

Messiah (Winter Garden)

TYPE	DIOCESE	NAME
Congregation	Central Florida	

TYPES OF WORK	POSITION TITLE/ROLE
Full Time	Rector/Priest-in-Charge

ROLE SUMMARY/DESCRIPTION

The following qualities, drawn from our Parish Survey and Focus Groups, reflect the collective aspirations of our congregation for our next Rector.

- Spiritual Leadership: Someone who wholeheartedly follows Christ, is devoted to prayer, affirms the inerrancy of Scripture and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, remains faithful to the Great Commission, and demonstrates fiscal responsibility.
- Adaptability and Delegation: An open-minded leader who is willing to delegate, serves as a theological generalist rather than focusing narrowly on specific topics, and is able to engage with individuals across all life stages and circumstances-from children to grieving widows/widowers, and from financial matters to encouraging congregational participation in both minor and major initiatives.
- Supportive Partnership: If married, the Rector’s spouse should be supportive and aligned the the ministry.
- Effective Communication: A great communicator who remains steadfast in scriptural integrity, is unafraid to address contemporary social and cultural issues, possesses an outgoing nature, and demonstrates sound business acumen.
- Pastoral Excellence: Someone who loves Jesus as Savior and Lord, embodies the role pastor, and is a godly preacher and teacher.
- Role Summary: With the blessing of Bishop Justin Holcomb, when we call the priest God chooses to be our next Rector, he or she, along with Fr. Tom Rutherford will serve as Co-Rector for a period of time. During this time together as Co-Rectors, Fr. Tom will turn over more and more responsibilities to our chosen Rector. This could take a month or two, or maybe longer. It will be at the discretion of the new Rector to decide how long this process last.

CURRENT STATUS	RECEIVING NAMES FROM	TO
Beginning search	03/30/2026	05/11/2026

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please contact Canon Dan Smith, Canon for the Ordinary, for more information regarding this position.
 Email: dsmith@cfdiocese.org
 Phone: 314-537-4948

CANDIDATE NARRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

4. How have you experienced and addressed conflict in ministry?, 5. What has been your experience leading change in the Church?, 10. What theological convictions shape your ministry?, 13. What is a ministry risk you've taken, and what came of it?, 15. How do you take care of your well-being-spiritually, emotionally, and physically?

CONTACT

NAME	Canon Dan Smith
ROLE	Canon to the Ordinary
ORGANIZATION	Diocese of Central Florida
PHONE NUMBER	314-537-4948
EMAIL ADDRESS	dsmith@cfdiocese.org

POSITION DETAILS

ORDERS OF MINISTRY

Priest

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Southeast

WORK ENVIRONMENT

In Person

MINISTRY SETTING

Urban

PAROCHIAL REPORT DATA	
<u>AVG. SUNDAY ATT.</u>	<u>ANNUAL BUDGET</u>
280	1247397

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW NARRATIVE

As of March 2026, COTM is debt free. Our 4.6 million dollar mortgage was paid off in 20 years. During the past few years we have painted the outside of the facility, gotten a new roof, re-landscaped and installed several new air conditioners. With that said, there are other updates needed and we are planning for these.

FINANCIAL RESOURCE TYPE None

STIPEND, HOUSING, AND BENEFITS

COMPENSATION/SALARY DETAIL

RANGE \$100,001 - \$125,000

DETAILS

Negotiable with Diocesan guidelines.

HOUSING/RECTORY TYPE

TYPE OF HOUSING PROVIDED Cash Stipend

DETAILS

No Rectory provided.

SECA REIMBURSEMENT DETAIL

REIMBURSEMENT OFFERED Half

DETAILS

SECA Reimbursement offered: Half

MEDICAL & PENSION BENEFITS DETAIL

PENSION PLAN

In compliance
with CPF
requirements

HEALTHCARE OPTIONS

Clergy +1

DETAILS

Pension: in compliance with CPF requirements. Healthcare Options: currently clergy +1 with dental

VACATION, CONTINUING EDUCATION, AND OTHER BENEFITS

VACATION & LEAVE DETAILS

4 weeks

CONTINUING EDUCATION DETAILS

2 weeks, budget negotiable

SABBATICAL PROVISION DETAILS

Yes

TRAVEL/AUTO ACCOUNT DETAILS

Yes, budget is negotiable

EQUIPMENT/PHONE DETAILS

OTHER BENEFITS OR COMMENTS

DIOCESAN COMPENSATION INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE)

FORMAT None

MINISTRY CONTEXT AND DESIRED SKILLS

WHAT ARE YOUR COMMUNITY'S HOPES FOR THIS POSITION?

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Adaptive Leadership, Administration, Change Management, Conflict Management, Congregational Development

MINISTRY SKILLS

Children & Family Formation, Church Growth, Pastoral Care, Prayer & Spirituality, Preaching, Scripture Study, Spiritual Direction, Teaching, Worship & Liturgy, No Politics

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?

To Change the world with Jesus: one child, one person, one family, one community at a time. To that end we pray, work and seek unchurched people who are spiritually hungry and committed Christians ready to serve.

- Change the World-No smaller goal is acceptable.
- With Jesus- Jesus said, "Without me you can do nothing."
- One Child- Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me."
- One Person- People are our priority.
- One Family-We all have the same father.
- One Community-Jesus transforms our community through us.
- At a Time- Because time is short, we "continually press on toward the goal."

To that end

- We pray-Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on the Messiah family; so guide the minds of those who shall choose a Co-Rector for this parish, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; and prepare us also to receive them as a gift of your love for us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
- Work-We "offer our bodies as living sacrifices" to do the good works God has prepared beforehand for us to do.
- Seek- Unchurched and spiritually hungry
- Those committed to serve- Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labors are few. Pray for the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the field.

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?

To be a Roundabout with lots of ways in and lots of ways out.
 We travel together as a Parish Family, Loving God, Loving our Neighbors, Loving one Another.
 We focus on building ways for children, families and community to come into the roundabout.
 We invite our community to travel our roundabout with us.

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.

The Church of the Messiah offers a dynamic, year-long ministry program called Messiah's Way, designed to help individuals discover their unique gifts and calling with our church community. With 30 ministries and multiple aspects within the ministries, members can explore a wide range of ministries—from serving as a Lay Eucharistic Minister or as a Lay Weeder (landscape/grounds team), help in the kitchen and beyond. Our Prayer Chain always ranks #1 in volunteers. The program emphasizes ministry rather than volunteering. Your commitment is for one church year, and the next year you can volunteer for the same ministry or try something new. This spirit of engagement has led to an astounding 80% participation rate among COTM members, reflecting a vibrant and deeply connected faith community.

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.

COTM provides a diverse range of worship experiences throughout the week, catering to various spiritual preferences and needs. Additionally, COTM embraces its diverse community with a Haitian Creole service, allowing worship in a culturally relevant language. A Wednesday healing service is also available. There's something for everyone at COTM.

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.

Our approach to cultural identity and inclusion is rooted in a commitment to two core pillars: a welcoming posture and the consistent, central preaching of the Gospel. We believe that every person, regardless of their cultural background, history, or personal identity, is created in the image of God and is therefore worthy of dignity, respect, love and a warm welcome into our community. We strive to be a space where anyone can walk through our doors and experience the kindness of a neighborly church. While everyone is invited to belong to our community and hear the Word, we maintain traditional biblical standards. We believe that the most inclusive act we can perform is the clear and unapologetic preaching of the Gospel. In our view, the Gospel is the great equalizer—it proclaims that every human being, regardless of their cultural identity, shares the same fundamental need for grace and the same access to redemption through Jesus Christ.

- Unity in Christ: We focus on an identity found in Christ that transcends ethnic, social, or cultural markers.
- Transformation: Our preaching emphasizes that the Gospel does not leave us as we are; it calls everyone to repentance and spiritual growth.
- Clarity: By sticking to the text of the Bible, we aim to provide a consistent moral and spiritual compass that remains steady despite shifting cultural tides.

MINISTRY MEDIA AND LINKS

Church Website	https://churchofthemessiah.com/
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/churchofthemessiahwg/
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/cotm_wg/
Youtube	https://www.youtube.com/@COTMWG

NARRATIVES

1. Describe your congregation's/diocese's theology or spiritual identity.

Reflect on key moments or experiences that have shaped or challenged your congregation's theological understanding or self-identity.

We are a worshipping community and place great importance on caring for our spiritual well-being by worshipping together. Throughout the week, numerous small groups, both clergy and lay-led offer opportunities for deeper connection and spiritual growth. Daughters of the King, Brotherhood of St. Andrew and Book Club are just a few examples. The Peace at Messiah, nurtures or spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being during every service. The Peace is a lively and heartfelt expression of community-hugs and handshakes are the norm, while staying in your pew is not. We come together monthly for Women's dinners, where we share fellowship, food and friendship.

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?

One of COTM's greatest successes is its strong commitment to mentoring and nurturing those discerning a call to ordained ministry. Currently we have a parishioner who was ordained recently to the Transitional Diaconate, another in the final stages of earning a Master of Divinity degree. Last year, COTM joyfully celebrated the completion of a three year mentorship with a newly ordained priest, who has now accepted a position at another parish. In addition, two more individuals are currently in the discernment, and we are mentoring yet another who was recently ordained to the Transitional Diaconate with a year long mentorship.

3. What is a ministry risk your congregation/diocese has taken, and what came of it?

Reflect on a time your community stepped out of its comfort zone to meet a new need or respond creatively to a challenge.

We recently launched a new outreach ministry called Community Suppers. This initiative is designed to nourish both body and soul by providing free meals for those who are hungry, along with the warmth of fellowship and connection. Each Sunday evening a warm meal is offered along with the opportunity for friendship, conversation and encouragement. Also included is a one-minute reflection on a passage of scripture.

6. In what ways is your congregation/diocese engaged in the wider Church or local community?

Whether through diocesan leadership, ecumenical partnerships, civic involvement, or community organizing, describe how your congregation serves beyond its own walls.

COTM plays an active role in the wider church through the dedicated service of both clergy and lay leaders. Clergy from COTM have served the Diocese in significant leadership positions, including as President of the Diocesan Standing Committee, serving on The Commission on Ministry, and have contributed to the spiritual formation of others by teaching in Diocese's Institute for Christian Studies. Clergy also participates in The West Orange Ministerial Association serving the broader community in Winter Garden. Lay members of COTM have also taken part in the national convention, Standing Committee and Commission on Ministry. We currently have four individuals in the discerning process and preparing for ordination as priest or deacons. Additionally, Messiah serves as a training ground for new and inexperienced clergy, who are mentored by our seasoned pastoral team.

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.

In March of 2026, COTM celebrated a significant milestone-the complete payoff of its mortgage. We are debt-free! This marks an exciting new chapter filled with opportunity and financial freedom. Stewardship continues to be an integral part of Messiah's Way program, where members faithfully pledge their annual contributions in support of the church's mission and ministries. At COTM, clergy leadership in stewardship is viewed as essential-not passive-setting the tone for generosity, accountability and faithful management of resources. With strong leadership and shared commitment, COTM is well positioned to dream boldly and invest wisely in God's work for years to come.

10. How has your congregation/diocese experienced and addressed conflict?

Conflict is part of communal life. Tell us about a time your congregation faced it and how you responded - what did you learn?

Like many faith communities, COTM has experienced moments of conflict. In response, our leadership chose the path of patience, grace and carefully listening. Clergy and lay leaders made themselves available to hear from all sides recognizing that open dialogue is essential to healing and understanding. Leadership acted prayerfully and deliberately, taking steps they believed necessary to address the situation while maintaining confidentiality and compassion. Most importantly, they avoided broadcasting any embarrassing or hurtful feedback, ensuring the dignity of every individual involved was respected. When handled in the way, COTM was reminded that conflict, when handled with humility and care, can strengthen the bonds of community and deepen our understanding of grace and forgiveness.

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.

At COTM, our experience in leading and addressing change has taught us the importance of thoughtful communication, patience, and prayerful discernment. Change has gone particularly well when it has been introduced gradually, with clear explanations and opportunities for parishioners to ask questions and feel included in the process. For example, Messiah's Way and Community Suppers succeeded because leadership invited feedback, celebrated small milestones, and emphasized how each change aligned with our shared mission. Not every change has been easy, but transparency and listening have proven just as important as action. Decisions made by our Vestry must have unanimous consent. If there isn't consensus, we pause, pray and revisit the next month. If it is truly God's plan, its worth waiting for.

14. Has your congregation/diocese participated in or hosted multilingual or cross-cultural worship?

Reflect on your experiences engaging with linguistic or cultural diversity in liturgy or community life.

We have a Haitian Associate Priest who has a French/Creole service every week. In addition, some of these parishioners are on the Vestry and are involved in the body of the church.