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2026 St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church

Mission and Community Profile

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St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church

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https://www.stbartshighsprings.org

www.Facebook.com/stbartshighsprings

St. Bartholomew's Mission Statement

We are first and foremost disciples of Jesus Christ. We have been a continuously worshiping family of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ at our current location since the late 19th century, thanks to the grace and benevolence of our Triune God. We are members of and participate in the Episcopal communities of the Diocese of Florida, the Episcopal Church of the United States, and the world Anglican community. We provide support to the community of High Springs and surrounding areas with spiritual development and care. We recognize the importance of supporting families, their children, and youth through programs that teach Biblical values and the development of safe relationships and a safe place to be nurtured.

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Profile Summary

The people of St. Bartholomew's are faithful and generous with their time, talent, and treasures. We look forward to continuing our faith journey and building a vision that will lead us with our next rector.

High Springs balances growth with a strong, hometown focus. The city preserves its historic downtown character while remaining a beloved getaway for nature and antique enthusiasts.

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History of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church was one of the first churches built after the great storm of 1896, and is today the oldest church standing in High Springs with continuous services. The church property, two blocks from the center of town was deeded to the Protestant Episcopal Church on June 23, 1885. By George E. Foster.

Facing NW 238th Street, the church looks much like the other churches of the 1895-1900 era, painted white on the outside, with stained walls and open cathedral ceiling on the inside.

St. Bartholomew's was built in the Carpenter Gothic style designed and popularized by Richard Upjohn, an English architect who came to the United States in the early 1800's and specialized in the design of rural churches. The floor plan consists of a nave and transept, symbolizing the Cross of Calvary. The open ceiling with beams in view is made like that of an inverted ship. The tall windows were originally made of blown wavy glass.

The Reverend George Gilmour was probably the first priest to hold Episcopal services in High Springs. Nine communicants were worshipping with him in January 1885.

Two years later, in the just completed building, the congregation numbered fifty-seven, of whom twenty-seven had been confirmed.

On September 29, 1896, a hurricane roared in from the Gulf of Mexico near Cedar Key, spawning a tornado which severely damaged the City of High Springs and destroyed many stores, homes and churches.

English workmen were brought to High Springs to work on the railroad and these men, together with the townspeople, gathered after work and in their free time to cut and hew timbers from the storm-toppled pine trees. These timbers were used to construct the church, pews, altar rails, and altar.

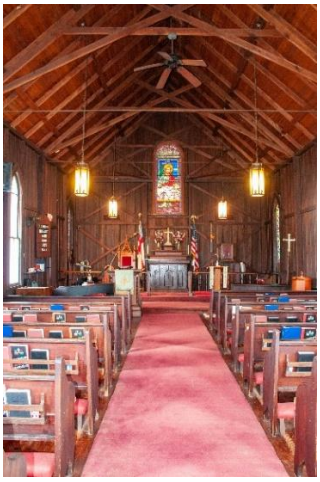
The women prepared and carried meals to the men at the worksite so they could work until darkness forced them to stop. The building housing St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church was valued at $365.00 upon completion. Following the hurricane, which almost blew the building over, steel rods were placed across the nave and a small sacristy was built joining the church at the transept to shore up the church and balance the building.

The two stained glass windows at the altar tilt into the church when open. These were given in memory of Mr. and Mrs. H.R. Dear by the Dear family in the late 1930's. The family came to High Springs from England when Mr. Dear was given an executive position at Loncala Phosphate.

The large window of Christ over the altar was taken from the scene of the Lord's Supper and was given in memory of the Vaughn's by their family in 1963. It was crafted and installed by German artists.

Heating and cooling of St. Bartholomew's was for many years dependent upon the weather. There was a small wood stove to the left of the entrance during the early years which provided heat in the winter. During the summer, windows were pushed up and the breeze cooled the congregation.

Bishop Edwin G. Weed (1886-1924) accepted the High Springs church as an organized mission on June 5, 1899.



Servants Hall

St. Bartholomew's mission hall, more commonly known as Servants Hall, was built in 2010 to not only serve our congregation but to serve the community. The hall has a nursery, Sunday school room, adult classroom, two offices, and a kitchen, along with the main hall.

Memorial Garden

St. Bartholomew's memorial garden was designed and completed July 2021 by Evergreen Lawn Care. All Florida Enterprises installed aluminum fencing with two gates.

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Who We Are (Our Congregation)

Worship Style: We are a traditionally liturgical, spirit-filled congregation that places high priority on weekly Eucharist. Our services are Rite ll, enhanced by dedicated lay readers and vocalists.

Demographics: We are an eclectic mix of long-time Episcopalians, retirees, young families, and those new to the faith. We value our multi-generational connections.

Parish Life: We are a highly social congregation that loves gathering for coffee hour, potlucks, and seasonal festive celebrations.

Education: We offer adult bible study on Wednesday, youth Sunday school, and fellowship events that help us grow together.

Average Sunday Attendance: 45-60

Average Pledge/Budget: $100,000 / year

Location: We are located in North Central Florida in the heart of High Springs historical district, serving a diverse community with easy access to I-75, Gainesville, airports and beaches.

Daughters of the King (DOK)

The Daughters of the King (DOK) chapter at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church in High Springs, Florida, is a dedicated community of 28 women bound by a lifelong vow of prayer, service, and evangelism. Operating within the historic Episcopal Diocese of Florida, these women actively support the spiritual growth of their parish family and the broader Alachua County community. Driven by their sacred motto, "For His Sake," the daughters engage in intentional intercessory prayer and hands-on ministries to fulfill their mission of making Jesus Christ known to others.

The Daughters of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church (affectionately known as St. Bart's) structure their spiritual lives around two primary pillars:

+ The Rule of Prayer: A commitment to daily, faithful intercession for the clergy, the intentions of the parish, and the needs of the surrounding High Springs Community.
+ The Rule of Service: Active involvement in strengthening parish ministries, Reinforcing family and youth initiatives, and fostering a welcoming, secure environment for worshipers.

Daughters of the King Outreach:

We delivered 43 bags of Thanksgiving meal ingredients with a New Testament and children's bible coloring books on November 13, 2025 to the High Springs Fire Department. The Fire Department then distributed the bags to families in NEED!

DOK also prepared and delivered Christmas gifts and cards to the residents of the area retirement homes.

Altar Guild:

St. Bartholomew's Altar Guild is a highly reliable and independent team of 5 dedicated volunteers. Members serve on a rotating schedule, ensuring the Sanctuary is prepared well in advance of all services. The guild operates under the direct liturgical oversight of the Vicar. While we maintain a consistent and dependable routine based on established mission customs, our members are highly adaptable and eager to align our practices with specific preferences, workflow, and the pastoral vision of our next Vicar.

Worship Music:

At St. Bartholomew's, the music ministry is a vital part of worship and an important piece of the congregation's spiritual formation. The Director of Music integrates sacred music into the liturgy, supporting the themes of the lectionary and seasons. The music ministry's main purpose is to lead congregational worship through singing, piano, and guitar, which enhances prayer, praise, and discipleship.

Sunday School:

Our children follow the St. Bart's Mission Statement: "Reaching Out and Welcoming All in the Love of Jesus Christ." We are a family, encouraging each other on our faith journey through prayer, fellowship, and learning together.

10 a.m. Sunday School (for children birth – 6th grade): This class is for those children who are not ready to sit through the church service. Our goal is to produce lifelong followers of Christ by teaching them stories from the Bible, showing them our faith traditions, and surrounding them with Jesus' love.

Outreach:

Annual 4th Grade Educational Tour

On Friday November 20th & 21st, 2025 the High Springs Museum made arrangements for the High Springs Community School 4th graders to do a history walking tour of the museum, City Hall, and St. Bartholomew's. Deacon Beverly Jones, along with Becky and Sam Tift, presented the history of St. Bartholomew's. There were approximately 100 students divided into 50 students each day. The 50 students were then divided into two groups of 25 to rotate between the museum and St. Bart's. The last group of 50 on Friday had lunch in the Mission Hall.

Annual Christmas Train Event

(Held in the Mission Hall)

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Train Event Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus

The Annual High Springs Christmas Parade

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St. Bartholomew's Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

reading of the lessons followed by the singing of a Christmas Carols.

Easter Sunday

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Our Community - (source: https://www.highsprings.gov)

High Springs is a charming city in Alachua County, roughly 20 miles northwest of Gainesville. Known as the "Gateway to the Springs," it is famous for its crystal-clear, 72-degree natural springs, historic downtown with antique shops, and proximity to major outdoor recreational parks along the Santa Fe River.

High Springs is the fourth-largest city in Alachua County and seventh-largest in North Central Florida. The population was 6,215 at the 2020 census, up from 5,350 at the 2010 census. It is part of the Gainesville, Florida Metropolitan Statistical Area. Gainesville International Airport (GNV) is approximately 25 miles from High Springs, located near the University of Florida.

High Springs is the ultimate refreshing getaway, offering a diverse range of opportunities for arts, antiques, and outdoor activities. Unwind at the local craft brewery or indulge in exceptional dining at restaurants featuring elevated menus that celebrate the region's flavors.

High Springs is known as the Gateway to the Springs: Ginnie Springs, Blue Springs, Poe Springs, and more. The Ichetucknee River and Santa Fe River connect with the Suwanee River which flows to the Gulf of America. Our city is the ideal launching point for exciting paddling, snorkeling, and swimming adventures where you can discover Florida's hidden treasures in the local natural beauty. https://www.visitflorida.com/places-to-go/north-central/high-springs/

Schools:

Families with children are served by the Alachua County Public School District.

High Springs Community School offers a quality education program to grades Pre-K thru 8th grade. High Springs Community School has primarily been an "A" school and being in the top 50 combination schools in the state of Florida.

First Christian Academy is a private, faith-based school serving Pre-K through 12th grade.

High school students in High Springs, Fl. are zoned to attend Santa Fe High School, located about 5 miles south east of High Springs in Alachua, Florida.

Key Demographics

The population of High Springs, Florida is approximately 6,500 to 7,200 residents, with the U.S. Census Bureau recording over 6,500 people. Situated in Alachua County, the city is a growing community within the Gainesville metropolitan area.

Key Demographic & Growth Metrics:

- **Population Estimate:** Ranges from 6,544 (Census) to 6,800+ (Demographic estimates).
- **Growth Rate:** Growing at an annual rate of about 1.82%, up roughly 10% from the 2020 Census.
- **Median Age:** Approximately 38 to 40 years.
- **Racial & Ethnic Breakdown:** The population is primarily White (approx. 69%), followed by Black/African American (14%), and Hispanic (12%) residents.
- **Median Household Income:** $94,421
  Per Capita Income: $38,952
- **Median Home Sale Price:** Approximately $321,000
  Median Monthly Rent: $1,800 to $2,000