



## ST. ELIZABETH'S & CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



### St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church

Located in the very small town of Whiterocks, fifteen miles north of the Ute Tribe's offices and facilities in Fort Duchesne, St. Elizabeth's serves the northern half of the reservation. It's a beautiful, high-desert setting, with the Uintah Range and many opportunities for outdoor recreation just a few miles farther north. The Vicarage stands behind the church's sanctuary and parish hall, which are surrounded by a large, fenced lawn with a children's playground.

For more than a hundred years, St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church in Whiterocks and Church of the Holy Spirit in Randlett have been serving the community of the Uintah and Ouray Ute Reservation in northeast Utah. With dedicated local leadership and strong diocesan support, the two congregations have witnessed to the love of Jesus, welcoming people to prayer book services, baptizing generations of Episcopalians, comforting grieving families, providing fun and formation for young people, and offering practical service to our neighbors. Fellowship is highly valued by both churches, with regular meals served after worship and festive holiday gatherings. Most of the members of the congregations are of Ute Indian ancestry.

With the retirement of our well-loved Vicar approaching in 2024, there's an opportunity for a priest to serve with us, working with both congregations to maintain our presence in the community, lift up and support lay leaders, and build on well-established missions. We picture someone who's spiritually-grounded, pastoral, open to learning and feels comfortable with all sorts of people, including kids and teens. We look forward to helping our new Vicar get to know the church members and develop relationships in the tribal community.

We're located a little more than two hours east of Park City and its many commercial and cultural offerings, with the diocesan offices another half hour's drive west in Salt Lake City. A generous, full-time salary will be provided, with family health and dental insurance, as well as a spacious, comfortable house with high-speed internet and no rent or utility costs. Top quality medical services are available in the nearby town of Roosevelt, and the advent of Zoom has helped us stay connected with diocesan events and our priest with clergy colleagues. If you'd like to find out more about this unique opportunity to be of service, don't hesitate to contact Angie Rogers, [arogers@episcopal-ut.org](mailto:arogers@episcopal-ut.org)



Since  
1904



Worship is celebrated in Whiterocks every Sunday morning at 10:00 am and on holidays, following the Rite II liturgies of the Book of Common Prayer with a variety of music from the Hymnal and other sources. We're blessed by a range of age groups, from kids, teens and young adults to wonderful elders, with the Youth Group attending worship together monthly.



For some years, the primary mission of St. Elizabeth's has been clear: to serve the young people of the community. All of our elders support that focus, and the Business Committee of the Ute Tribe has expressed its appreciation. Seventeen years ago, a unique expressive arts program, now called Art Empowers, was established as a response to the many challenges faced by young people growing up in a community impacted by past and current trauma and by widespread alcohol and substance abuse. Over a hundred Native young people from all around the reservation attend our afterschool and summer programs, which are led by a team of local women. Besides art activities offered by team members and local visiting artists, every session includes a Talking Circle with a sage blessing, and traditional Native arts are regular parts of the curriculum. Our Vicar spends a great deal of time with this program, working with a grant writer, handling administration and communications, as well as driving a van and serving as a small group leader with the kids.



# ST. ELIZABETH'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

CONTINUED



## Art Empowers

In response to a flyer sent out by Art Empowers last spring, a couple in Salt Lake City was inspired to donate most of the cost of a new van. We raised \$10,000 locally, and after months of waiting, we finally have a wonderful new 15-passenger van. We are deeply grateful for all this generosity, which inspires us to continue following "the One who came not to be served, but to serve."

St. Elizabeth's has been blessed to develop very strong lay leadership. Bishop's Warden Forrest Cuch is well-known in Utah and beyond for serving on nonprofit boards and making presentations on Ute history and spirituality and for environmental concerns. He witnesses to the congruence of Christianity with Native traditions and participates in many diocesan activities. Becca Gardner grew up in the church and attended our expressive arts program. She began to lead its activities for teens six years ago and has become the Program Director of Art Empowers, organizing and supervising the team of adult leaders, directing each day's activities and handling myriad details. She also leads our church Youth Group, which combines fun and adventures, prayer and Bible study, and outreach projects. Becca is employed twenty hours a week by St. Elizabeth's as our Youth and Outreach Coordinator, organizing food and clothing giveaways, an annual community dinner, a blanket drive, etc. Three elder women in the church were active leaders in Art Empowers in earlier years, and several young adult women have risen up into leadership. Identifying and supporting lay leaders is a central part of our Vicar's ministry.

Another strength of the congregation and responsibility of the Vicar is communicating with our members, the reservation community and the wider church through texts, Facebook posts, the newsletter and other means. The newsletter is especially important in raising our visibility in the community—not only do we have an extensive mailing list, but every issue is reprinted in the Tribal newspaper. By sharing photos and stories of our many activities, we express how we're called by our faith to serve others and illustrate the impact of our missions. Email circulation of the newsletter shares our ministries throughout the diocese and across the national Indigenous Ministries network. A collection of past newsletters can be found on our website at [www.stelizabetsut.org](http://www.stelizabetsut.org).



Since  
2007

Three years ago, when we took the leap of committing to Becca's half-time salary, we expected to use \$10,000 from our savings every year to meet payroll expenses. However, through the variety of our communications, generous donors have arisen to limit our use of savings.



## Opportunities and Challenges

In the Bishop's Committee's recent discussion, these two aspects of the future seemed inseparable. On the one hand, our wonderful ministries and outward-looking spirit create an opportunity to invite and welcome new people into the worshipping congregation. At the same time, "belonging" doesn't seem the same after the pandemic, especially in a reservation community where trauma has an impact on every family. Having more neighborhood and community events involving fun and food seems like a way to draw people closer. We'd also like to keep expanding attendance in Art Empowers and our Youth Group and to take our Food Pantry and Clothing Room to another level of service. While the post-pandemic times and the nature of our community present challenges, we also see opportunities to build up participation in our worship and ministries and to continue making a difference in the lives of our neighbors.



# PARISH PROFILE

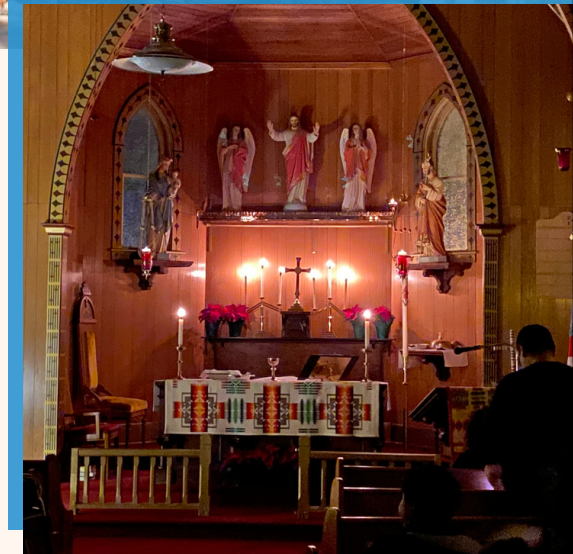
## Church of the Holy Spirit

Located in the very small town of Randlett, eight miles south of the Ute Tribe's headquarters in Fort Duchesne, Holy Spirit serves the southern half of the reservation community. (Both congregations have numerous members from Fort Duchesne.) Worship is celebrated in Randlett every Sunday afternoon at 1:00 pm and on holidays, following the Rite II liturgies of the Book of Common Prayer with music from the Hymnal. A potluck lunch is held on the first Sunday of every month, and there are usually children's activities on those days. We're proud of our sanctuary, which is listed on the National Historic Register, and of having its old shingles replaced this summer with a beautiful, metal roof. It's an expression of our commitment to continue serving this community for many years to come.

Like so many congregations, Holy Spirit is finding its way forward after being impacted by the pandemic. In the fall of 2022 we began sharing a priest with St. Elizabeth's, which has brought greater stability and improved pastoral relationships.

One exciting development has been a revival of outreach to our neighbors in need. When the new Vicar discovered that the Discretionary Fund hadn't been used for years and held a large balance, the Bishop's Committee decided to use those funds to give generous gift cards to families in need. Rather than selecting the recipients ourselves, we partnered with four local social service agencies with whom our members are connected. Each agency distributed five gift cards, and not only were the recipients grateful, but we were uplifted by knowing that we'd made a difference for them.

Building on that experience, this summer we focused on the Ute Tribe's Head Start program, offering backpacks and school supplies to all the students "graduating" to kindergarten. There turned out to be more than fifty, which was somewhat daunting, but after the Bishop's Committee approved the expenditures, we ordered a carload of materials and got help from nearby Episcopalians in assembling the packs. They were presented to the entire Head Start staff at a training session, and BC member Cheryl Pawwinnee received numerous calls of gratitude from the families. Once again, this raised our sense of what's possible, and we're considering plans for the next outreach project.



Holy Spirit has a long history of devoted, lay leadership by women whose personal mission has been to sustain the congregation. We're mourning the recent passing of Irene Cuch, a legendary tribal and national leader who served as our Bishop's Warden for seven years. She helped to bring Holy Spirit through the pandemic and a period of conflict, and the five members of our current Bishop's Committee are committed to working together in this time of transition. The outreach projects, festive summer potlucks in the park across the street and the beginnings of a children's program are hopeful signs for the future.

During the pandemic we were careful about our expenditures and were able to put away a substantial sum. Now the Bishop's Committee has invested a good part of our savings in buying a 2023 Chevy van! They see this opening up possibilities for outings for both adults and young people, for reviving the past practice of picking up people for church on Sunday, and for transportation for the priest. A great new beginning!

## Opportunities and Challenges

For many years, Holy Spirit has had a strong presence in the community, with numerous former members we haven't seen recently. This represents an opportunity to invite them to fellowship activities and to make home visits. Our Bishop's Committee recognizes that reconnecting with people is challenging once they get out of the habit of attending church, but we're committed to trying. In the past year we've started producing a newsletter, and almost by accident, we discovered that people at the Tribal offices enjoyed getting a copy. We'll continue this practice and plan to set up a website in the near future.



# Next Steps

In less than two years, Bishop Phyllis Spiegel has made two informal trips and three official visits to our congregations, as well as Zoom calls with both Bishop's Committees and numerous conversations with our Vicar. We're thankful for her strong involvement and support, and from those conversations we've all come to agree that the current arrangement of sharing the Vicar's time and salary expenses is working well. Both BC's say that their basic worship, pastoral and administrative needs are being met, and it's clear that outreach efforts are growing. Besides the natural pastoral and cultural connections between the two congregations, sharing a Vicar provides some financial savings at a time when the diocese is recognizing the limits of its ability to provide grant funding.

Our strongest prayer is that a priest who is spiritually-grounded, pastoral, open to learning and comfortable with all kinds of people will see this profile and feel a movement of the Spirit to explore the possibility of serving with us. We'll be delighted to welcome that person (and their family) and to introduce them to this unique community and its challenging opportunities. When asked eight years ago why he was drawn to come here, our Vicar said it was "to learn and grow and be of service." He says that all three of those goals have been fulfilled beyond his imagining, but now it's time for him and his wife to retire. We wait with wonder to see how the Spirit will be at work, drawing a new leader into our midst.

## Vicar Search Prayer

Gracious God, we're thankful for all that you are and for all you have done through St. Elizabeth's and Church of the Holy Spirit. We ask you now to draw us closer to you and to each other, as we search for a new priest. Open our hearts to trust in the guidance of your Holy Spirit. Bless the people of our churches with your power and purpose, and bless this holy work we're doing. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

## Financial Reports for 2023

### St. Elizabeth's

<u>Revenue</u>	
Plate	\$ 4,030
Pledge	17,508
Special Offerings	11,247
Diocesan Grant	122,713
Reimbursements (Art Emp.)	15,998
Total	\$171,496

<u>Expenses</u>	
Clergy Salary	\$ 82,548
Clergy Expenses	4,531
General Operating	11,041
Property	25,053
Improvements	1,795
Christian Ed	39,165
Hospitality	2,292
Pastoral Care	277
Worship	1,446
Outreach	5,486
Episcopal Support	6,388
Total	\$180,022

### Holy Spirit

<u>Revenue</u>	
Plate	\$ 2,782
Pledge	1,200
Diocesan Grant	42,816
Total	\$58,522

<u>Expenses</u>	
Clergy Salary	15,264
Clergy Expenses	2,451
Christian Ed	218
Property	13,574
Improvements	16,524
General Operating	11,580
Hospitality	2,823
Worship	535
Outreach	3,643
Episcopal Support	480
Misc.	2,477
Total	\$54,302

## Average Sunday Attendance for 2023

St. Elizabeth's 14 (Easter 50, Christmas Eve 52)  
Holy Spirit 12 (Easter 51, Christmas Eve 50)

Facebook Live weekly videos approx. 40 views per week (except during summer)  
(with Sunday's sermon and prayers, on Michael Carney's FB page)