



ST. JAMES
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

THE MESSENGER

2021 VOLUME 2



205 N. FOURTH STREET • BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70801
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The Rev. Drew Harmon
Senior Associate Rector

The Rev. Don White
Assisting Clergy

The Rt. Rev. Robert C. Witcher
Bishop-in-Residence

The Rev. Pat R. Lyle
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Bahin Leonard
Amy Rabalais
Trey Roberts
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Stewart Tharp

Second Year Term

Bob Bowsher
Ashley Frey
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Bettsie Miller
Chrissie Olsson
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First Year Term

Anita Byrne
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Lolly Martin
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STAFF

Cheryl Olinde
Director of Finance

Mary Hunt Boutwell
Parish Life Coordinator

Jacques Pourciau
Director of Operations

Haley Schroeck
Family Ministry Coordinator

Shannon Gallier
Director of Music

Sylvia Rabalais
Membership Coordinator

Monica Dugas
Office Administrator

Chelsea Borruano
Director of Communications

Paul Allman
Facilities Manager

Dwight Nichols
Sexton

Bridget Henderson
Head of School



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ON BECOMING MORE CHRISTLIKE

THE REV. CHRIS DUNCAN
ST. JAMES RECTOR

“O GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD, FOR HIS STEADFAST LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.” PSALM 136:1

Much has changed over the past year. On one hand, we long for a sense of “normalcy.” On the other hand, our eyes have been opened to new possibilities, new beginnings, and fresh ideas. Even through all of the changes and challenges of the past year, we find God’s steadfast love endures, and Christ, who is “making all things new,”ⁱ at work through the Holy Spirit to transform us so that we might fully share the same love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness which was so freely given to us.

While God is unchanging, at the heart of our Christian faith is the belief that we are continually being transformed by God from death into life. All of this is so that we might be people who are more Christlike day by day. God whose “steadfast love endures forever” loves us and transforms us to be more in his image and likeness. We get beautiful reminders of this transformation throughout scripture. Moses is a wanted murderer in Egypt and filled with fear of speaking and leading, but the Lord transforms him with the promise of divine presence always and leads the Israelites out of slavery into freedom.ⁱⁱ The prophet Ezekiel recounts the vision of God breathing new life into the valley of dry bones.ⁱⁱⁱ The Apostle Paul writes in his first letter to the Corinthians that Jesus Christ is the “first fruits” from the dead through the resurrection.^{iv} This is only a small sampling of God’s transformative work as seen in scripture, and yet, this work continues as the Risen Lord is “making all things new” within each one of us still today. We are changed by the One who is unchanging. The One who is steadfast in love.

Before Christ ascends into heaven, he tasks the Church with bringing the Gospel to the ends of the Earth, and therefore, we become participants in transforming lives. In this calling, we find that we are each equipped for the ministry of “representing Christ and his Church, bearing witness to him wherever we may be, and carrying on his work of reconciliation in the world...”^v Despite the pandemic, St. James and the wider universal Church have been at work. Even when away from our buildings and physically separated at times, the work of the Church continues, and Christ’s love endures.



Now as more and more people begin to reengage in the life of St. James, we should stop to reflect upon how God has been and is currently transforming our lives. We might consider the ways that God equips each of us for the ministry of sharing God's love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness. As we look to the summer and the relaunch of what will hopefully be a more "normal" program year in August, I invite you to reflect upon these questions:

**HOW HAS GOD BEEN AT WORK
IN YOUR LIFE TO REVEAL
LOVE, GRACE, MERCY, AND
FORGIVENESS?**

**HOW HAVE YOU BEEN
TRANSFORMED DURING THIS
PAST YEAR TO BE MORE
CHRISTLIKE?**

**HOW WILL YOU PARTICIPATE
IN TRANSFORMING LIVES BY
SHARING CHRIST'S MESSAGE
OF LOVE, GRACE, MERCY, AND
FORGIVENESS WITH OTHERS?**



- i Revelation 21:5
- ii Exodus 3-4
- iii Ezekiel 37
- iv I Corinthians 15:22-23
- v *Book of Common Prayer*, p. 856

celebrating HOLY WEEK & EASTER *together*





PASTORAL CARE: FRIENDS FEEDING FRIENDS

MARY HUNT BOUTWELL
PARISH LIFE COORDINATOR

The Pastoral Care Ministries at St. James seek to create and maintain meaningful connections by extending the expression of Christian love and fellowship to all parishioners and visitors. The various Pastoral Care Ministries accomplish this by offering emotional, social, and spiritual support through phone calls, cards, visitation, meals, and more.

The Friends Feeding Friends Ministry led by Kathryn Clifton is one such example. This ministry was cooked up from a desire to help members of our church family who are recovering from an illness or surgery, bringing home a new baby, or other special circumstances. The volunteers prepare (or pick up a pre-made meal) and deliver meals as a gift to those in need.

When Covid-19 and shutdowns hit a year ago, this ministry was placed on hiatus. Kathryn was determined to restart Friends Feeding Friends in a safe way. Since every delivery service in town was successful with contactless delivery, she decided to reach out to the ministry members to gauge their interest in implementing contactless delivery of meals. The ministry brought its first meal to a church member in July after a four-month hiatus. With contactless delivery, the Friends have delivered more than twenty-five meals to church families since July.

If you are in need of a meal, or would like to join the Friends Feeding Friends Ministry, contact Kathryn Clifton: kat.b.clifton@gmail.com.



KATHRYN CLIFTON & FAMILY



ST. JAMES GARDEN GUILD: REMEMBERING ROSEMARY

MARY HUNT BOUTWELL
PARISH LIFE COORDINATOR

The St. James Garden Guild is a welcoming ministry of hospitality. The members of the Garden Guild are committed to beautifying the grounds and gardens of the church campus in order to create an inviting environment for our parishioners and visitors.

On Saturday, March 27 the Garden Guild gathered for a Parish Workday to prepare the grounds for our Easter Sunday celebration. This particular Workday was held in honor of **Rosemary Campbell**, long-time Garden Guild Chair. Rosemary served the Garden Guild as its Chair for a decade, and you could find her on Thursday afternoons working to maintain and beautify the church campus. As a master gardener, she put her knowledge and gardening skills to work each week. Whether hauling sacks of dirt or planting annual flowers, Rosemary had a smile for all who walked by as she gardened.



“ALL WHO SHARE A LOVE OF GARDENING AND ST. JAMES ARE WELCOME TO JOIN THE GARDEN GUILD. IT IS REWARDING TO SEE THE WORK OF THE GUILD ON DISPLAY ALL AROUND THE CAMPUS, ESPECIALLY IN THE SPRING AND THE FALL.”
-STEVE BOUTWELL

Rosemary joined the Garden Guild when her fellow gardener Celeste Spann was the chairperson. Celeste, too, is known for her devotion to the gardens of St. James. The pandemic has kept Celeste away but one cannot walk the campus of St. James without envisioning both Celeste and Rosemary working side by side in the gardens.

Each year, the Garden Guild hosts four Parish Workdays to do basic garden maintenance, clean and beautify the grounds, and install annual and perennial flowers and shrubs.

For the past two years, the Garden Guild has been led by Steve Boutwell. For more information, or to sign up for the Garden Guild, contact Steve: steve.boutwell@keanmiller.com.



PRAYER IN A PANDEMIC: REIMAGINING DAY SCHOOL CHAPEL

THE REV. DREW HARMON
SR. ASSOCIATE RECTOR

HOW CAN WE SING THE SONGS OF THE LORD WHILE IN A STRANGE LAND?

PSALM 137:4

In many ways, **this question** has been the question of the church in the strange land that is COVID. What does it look like when we are not afforded our usual ways of coming together for worship? With the Day School, the question presented itself in unique ways. Prior to the pandemic, SJEDS had become accustomed to regular chapel services on Mondays and Fridays, with the latter serving as weekly school-wide eucharistic celebrations. Any and everyone was invited—parents, loved ones, and members of the larger St. James community—to participate in these energetic and life-giving worship opportunities.

But with COVID, health and safety protocols and worries about social distancing were brought to the fore. And seeing that the church was under renovation for the first half of the 2020-21 school year, the administrative team had a creative challenge on its hands. With masks on faces and tape measures in hand, Friday morning chapel resumed on September 4 in Bishops Hall, with a single grade level attending each Friday. Other grades were invited to join via livestream. This model continued until later in the fall semester, when two additional grade levels were able to attend per week.

In late January, students were able to return to the beautifully renovated church, keeping the same structure for Friday mornings, livestream included. Though eucharist and congregational singing were and are still not a part of these Friday chapel gatherings, life and energy saturates each Day School church service.



On March 1, Monday morning prayer was reintroduced, affording parents for one grade level the opportunity to join their children for a brief time of worship to begin the week. This has been met with rave reviews from parents and students alike. And though Monday morning prayer has not been live streamed, grade levels have been fairly rotated to allow students from PreK-3 up to 5th grade to have this experience.

With Monday and Friday Day School church back in the weekly liturgical life of the St. James community, the worshipping rhythm is on its way to being restored. It has been a long road, and there is still more to travel. But signs of new life are hard not to see. The students' joy and excitement, their profound wonderings after the things of God, have propelled this community forward to begin to answer the question how can we sing the songs of the Lord while in this strange land.



WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE EXPECTING...A NEW ORGAN!

SHANNON GALLIER DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Within a matter of a few weeks of the publication of this edition of The Messenger, our new organ will have, at long last, arrived! Goulding & Wood Pipe Organ Builders have been hard at work over the past two years building their Opus 53, which will be installed here at St. James in early June.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the timeline for installation (like so much of our everyday lives) has been disrupted more than once. But as I type this, the organ building process in Indianapolis is in its end stages - wiring of electronics is being completed, pipes are being tuned and voiced, woodwork is being stained, and your Director of Music is eagerly awaiting a quick trip to Goulding & Wood's workshop to be the first person to play this brand-new instrument.

We are coming up with a whole slew of ways for us to celebrate the installation of the new organ. Just a few examples:

- **A Parish-wide "Barn Raising"** - when the organ arrives in town, join us as we unload the thousands of pipes that will give the organ its voice, even lending a hand carrying pipes into the church before they are installed.
- **Voluntary Series** - when the organ is playable, I will embark on a summer-long series in which the voluntaries for each Sunday will show off certain aspects of the instrument.

- **Organ demonstrations** - join me for adult forum and mid-week sessions in which I explain how the organ was built, how it works, and explore the various sounds and colors it is capable of.
- **Recitals** - beginning in the fall, come and enjoy regular organ recitals by myself, local organists, and nationally renowned artists. Larger services like Evensongs, Lessons and Carols, and Compline, will also be preceded by wonderful recitals.
- **Hymn-sing** - when congregational singing resumes, join us for a good old-fashioned hymn-sing, when we'll sing our favorite hymns together.

We have been waiting for this instrument for a long time! I hope you're looking forward to hearing it for the first time, and to singing our praises to God with it for many years to come.



**O PRAISE YE THE LORD! ALL
THINGS THAT GIVE SOUND;
EACH JUBILANT CHORD
REECHO AROUND; LOUD
ORGANS HIS GLORY FORTH
TELL IN DEEP TONE, AND
SWEET HARP THE STORY OF
WHAT HE HATH DONE.**

**-HENRY WILLIAMS BAKER
(1821-1877), FROM HYMN 432,
"O PRAISE YE THE LORD"**

THE HUNT FOR A FAMILY(& COVID)-FRIENDLY EASTER EVENT

HALEY SCHROECK

FAMILY MINISTRY COORDINATOR

While I've been at St. James for almost two years this was my first in-person Easter, and the pressure to make it spectacular felt insurmountable at times. On top of that, we were playing the now-popular game, "What will the Covid restrictions be then?" In the end, we decided on a downtown scavenger hunt! A wonderful way to get outside, keep distance between families, and be very intentional about how many children were touching the same eggs. Then came the logistics. How many stations? How far apart are they? Is that too far for small children to walk? How many eggs would the children get at each station? How many families would come downtown for a less than traditional Easter Egg Hunt? The list of questions grew and grew.

We were quickly able to partner with several downtown businesses: Matherne's Market, Poor Boy Lloyds, PJ's Coffee, Louisiana Arts and Science Museum, and the new downtown library to host our wonderful Easter Egg Stations. This determined that we would have a trail with seven egg stops, starting and ending at St. James, that would be about a mile round trip; with stops roughly every two blocks. Our children would "chase" the Easter Bunny, always just seeming to miss him, while collecting incredible eggs and participating in small games and activities, like face painting.



There were too many people who assisted in this event to list them all here, but I must take a moment to highlight a few. A mighty group of moms, coordinated by Anna Catherine Soule, gave up one of their Sunday afternoons to gather at Erin Irby's home. Surrounded by candy, stickers, toys, and vouchers for LASM, these ladies stuffed roughly 1,000 Easter Eggs in just a few hours! Our nursery staff, and a few of their family volunteers, were once again invaluable. Not only did they run the stations at the hunt, but they worked tirelessly all weekend during Good Friday, Easter Vigil, and three of the Easter Sunday services. Lastly, our incredible Communications Director, Chelsea Borruano, must get a round of applause! Every email, sign, social media post, and map was so lovingly crafted by her. The event wouldn't have been nearly as successful without her impeccable talents.

With all of that time and labor, the anticipation of the day began to weigh on me. As I stood at the first station at 9:50am that morning, I wondered if all of this would come to anything. Would families be as ready as I was to get back out here and enjoy some version of normal? By the time 9:59am rolled around, it was clear I never should have worried. Not only did we have a line of wonderful St. James families waiting for us to begin, but we were also greeted by Day School families, and even families who had just seen the event through social media! We also had families join halfway through the hunt because they had been downtown at the library or the arts market, saw the signs, and were willing and welcomed to join!

With all the excitement, it was a little difficult to get an exact headcount but, based off of the amount of supplies we had left, we estimated that between 70-85 children went home with 13 eggs and their own mini-Easter bunny! Covid finally did something positive. By "restricting" us, it allowed us to break the mold and touch several children and families we never would have otherwise. I'm excited to expand on this event model for years to come, and hope we'll see you there!





CONFIRMATION & RECEPTION

THE REV. DREW HARMON SR. ASSOCIATE RECTOR

Historically, the season of Lent has been a time of preparing individuals to join the church, both through baptism and through confirmation. This has been the established norm for centuries, and this year was no different at St. James. Throughout this past Lent fourteen youth (8th grade and older) and six adults prayerfully participated in age-appropriate confirmation classes and in anticipation of being either confirmed or received in The Episcopal Church. Confirmation is the sacrament held out to those who have been baptized and who wish to make a mature commitment of faith before the bishop. Reception is offered to those who have been confirmed in another church tradition.

The Youth Confirmation class began with a retreat weekend in late February, packed with games, food, and a good helping of Episcopal history and theology! The remainder of Lent, the group met to discuss other aspects of Episcopal faith and practice. The final gathering capped off the class with a Saturday of service, distributing food to those in need and organizing the St. James Food Pantry. Our Adult Confirmation class met over lunch for five consecutive Sundays. Each session examined a distinct aspect of Episcopal history, belief, and identity. And with multiple religious backgrounds represented, conversation was engaging and questions flowed naturally, as all involved sought to understand their own stories in light of the Episcopal tradition.

On May 2, St. James was pleased to welcome the Rt. Rev. Morris K. Thompson, Jr., Bishop of the Diocese of Louisiana, for his annual visit, at which he confirmed and received these twenty individuals. Due to COVID, it had been two years since Bishop Thompson's last official visit to St. James, so the occasion was marked by great excitement and anticipation. With health and distancing protocols still in place, the 5pm Sunday service was dedicated to Holy Baptism, Confirmation, and Reception with Bishop Thompson presiding and preaching. A reception honoring the confirmands preceded the service, giving them the chance to meet with the Bishop for informal fellowship and sharing.

In addition to the Bishop's thoughtful sermon, the 5pm service was filled with beautiful music and the richness of sacramental celebration: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist! It was a fitting conclusion to the hours of Lenten exploration, faith-filled preparation, and the continual working of the Holy Spirit in the concrete lives of those in this community. Our prayer is, of course, that each one of these individuals would continue live in light of God's enduring love for the growth and strengthening of the church. A hearty congratulations to all those who were confirmed or received!



**CHERYL RENEE AMAR
RANJI LYNN BERCEGEAY
WILLIAM NEAL CREECH
NEAL RISLEY ELLIOTT III
FRED CHARLES FREY V
FRANCES PROSSER HINES
FAIRFAX ELIZABETH NOLAND
JOHN BURDEN NOLAND III
BRYAN MCGUFFEE OLSSON**

**HAYDEN FOSTER WILLETT
GEORGIA ALLENE PITTENGER
JOHN PORTER SAURAGE
SAMUEL PATRICK MESSINA
AVERY ADAIR KYLE
RYANN ELIZABETH RICHARD
OLIVIA CATHERINE VAN HOOK
LANA SONNIER VENABLE
STEPHEN CODY ZWAHR**



FROM THE VESTRY

TREY ROBERTS SR. WARDEN

After what has been for many, a very long year, some normalcy is starting to appear in our lives and in the life of St. James. The renovations to the church have been completed and the space has been restored to its original beauty. A special thanks goes out to John Soule and the Campus Planning Committee for overseeing the project over the last year. Without the dedication of this committee, the project would not have been such a success.

We opened the church for services by reservation in order to adhere to the social distancing mandates of the City and Diocese. Most all of the services have been at capacity since we moved back into the church. Fr. Chris, Fr. Drew and all of the staff have worked hard to accommodate as many parishioners as possible by offering four services each Sunday. If you haven't been back to church yet, sign up for a service soon; they are being held in a safe, responsible way.

With the completion of the Capital Campaign, it is evident that our members are excited about the state of our church and are willing to invest our future. Not only did we exceed our original goal of raising \$3.5 million but we are very close to surpassing our challenge goal of \$4 million. We could not accomplish this feat without the support of many. Over 70% of you, our active parishioners, made a sacrificial pledge to support the Preserving our Past, Securing our Future Campaign for which we are very thankful. We are also greatly appreciative for the dedication of the Capital Campaign Co-Chairs Helen Campbell, Lee Griffin and John Noland. Each of them worked tirelessly over the last year organizing and executing a successful campaign that will make a lasting impact on our campus for years to come.



In the coming months, you will see your contributions at work as we continue to tackle projects around the campus that have been neglected for some time. The Campus Planning Committee is working to prioritize our list of projects. However, work will begin around the campus soon. As school is dismissed for Summer, a much needed fresh coat of paint will be applied to the interior of Bishop's Hall and to the ministry center. The water infiltration issues within the walls of the ministry center will also be addressed. Larger projects like redesigning our multiple parking lots in a single lot and replacing all of the windows in Werlein Hall will require additional planning and will likely be undertaken in the Summer of 2022. It is exciting to think about the entire campus being restored!

The St. James Vestry is engaged and excited about the year ahead. We are thrilled to be able to worship together in our historic church and look forward to more opportunities to gather with our church family in the future.



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN BY THE NUMBERS

2021-2025

Preserving Our Past
SECURING OUR FUTURE



CURRENT PLEDGE TOTAL ^{OVER} **\$4 MILLION**

EXCEEDING BOTH ORIGINAL & CHALLENGE GOALS

256 PLEDGING HOUSEHOLDS
.....> **76.4%**
OF CONGREGATION

\$1,353,875
(33%)
GIVEN TO DATE

2017-2020

Love of Christ
ALWAYS

PLEDGE TOTAL
\$2,239,035 90 PLEDGING HOUSEHOLDS
26.8% OF CONGREGATION

FINAL GIVEN → **\$2,217,023** **(99.4%)**

Mark your calendars!

UPCOMING EVENTS



Summer Sounds

with Chris LeBlanc Band
JULY 8TH

+ Gym Fit for the kids
+ Food provided by John
Cadwallader & The Holy Grillers



St. James Sunday

JULY 25

Join us in celebrating the
Feast of St. James

+ Splash Day for the kids



Volunteer with Us

Drive-In Food
Bank Distribution

THIRD
SATURDAY
OF EVERY
MONTH



Youth Week

AUGUST 1+3+5



Back to School Bash

AUGUST 8

+ Blessing of the Backpacks



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WORSHIP WITH US

SUNDAYS IN-PERSON

(until further notice)

7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I

9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

SUNDAYS ONLINE

10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Facebook/YouTube

WEDNESDAYS ONLINE

12:00 p.m. Noonday Prayer, Facebook