shipped worldwide to those in need. Our church serves as a host site for Spring Initiative, a program that provides one-on-one tutoring and mentoring for at-risk youth. Our church members are some of the most involved participants in these programs and others in our town.

St. George's members give freely of their time and talents to minister to those within our church and in our community.

How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

The parishioners of St. George's Episcopal Church are actively engaged in pastoral care for others in our community. Members are active in serving and delivering meals for the Care Station, a community feeding program. We have members in leadership positions who help with fund raising for the Care Station and oversee its operations. During Lent St. George's hosts luncheons for all denominations with a guest speaker each week. Members bring guests to our annual Shrove Tuesday pancake supper. With the state penitentiary at Parchman only 30 miles from Clarksdale, members have been involved over the years in prison ministry. Parishioners have also made talks about recovery to the still suffering at Fairland Center, a local drug and alcohol rehabilitation center. Members of St. George's are actively involved in feeding the hungry, ministering to those in prison, participating in alcohol, drug, and mental health treatment and giving legal assistance and financial support for those less fortunate. Parishioners at St. George's Episcopal Church in Clarksdale are generous with their treasure and also with their time and talents to support our local community projects and services.

Ministering to Ourselves and Others

How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

If we are to survive as a church we must learn to adapt and embrace the changes that are coming – probably at seemingly breakneck speed. To prepare for the future we will be purposefully aware of the changing needs of our congregants and our wider community and find ways to meet those needs. To do this, we must keep strong lay leaders to work closely and cooperatively with our rector. We must also encourage more parishioners to be actively involved in the church's ministries.

During the COVID-19 crisis we have been online streaming our Sunday services. We may find we will continue doing so for our shut-ins and others. Based on the last decade, we believe the church of the future will look very different from what we experience today. But with our 100+ year history and a faithful rector, we believe we will adapt to meet its joys and challenges.

Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

Several years ago, a group of women gathered in St. George's church office to start a knitting ministry. The seasoned knitters taught the beginners and HandWorks Ministry was formed. Initially, prayer shawls, scarves, and lap blankets were knitted to give to people with terminal illnesses in the surrounding area. Each item was prayed over and then blessed. Then, an item was selected for a recipient and delivered by one or two parishioners. Each knitted item is a sign of Christ's healing presence engulfing the recipient with the strength, joy, peace, hope, and love of Christ. The knitting has progressed to include prayer squares, and delivery was expanded to anyone who was sick, lonely, or in need. This past December, these St. George's parishioners knitted prayer squares for teens and adults in rehab facilities. HandWorks allows St. George's to be the hands and feet of Christ as these parishioners minister to others by offering a small sign of encouragement, love, comfort, and care.

Paula Henke may be contacted for additional information. Call the church office at 662-627-7875 for her contact information.

Parish Life

Parish life at St. George's helps our parishioners stay connected inside and outside of the church. All of our parishioners have the opportunity to serve, from the youngest to the oldest member.

ACOLYTES

Anyone is welcome to acolyte at St. George's. Typically young people from 10 to 18 years of age assist during the 10:30 service.

ALTAR GUILD

Without the ladies who make up our altar guild, St. George's church would not be able to transition from one service to the next with such ease and efficiency. St. George's altar guild schedules teams through the calendar year and keeps everyone organized. The different teams are made up of 4-5 people, and each team is asked to serve two months a year.

BIBLE STUDY

Our weekly Bible study group is led by our senior warden, Jerry Hudson and meets on Tuesday evenings at 5:30 in the Parish Hall. The books of the Bible are studied verse by verse with in-depth discussions of verses and what they mean to each individual.

CHURCH CHOIR

St. George's choir is led by organist and director Jay Westfaul. St. George's has been blessed to have Jay lead our choir for 10 years. Jay is a dedicated and loyal servant of St. George's with a passion for using beautiful music to help us worship.



Parish Life

CHURCH SCHOOL

Currently there are is no church school for children or teens. There are 2 teachers for adult classes and each has between 8 and 10 attendees.

TLC COMMITTEE

The purpose of TLC at St. George's is to offer tokens of thoughtfulness among the parishioners. They celebrate births, baptisms, weddings, graduations, and other milestones. They acknowledge traumas, bereavements, sicknesses, and struggles. They visit parishioners who may be lonely and feed those who may need a meal. They check on those who may need something from the store, a ride to the doctor, or a happy bouquet. The TLC Committee also offers to entertain the Rector and Organist on Sundays following the services.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

The ECW performs a variety of services for our church, our church members, and our community. They help with a pancake supper on Shrove Tuesday, the Rogation picnic each year, and the UTO boxes. The women are responsible for preparing and serving meals for funerals, baby showers, and luncheons held at the church. They make cookies and other "goodies" for the congregation to take home on special occasions. ECW hosts "Dinner and a Movie" and other events that bring our church family together. The ECW also volunteers at the Care Station to serve and deliver meals and collects diapers and prepares holiday goodies for residents of Fairland Treatment Center. They provide goodies for local nursing homes, food boxes for needy residents in the county, organize Operation Christmas Child, and prepare meals for the Police and Sheriff's Departments to show appreciation for their services.



St. George's Outreach

Parishioners at St. George's are generous with their treasures, but also with their time. They offer their time and talents to support many local community projects.

St. George's hosts Spring Initiative, an after-school program, upstairs in the parish hall every week. Many parishioners also lend their time to tutor and mentor the students enrolled in this program. Spring works with the students who face the strongest academic, emotional, and behavioral challenges. Their goal is to empower students to live to their full potential; to break the cycle of poverty; to lead happy, healthy, secure, and fully engaged lives; and to give back to their community.

Parishioners from St. George's have been active supporters of our local Care Station since its beginning. Members of our church family serve meals, deliver meals, and answer calls for current needs of the Care Station.

Our members are actively involved in prison ministry; in alcohol, drug, and mental health treatment center ministry; and in providing legal assistance and financial support to those in need.



Church Facilities

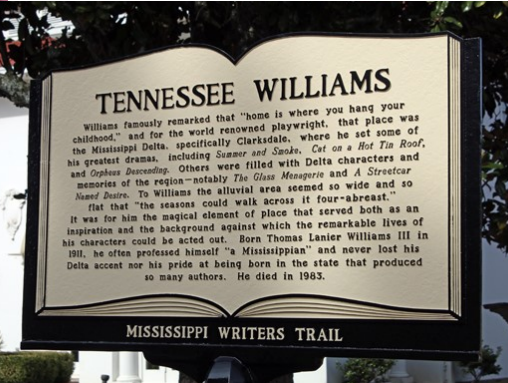
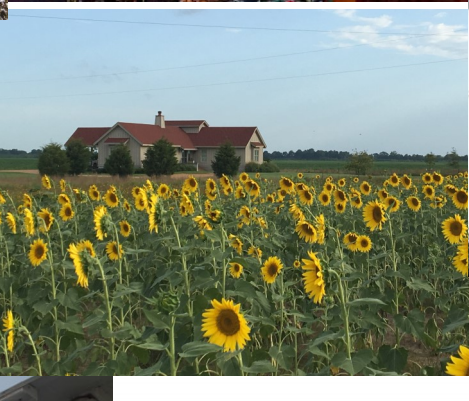
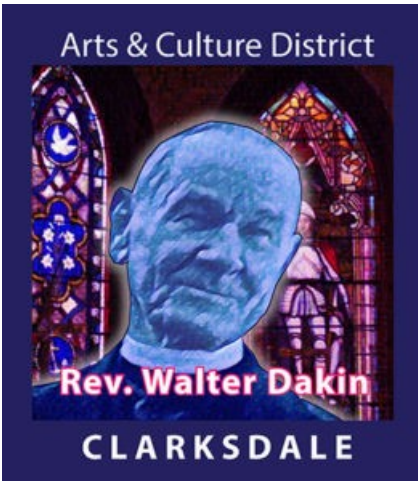
St. Georges' Episcopal Church is located in the heart of the downtown historical district at the corner of First Street and Sharkey Avenue. The Church is comprised of three individual buildings: the church, the church office, and the parish hall.

Built in 1906, with her original outer brick, hardwood floors, pews to seat 140 people, gorgeous stained-glass windows, vaulted open rafters and tongue and groove wood throughout, St. George's is one of the most beautiful Episcopal churches in the diocese. The church underwent renovation in 2001. Two beautiful wrought-iron chandeliers in the nave, track lighting in the sanctuary, and the pipe organ were the only new additions. A beautiful 90-niche columbarium was built in 2010 and resides in a separate room behind the organ. The sacristy received new cabinetry several years ago and provides generous working space.

The first floor of the parish hall consists of an entry way opening into a large spacious gathering area used for luncheons, receptions, visitations, meetings, and adult Bible class. A retractable video screen can be lowered and seating provided to accommodate overflow congregations. Our recently renovated state-of-the-art kitchen, restrooms, and choir room complete the first floor facilities. The second floor houses a spacious two room nursery, two multi-purpose classrooms, and storage facilities.

The first floor of the church office consists of a living room/parlor, meeting/conference room, secretary's office, and rector's office. The Tennessee Williams Museum is housed on the second floor.





10th annual • Jan 24-26, 2020

Clarksdale Film & Music Festival

MOVIES • MUSIC • MISSISSIPPI
www.clarksdalefilmfestival.com

Visit Clarksdale for a winter weekend of Mississippi-connected and blues/roots-music films... plus 'live' blues, cool workshops, history bus tours and more!

FILMMAKER? SUBMISSIONS NOW OPEN!

History of Clarksdale

Historic Clarksdale, Mississippi, a town of agriculture and art, is less than 90 minutes south of the Memphis International Airport. It has a long history of cotton farming and is known as the home of the Crossroads, where legend tells the blues were born.

Located in Coahoma County, Clarksdale is situated along the Sunflower River in the Mississippi Delta. In 1541, it is believed that Hernando DeSoto, on a personal quest for gold in the New World, discovered the Mississippi River at Sunflower Landing in what would become, three centuries later, Coahoma County.

In 1839, sixteen-year-old John Clark, a native of Ashford, England, arrived in Coahoma County in search of lumber for his New Orleans employer. Inspired by the fertile Delta farmland, he purchased 101 acres of land near the Sunflower River in 1848 – an area that would later become the business district of Clarksdale. In 1868, Clark set aside some of his land and sold 76 lots to residents, creating the community first known as Clarksville. Thirteen years later, in 1882, when it became evident that a railroad would pass through the area, Clark had the town chartered and incorporated as Clarksdale. Frequent floods, a fire in 1889, and very poor roads slowed the early growth of Clarksdale but it is now one of the larger towns in the Mississippi Delta.

Sometimes referred to as the most Southern place on earth, Clarksdale was once most known as the “golden buckle of the cotton belt” and was home to a multi-cultural mixture of people. Agriculture was and continues to be Clarksdale’s primary industry. The first cotton crop commercially produced entirely by machinery, from planting to baling, was grown in 1944 on 28 acres owned by the Hopson Planting Company of Clarksdale, Mississippi. This technological advancement quickly revolutionized American agriculture and had far-reaching economic and social implications for the cotton industry worldwide and particularly for the Mississippi Delta.

Clarksdale has also been historically significant in the history of the blues. It has and continues to inspire artists of many kinds. It has served as home at one time or another to Muddy Waters, W.C. Handy, John Lee Hooker, Sam Cook, Ike Turner, the Staple Singers, the Five Blind Boys, and many others. Coahoma County was the birthplace of late great Country & Western singer Conway Twitty. The Mississippi Blues Trail has placed many historical blues markers in Clarksdale. It is also home to the Delta Blues Museum.

Tennessee Williams lived in Clarksdale for a short while and visited often after moving. His grandfather, Walter E. Dakin was the rector of St. George's Episcopal Church until 1932. Many of Williams’ most famous plays, including *The Glass Menagerie*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, are believed to have been inspired by people and places from this part of the Mississippi Delta.

Clarksdale is a town filled with families who have lived here for generations and many former tourists who have decided to call it home. This eclectic mix of old and new is one reason Clarksdale was number 4 on USA Today’s 10 Best Reader’s Choice list for 2019 for Best Historic Small Town.

Economy and Industry

Clarksdale is a historic town in the heart of the alluvial plain of the Mississippi Delta. With a population of 15,304 (2020 estimate), it is the major city and county seat of Coahoma County, whose western boundary is the Mississippi River.

Industry – The median household income in Clarksdale is \$28,988 with educational, healthcare, and agricultural occupations accounting for the largest employment. Clarksdale’s economy is still centered on farming and the agriculture industry, including seed sales, agricultural chemical sales, machinery sales and production, and agricultural insurance.

The enthusiasm and potential of our small town is most evident by the recent addition of four key businesses. In May of 2019, social enterprise technology company, PeopleShores, chose Clarksdale as its second U.S. location adding 200 jobs to our economy. The company provides digital transformation and business process management services such as robotics process automation, artificial intelligence machine learning, customer experience management and image processing to large corporations.

Stud welding company Image Industries announced its relocation to Clarksdale in 2019 and will create 50 skilled-labor jobs over the next four years. Image Industries owner Blake Hobson stated, “Image Industries is excited to be relocating to Clarksdale, Mississippi. Not only are the city of Clarksdale, the Mississippi Development Authority and the state providing a business-friendly environment where Image Industries can grow and prosper, but the community as a whole has been very welcoming. To a person, everyone has greeted us with open arms.”

Locally-owned company Saf-T-Cart, which produces cylinder carts, cages, pallets, truck beds and trailers, is constructing an 18,000-square-foot addition onto its current 150,000-square-foot facility to accommodate its growing truck bed and trailer operations. With the expansion, they hope to create an additional 25 jobs to its 90 current employees.

Most recently, Automation Anywhere, a global leader in Robotic Process Automation, announced that they will partner with PeopleShores to open a RPA Center of Excellence (CoE) dedicated to bringing more than 200 jobs to the region.



Tourism

Tourism – Clarksdale has been undergoing a major revival in recent years as a result of blues-based tourism and downtown revitalization efforts. Home of the Blues and home of the Delta Blues Museum, Clarksdale has established itself as a mecca for music enthusiasts across the globe. Our unique town is filled with juke joints, boutique restaurants, quirky hotels, and more live music than you can imagine! Every year, musicians make the pilgrimage to Clarksdale – to perform, to reflect, and to pay homage to the performers who defined the industry. Our annual Juke Joint Festival held each April attracts thousands of people from across the country who flock to our streets to hear over 100 blues acts and to get a taste of our small-town charm.

In the last decade, thirty two new businesses have opened in Clarksdale’s historic downtown Arts & Cultural District. Fourteen of these are owned by longtime Clarksdale families, and eighteen are owned by new residents who have moved here from across the country. Almost all of these new businesses serve Clarksdale’s arts and cultural community.



Education

Clarksdale offers public school from kindergarten through 12th grade. Recently added is a public charter school, Clarksdale Collegiate, which currently serves kindergarten through 3rd grade with plans to add an additional grade each year up to 8th grade. There are also three private schools in Clarksdale. For elementary students, preschool through 6th grade, there is a choice of two parochial schools: Presbyterian Day School and St. Elizabeth Catholic School. Students from 7th to 12th grade have the option to attend the private college preparatory school, Lee Academy. More information about all the schools can be found on their websites listed below.

Clarksdale Municipal Schools- <https://www.cmsdschools.org/>

Coahoma County Schools- <https://www.coahomak12.org/>

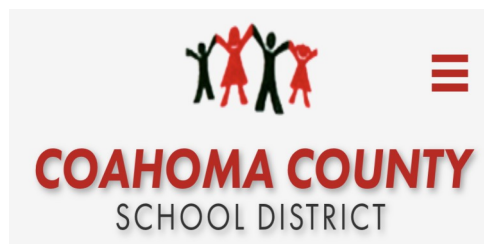
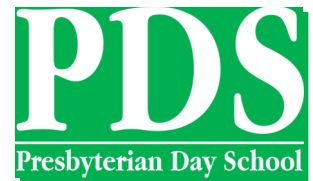
Clarksdale Collegiate- <https://www.clarksdalecollegiate.org/>

Presbyterian Day School- <http://pdsclarksdale.com/>

St. Elizabeth Catholic School- <https://www.seseagles.com/>

Lee Academy- <http://www.leeacademycolts.org/>

For those wishing to continue their post high school education, Coahoma Community College is a two-year, accredited, public institution of higher learning located on a ninety-nine acre campus in Coahoma County. The programs of study include: Academic, Career and Technical, Health Sciences, and Workforce Development.



Around Town

Clarksdale may be a small town but it has wonderful restaurants, well curated shops, several museums, and live blues 365 days a year. Clarksdale is a short drive from major shopping, movies, and many other activities in Southaven, Memphis, or Oxford. The outdoors enthusiast would be in heaven in Clarksdale. There are opportunities to hunt, fish, golf, swim, and boat. Clarksdale's very own Quapaw Canoe Company offers unique canoe trips down the Mississippi River. There is wonderful information about all the many activities this fun little town has to offer on the Visit Clarksdale website (www.visitclarksdale.com). Below you will find an adapted excerpt from their site from a section called, "Ideas for your Day in Clarksdale."

IDEAS FOR YOUR DAY IN CLARKSDALE:

- Good Morning! Wake up to gourmet coffee at Yazoo Pass or Meraki Coffee Roasters.
- Breakfast – start the day right! Bluesberry Café, Grandma's Pancake House, Rest Haven Restaurant, or Yazoo Pass.
- Visit the Delta Blues Museum, Cat Head Delta Blues & Folk Art, or take a Walking Tour of historic blues markers and art downtown.
- Lunch Downtown: A variety of downtown lunch restaurants are sure to tempt you including world famous Ground Zero Blues Club.
- Browse some local shops: Hambone Art & Music, Delta Creations, Magpie Gift and Art, and Nelly May's.
- Dinner Downtown: there are several downtown bar/restaurants (Levon's Bar & Grill, Stone Pony Pizza, Yazoo Pass, and Hooker Grocery) serving a variety of fares including barbecue, fried catfish and Delta hot tamales, steaks, and pizzas.
- Listen to Some Local Music– You will find live blues music somewhere every night at iconic venues like Bluesberry Café, Hambone Art & Music, Red's Lounge, Ground Zero Blues Club, Levon's, Shack Up Inn, Hopson Commissary, New Roxy, Grandma's Blues House, and Delta Blues Alley Café.

Sports and Outdoors

With its close vicinity to Cleveland, Oxford, and Memphis, Clarksdale offers a wide variety of events for the sports enthusiast to attend within an hour and a half drive. The University of Mississippi and Delta State University offer many college level sports events. With a short drive to Memphis, you can catch an exciting Memphis Grizzlies NBA game at the exceptional FedEx Forum or enjoy great family fun at a Memphis Redbirds baseball game.

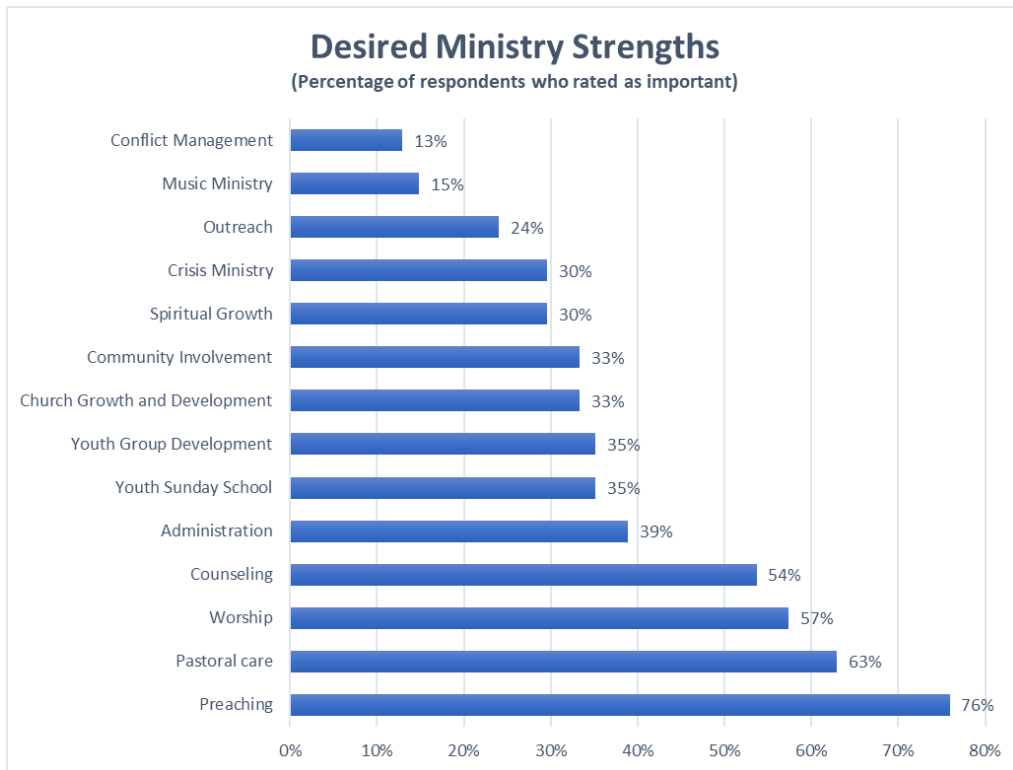
The Clarksdale Country Club offers an 18 hole, championship style golf course, a tennis complex that features eight lighted tennis courts, a twenty-four hour fitness center, an Olympic-size swimming pool, a full service restaurant, and a teen center for children. The Coahoma Country Club on Davenport Road is a 9 hole, semi-private course. In addition, sports opportunities for young children are abundant, including soccer, football, baseball, and basketball, and our local schools field competitive teams.

Hunting season in the Mississippi Delta is a huge attraction. The hunting season generally begins on Labor Day weekend with the opening day of dove season. This is followed by whitetail deer hunting and duck season. The seasons end with turkeys, but numerous lakes and the Mississippi River host a range of water sports including fishing, water-skiing, jet-skiing, and picnicking on sand bars.



Church Survey

DESIRED QUALITIES IN A RECTOR	
Positive attitude	54
Good sermons	48
Personable/outgoing	44
Relatable to all ages	44
Accessible	41
Deeply spiritual	37
Organized	34
Sense of humor	33
Sociable	27
Energetic	16
Moderate church	16



Our Future

Our congregation may be small; but we are passionate, involved, and committed. We have an average Sunday attendance of 80-85. As a small congregation, we are like a family. We love to take care of each other. We love to gather. We love to know people and to feel like we are known. There will be no shortage of opportunities for fellowship in our church or in our community.

Our congregants are committed to their own spiritual growth and development as well as the growth and development of St. George's Episcopal Church. We value good sermons. We hope the Holy Spirit will lead someone to us who is positive, deeply spiritual, and relatable to many age groups. We pray for someone whose ministry strengths include: Preaching, Pastoral Care, Counseling, Administration, and Development of Youth Programs. The youth of our church represent a wide range of age groups, and we have had difficulty getting consistent youth programming established. This is something very important to our young families and to the life of our church.

Our church is financially solid and easily able to maintain our facilities and support our Rector, our congregants, our community, and our Diocese.

Rector Compensation Package	
Cell phone	1,200
Continuing Education	250
Life Insurance	360
Mileage	1,000
Professional Expense	200
Housing Equity	1,200
Sabbatical Reserve	250
Medical	10,244 - 28,372
Salary	75,000
Pension	15,000
SS & MC	4,350
Total without housing	109,054 - 127,182

St. George's Episcopal Church

One Church in Mission: Inviting, Transforming, Reconciling

106 Sharkey Avenue, Clarksdale, MS 38614

(662) 627-7875

stgeorgeclarksdale@gmail.com

<https://www.stgeorgesclarksdale.com/>