



The Episcopal School of Knoxville

School Chaplain

August 2025



About ESK:



The Episcopal School of Knoxville (ESK) is an independent, co-educational day school that offers academic excellence and character training to ages 3 through Eighth Grade. ESK offers an interdisciplinary, college-preparatory curriculum; many interscholastic activities; performing and fine arts; world languages; a unique “Acorns to Oaks” environmental science program; design thinking practices; and a full, inclusive athletic program. The school offers a faith-based environment with roots in the Episcopal denomination and a commitment to being an inclusive community that respects all students and their beliefs.

Situated on 96 acres of pristine, rolling wooded farmland in Knoxville, Tennessee, the natural environment of ESK provides a place where every day is filled with new discoveries; where the enthusiastic and formally trained faculty are attentive, creative, instructive, and supportive, and where learning is an act of great joy. It is the place where Faith, Knowledge, and Culture intersect. ESK challenges students to excel, both academically and socially, through solid educational goals and in an environment that teaches kindness, compassion, and consideration of others. The faculty, administrative staff, and parents of ESK strive to make a positive impact on the world- one student at a time.

Our Mission

The mission of The Episcopal School of Knoxville is to prepare students for higher education and a lifetime of learning within the context of a loving, inclusive and family-centered community. We enrich our students' intellectual, physical, cultural, and spiritual growth so that they may realize their potential as children of God and citizens of the world.

At a Glance:

- Current Enrollment: 420 (JK3-8th)
- Student-Teacher Ratio: 9:1
- Average Class Size: 18
- Faculty/Staff: 86
- Faculty with Advanced Degrees: 55%
- Lower School: Grades JK3-4th
- Middle School: Grades 5th-8th
- Chapel Services: 5 days/week
- Episcopalian Student Population: 27%
- Member of National Association of Episcopal Schools



FAITH – KNOWLEDGE – CULTURE



TRIBES:

The climate at ESK is one where students feel safe, accepted, and supported in their learning pathways. All faculty and staff are trained in **Tribes Learning Communities** to better facilitate and promote this healthy culture. Tribes serve as the framework to the school's discipline policy, and students pledge to live by **The Tribes Agreements:**

- Mutual Respect
- The Right to Pass
- Attentive Listening
- Appreciations/No Put Downs
 - Let Go and Move On
 - Honesty



Blessing of the Pets

The Position:

The Episcopal School of Knoxville seeks a dynamic and approachable Episcopal priest to be its next School Chaplain. Reporting to the Head of School and serving on the senior administrative team, the Chaplain oversees and promotes the spiritual culture of the school, leads the school in daily chapel, integrates the religious instruction, and oversees the service-learning program. As an ambassador of the school's mission and Episcopal identity, the Chaplain is a warm and welcoming figure who embraces the diverse backgrounds within the school family, as well as the school's vision for excellence in Faith, Knowledge, and Culture.

The Chaplain exhibits energy and excitement for spiritual nourishment throughout the educational program. Chapel is celebrated daily with three services: Lower School (8:00); JK (8:45); and Middle School (10:30). All students and faculty attend one of the three 15-min services, and families and friends are a welcomed addition at our community time for song, lessons, and prayer. Eucharist is celebrated monthly, and special services including, Blessing of the Pets (a community favorite), All Saints' Day, Christmas (of course), MLK Day, Kindness Week, Ash Wednesday, and Holy Week, all add to the life culture of the school. The Chaplain orchestrates the calendar of services and religious observations throughout the year.

The Chaplain oversees the religious curriculum and participates in religious instruction. Connecting the teaching of the Old and New Testaments to the values and social dynamics promoted at the school, the religious instruction is a good support for the school's culture for community. Since its beginning, the school has been grounded in the teachings and practices of Tribes Learning Communities and Artistry for Learning. This offers a wonderful and practical opportunity for students to apply and understand the teachings of the Episcopal faith in a real-world environment.

ESK is a firm believer in community stewardship to prepare young "citizens of the world and children of God". The Chaplain coordinates the service-learning program and helps orchestrate community partnerships and service projects, both direct and indirect, at each grade level.

Finally, our Chaplain leads the school community in pastoral care and supports an "open door" for students, their families, faculty, and staff to seek assistance and support in their spiritual growth and attention. The Chaplaincy is a full-time position based on the 10-month employee calendar (summers off) and is accompanied by a competitive benefits package including medical insurance, contribution to the Church Pension Fund, and discounted tuition.

The Successful Candidate will:

- Possess a love and understanding for children of all ages
- Demonstrate outstanding listening and communication skills
- Possess an advanced degree in divinity
- Embrace the principles that distinguish Episcopal education as articulated by the National Association of Episcopal Schools
- Serve as a transitional Deacon or Ordained Priest in the Episcopal Church

Strategic Priorities for the next Chaplain:



- Cultivate a strong rapport with students, their parents, and faculty, while embracing the diverse backgrounds within the school family
- Deliver a ministry to our school families and friends who turn to ESK for their spiritual needs
- Develop and implement a calendar of spiritual events that connect our mission pillars of Faith, Knowledge, and Culture
- Assess and align the JK-8th curriculum of religious instruction to the school's academic program
- Demonstrate organizational skills and a collaborative work style
- Serve as a leader in the school's promotion of service learning
- Foster our child-focused community through creativity and an openness of mind
- Monitor and steward the religious program and the Episcopal identity as the school undergoes its exciting growth in enrollment and expansion of facilities

Service Learning: Through ESK's service-learning curriculum, we help students develop a meaningful understanding of community stewardship. Each grade engages in both on-site and in-the-field initiatives including:

- **Kindergarten-** Pet Food Drive to support Lambs Ministry
- **1st Grade-** Holiday Bureau Toy Drive
- **2nd Grade-** Fish Pantry Canned Food Drive
- **3rd Grade-** School Store to benefit Grace Point
- **4th Grade-** Jazzy Jars and bake sale to support the Love Kitchen
- **5th-8th Grades-** conduct multiple service-learning days in the community to assist community partners including, Mobile Meals, Beck Cultural Center, Karm, Operation Backyard, 2nd Harvest Foodbank, Morning Pointe, and Volunteer Ministry



The Religious Program:

All students receive religious instruction through their enrichment classes and daily chapel. While ESK's environment is welcoming of all faiths, our religious education classes follow the teachings and lessons of Christianity and Episcopal traditions. We want our students to feel connected to their own community and to the world at large. Our Chaplain steers the religious education program so that students have a worldly and educated approach to these connections.

Lower School:

JK3 & JK4- Our 3- and 4-year-olds learn about God through stories, song, and prayer during their daily chapel time.

K-4th Grade- Students begin making connections to the lessons of the Old & New Testaments through Godly Play's meaningful storytelling, song, and class discussions, as they relate to the liturgical seasons. The Tribes learning Communities also plays a dominant theme in our guidance portion of the class, as it provides the foundation and common language established through the Tribes Agreements. Finally, in support of our mission to develop "citizens of the world", the K-4 religious studies introduce students to the other denominations and religions that exist in cultures from around the world through scripture, folk tales, and other media.

Middle School- The 5th-8th religious program is a continuation of the K-4th studies and emphasizes a development of "world citizens" through a topical survey of the following:

- **5th Grade-** Hebrew Bible
- **6th Grade-** New Testament
- **7th Grade-** World Religions
- **8th Grade-** Ethics

Each class explores its subject through readings and discussions of primary sources. Students are encouraged to ask tough questions and to enjoy the process of achieving a deeper awareness of the rich and complex history of the Bible, world religions, and human morality.

Campus Master Plan:

Since 2020, ESK has been blessed with a healthy growth in enrollment, and under its new strategic plan will add an additional section to each grade (K-8th). The school has contracted the services of a local architect firm who has submitted plans for facility expansion, including a signature chapel building at the center of campus. This exciting growth extends the opportunity for the new Chaplain to oversee the expansion of the religion department and Episcopal support to the ESK community.



Phase 3 of the expansion plan will include a 450-seat Chapel venue.

The City of Knoxville:

Located in the Eastern section of the state between the Great Smoky Mountains and the Cumberland Plateau, Knoxville is Tennessee's third largest city. It is a thriving community currently experiencing significant revitalization. Downtown Knoxville is anchored by the Tennessee River and features a beautiful downtown riverfront park. The city's many museums and performing arts venues make it a thriving cultural center. The historic Market Square District boasts fine dining, shopping, and entertainment.

Knoxville's unique topography and well-developed infrastructure make it a prime location for industry, while large employers like the Oak Ridge National Laboratory and the University of Tennessee further strengthen the region's economy. This economic strength enables Knoxville's "Innovation Valley" to position itself as an area with one of the best employment outlooks in the nation. The city is often cited as one of the most affordable places to live in the US and has gained recognition from Forbes and Kiplinger's as a great place to live and do business.

Forty miles Southeast of Knoxville, Great Smoky Mountains National Park provides plentiful opportunities for outdoors enthusiasts. However, Greater Knoxville itself is filled with abundant green space- parks, greenways, and gardens throughout the area.

To Apply:

Candidates should provide:

- Letter of interest with qualifications for this position
- Complete resume with previous positions and responsibilities
- Statement of Educational Philosophy
- Five references with contact information

Please send materials and direct any questions to:

Dr. Jack Talmadge
Head of School

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Timelines:

Material Submission by Jan. 11
Interviews Begin Jan. 20
Finalist Visits Feb. 10-28

ESK is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to complying with all applicable laws providing equal employment opportunities to individuals and makes employment decisions on the basis of merit, qualifications, potential and competency.

