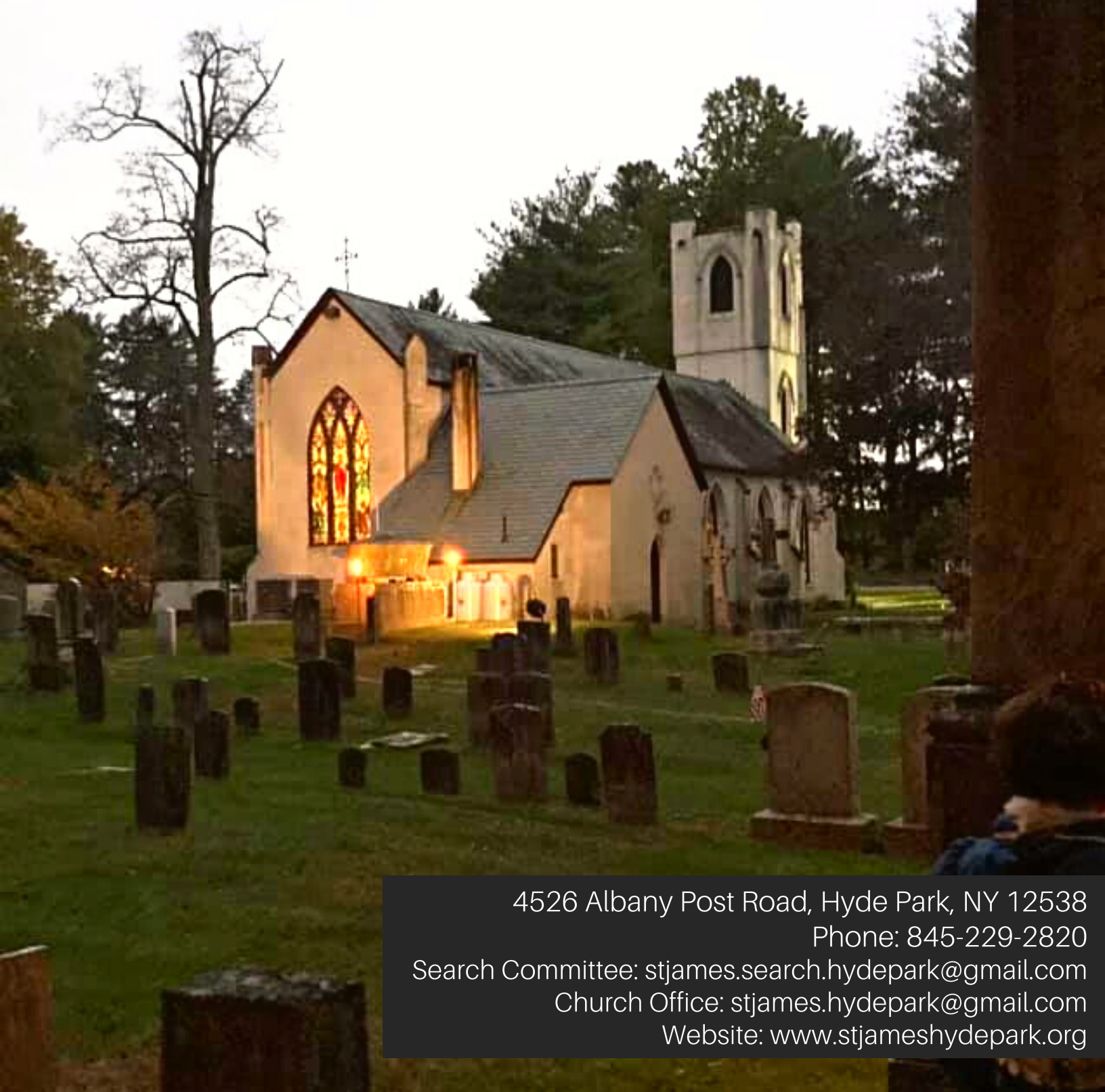


St. James' Episcopal Church

2022 Parish Profile



4526 Albany Post Road, Hyde Park, NY 12538

Phone: 845-229-2820

Search Committee: stjames.search.hydepark@gmail.com

Church Office: stjames.hydepark@gmail.com

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Welcome to St. James'

Nestled in a grove of pines, St. James' along with its rectory is conveniently located in the mid-Hudson Valley ninety minutes north of Manhattan, south of Albany, west of the Berkshires, and only a minute's walk from the grounds of the Vanderbilt National Historic Park Site with its panoramic views of the magnificent Hudson River.

The Town of Hyde Park in Dutchess County is a small bedroom community numbering some 21,000 people, and interconnected by a network of hiking trails that highlight both our scenic beauty and historic significance. In addition to our neighboring Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site, the town also is home to the F.D. Roosevelt Home and Presidential Library including Top Cottage and Val-kill, and the acclaimed Culinary Institute of America. Nearby Marist and Vassar Colleges to our south, Bard College to our north, and SUNY New Paltz and Holy Cross Monastery across the river to our west all provide additional sources of enrichment making for dynamic cultural opportunities rich in learning and the arts.



For the outdoor enthusiasts, in the winter there is skiing, both downhill and cross-country, sledding, and ice skating. Our milder months open up possibilities for kayaking on the Hudson, golf, swimming... The Shawangunk Mountains in Ulster County provide rock climbing and hiking opportunities, while on this side of the river the bicyclist or casual hiker has access to the Dutchess County Rail Trail. With over thirteen miles of shared trails, it forms part of the Empire State Trail and is connected to the Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park, the world's longest pedestrian elevated bridge spanning 1.28 miles over the river.

For history buffs, mansions up and down the river banks provide a peek into the gilded age, or into the homes of inventors and artists like Samuel Morse's Locust Grove and Frederic Church's Olana. And then there is St. James' itself, very much connected to the lives of those who made their homes along the river like the Bards, the Vanderbilts, the Mills, the Rogers, and of course the Roosevelt family. It was through Dr. Samuel Bard's effort and donation of land that St. James' was consecrated on October 10, 1811. It has been said a look into our past reads like a Who's Who in Early American History. And one might say this pattern continues into present day. Many books have been written, the most recent being, *LIVING FAITH, A History of Saint James' Parish* by our now retired pastor, The Rev. Chuck Kramer. St. James' was featured in Ken Burns' documentary on the Roosevelts.



Because St. James is a historic church, parishioners are stewards of a living history that informs our contemporary mission. We are a small but vibrant community, approximately 120 families, making up in ingenuity and enthusiasm for what we lack in numbers. We devote our energies and endeavor, with God's help, to live fully as an embodiment of our mission statement.

Our Mission Statement

"To know Christ and make him known..." to "proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ" and to "seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as ourselves. We believe that God's Holy Spirit will empower us to express this mission in the following particular ways."

Worship/Spiritual Nurture

We of St. James', "By worshipping God regularly, sharing the Body and Blood of Christ in communion with God and each other and participating in other activities for spiritual nurture such as prayer groups and retreats" do undertake the following.

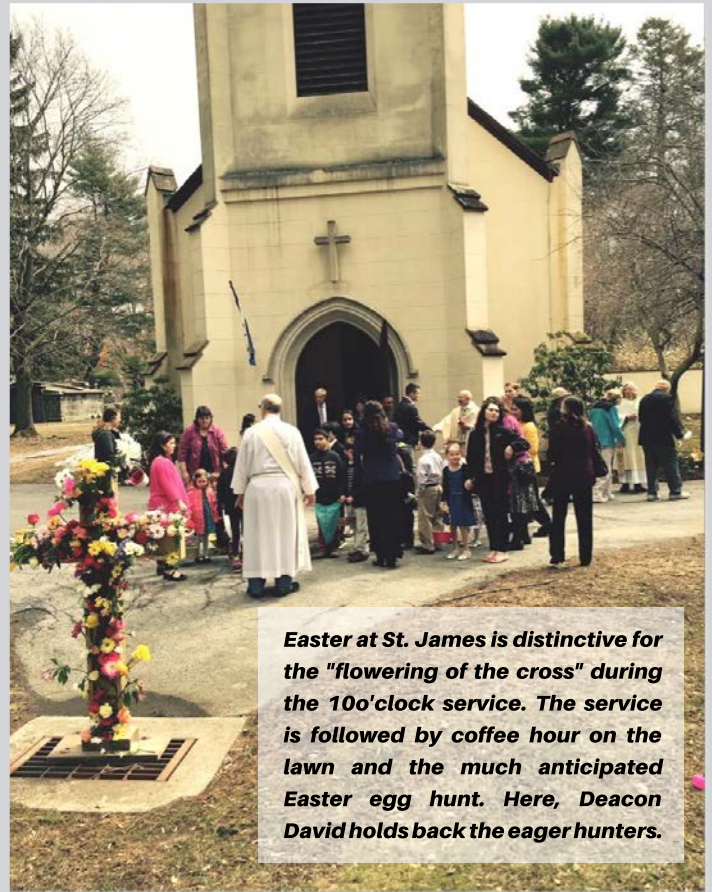


We're a BCP observant church with two services on Sunday mornings, Rite I Eucharist at 8:00 and Rite II Eucharist at 10:00. We "make a joyful noise unto the Lord," whether through Doug Belding and his acoustic guitar at the eight o'clock service, or through the combined efforts of Glenn May, Minister of Music, along with a modest choir at the ten o'clock service. However, due to Covid constraints in 2021, our choir was replaced by cantors.

In addition to regular Sunday worship, we hold Evening Prayer on Wednesday Evenings, and Compline on Saturday evenings. During the height of the pandemic when the church was closed to in-person worship, we also held Evening Prayer Monday through Friday and Compline on Saturday. We are fortunate to have state of the art camera and sound equipment enabling us to live stream our services on Zoom, Facebook, and YouTube.



We have several spiritual retreat centers within a ten to thirty minute drive from the church, and have taken advantage of their offerings whether it be a half day or an entire weekend. Under Father Chuck Kramer, the Lenten Meditation booklets became an annual favorite way for parishioners to share elements of their spiritual life. Originally they appeared only as paper booklets, issued on Ash Wednesday. In recent years, one could either pick up a booklet or sign up to receive a meditation per day via email. "Ashes-to-go" has been well received at a local cafe. On Good Friday, St. James' priest, deacons, and parishioners, together with pastors, deacons, and congregants from the other local churches, come together in what is known as The Good Friday Community Walk of the Cross. Taking turns as able, participants share shouldering St. James' heavy wooden cross, processing in prayer through the village of Hyde Park.



Outreach



As a parish, we celebrate the opportunity to serve "...the poor, hungry and needy of this community and the world, in person where possible, with money where necessary and by explicitly inviting our community into our church to share the Good News of Christ." In the tradition of Eleanor Roosevelt, we "think globally but act locally." In April of 2012, in honor of long-time parishioner and social activist Allelu Kurten, ground was broken for a 30x40 foot plot community garden to feed the hungry. Today, Allelu's garden has grown into a 90x180 foot plot with 28 gardeners ranging in age from 5 to 73. The gardeners enjoy the fruits of their labor in addition to supplying enough fresh fruits, vegetables, and flowers for the 125 families who regularly visit the Hyde Park Food Pantry.

Each December we hold a home-made cookie and candy sale with the proceeds going to help fund our signature holiday efforts, the providing of Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets and children's Christmas gifts for 25 families. The lion's share of funding for this comes from our annual Mothers' Day Tea Room, but due to Covid restrictions, this year the tea was not possible.



In its place, the Outreach Committee invented The Vanderbilt View Emporium, a successful monthly outdoor flea market replete with live music, food trucks, and a white elephant table. We've established and oversee the St. James' Reading Adventures Program for first graders at one of our local elementary schools. Identified by their teachers as needing remedial help, on a weekly basis the children read one-on-one with volunteers from St. James' and other community members. We are hoping to return once the threat of Covid has abated.

We are part of the Rural and Migrant Ministry, which advocates for and supports rural and migrant workers and their families. In 2021, we provided enough school materials to fill 48 backpacks.

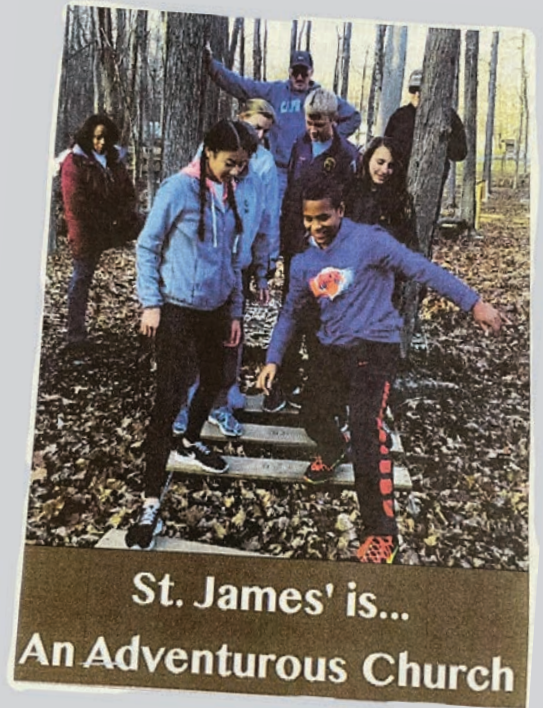
We assist Meals on Wheels, Hudson River Housing (homeless shelters) and Grace Smith House (aiding victims of domestic violence.)



Thinking globally, we support Episcopal Charities and Episcopal Relief and Development. In 2017 St. James' began its multi-layered support of the NY Haiti Project, integrating this mission work into our parish through the sharing of informative displays and discussions, Sunday School activities, and fund raising. This past year we were able to raise and donate five thousand dollars toward aid for the families of Matel, Haiti.

Youth

We welcome "...young people into this church to teach them the Good News of Jesus Christ and to share that love with them as active members of our Community of Faith" by providing age-appropriate opportunities. Our nursery school is entering its 59th year of serving the community. A five day, half day program taught by two outstanding teachers provides a warm and welcoming environment where children learn to socialize and problem solve in a safe setting. Our priest visits weekly to read bible stories and take them on field trips exploring the church and church grounds.



"I have fond memories of creative play inside my classroom and outside on the church grounds as well as engaging in fun learning activities which emphasized the important skills of being a good friend (neighbor) by taking care of each other, sharing, and taking turns, to name a few. Most importantly, the teachers and pastor reinforced and strengthened my love for God and his teachings."

Charlessa Bethea Thatcher, parishioner.

Youngsters of all ages have been invited to participate in our community garden, not only learning how to grow, but also by participating in related educational projects such as the building of birdhouses and creating pollinator gardens for birds, bees and butterflies.

St. James' has long sponsored a Boy Scout troop which meets weekly in our parish hall, as well as hosting various Girl Scout events. Pre-Covid, we had a youth group and Vacation Bible School, both including young people, not only from our parish, but from the greater community as well.



Christian Education

"By learning about our faith through such means as Bible Study, Adult Education, Children's Church School, and Music," we fulfill our mission statement. Though some of St. James' Christian formation programs have been adversely affected by the pandemic, we remain, as a parish, committed to seeing them return to vibrant functioning as soon as conditions permit, for "without Christian Education, there would be no church."

Sunday School children learning about the school uniforms worn by the children at the school in Matel, Haiti, as part of St. James' involvement with the New York Haiti Project.

"The money you give is only part of what makes St. James' Hyde Park such a valuable partner. The way that you have integrated our mission work into the life of the parish has inspired other parishes in our diocese to do the same. Your regular prayers for the people of Matel mean more than you know."

Excerpt from a thank you note from the Rev. Sam Owen of the New York Haiti Project



Our traditional children's Sunday School classes were hardest hit by Covid constraints. Pre-pandemic, we had a small but enthusiastic group of children divided into elementary and middle school classes who regularly shared their growing knowledge with the congregation through songs, crafts, and plays.



Bible Study has been a mainstay of Christian formation here at St. James', and thanks to Zoom, has been able to continue uninterrupted. Our current approach blends the African Bible Study Method with a scholarly approach.



Our music ministry has also suffered under the current constraints, forcing the temporary disbanding of our choir. But we are most thankful for our Minister of Music who, in addition to having an extraordinary passion for the value and importance of our Bozeman organ, has found creative ways to utilize our parishioners' musical gifts via Zoom.



Pastoral Care

"...caring for those who are members of this particular Christian Community-visiting the sick, listening to and supporting those in trouble or grief, calling on the missing and sharing times of joy" is an important ministry of this parish. During the period of quarantine, vestry members made a point of regularly checking in with the parish family via phone. Pre-Covid, our pastor visited the homebound whether confined in the hospital, nursing home, or the comfort of their own homes. Parishioners, as well, visit those who can't be with us in person, bringing gifts of laughter when appropriate, altar flowers, and food as needed.



Hospitality



A St. James' priority, the "...welcoming all people and getting to know one another better through gatherings such as parish meals, coffee hours, receptions, parties, and work parties" continues even during this time of pandemic. Work parties range in scope from the maintenance of church buildings and grounds to helping parish families endure and recover from difficult times.

Our parish hall is the nucleus of gatherings, be it on the impressive scale of The Four Freedoms Award or our own humbler coffee hours. Though the Award ceremony has moved to a different venue, the hall is still where we come together as family for pot luck suppers, movie nights, concerts, and fund-raising dinners. It also provides much needed community space for such diverse groups as Skylkill Needle Work, Children's Writers of the Hudson Valley Conferences, and Alcoholics Anonymous.

The parish hall is also the site of our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, replete with a pancake decorating contest for the young and young at heart.

And following our version of Carnivale, it is where we come each Sunday morning in Lent between the eight and ten o'clock services to share in Lenten Breakfasts prepared by a few culinary gifted parishioners. It is also home to Vacation Bible School and performances such as our traditional Epiphany pageant.

Fireside Chats and the Graveyard Tours, both outgrowths of our bicentennial celebration in 2011, attract people from far beyond this immediate community, some to present, some to act, and all to enjoy.

The Fireside Chats, conceived as "A forum for the presentation of topics of local interest," are held in the St. James' Chapel and, prior to Covid, occurred monthly from January through April.



The Graveyard Tours, held by lantern light the first three weekend evenings in October and able to resume in autumn 2021 after a one-year hiatus, give visitors the opportunity to meet six carefully researched and costumed apparitions. Part fellowship, part historical heritage, part community outreach, GYT involves not only the combined talents of our immediate parish, but welcomes local acting talent from the high school and community theater.

Our audiences come from near and far, sometimes even by tour bus, but locals are the frequent repeaters, some even holding pre-performance tailgate parties in the parking lot. The tours, besides offering enjoyment for both those who work and those who watch, have become a significant fundraiser with proceeds funneled into the general budget.

As we endeavor to live our mission statement, we also strive to be good stewards of our buildings and grounds. St. James', once home to a number of the wealthy, has been gifted with buildings and land, church, rectory, parish hall, meditation garden, columbarium, graveyard, situated together on 10 acres, as well as the chapel in the village proper of Hyde Park where FDR was baptized. A boon as well as a bane, today we struggle with acreage and aging infrastructure. Yet, with God's grace, we've managed.

Several years ago, the chapel underwent major renovations making it a usable and welcoming building for both services and educational events.

Once a school, there is now some thought of turning the chapel's reading room into a spiritual library for children of the diocese. Our main church, restored after a major fire in 1984, has a relatively new heating and cooling system, and recently underwent extensive mold remediation along with the installation of a state-of-the-art HEPA filtration system.

Our parish hall, circa 1950, has some drawbacks. Large and drafty, it's expensive to heat. And built from concrete, it inhibits free flow of Wi-Fi signal. However, it does provide good space for the nursery school and offices, has multiple classrooms, an auditorium complete with stage, and a fully equipped, up-to-date industrial kitchen. As one of the most northern churches in the diocese, and with an eye toward the future, the St. James' campus, with its large facility and ample parking, could become a northern diocese meeting hub.

In spite of the challenges that Covid has presented, worship and parish life have, in the main, flourished. As expressed in the words of one of our parishioners: "I've been so impressed by the way members of St. James' have 'kept calm and carried on' during this pandemic. Members have improvised and been so creative in finding ways to continue their missions and find meaning in prayer, services, gardening, hospitality and song."



Finances

St. James' has no outstanding debt, and has so far navigated the pandemic well. We ended 2021 with a budget surplus of \$37,000. St. James' budget, the past several years, has started the year with a deficit - and yet has managed to wrap up each of the past several years in a solvent state. The 2021 year ended so well in part due to the strong performance of our invested funds, financial assistance from the Payroll Protection Program and apportioned share relief, and lower expenses related to the choice to call a part-time interim priest who does not live in the rectory. Yet the most significant reason was the dedication and generosity of the congregation, through both direct giving and special fundraising efforts.

As shown in Figure 1, parishioner offerings of time, talent, and treasure in 2021 accounted for 56% of St. James' total income of \$370,000. Pledge and plate income reached \$160,000, while designated contributions, such as gifts for memorials and outreach initiatives, totaled \$18,000. Special fundraising efforts, including a summer Emporium, a Harvest Dinner, a Holiday Bake Sale, and most notably, the Graveyard Tours, contributed \$27,500 to operating income.

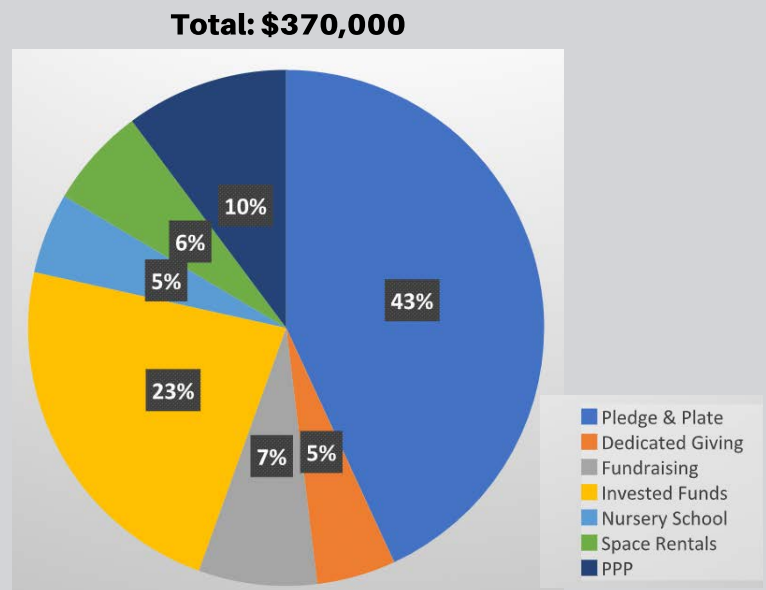


Figure 1. 2021 Source of Income by Type

Importantly, parishioner-led fundraising events have a mission purpose: They bring together parishioners and neighbors from the wider community of Hyde Park and many support local outreach. The Graveyard Tours, furthermore, offer a unique educational experience about local and national history, drawing visitors from across the New York Metropolitan area.

About a quarter of St. James' operating income in 2021, meanwhile, came from investments. We have a General Fund with a balance at year-end of about \$1.5 million, a dedicated fund for the Graveyard of about \$277,000, and a fund specifically for the upkeep of the Chapel of about \$225,000.

On the expense side, Figure 2 reveals that by far the two greatest areas of operating expense for St. James' in 2021 was for church staff compensation and property stewardship, each accounting for about a third of total expenditures. It is important to note that St. James' has been intentionally using the interim period, when programming has been constrained due to the pandemic, to do significant repair work on the church's buildings and grounds, including the rectory. The 2021 figures therefore overstate the typical financial demands of our historic church property, including the Graveyard. Nevertheless, we need to be honest that the costs of property maintenance, repair, insurance, and utilities, including the care of the Graveyard, has left little room in the budget in recent years for church ministry programs, such as music and Christian education. Such programs have depended, and indeed have thrived, on gifts of time and talent by parishioners.

Going forward, we do expect the financial generosity of the congregation to remain steadfast, and we hope to increase income from rentals of our beautiful chapel and parish hall back to pre-pandemic levels. (In 2019, space use generated \$36,000 in income, versus \$23,000 last year.) Yet, like many parishes, we are facing certain pressures, especially over the next year or two.

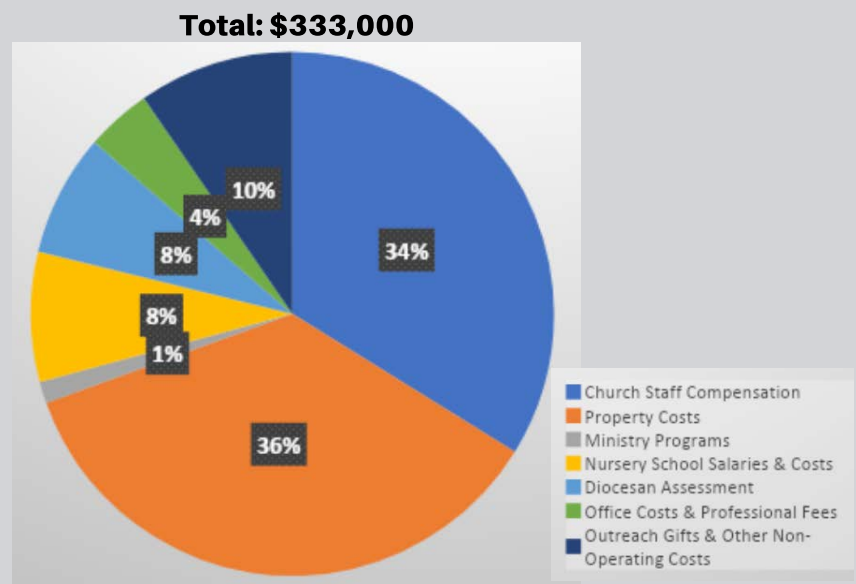


Figure 2. Operating Expenses By Type, 2021

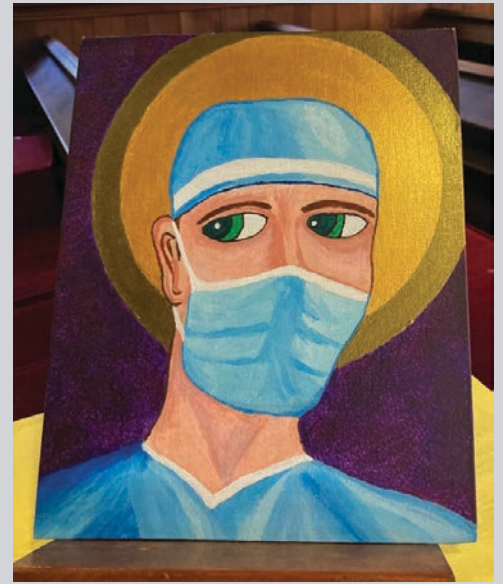
First, in 2022 we are losing the financial assistance of the Payroll Protection Program and reduced diocesan assessments. Second, with the arrival of the new priest, we will return to compensating a full-time priest. Finally, because of the rise in inflation this past year, we chose, for 2022, to give a healthy raise in compensation to the lay church and nursery school staff.

The good news is we do have sufficient financial resources to walk into God's future with both faith and vision. We believe in Hyde Park and are mindful of favorable demographics as people move into the Hudson Valley. We believe also in one another, grateful for the great depth of self-offering we experience not just in our leaders, but also throughout the congregation. Further, we are open to new ways of being a church, and we are already beginning discussions with neighboring parishes about partnered mission and shared resources. Yet - and this is a boon - we are also clear that, while we wish to say yes financially to what will see us through the near term, we must protect our endowment. We seek a priest who will be excited about the future mission of St. James', in partnership with other parishes of Dutchess County, and savvy at looking creatively with us at the financials.

The Priest We Seek

St. James' is seeking a Priest-in-Charge for an initial term of three years, with the hope of building a longer-term pastoral relationship that will lead to the call of a Rector. We are making the choice to call a priest-in-charge, initially, because of the reality of a changed Church coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. We believe that St. James' will thrive as it learns and adapts to a new religious landscape, and we seek a priest who will walk with us as we claim a new mission.

It would be an impossible task for any one individual to fulfill all our hopes and dreams for a priest. So, with grace and kindness, we prayerfully call for someone who will feel excited to become fully part of our loving, generous congregation.



**Covid Nurse icon written
by parishioner Shannon Butler**

We are hopeful of attracting a priest who will make a home of our rectory and whose presence on our campus will be a welcoming beacon to people, who can interact with compassion for, and understanding of all the needs of the very young, the elderly, and those in between.

As a parish, we abound in writers, musicians, actors, and artists of all kinds, and we have a special passion for our community and meditation gardens. We yearn for a priest and pastor who will embrace these gifts.

We are hopeful of finding a new priest who will possess abundant energy, creativity, and an eagerness to inspire and support us, most importantly in the areas of Christian education, youth programs, and outreach. To this end, they must have a gift for developing lay leadership.

We are hopeful of finding a priest who is open to mentoring parishioners in their spiritual journey, helping us all to grow in deeper relationship with God.

Looking toward the future, as the ethnicity of our wider community continues to grow more diverse, we seek a priest with a heart for reaching new populations, including outreach to the Spanish-speaking residents of the area.

We hope for a priest whose preaching is both relatable as well as based on sound theology.

Finally, as a church that occupies a unique place in Hyde Park and beyond, we need a priest who understands that they will represent St. James' to the community at large, and can feel comfortable serving in that capacity.

If you sense that God may be calling you to St. James', please send your application documents (cover letter, resume, and OTM profile) to stjames.search.hydepark@gmail.com, with a copy to the Canon for Transition on Ministry, Canon Nora Smith, at nsmith@dioceseny.org, by 5/30/22 with "St. James' Hyde Park" in the subject line.

Search Committee Contact Information

SEARCH COMMITTEE

Justin Bohlmann (vestry)
Karen Gasparini
Patty Glancey
Irene Kipp
Lynne Koch
James Oppenheimer-Crawford
Barbara Slegel
Charlessa Thatcher
Wendy Urban-Mead (chair)
Bobbie Wells

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USEFUL LINKS:

St. James' YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCN-WZHboXxsNRa339M1TEVaw>

Diocese of New York, Office of
Transition Ministry:
<https://dioceseny.org/administration/for-clergy/transition-ministry-office/>

Hyde Park Central School
District:
<https://www.hpcsd.org/>

Town of Hyde Park:
<https://www.hydeparkny.us/>

Dutchess County Tourism:
<https://dutchesstourism.com/>



Meet the Search Committee



Barbara Slegel

St. James' has been my spiritual home since September of 1992 when I moved to Staatsburg from New Jersey because of my marriage to my husband, Tim, in August of that year. I have been a Choir member since then with a six-year hiatus when my two sons, Craig and Dalton, were small. I have been attending Bible Study since its inception in 1999 and also serve as a Lector. Outside of church, I enjoy playing the clarinet, traveling, and spending time with my family, friends, and neighbors.



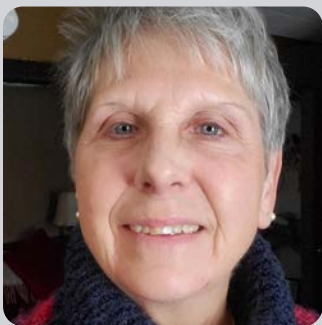
Irene S. Kipp

I am a retired administrative assistant with a particular affinity for library service employment which I have enjoyed over the years. I learned about St. James' through a writers' group and have attended since 2014. I serve as a lay reader, am a member of the Outreach Committee, and have worked on the Graveyard Tours. I also contribute to the annual Lenten Meditation Booklet. Outside of St. James', my interests include crocheting hairpin lace, baking, and writing essays and haiku. I enjoy walks in our local National Parks where I find inspiration for the haiku. It has been a privilege to work with this Search Committee.



Justin Bohlmann (vestry liaison)

I've been a member of the St. James' parish since I was a toddler when my parents were looking for a more family friendly organization. My whole life has been spent serving the community: as an EMT, a firefighter, and through various roles over the years at St James'; currently serving my third term on the vestry. I'm proud to say my children are being raised at St James'. Outside of my service to the community, I enjoy camping, watching hockey and baseball, and exploring the Hudson Valley and beyond with my family.



Karen Gasparini

I am a retired nurse (45 years) now enjoying crafting, cooking, gardening, yoga, and walks through our lovely historic area. My husband and I were warmly welcomed as parishioners of St. James' two years ago. I am a member of the Altar Guild, Outreach Committee, The Women's Group, and act as a leader/reader for Evening Prayer. I am pleased and honored to serve on the Search Committee.



Lynne Koch

I am a retired Adjunct English Professor from Marist College. I've been a member of St. James since 1984 and many of my distant Livingston relatives are buried in the churchyard. I co-chair the Altar Guild and love taking care of God's house. I'm a supporter of the "Outreach" community. Been married to my husband of 60 years, who I met and fell in love with when I was 14 at an Episcopal summer camp on Long Island. We have 3 children and 8 grandchildren. Our energetic family reconnects each summer at our camp in the Adirondacks. I'm a voracious reader, skilled needleworker, quilter and I love gardening and hiking. It's been my pleasure and honor to be on the Search Committee.



Patty Glancey

My husband, 2 young daughters, and I have been a part of our supportive and loving St. James' family since 2014. My husband serves on the Vestry, following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. I teach Sunday School, organize meetings of the Women's Group, and have served on the Stewardship committee. I have been passionately teaching biology in a local high school for the past 21 years. My family loves to be outdoors and we enjoy hiking, camping, and exploring all bodies of water!



Charlessa Thatcher

I've been a parishioner at St. James' Church since I was one, having moved from Albany, New York to Hyde Park with my family. I grew up at St. James' attending Nursery School, Sunday School, Confirmation Class and Youth Group. Both of my children have been baptized and confirmed at St. James' and served as Acolytes. They have participated in the life of St. James by engaging in Sunday School, Epiphany pageants, VBS, and more. I have a diverse professional career that includes being a licensed social worker, a director and choreographer for middle school student musicals and enjoy teaching Yoga as well as Tai Chi/Qigong to children, teens and adults. I've served on the Vestry and am honored to now be a member of the Search Committee.



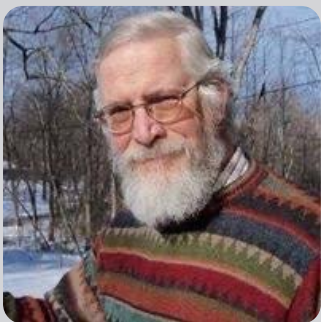
Bobbie Wells

I am the octogenarian embodiment of Peter Pan. If I'd could, I'd have leapt from my pram and made straight for Never Land. Instead, I told God I didn't want to grow up, and he listened. So, I became an artist, an author, and an elementary school art teacher. I raised two sons, two cats, seven dogs, one pair of goldfish, and wrote ChurchTails, an irreverent recounting of St. James' history as seen through the eyes of our church mice. I've coordinated vacation church schools, Graveyard tours, church service greeters, and managed to sit still long enough to serve multiple terms on vestry.



Wendy Urban-Mead (chair)

I have been at St. James' since 2002, together with my husband Russell. Our two children grew up at St. James', attending Sunday School, VBS, service camps; all four of us have contributed to the music program. I served on the vestry, taught Christian Education from ages 3 to adult, and acted in and directed the Graveyard Tours. In the community you can find me on- or back-stage at the Center for Performing Arts at Rhinebeck, at the Staatsburg Library, or walking along the Hudson River. I train high school teachers and teach history at Bard College and in nearby prisons. Stories, songs, and people are my favorite things.



James W. Oppenheimer-Crawford

I'm retired (30 years with New York State as a rehab counselor, 21 years with US Army as an interrogator). I have been in my church choir since I was about eight, and a number of other choirs over the decades. At a previous parish, I coordinated adult education, the prayer chain, and lay Eucharistic ministers (I have an M.Div.), and served on vestry. Today my main interests are music composition and playing in a couple of music groups, including an early-music ensemble where I play recorder. I'm enjoying being part of the search committee process.