

PARACLETE

JANUARY 2026

HOLY SPIRIT | EPISCOPAL CHURCH



130 South 6th Street East • Missoula, MT 59801 • 406.542.2167 • E-mail: office@holyspiritmissoula.org • Website: www.holyspiritmissoula.org

A publication of Holy Spirit Episcopal Church

2026 DIOCESAN CONVENTION

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MONTANA

Sign up to be a delegate to the Diocesan Convention to be held September 25-27, hosted by St. James' Episcopal Church, Bozeman, Montana. Holy Spirit is entitled to 6 delegates who will be elected at the Annual Meeting on January 25. If you are interested in representing Holy Spirit at the Diocesan Convention, please call the church office, 406-542-2167, by Wednesday, January 21, 2026.

September 25-27
Bozeman, Montana

For more information:
(406) 542-2167
www.holyspiritmissoula.org

Sign Up to Serve as a Delegate to Diocesan Convention

The next **Diocesan Convention** will take place **September 25-27** at St. James' Episcopal Church in Bozeman. This gathering is where we attend to the business of the diocese together.

Holy Spirit is entitled to **six delegates**, based on our Average Sunday Attendance, and we will elect both delegates and alternates at our **Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 25**. Alternates are especially important, since plans can change during the year.

If you are a parish member who feels called to serve in this role, please contact the church office at **(406) 542-2167** no later than **Wednesday, January 21**.

Please join us at the Annual Meeting Annual Meeting: A celebration of our parish life

The **Annual Meeting of Holy Spirit Episcopal Church** will be held in the parish hall **after the 10:15 service on Sunday, January 25**. This gathering is more than just business—it's a chance for us to come together as a parish family, reflect on the past year, and look ahead with hope and purpose.

We'll share a **light meal** together (cost: \$5). Reservations may be made after services beginning **January 11** and continuing each Sunday until the meeting, or by calling the church office at **(406) 542-2167** no later than **Wednesday, January 21**.

What's on the agenda

At this important meeting we will:

- Elect new members to the **Vestry**, who will help guide our parish in the year ahead

- Choose delegates to next fall's **Diocesan Convention**
- Review the Vestry-approved **budget for 2026**
- See the reports from parish ministries and organizations, celebrating the many ways we serve together

Why it matters

This is **your church meeting**—a time to lend your voice, share in decisions, and help shape the future of our parish. It's also a moment to celebrate the gifts of our community and the faith that binds us together.

We hope you'll join us for this special day as we begin a new year of ministry, fellowship, and service. Let's get 2026 off to a joyful and purposeful start!



OUR STAFF

Clergy:

The Rev. Gretchen Strohmaier,
Co-Rector
Gretchen@holyspiritmissoula.org
The Rev. Terri Ann Grotzinger
(retired), Co-Rector
revterri@holyspiritmissoula.org
The Rev. Dorce Dvarishkis,
Deacon
dorcied@gmail.com

Director of Music:

Dr. Nancy Cooper

Parish Administrator:

Judy Parock
office@holyspiritmissoula.org

Bookkeeper/Office Assistant:

Connie Gerke
Connie@holyspiritmissoula.org

Technology Specialist:

PJ Willett
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Webmaster:

Elizabeth Serviss
serviss7@msn.com

Sexton: Lori Cordis

NEWSLETTER

Paraclete, from the Greek meaning 'Holy Spirit,' is published monthly, September through May, by Holy Spirit Episcopal Church. All material is due by the fifteenth of the month preceding the month of publication.

HOLY SPIRIT

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

130 South 6th Street East
Missoula, MT 59801

406.542.2167

office@holyspiritmissoula.org
www.holyspiritmissoula.org

Help provide socks and gloves for Missoula's houseless

WARM HANDS, warm feet!



Donate on January 4, 11 and 18

Supporting our neighbors: Sock Drive for the Poverello Center

Calling all parishioners! Holy Spirit's drive for warm socks, hats, scarves, gloves and mittens begins the first Sunday of the new year, January 4, and continues through Sunday, January 18. This is the tenth year that Holy Spirit has collected warm apparel for our houseless brothers and sisters who are receiving shelter at the Poverello Center or are sleeping outside and being served by the Housing Outreach Team (The HOT Team). The familiar red-and-white striped box will again await your donations in the parish hall. Items also can be placed in a plastic bin located on the porch outside the church office.

The needs of the houseless are especially great this year, due to funding cuts, the closure of the Johnson Street shelter, and a winter predicted to be colder and snowier in the northern United States.

As always, we welcome items that are hand-knit, store-bought or gently used. **Please remember: socks should be made from wool or synthetic fabrics such as Thermolite. Please NO COTTON!**

Cotton does not keep out the cold and fails to wick away moisture, making feet feel damp and chilly.

Houseless men and women who sleep at the Poverello Center spend many of their daytime hours outside in our cold, snowy, and windy winter weather. The Pov's HOT Team also serves those individuals who are shelter resistant and sleep outdoors or in their vehicles. As a result, the Pov goes through countless pairs of socks and other woolly items in a single day!

We appreciate whatever items you can donate to this critically important drive. If parishioners wish to place a bin outside their homes or work spaces and accept donations from their neighbors, coworkers, or customers, please email me at *lucia.solowork@gmail.com*. I am happy to provide the bin and signage and collect the contents as needed.

Thanks in advance for your generosity!

— LUCIA SOLORZANO WORK
SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Faith and Food: Upcoming educational events at Holy Spirit

We invite you to explore the connections between faith, food, and care for creation through a series of engaging events this winter and spring.

Film & Discussion: *Babette's Feast*

On Sunday afternoon January 11, from 3 pm to 5 pm, come view the film, *Babette's Feast* and learn from event host, Valerie Hess, about the connection between theology and food and how our beliefs shape life, even our food choices. Watch the film and stay afterwards for a short discussion time.

Book Study: *Food for Thought*

Starting January 24, Sara Streeter and Carla Mettling will lead a 5-week book study "Food for Thought" where participants will read Mark Bittman's *Animal, Vegetable, Junk* and Sophie Egan's *How to be a Conscious Eater*. Bittman follows the ways people got their food throughout history, from being hunter-gatherers, to farmers, to cash crop workers, to junk-food consumers, and how such practices shaped their societies and lives. Egan, on the other hand, focuses on making us informed food shoppers who foster the planet, farmers,

animals, and ourselves by the choices we make in food shopping.

The group will meet in the Guild Room on Saturday morning from 10 to 11:30, from January 24 to February 21. Those interested should get these books and start reading. The study will conclude with a special Conscious Eating Potluck for the whole parish, on Wednesday evening, March 4.

Lenten Learning: The Practice of Fasting

On Saturday February 21 as we begin the season of Lent, learn from Valerie Hess about fasting. What is it? How is it done? Why is it practiced? What difference can it make? This one-time presentation at 10:00 am in the parish hall will set participants up to experiment with fasting during the Lenten season.

Panel Discussions

Coming in March a Food Insecurity panel discussion hosted by Jesse Jaeger.

In April look for a Food Waste panel discussion hosted by Warren Gartner and Sara Streeter.

— REV. GRETCHEN

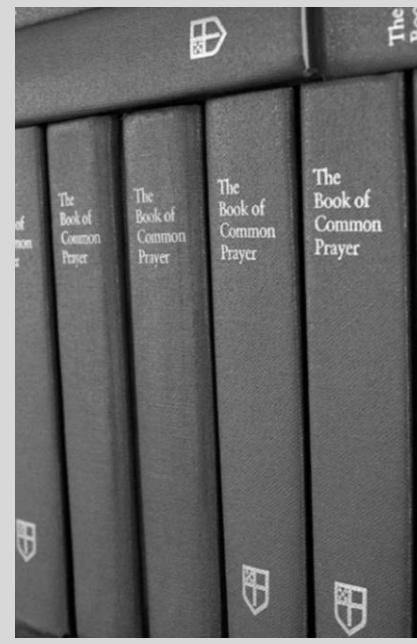
Exploring the Book of Common Prayer with Rev. Terri

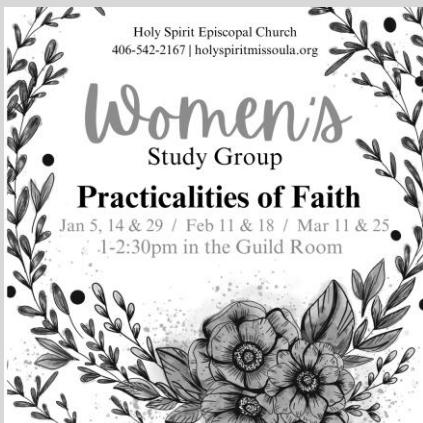
Join me on Tuesday, January 13 and 20, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Guild Room as we explore the practicalities of the Book of Common Prayer (BCP)—a treasure trove of wisdom, comfort, and guidance for our daily lives.

We'll look beyond Sunday worship to discover how the BCP can support personal prayer, deepen spiritual reflection, and offer language for life's milestones and moments. Whether you're a cradle Episcopalian or just learning how to pronounce "Episcopal," this is a welcoming space to engage, ask questions, and grow together.

Come curious, come open-hearted—come see how this beloved book can be a companion in your faith journey.

— Rev. Terri





Women's Group: Living Our Faith Together

Looking for a space to reflect, connect, and grow in faith with other women? Come join the *Practicalities of Faith* group, a welcoming circle led by Julie Benson, where heartfelt conversation and spiritual companionship flourish. Whether you're navigating life's joys or challenges, this group offers a gentle place to share, listen, and explore how faith shapes our everyday experiences.

All women are welcome— bring a friend, bring your questions, and come just as you are. No preparation needed, just a spirit open to connection.

Upcoming gatherings:

January 5, 14, & 29

February 11 & 18

March 11 & 25

1-2:30 p.m. in the Guild Room

Drop in for any of these sessions—no registration required. Whether you're new to Holy Spirit or a longtime parishioner, we'd love to have you.

Come be part of a supportive community where faith meets real life, and where women encourage one another to live with purpose, grace, and joy.

Rector Search goes live: Applications now open

Our search for a new rector takes a huge step forward this month. By the time you read this, our rector search will be live, and we will have begun accepting applications. I want to thank the Search Committee for their work on drafting the Parish Profile and the OTM Portfolio. A special thanks goes to Kirk Johnson for his skill in making the Parish Profile so beautiful. Both documents are available online at: holyspiritmissoula.org.

We plan to start accepting applications on January 2 and close the search in late February or until we have a viable candidate. We will winnow the list of applicants to the top five and then conduct Zoom interviews. After those interviews, we

will invite the top three candidates to Missoula for interviews, preaching, and a chance to meet all of you. Following the in-person interviews, the Search Committee will make a final recommendation to the Vestry, who decides whether to issue a call.

You can help us find a new rector! If you know of someone who might be interested or have contacts in other parishes, we have a draft letter on Holy Spirit's website you can download and send to them with our Parish Profile.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact a Search Committee member or email: rectorsearch@holyspiritmissoula.org.

RECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

Bill Drummond • CHAIR
Tracey Gage
Michael Irwin

Lindsay Iudicello
Sue LaRose
Natalie Jaeger

Zara Renander
Gary Swartz • VICE CHAIR
Adrienne Tranel

Resolve now to attend the White Elephant Potluck on January 15

Bring your favorite board or building game. A cribbage, checkers, or backgammon board. A deck or two of cards. Your lucky set of dice! A fun game that can be completed in a reasonably short time. The prizes? Well, we're asking you to bring those, too, to our White Elephant Potluck. Something that passes as "new" and in working condition that just does not fit into your lifestyle. A Christmas gift you wonder why you received. A book you'll never read, or certainly not again. A toy you're too young or old for. A tool or hobby kit you still haven't figured out. A fun clothing or

jewelry item that's just not you. Something you already have plenty of. Something someone else will love.

Oh, yes, and a generous dish of your favorite making to share at dinner! We'll begin eating at 5:30 and then play games until you and your guests are ready to head home with your new White Elephant, a full tummy, and great memories of your evening with our Holy Spirit family. Mark your calendars for a fun potluck event on January 15.

— ELIZABETH DRUMMOND
THE WHOLLY FUN COMMITTEE

Act with Mercy and Compassion

Missoula Food Bank Ministry Volunteer Opportunities

This season, Holy Spirit is proud to partner with the Missoula Food Bank to help nourish our community in both body and spirit. From donations to hands-on volunteering, there are many ways to share the love—and we invite you to join in.

An **EmPower Pack event** will be held at the Missoula Food Bank on **Wednesday, January 14 at 4:30 p.m.** Last August, Holy Spirit participated in a similar event, and it was a joy-filled afternoon. This January, we'll gather again to prepare weekend food bags for children experiencing chronic hunger. We need thirty volunteers, and it's a wonderful activity for families, friends, and groups. You can sign up in the parish hall after services.

The Kids EmPower Pack program provides children with a bag of nutritious food each Friday to help them stay healthy when school meals aren't available. It serves students from preschool through high school across forty meal sites in Missoula, Lolo, Bonner,

Frenchtown, Clinton, Seeley, and Alberton. Children are identified by school officials who notice signs of food insecurity, such as hoarding food, weekend anxiety, or Monday morning fatigue. Each pack includes two entrees, two breakfasts, hearty snacks, fresh fruit, and milk, customized for different ages. Each pack costs six dollars, and every donation directly supports healthy food for kids in need.

We also thank you for your continued generosity with food bank donations. To begin the New Year, we are focusing on **shelf-stable essentials for babies**. Please consider bringing diapers of all sizes, wipes, baby shampoo, lotion, powder, formula, baby food, infant cereal, biscuits, toddler snacks, and juice boxes.

Together, we can act with mercy and compassion, ensuring that every child in our community is nourished and cared for.

— AUDREY MURRAY AND KATHY BERMAN
MISSOULA FOOD BANK MINISTRY



Envelope Assembly for the Missoula Food Bank

Lend a hand, fill a heart

- Parish Hall
- 📅 Tuesday, January 13 at 5:00 PM
- 📅 Tuesday, January 20 at 5:00 PM

As the new year begins, let's carry the spirit of giving forward. Join us for a simple, hands-on way to support the Missoula Food Bank's vital mission. By folding, stuffing, and sealing fundraising envelopes, we help stretch their resources—and ensure more neighbors are fed with dignity.

This joyful volunteer opportunity is easy, social, and deeply impactful. Whether you come for one evening or both, your time helps turn paper into possibility.

Bring a friend, share a laugh, and be part of something meaningful. To sign up, text or call Rosemary at 406-570-7074, or add your name to the sheet in the Parish Hall.

Let's start the year with hearts full and hands busy—because every envelope is a step toward a fuller table for someone in need.

Winter Blood Drive – Save the Date!

Blood. We all have it. We can't live without it. And there's no substitute for it. Every unit of blood given to a patient was first donated by someone generous enough to share the gift of life.

Every day, donors help patients of all ages—accident and burn victims, those undergoing heart surgery or organ transplants, and people battling cancer. In fact, every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood.

Holy Spirit will host a **Winter Blood Drive on Thursday, February 12, from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. in the parish hall.** Please mark your calendar and consider signing up at www.redcross.org.

Who Can Donate?

To give blood, you must:

- Be at least 17 years old (16 with parental consent in some states).
- Weigh at least 110 pounds.
- Be in good health and feeling well on the day of donation.
- Bring a photo ID or your donor card.

If you're not able to donate, you can still help by volunteering at the drive. Contact **Audrey Murray at 612-968-2108 or audreymurray196@gmail.com** to sign up. Together, we can make a life-saving difference.



Social Concerns Committee Helping Others: Why and How

In the Gospels, Jesus teaches that to enter the kingdom of heaven we must love God, follow his commandments, and love our neighbors—giving what we can when we have it to give. For Christians, helping others not only meets real needs but also draws us closer to God. Sometimes we may even be the person God intends to send for a particular cause or individual.

Many of us already serve through acts of kindness or volunteering. Others want to help but aren't sure where to begin. Fortunately, Missoula offers many opportunities:

- **Missoula Aging Services** – volunteers visit in homes and provide occasional transportation (406-728-7682, info@missoulaagingservices.org).
- **Meals on Wheels** – delivers hot meals to elderly or disabled persons, often with friendly visitation (406-728-7682).
- **Friends of the Children–Western Montana** – long-term mentoring relationships with children, with training and supervision (Lyndsay Story,

805-286-6634, lstory@friendsmontana.org).

- **Missoula Food Bank** – practical volunteer work in food distribution (406-541-0774).
- **Scouting America** – assist leaders in meetings and outings, teaching practical skills (406-761-6000).
- **Missoula Interfaith Collaborative (MIC)** – organizing and working with individuals, especially around housing needs (406-207-8228).

In addition to these six organizations, many more in the Missoula community depend on volunteers. If you know someone already involved, reach out and learn how you might join in. Helping others is a shared responsibility, and each of us has personal resources—time, talents, and financial gifts—that can make a difference.

As we consider how to live faithfully, let us remember that giving of ourselves is both a service to our neighbors and a way of deepening our relationship with God.

– BOB DEATON AND JIM WILEY
SOCIAL CONCERNs COMMITTEE



Community Ministries

The many gifts of our Alms Sundays in 2025

Alms Sundays have been a part of the life of Holy Spirit for four years now, and the gifts that they revealed to us in 2025 invited us deeper into our community. Here is a brief summary of what 2025 included:

- The organizations/ministries featured included the Rio Grande Borderland Ministry, the Poverello Center, Reading Opens Your World, Friends of the Children, Parenting Place, The Center, International Choral Festival, Hellgate High School's Family Resource Center, and LifeGuard.
- Alms Sundays' organizers from our Social Concerns Committee and the parish included Jim Wiley, Lucia Solorzano Work, Clem Work, Jesse Jaeger, Lance Collister, A'Lisa Scott, Marcy Hanson, and me. Judy Parock partnered with us all to creatively spread the word in print and social media.

- The overall funds collected at Holy Spirit – in addition to any made directly to the organizations – totaled \$7,684. This is a 13 percent increase over what was given in 2024 and brings our Alms Sunday total gifts to \$23,972 since we began early in 2022.

These Alms Sunday opportunities help us to live into our canonical responsibility of monthly giving to community needs and also make the stories of our neighbors come to life in ways that grow our awareness and stir our consideration of further involvement. As we look toward future Alms Sundays, we welcome your prayers and suggestions for possible new organizations to invite and know that your support and engagement are so appreciated.

To our connections in community,
— THE VEN. DORCIE KAFKA
DVARISHKIS
dorcied@gmail.com
406-542-2167 church office

When does Baptism take place at Holy Spirit?

Holy Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body the Church. Baptism takes place during the Easter Vigil service (Saturday evening, in April), and at a Sunday service about three times a year: the Day of Pentecost (at the end of May next year), the Sunday after All Saints' Day (early November), and the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord (the first Sunday after Epiphany, in early January). Baptism may also take place when the bishop visits (in December this year), and on a Sunday during the summer on a date to be determined. If you are interested in Baptism for yourself or for your child, preparation needs to take place. Please contact the office at (406) 542-2167 to speak with one of our co-rectors.

The next date for Baptism will be at the 7:30 p.m. Easter Vigil service on Saturday, April 4.



HOLY SPIRIT PARISH

130 South 6th Street East
Missoula, MT 59801-4222

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



HOLY SPIRIT | EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ANNUAL MEETING

Meeting begins after the 10:15 a.m.
service in the parish hall

January 25, 2026

