

Mural Project / Christ the King Episcopal Church (110-112 McKey Street)

The location for the mural is on the northern outside wall of Christ the King Episcopal Church, immediately adjacent to Mack's Park in downtown Valdosta.

Background information:

- Christ the King Episcopal Church: Until 2020, the location for Christ the King Church was 101 E Central Avenue. This was also the location for Hildegard's, a café that often served as a venue for music and art shows. (Today, a boutique hotel and the Gūd Coffee House are located at 101 E Central Avenue.)
 - o In 2021, the building at 101 E Central Avenue was sold and a new building for our church was acquired at 110-112 McKey Street. (This location used to house the Southern Georgia Regional Computer Center.)

- Mack's Park: In the Spring of 2002, downtown Valdosta received a new landmark with Mack's Park. This park was dedicated in honor of William "Mack" Freeman, the former owner of the Flower Gallery, who was a prominent member of the downtown area and Valdosta's LGBTQ community.
 - o The park contains a sculpture by Wilby Coleman ("Unarranged Flowers: Where is Mack now that we need him?")
 - o In 2005, the northern outside wall of the building, that now houses Christ the King Episcopal Church, received a mural that was called "Field of Dreams" (sometimes also referred to as "Mack's Secret Garden"). The old mural, which was done by the VSU student Sarah Lippincott in 2005, has been painted over in preparation for our new mural.



Image of the area and wall from 2002



Image of the area and wall from 2023

Specifics of the Mural Project:

- To proceed with the mural project, the wall's stucco had to be repaired in some areas and its entire surface cleaned and primed.
- The mural project covers the northern outside wall of the church's building.
- The mural will display portraits of the following individuals:
 - o [Saint Anna Alexander](#), who has been a Saint of the Diocese of Georgia since 1998.
 - o [John Lewis](#), nationally well-known civil rights leader from Georgia.
 - o [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#), internationally known civil rights leader and Georgia native.
 - o [Howard Thurman](#), author, theologian, and civil rights leader.
 - o [Marsha P. Johnson](#), nationally known LGBTQ rights activist.
 - o Also depicted on the wall will be a tree with a female body that represents [Mary Turner](#), a victim of the 1918 Georgia lynching rampage, plus a portrait of [Ahmaud Arbery](#), who was lynched in February 2020. Moreover, portraits of [Harriet Tubman](#), [Maya Angelou](#), and [Malcom X](#) will appear on the wall, alongside an image of Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama.
- Weaving across the mural is a rainbow-colored ribbon which in one area displays notes and lyrics from the [Billy Holiday](#) song "Strange Fruit" ("Southern trees bear strange fruit" / lyrics are from the Jewish-American immigrant Abel Meeropol).
- The mural project received the support of Valdosta's Public Art Advisory Committee and the Historic Preservation Commission.
- Once the mural is done, a display board with QR codes will be installed, so that visitors can learn more about the people depicted on it.

General design of the mural:



Artists are [Taylor Shaw](#) (former VSU professor) and [A'Shadrian Clayton](#) (VSU student).