



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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ANNUAL REPORT

Meeting Agenda

- I. Call to order
- II. Opening Prayer
- III. Approval of 2023 Meeting Minutes
- IV. Submit Written Reports
- V. Head of School Report
- VI. Vestry & Associate Vestry Report
- VII. Old Business
 - a. Capital Improvements & Campaign Update
- VIII. New Business
 - a. Legacy Giving: 1844 Society
- IX. Financials
 - a. Treasurer's Report
- X. Benediction
- XI. Adjourn

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2023 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

January 29, 2023

I. Called to Order: The 2023 Annual Meeting was called into order at 9:21 a.m. in Bishops Hall by The Rev. Christopher R. Duncan, Rector.

II. Opening Prayer: Led by The Rev. Dr. Andrew Harmon, Sr. Associate

III. Approval of the 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes: Minutes in the 2022 Annual Report booklet. Motion to accept the minutes as presented by Bettsie Miller. Seconded by Robert Bowsher. Motion carried.

IV. Written Reports: Fr. Duncan presented the 2022 Annual Report Booklet. Fr. Duncan also introduced the staff.

V. Head of School Report: Bridget Henderson shared a brief update on the school.

VI. 2023 Vestry and Associate Vestry Elections

a. Anita Byrne, returning Sr. Warden, thanked the outgoing Vestry members and those continuing in their service. Byrne then shared the slate of 6 to be officially elected at this meeting as selected from 9 nominees and then voted upon by mailed ballot. The slate of vestry nominees includes Will Benton, Margaret Boudreaux, Randy East, Gary Field, Alison Rodrigue, and Shirley Young. Motion to elect the six nominees on the slate to the vestry by Lolly Martin. Seconded by Alan Miller. Motion carried.

b. Byrne thanked the outgoing members of the Associate Vestry and presented the nominees for the Associate Vestry including LaToya Carter, Marci Drumm, Randal Johnson, Donna Landrem, Catherine Lawrence, Julia Spaht, and Martha Vasquez. Motion to elect the presented nominees by Blair Napolitano. Seconded by Martha Richard. Motion carried.

VII. Capital Projects and Campaign Update: Trey Roberts shared a recap of the capital improvement efforts around campus during 2022. Roberts also highlighted the upcoming projects for 2023 as well as looked ahead to the remaining projects. Finally, Roberts shared that the campaign has collected over 66% of the pledged funds. Further details can be found in the 2022 Annual Report booklet on page 14.

IX. Staff Update: Fr. Duncan shared his appreciation for Elizabeth Canfield joining the staff on an interim basis while she worked on earning her teaching certificate. Canfield is completing the process and will be leaving the staff as planned to be a Middle School teacher. The search for Canfield's replacement is beginning.

X. Treasurer's Report: Chris Harrell, Treasurer, gave a review of the 2022 financials as well as shared the upcoming 2022 budget as passed by the Vestry in December 2022. Harrell shared how St. James' financial position is stable despite a loss of \$48k in operating funds in 2022. A detailed written report with figures can be found in the 2022 Annual Report booklet.

XI. Endowment Usage & Importance: Fr. Duncan thanked the congregation for responding so strongly to the call to increase the overall pledge total and average. Fr. Duncan also thanked the generations before that give from their estate to create the endowment which empowers the congregation to do more in ministry. Fr. Duncan encouraged everyone to read the report on how the funds are used as written by Gerry Sulzer and how the investments performed during 2022 as written by Robert Bowsher. Finally, Fr. Duncan encouraged everyone in the congregation to remember St. James Church in their estate planning.

XII. Benediction: Fr. Duncan gave the following blessing:
Life is short and we do not have much time
to gladden the hearts of those that travel the way with us.
So, be swift the love and make haste to be kind...
And the blessing of God Almighty: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always.

XII. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 9:59 a.m.

LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

by The Rev. Christopher Duncan

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

What can you say about 2023 at St. James Episcopal Church? While I doubt the year will be recorded in the annals of St. James history as overly significant without any major projects or controversies, considerable growth in ministry, membership, attendance, and giving filled the year. Therefore, before delving too far into this letter, I first want to thank you for the honor it is to serve as the 24th rector of St. James. Thank you also for all you do to make this a thriving congregation filled with life and love.

As alluded to above, church growth can be experienced in many ways. In the pages of this Annual Report, you will find details about the various ways St. James lived out our mission of "proclaiming Christ crucified and risen and inviting all to join with us in ministry together in his name." We do this through worship, fellowship, outreach, education, and pastoral care. Nearly across the board, we saw growth within our ministries and fresh expressions of existing ministries. Three highlights for me were Eucharistic Visitors, Gumbo, and Community Connections Sunday.

Eucharistic Visitors: In 2022, the Eucharistic Visitor Ministry was reactivated after being on hiatus during COVID-19. Furthermore, in 2023, we added new members to this ministry to expand our reach. The fruits of this effort were witnessed this year as St. James had 156 Eucharistic visits, an average of three visits per week. As a reminder, Eucharistic Visitors help the clergy bring communion to those unable to join us on a Sunday, thus keeping individuals connected to St. James. Please let the clergy know if you know someone who could benefit from this ministry.



Gumbo: St. James Gumbo has a rich history that runs deep in this congregation's life and the larger community. For several years now, Gumbo has worked to find the "right" footprint in a changing downtown landscape and changing volunteer base. The incredible 2023 Gumbo season filled my heart (and stomach) with multiple busy takeout days and a packed dine-in event. On March 24, new volunteers joined the seasoned crew, and a large crowd of diners filled Bishops Hall to create a truly joyous and delicious event!



Community Connections Sunday: Please read about the newly formed Community Connections Sunday outreach ministry. This reimagined ministry combined two longstanding ministries, Food Bank and Hearty Breakfast, to create an expanded program that creates more opportunities for our neighbors facing housing and hunger insecurity. Community Connections Sunday strives to care for the whole person by inviting various social and health services to each event and opens new opportunities for personal growth beyond just hunger.

Throughout the year, we also saw incredible growth in membership and average Sunday attendance. In 2023, St. James welcomed 51 new members. Many of these new members have jumped right into all aspects of parish life. It is exhilarating to see new faces, both young and old, find a home in this church community. This membership growth was reflected in our average Sunday attendance going up by 20 people per week, mainly at the 10:30 a.m. service, to a weekly average of 294. This growth was further illustrated by the incredible Christmas Eve and Christmas Day attendance of 932. With all that said, the most exciting statistic to me is the fact that we had 28 baptisms in 2023.

During the annual pledging campaign in October 2022, a challenge was given to increase giving in 2023 by at least 10% to meet the growing needs in the budget due to inflation... And the good people of St. James faithfully responded by surpassing that goal with a 14% increase. Chris Harrell, Treasurer, shares further details about how St. James did financially overall throughout the year, but this is my opportunity to thank you for faithfully supporting the ministries of St. James. Furthermore, as we look to 2024, St. James responded again and increased the pledged amount by an additional \$100 thousand. To help continue the momentum of growth we have experienced, the Vestry approved a 2024 budget that will address all needs while staying within a healthy range of Endowment assistance. Once again, the Treasurer's Report will share more details.

We have an incredible staff here at St. James. We have fun serving together. With that said, we also had difficult goodbyes in 2023. John Ozier faithfully served St. James as a parishioner and a staff member for many years. I often joked that John was terrible at retiring because shortly after stepping away, he would come right back. I am incredibly grateful for John's ministry at St. James. Since his death in July, John's presence in the office has been greatly missed. On a lighter note, Liz Canfield faithfully served as Director of Family Ministries for two years. She stepped in at a time of need and wonderfully navigated the ministry as we emerged from the COVID pandemic. In the summer of 2023, Liz embarked on a new career path as a teacher. The good news is that, while she left the staff, she and her family are still active members in the life of St. James.



Just as we had staff departures, we also welcomed three new members of the staff and two new college interns. Eydie Comeaux is our new Director of Family Ministries. She has years of experience in this ministry area and truly hit the ground running this summer. Building upon the foundation laid by Haley and Liz before her, Eydie has overseen incredible growth with record numbers at both Children's Sunday School and Children's Chapel. Jaslyn Evans also joined the staff as our receptionist. She has been a welcomed addition as she warmly greets each visitor to the Ministries Center. Austin Clark came on board in a new position, Associate Organist. Although he has only been on staff for five months, his ministry has already had a real impact within the music ministry and in working with all our liturgical ministries. Furthermore, we added two college interns, Rece Silcox (Communications) and Alleaha Lopez (Family Ministries). Both are not only getting real-world work experience, but they are also contributing meaningfully to the life and ministry of St. James. Finally, as we look to 2024, the Rev. Lynn Hooks will join the staff in March as Associate Rector and Day School Chaplain.



As you can see, 2023 was quite the year, and at the same time, many possibilities await in 2024. With "growth" as the buzzword I use to describe 2023, I am eager to see the incredible ways God will move in the life of this place in the year to come. Even if we do not end up in the church history books, lives are being transformed by the grace of God. Therefore, the one thing I do know about the coming year is that the good people of St. James will once again come together with the light of Christ's love shining even brighter.

Yours in Christ,



LETTER FROM THE SR. WARDEN

by Anita Byrne

I hope you will enjoy reviewing the 2023 Annual Report as I have. It has reminded me of the wonderful community that is St. James Episcopal Church and how much we accomplish together. The capital projects continued in 2023 with several roof projects, a repair of water damage to the Ministries Center, and the replacement of the Werlein windows. A huge blessing to this work has been the successful use of the Louisiana Historic Tax Credit program. Thank you to the many Capital Campaign contributors! Your continued pledged support will allow the Vestry and Campus Planning Committee to finish strong with the remaining projects on deck.

The Vestry continues to review and update the policy and procedures handbook in alignment with good governance and fiscal management practices. Both St. James Episcopal Church and the Day School received “clean” audits reflecting the great fiduciary oversight exercised. The Vestry also concluded the work of the Health and Safety Task Force with new AEDs identified around campus, new security support, and an ongoing training for hands-only CPR and by-stander first response for the parish.

This year, the Vestry also approved the Ordination to Priesthood for Austin Wendt, our seminarian who was ordained a deacon in December and will be ordained a priest upon completing seminary in 2024. He will be the third ordination from St. James since 2021. Please keep Austin and all who are in the discernment process in your prayers.

The life of St. James has indeed been busy and to call out a few highlights like the popular Gumbo event, a dynamic Outreach program with multiple events, an engaging Family Ministries with offerings for children, youth, and families, a growing and exciting Music Ministry, and wonderful moments of hospitality with the Associate Vestry. All of this is possible due to the strong response to the call for stewardship and the careful guidance of the Vestry and other committees/ministries. Thank you for supporting our community with your time, talent, and resources!

It has been an honor to serve as Senior Warden and I am proud of the work we have accomplished as Vestry. I am excited about the future of our parish and the exciting opportunities planned for 2024. I hope you will join me in supporting our incoming Vestry, Associate Vestry, and committee/ministry leaders.



VESTRY

Outgoing

- Anita Byrne
- Mike Fontenot
- Lolly Martin
- Alan Miller
- Robyn Richards
- Otey White

Third Year

- Chetwin Carter
- Ben Dampf
- Ann Holmes
- Bunny Hines
- Mary Pesses
- Lazette Phillips

Second Year

- Will Benton
- Margaret Boudreaux
- Randy East
- Gary Field
- Alison Rodrigue
- Shirley Young

First Year

- Steve Broyles
- Pamela Gladney
- Susie Heroman
- Lindsay Turner
- Jim Van Hook
- Lauren Whatley

ASSOCIATE VESTRY

Outgoing

- Kathryn Clifton
- Jessica McVea
- Christine Mills
- Alan Stevens
- Catherine Van Hook
- Lauren Whatley

Third Year

- Amos Davis
- Sarah Gray
- Seth Lawrence
- Blair Napolitano
- Liz Noland
- Laura Sorey
- Bobbi Wisekal

Second Year

- LaToya Carter
- Marci Drumm
- Randal Johnson
- Donna Landrem
- Catherine Lawrence
- Julia Spaht
- Martha Vasquez

First Year

- Renee Amar
- Deborah Baucom
- Paul Fitzmorris
- Per Holmgren
- Mary Katherine Loos
- Andy McCall
- Trey Roberts
- Catherine Van Hook

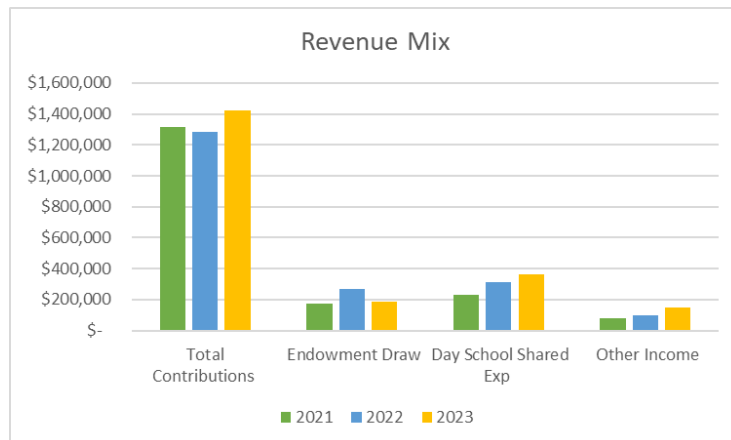
TREASURER'S REPORT

by Chris Harrell, Treasurer

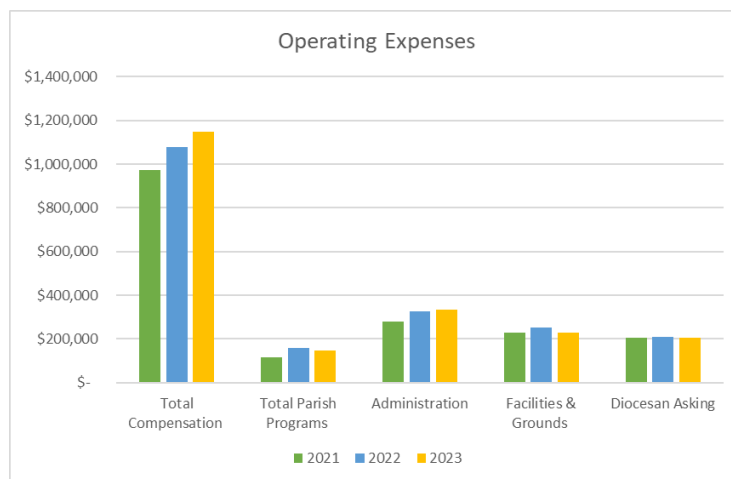
In last year's Treasurer's report, I wrote that I was praying for a calmer, and even boring, or ordinary 2023. I'm pleased to report this past year was by all accounts more ordinary with welcome financial stability. The Church's financial condition continues to be strong and 2023 proved a good year for both the balance sheet and operations. Because of your faith in our Church and the work of many people, we were able to end the year with a net surplus. If that performance equates to boring and ordinary, then my prayers continue for both in 2024.



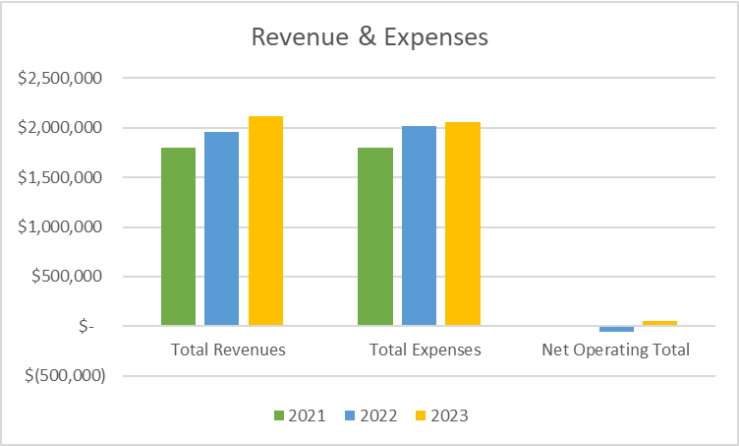
In 2023, total revenue was \$2.12 million or \$61 thousand ahead of budget. Contributions make up the largest budget category and we ended 2023 with \$1.42 million in total contributions or \$29 thousand ahead of budget. Other income totaled \$696 thousand or \$31 thousand ahead of budget. Because of a significant increase in parking income in 2023, we were able to reduce our draw from investments from a budgeted amount of \$234 thousand to \$185 thousand. The chart to the right shows our revenue mix for the past three years.



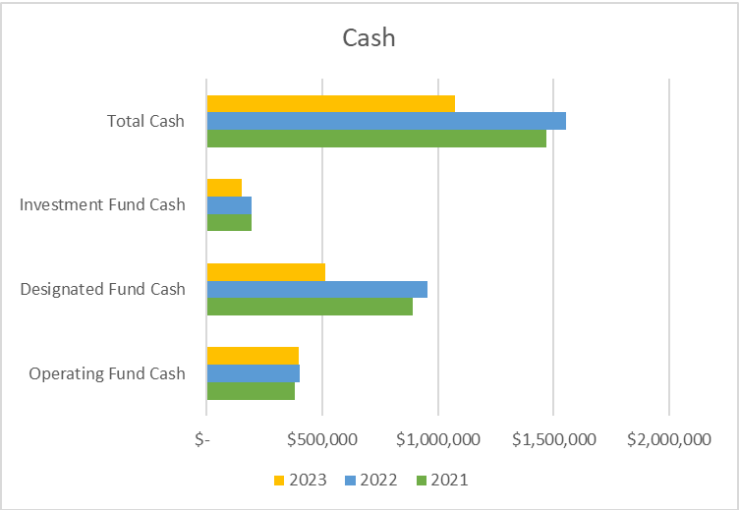
After the 2022 inflationary impact on our operating expenses, 2023 proved to be a more stable year. Total expenses in 2023 were \$2.06 million which was \$5 thousand over budget. Compensation exceeded budget by \$18 thousand due to a funded mid-year addition to our staff. Parish programs ended the year under budget by \$10 thousand. Administrative costs were over budget by \$9 thousand due to additional accounting and audit support and an increase in bank charges from the donation of stock. Unlike last year, utilities ended the year under budget due to lower energy costs and better management of our heating and cooling systems. Maintenance ended over budget due to the replacement of multiple air conditioning compressors during the very hot summer. The Diocese Asking was within budget. A breakdown of our operating expenses over the last three years is shown to the right.



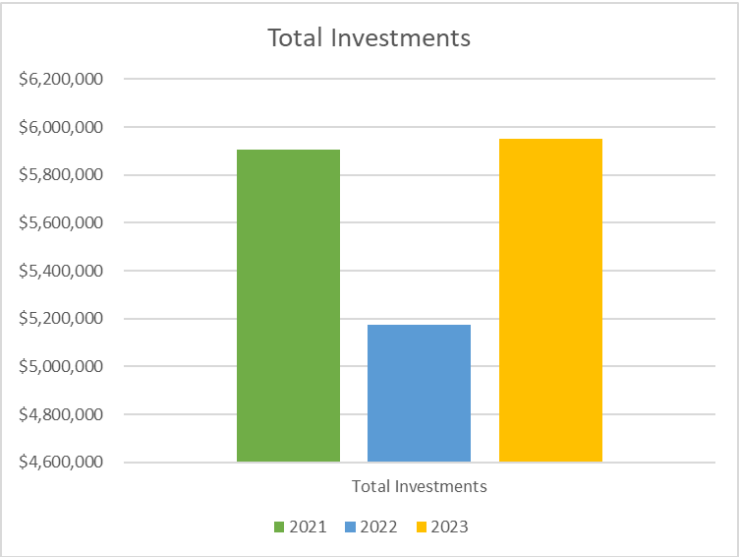
As noted earlier, we were able to end the year with a net surplus of \$56 thousand. I commend Fr. Chris, his staff, and the Vestry for the excellent stewardship of our operations. A chart showing revenue and expenses is shown to the right.



The Church’s balance sheet remains very sound with cash totaling \$1.07 million and investments totaling \$5.95 million. We have no debt to outside creditors. Unlike 2022, our investment portfolio had unrealized gains totaling \$639 thousand. The Church’s cash position for the past three years is shown to the right.



Most of the Church’s investments are managed by JP Morgan in a balanced investment account. Unlike last year, when both the stock and bond markets declined, we had solid investment returns in 2023.



Included with this report you will find the 2023 unaudited summary of our revenues and expenses with comparison to our 2023 budget and the budget for 2024. *Please note that the 2023 numbers are preliminary and subject to change with the official audit.*

In closing, 2023 proved to be a sound year financially for the Church. Whether daily operations, long-range planning or investments, we are the beneficiaries of wise practices and accountability which will serve our Church well for generations to come. St. James Church continues to be blessed by your prayerful and generous support.

2023 FINANCIALS

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

BUDGETS VS. ACTUALS

REVENUE	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	Difference
Contributions			
Current Operating Contributions	\$1,370,000	\$1,394,111	\$24,111
Plate offerings	\$12,000	\$18,505	\$6,505
Prior Year Contributions	\$10,000	\$8,820	-\$1,180
Total Contributions	\$1,392,000	\$1,421,436	\$29,436
Other Income			
Investment Income	\$233,655	\$185,000	-\$48,655
Day School Shared Expense Ask	\$361,064	\$361,064	\$0
Building Income	\$38,364	\$38,354	-\$10
Parking Income	\$27,000	\$68,072	\$41,072
Miscellaneous Income	\$4,000	\$43,105	\$39,105
Total Other Income	\$664,083	\$695,595	\$31,512

EXPENSES	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	Difference
Compensation/Benefits	\$1,129,076	\$1,147,072	-\$17,996
Total Compensation/Benefits	\$1,129,076	\$1,147,072	-\$17,996
Parish Programs			
Liturgy	\$3,650	\$2,797	\$853
Music Program	\$62,000	\$60,132	\$1,868
Parish Life	\$38,350	\$33,610	\$4,740
Christian Education	\$18,500	\$15,882	\$2,618
Outreach	\$34,000	\$34,000	\$0
Total Parish Programs	\$156,500	\$146,422	\$10,078
Administration			
Office & Staff	\$104,800	\$114,384	-\$9,584
Communications	\$18,000	\$16,630	\$1,370
Insurance and Security	\$204,144	\$204,898	-\$754
Total	\$326,944	\$335,912	-\$8,968
Administration			
Facilities & Grounds			
Maintenance	\$69,500	\$82,639	-\$13,139
Utilities	\$170,000	\$144,871	\$25,129
Total Facilities & Grounds	\$239,500	\$227,510	\$11,990
Diocese Assessment			
Diocesan Assessment Total	\$204,063	\$204,063	\$0
Diocese Assessment	\$204,063	\$204,063	\$0

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	Difference
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,056,083	\$2,117,031	\$60,948
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,056,083	\$2,060,979	-\$4,896
TOTAL DIFFERENCE	\$0	\$56,052	\$56,052

2024 PROJECTED BUDGET

REVENUE

Contributions	
Current Operating Contributions	\$1,435,439
Plate offerings	\$15,000
Prior Year Contributions	\$9,000
Total Contributions	\$1,459,439
Other Income	
Investment Income	\$185,000
Day School Shared Expense Ask	\$429,322
Building Income	\$38,360
Parking Income	\$65,000
Miscellaneous Income	\$107,145
Total Other Income	\$824,827

TOTAL REVENUE \$2,284,266

EXPENSES

Compensation/Benefits	\$1,304,064
Total Compensation/Benefits	\$1,304,064
Parish Programs	
Liturgy	\$3,800
Music Program	\$63,305
Parish Life	\$40,350
Christian Education	\$19,000
Outreach	\$38,000
Total Parish Programs	\$164,455
Administration	
Office & Staff	\$110,200
Communications	\$18,000
Insurance and Security	\$245,773
Total Administration	\$373,973
Facilities & Grounds	
Maintenance	\$84,000
Utilities	\$157,100
Total Facilities & Grounds	\$241,100
Diocesan Assessment	\$200,674
Total Diocesan Assessment	\$200,674

TOTAL EXPENSES \$2,284,266

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

by Gerry Sulzer

We use endowment income to balance our budgets. The approved, 2023 operating budget was \$2,056,083. Our total estimated income from all sources excluding investment income was \$1,972,401. This left us with a shortfall of \$185,000 to be covered by investment income transfers. Three investment funds having donor-designated uses were tapped to cover \$83,682 of correspondingly designated budget line items. Three other investment funds having no donor-designated use were used to cover the remaining shortfall of \$101,318. There was one non-operating budget item that was also balanced with investment income. The Property Committee's capital budget of \$15,000 was balanced with \$13,606 transferred from the capital-designated funds group. As is our common practice, the amounts taken from any endowment-designated group of funds were limited to a max, if possible, of 5% of that fund's endowment-designated group total. This practice ensures we will maintain the total endowment principle over time. While the transfer from the Capital fund group slightly exceeded 5%, the total amount transferred across all fund groups was below 5%. The table below gives the details of how and how much of each fund was used to balance the operating budget.

It is worth noting that even with the generous giving of our members, we still need to supplement 9.7 % of our total budget with endowment income. This points out the importance of endowment income in maintaining/increasing our many ministries. To this end, St James has created the **1844 Society** to promote legacy giving for our future growth and stability. I ask you prayerfully consider joining it.

Investment Income Transfers

2023 Budgeted Operating Expenses				2023 Budgeted Funding Sources Acct.	
Outreach, Line Items		\$34,000		\$34,000	Acct. 900160, Knox-Dunbar Fund
Music Expense					
Salary & Benefits	\$45,382	\$45,382		\$45,382	Acct. 900131, Music Income Fund
Pastoral Care Line Items					
St Martha' Guild	\$200				
Guild of the Christ Child	\$100				
Pastoral Care	\$4,000				
		\$4,300		\$4,300	Acct. 900401 Pastoral Care Memorial
					Other Non-designated Investment Transfers
				\$18,756	Acct. 900101, General Fund
				\$18,756	Acct. 900102, Schwing-Williams
				<u>\$63,806</u>	Acct. 900111, Barnes Fund
				\$185,000	Investment Funds Subtotal (9.0% of Op. Budget)
Other Op. Expenses to Fund		\$1,972,401		\$1,392,000	Parishioner Contributions
				\$361,064	Day School Shared Expense Ask
				<u>\$118,019</u>	Other Income
Total		<u>\$2,056,083</u>		<u>\$2,056,083</u>	Total

2023 Operating Usage of Investment Funds

Fund Group Designation	Total Balance	Funds Used 2023 Budget	Percent Transferred
Outreach Funds	\$742,954	\$34,000	4.6%
Music Funds	\$1,173,137	\$45,382	3.9%
Parishioner Aid Funds	\$251,667	\$4,300	1.7%
Unrestricted Funds	\$2,047,586	\$101,318	4.9%

2023 Budgeted Non-Operating		2023 Budgeted Funding Sources	
Expenses Property Committee	\$15,000	\$1,094	Unspent 2022 Budget
		<u>\$13,906</u>	Acct. 900260, WP Kidd Fund (5.1% of total Building Funds)
Total	<u>\$15,000</u>	<u>\$15,000</u>	Total

INVESTMENT REPORT

by Robert T. Bowsheer, Chairman

The investment funds of St. James Episcopal Church are managed and invested by the Investment Department of J.P. Morgan Chase Bank (the “Bank”). The Investment Committee meets quarterly with the Bank to review the performance of the Church’s investment portfolio. (“Portfolio”)The Committee discusses and reviews the Bank’s investment performance in light of the Church’s investment policy and the standard published investment benchmark performances for investments in equities and fixed income.

As of December 31, 2023, the Church had the following investment and cash accounts including cash outside the Portfolio totaling \$5,646,232:

1. Balanced account (58.2% equities/41.8% fixed income + cash)	\$5,074,648
2. Focused Dividend Growth (investment in classic large-cap. dividend paying stocks)	\$281,957
3. Innovators strategy (investment in technology growth stocks)	\$142,133
4. Other accounts (cash or cash equivalents)	<u>\$147,493</u>
Total	\$5,646,232

On a year-to-date basis, as of December 31, 2023, the performance of all of the investment accounts with their appropriate benchmarks was as follows:

	<u>1 year</u>	<u>3 year</u>	<u>5 year</u>	<u>Since Inception</u>
<u>Equities</u> (58.7% of Portfolio)				
Church	23.1	7.8	13.1	10.2
MSCI World Net	23.8	7.3	12.8	9.6
 <u>Fixed Income + Cash</u> (41.3% of Portfolio)	 <u>1 year</u>	 <u>3 year</u>	 <u>5 year</u>	 <u>Since Inception</u>
Church	7.8	-1.1	2.4	2.8
BBUS Aggregate Index	5.5	-3.3	1.1	2.9

Generally, investment performance, more or less, at the relevant benchmarks is considered superior performance.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

PRESERVING OUR PAST, SECURING OUR FUTURE

by Trey Roberts

Through the combined campaigns of Love of Christ Always (2017) and Preserving Our Past, Securing Our Future (2021), St. James will invest roughly \$7.5 million into the renovation and restoration of our historic campus without incurring any outside debt. We are finally in the homestretch of this effort, we can't stop to celebrate just yet because there is more work to be done.

While at first glance there does not seem to be much accomplished in 2023 as in years past, it was a busy year with projects that are not as visible but are vital to the upkeep of our campus. With help from our various contractors, we were able to complete the following:

- **Ministries Center Roof:** The year began replacing the old leaky Ministries Center roof. Work began on this project in early January 2023 and was moving right along. However, on January 29, the contractor's tarps used during the replacement failed during a torrential rainfall creating a waterfall into the third floor that seeped down to the first. Even though we had just renovated the Ministries Center in the summer of 2022, here we were again doing a renovation to fix the water-damaged areas. Luckily the rest of the roof project moved forward on schedule and the building has been watertight ever since. Thankfully, the roofer's insurance covered the cost of all the damage incurred.
- **Ministries Center Landscaping:** Also, at the beginning of last year, the new landscaping around the Ministries Center entrance was enhanced to create beautiful gardens and sitting space. Thanks to the property committee and Craig Rhodes for their work on this project.
- **Werlein Hall Windows:** The largest of the 2023 projects is the Werlein Hall window replacement. The windows in Werlein Hall were in terrible shape with large gaps and rotting wood throughout. Every window was replaced with historic-looking double paned energy efficient windows. The highlight of the project was the preservation of the stained glass windows in the old Day School chapel now used for religious education.



The only project that remains is to renovate the interior of Atkinson Hall. Updates will include fresh paint in Coleman Hall, the Chapel of the Twelve Apostles, foyer, parlor, and Sunday School classrooms. The Campus Planning Committee is also hoping to finish transitioning all the lights to LED and replacing the worn carpet on the stairs and in the second-floor classrooms/hallways. The purpose of these projects is not to change the appearance of these spaces but to simply refresh them as Atkinson Hall has largely not been touched since the fire in the early 2000s.

While the church did not take out any outside debt to accomplish these projects, a \$600 thousand loan from the endowment was used to pay for the church interior renovations as well as a remaining \$247 thousand. loan by the school. It is vital that these funds are repaid to the endowment to ensure we are empowering the future ministry of St. James.



FACTS FOR 2023



294
Average Sunday
Church Attendance



932
Christmas Attendance



28
Baptisms



769
Easter Attendance



156
Eucharists Visits



28
Confirmations /
Receptions



17
Burials

MINISTRY REPORT

WORSHIP MINISTRIES

By Austin Clark

As membership and attendance have increased, so, too, has participation continued to increase across our Liturgical Ministries. In total, there are currently over 175 individuals engaged in lay ministry at St. James.

Acolytes

The Acolyte ministry is comprised of 40 children and teenagers split into six teams that serve on rotation throughout the year. Led by John Sykes, the acolyte ministry continues to grow. Earning the five-year service cross in 2023 was Pace Rabalais.

Altar Guild

Led by Jane Christiansen, the 18 women and men who serve on the Altar Guild work behind the scenes to prepare for eucharists and maintain the sacristies. Many hands make light work and the Altar Guild welcomes new volunteers.



Eucharistic Ministers

The 30 Eucharistic Ministers assist the clergy as chalice bearers whenever a eucharist is offered. The number of individuals serving in this ministry allows us to distribute communion from multiple stations at large services to aid in a better flow.

Lectors

Led by Shirley Young, 40 Lectors read scripture passages and lead psalms and prayers at Eucharists and evensongs.

Sunday Greeters

The Sunday Greeters continue to welcome visitors and newcomers to St. James.

Ushers

The 26 men and women of the Usher Ministry serve in rotation of six teams to be a welcoming presence to all as they arrive at St. James, collect the offering, and help direct the congregation during communion.

The word “**liturgy**” is the work of the people—a service that contributes to our communal worship. These liturgical ministries enrich our spiritual lives and draw us into a deeper experience of God. If you feel called to be a part of any of these ministries, you are encouraged to reach out to the ministry leader, clergy, or Parish Office for more information.



MINISTRY REPORT

PASTORAL CARE MINISTRIES

by Laurie Gaston

Eucharistic Visitor Ministry

St. James Eucharistic Visitors are specially trained and bring communion to members who are homebound and are not able to attend Sunday worship services. Eucharistic visits resumed this year and are assisting 15 members through monthly or as-needed visits.

Flowers From The Altar

Each week the Sunday altar flowers are delivered to two parishioners. They are given to the sick, in thanksgiving and remembrance or as a thinking of you.

Friends Feeding Friends

This ministry assists our church family members by delivering meals in times of need. It is a way for the church to show support for those in their time of need. Last year this group delivered 52 meals to 10 families.

Prayer Ministry

The Prayer Ministry coordinates prayer for those who have requested it for the departed, healing, spiritual needs, expectant mothers, newborns and for military/law enforcement personnel. A Prayer List is sent out weekly to those who are wishing to commit to praying for those on our Prayer List. There are also the spoken prayers each Sunday that come from this list. We currently have 98 members participating in this ministry.

Saint Martha's Guild

This ministry consists of volunteers who serve as hostesses for visitations held in Coleman Hall before or after funerals. They assist the families during this difficult time by receiving the flowers, helping with refreshments, and the basics of organizing the visitation.



MEMORIALS

Give rest, O Christ, to your servants with your saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.

Valerian Butler-Smith
Mary Lintot Dougherty
Alan C. Farries
Malcolm Keith Gibson
George Lee Griffin
Roy Fred Hill
John Dallas Hoshman
Robert B. McCall

John Cawthon Ozier
Allen H. Paterson
Randall Wayne Peterson, Sr.
Dana Lamke Reed
Stephen Mavor Selby
Evelyn Traylor
Sarah Jane Watson
Walker D. Winans

Coming this spring

1844 Society

*Supporting the legacy of
St. James Episcopal Church
through planned giving.*



MINISTRY REPORT

ADULT EDUCATION

by The Rev. Drew Harmon

Over the past calendar year, St. James' **Adult Education** programs have afforded parishioners opportunities to engage in meaningful reflection and practice of faith in both large- and small-group settings.

The **Adult Forum** continues to be a staple of Sunday mornings. During the season after the Epiphany, the Rev. Stephen Holmgren (retired local priest and professor of Moral Theology) guided us in a three-part series on "Virtue in the Christian Tradition," which examined the richness of reflection on human intention and deeds. Casey Duncan (Assistant Chaplain at Episcopal High School) led the next Adult Forum series on the parables ("Short Stories of Jesus"), encouraging those who participated to reconsider some of Jesus's best-known and most perplexing teachings. Concluding Lent, Fr. Drew led a two-part exploration of the unique liturgies of Holy Week called "Walking with Jesus to Jerusalem: Holy Week and Its Liturgies". Dr. Ludovico Geymonat (Art Professor at LSU) was welcomed for a two-part series on "Art and Religion", investigating how images reflect and motivate faithful action. Following the Feast of Pentecost, Fr. Chris guided a three-part series entitled "The Birth of Church," which took a deep dive into the book of Acts.



The fall forum kicked off in mid-August with a two-Sunday series ("Into the Household of God: Emotional Lives of Children and Youth") and was led by three experts in the mental health field (Mary Pesses, Alaine Williamson, and Charlie Frey). This series explored common challenges in the development of the youngest among us. Visiting presenter Adrian Owen led the group in considering "Enneagram and Spirituality," using this widely popular personality assessment as a means for spiritual consideration and growth. Then Fr. Chris guided a series entitled "Transformation and Torah: The Gospel of Matthew," delving deeply into the Old Testament resonances within Matthew's gospel. The final series was a two-part offering co-taught by Austin Clark and Fr. Drew that examined the theological significance of Advent through some of its hymns.



Rector's Bible Study



Senior Men's Bible Study



In addition to rotating Adult Forum series, several **stand-alone classes** dotted the second half of the calendar. These included: “O Gracious Light: Choral Evensong and the Anglican Tradition” (Shannon Gallier); and “Who was St. Ambrose and Why Should We Care?” (Fr. Drew).

The **Sunday Book Club** met monthly in the winter/spring, then agreed to meet quarterly for the 2023-24 program year. Books discussed included *The Love that is God* (Frederick Bauerschmidt); *Short Stories by Jesus* (Amy-Jill Levine); *When Breath Becomes Air* (Paul Kalathani); *Being Christian* (Rowan Williams); *Looking for God in Messy Places* (Jake Owensby); and *This Here Flesh* (Cole Arthur Riley).



Sunday Book Club

St. James’ vibrant weekday opportunities have continued meeting with increased engagement. These include:

- **The Rector’s Bible Study** (Tuesday mornings)
- **Senior Men’s Bible Study** (Wednesday mornings)
- **Education for Ministry** (Thursday evenings)
- **EfM Graduate Group** (third Thursday)
- **St. Mary’s Group** (second Tuesday)
- **St. Joan of Arc** (first Wednesday)



For five weeks in the fall, Fr. Drew led the annual **Adult Inquirers class** that looked at different foundational topics of Anglican/Episcopal belief and practice (scripture, church history, liturgy, sacraments, and discipleship). Eight of the 14 participants were then confirmed, received, or reaffirmed at the Bishop’s visitation in October.



St. Joan of Arc



Education for Ministry

Finally, St. James was once again thrilled to host both **Lenten and Advent quiet days**. For Lent, the Rev. Lynn Hooks (SJEDS) led the morning, while the Rev. Katie Nakamura Rengers (National Church Officer for Church Planting) facilitated the Advent quiet day.

MINISTRY REPORT

FAMILY MINISTRIES



by Eydie Comeaux

This will be my first annual report based on the past six months of service to St. James. **Whew! It has been a real whirlwind.**

Sunday School and **Children's Chapel** started off this year with a new program style, highlighted by two classes instead of one. Children are separated by age in order to experience a more age-appropriate lesson. Classroom management for both Sunday School and Children's Chapel now follows Responsive Classroom, utilized by the Day School, as well. *The primary goals of this highly effective approach to discipline are to:*

- Establish a calm, orderly, and safe environment for learning.
- Help children develop self-control and self-discipline.
- Teach children to be responsible, continuing members of our church community.
- Promote respectful, kind, and healthy teacher-student and student-student interactions.



Children's Chapel continues to present age-appropriate engagement with scripture lessons based on the lectionary. The children are given the same lesson in chapel as their family is receiving in church. Activities and crafts reinforce the lesson. This gives families something in common they can discuss at home with their children concerning what they learned in church. I am delighted to report that we have fabulous attendance at our children's chapel! We average 20 children and have enjoyed 30 plus on many occasions.



We were able to hire an intern from LSU, **Alleaha Lopez**, who has been a blessing to our children's program. She is wonderful with the children and helps with the workload of creating and carrying out a meaningful program for our children. I am grateful for her presence in this ministry.

The revamped monthly newsletter, **"Family Ministries Minute"**, has seen an increased open rate (65%), with many households re-subscribing in recent months. We had a **Dads Night Out** in September and a **Moms Night Out** in October. In December, we had a Parents Night Out, but the flu season hit the church and school hard, and I had many parents tell me we need to do this again, but in the warmer months! We will continue to offer our parents some time out for good behavior during the coming year! The kids are having a fun time at these play dates and one parent told me, *"I feel like we should pay you for this. My husband and I really enjoyed our time together."* That statement was payment enough. St. James is pleased to offer these opportunities for the families of this parish!



St. James is truly blessed to have a nursery team of seven women, the average tenure of each caregiver being 5 years. Each caregiver is trained according to Safe Church policies. In recent months, the nursery has added additional protocols to increase the safety of each little one who comes through the door.

A **BIG SHOUTOUT** out to our current nursery staff:

- Kaitlyn Kelley
- Jessica Wilson
- Laila Pitre
- Victoria Hill
- Pelarr Edwards
- Caitlin Marquis
- Celeste Lovelady

We had a fabulous turnout for **The Feast of St. James** which fed 200 of our congregation and entertained our children with games, and indoor crafts like fishing for prizes and making sand art just to name a few! **The Back to School Bash** brought everyone together in worship, fellowship, and fun. The children loved playing in the sprinklers and taking photos at the photo booth! Balloon animals were a big hit too! Teachers and students from the Day School joined over 200 parishioners in the **Blessing of the Backpacks** during the 10:30 a.m. service followed by a wonderful lunch in Bishops Hall.

St. Nicholas Sunday was an absolute favorite of the children! Forty-five children learned about St. Nicholas and enjoyed a visit from the Saint at the 10:30 a.m. service! He came and filled the children's shoes with gold coins of chocolate, oranges, and a reindeer surprise! The children invited him back next year, and he lovingly agreed to come.

Family Ministries oversaw the **Children's Nativity Pageant** which was my favorite event of the year! Forty-six children and youth told the story of our Savior's birth through narration, song, and costumes. Everyone pitched in to make sure the children had a delightful time, and the baby Jesus finally made it to the manger, even though one little angel skinned her knee and bravely carried on to Bethlehem! Cookie cake was enjoyed by all to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior! What a wonderful day.



Goals for 2024

- Continue to work on our volunteer program.
- Continue to offer more parent programs through the year.
- Continue to provide caring, safe, and meaningful-shared experiences for today's St. James' families.

MINISTRY REPORT

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

by The Rev. Drew Harmon

St. James Outreach Ministries have continued to grow, expand, and adapt to best meet the needs of our neighbors. This is done by both hands-on community engagement and through the regular support of organizations working toward a better Baton Rouge.

The **Outreach Committee** consists of representatives from the vestry and associate vestry, ministry leads for longstanding programs, at-large members, and a committee chair. The Committee is further organized into two subcommittees, Seasons of Giving and Serve Sunday, which assist in community contact and planning of outreach opportunities. Fr. Drew Harmon serves as staff liaison for Outreach.

2023 Outreach Committee:

Denise Allen	Mike Fontenot
Copper Alvarez	Ann Holmes
Latoya Carter	Emily Kelly (Chair)
Allyson Cunningham	Doug LeBleu
Tommy Cunningham	Larry Mitchum
Marci Drumm	Robyn Richards



Christmas Feast

This year, 35 volunteers of all ages served 140 holiday meals at the annual St. James Christmas Feast on Dec. 17. Special thanks to Copper Alvarez, Ann Holmes, Doug LeBleu, Larry Mitchum, Liz Noland, Susan Rolfs, and John Sykes for their organizing, decorating, and artistic gifts, which helped make the Feast a huge success once again. In addition to access to typical CCS support services, guests were offered cold weather gear (sweatshirts, hats, gloves, hand warmers, etc.) and grocery vouchers.



Community Connection Sundays monthly:

- 20 parishioners of all ages (aged 3 to 83)
- 75 of our downtown neighbors
- 400 volunteer hours of service (nearly 35 hrs per month)
- 110 meals (including take-out)

In 2023, the **St. James Food Pantry** distributed food to 499 total households (42 per month) and 958 individuals (80 per month).

Volunteers sign up to greet, serve food and drink, distribute groceries, and provide various types of health support. Leftover food is boxed to-go, donated to the feeding ministry at St. Agnes Queen of Peace Shelter and Soup Kitchen, and/or to the Baton Rouge Community Fridge.

Community Connections Sunday (CCS)

For the entirety of 2023, Community Connections Sunday (Formerly "Hearty Breakfast+Food Pantry") operated as a multi-faceted hub of support for our downtown neighbors. On the last Sunday of the month, Bishops Hall is transformed in a space that offers a warm meal provided by the cafeteria staff, groceries from the GBR Food Bank, supplemental food staples, basic hygiene products, health screenings, and a rotating group of community organizations (EBR Library Services, Healthcare Navigator, Vaccine Clinic, Line4Line Barber).



Seasons of Giving

Seasons of Giving are times throughout the year dedicated to the collections of supplies in support of local organizations and those they serve.

- **March:** Collected items were given to **IRIS Domestic Violence Center**, which supports victims of domestic and dating violence and their children.
- **July:** Thanks to St. James' generosity, the Seasons of Giving sub-committee was able to establish a fuller relationship with **New Horizon Head Start** for the entirety of the school year, supporting the ongoing needs of the school's teachers, administrators, and the 120 students they serve.
- **November:** the annual **Angel Tree collection** provided holiday gifts for 85 children and adults in need who are supported by **Volunteers of America** programming.

We Care Bag Ministry

The We Care Bag Ministry continued its partnership with the EBR Library System in 2023. Roughly 100 snack bags are delivered to the Main Library weekly and then disbursed to multiple branches through the library courier system to best accommodate library patrons (typically, school-age children and young persons) experiencing food insecurity. Throughout the week, additional bags (approximately 15 per week) are distributed from the Ministries Center.

VIPS Reading Friends

In partnership with Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS), St. James has 12 trained individuals who serve regularly as reading and math friends. Each week, volunteers visit and work with their assigned student(s) at area schools. St. James is humbled to have been recognized multiple times by the East Baton Rouge School Board.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND GRANTS

As tasked, the annual Outreach budget served to first fund existing parish programs with any residual monies able to be disbursed in accordance with the stated mission; That said, in addition to the above, the Outreach Committee was pleased to allocate the following gifts to area partner organizations hard-at-work for the building up of a better Baton Rouge.

- \$5,000 **Front Yard Bikes** (impacts youth one bike at a time to work for better community)
- \$5,000 **Line4Line** (a creative organization dedicated to youth literacy and barber apprenticeship)
- \$5,000 **Episcopal Relief and Development/Hawaii Wildfire Response** (response to acute need of natural disasters)
- \$2,500 **Rebuilding Together Baton Rouge** (repair homes to revitalize communities and rebuild lives)



Serve Sundays: Bi-annual Serve Sundays are dedicated to putting faith into action. The first Serve Sunday provided three different ways to serve. A team of volunteers worked with Rebuilding Together Baton Rouge (RBTBR) to construct a wheelchair ramp for a local homeowner new to using a wheelchair. On-site, parishioners were able to fill over 600 We Care Bags and pick up litter around downtown.

In the Fall, the Serve Sunday offerings quickly outgrew a single Sunday, thus becoming St. James Serves, spanning the week of Oct. 22–28. On-site volunteers were able to pack We Care Bags. Off-site projects included facilitating an activities day with at the VOA Drusilla Group Home, working with VIPS to spruce up The Dufrocq School's community garden, and again working with RBTBR to put in a wheelchair ramp.



MINISTRY REPORT

MUSIC MINISTRY

by Shannon Gallier

In January, we were honored to host the mid-winter festival of the **Gulf Coast Royal School of Church Music (RSCM)**. Many of our young choristers were joined by choristers from across the Gulf Coast region to create a mass choir of around 40 young people. This choir led our Sunday worship and sang challenging music at a very high standard. In January, nine of our choristers will attend the festival in Houston.

In the spring, following a blockbuster Holy Week, we continued to celebrate our magnificent pipe organ with a recital performed by world-renowned concert organist, **Dr. Damin Spritzer**. We hosted a **Hymn-a-thon**, during which the choirs of St. James sang all 720 hymns in the Hymnal 1982 and raised more than \$13,000 to go toward their 2025 residency at Worcester Cathedral in England.

In June, Director of Music Shannon Gallier served on the staff of the RSCM Gulf Coast course. In 2024, Shannon has been invited to serve as the Director of this course, leading young choristers from around the United States in a week of learning, singing, worship, and fellowship. This invitation is a sign of the respect that the national sacred music community holds for the work being done at St. James.

Austin Clark join the music ministry staff in August as the Associate Organist. His presence at the organ and in rehearsals has been transformative, as our choirs continue to grow, not only in numbers, but in their musicianship, professionalism, and commitment. We are grateful to the continued help of Schola member René Singleton, who aids in teaching the St. Francis and St. Cecilia Choirs.

To celebrate the beginning of the program year our choirs were back in the stalls after their summer rest, and Director of Music Shannon Gallier performed an organ recital. October and November saw our first **Evensongs** of the season, when we celebrated the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels and All Saints'— the first in a longer series of Evensongs as we continue to offer more and more opportunities for beautiful, transcendent worship.

In December, the Choirs offered a service of **Advent Lessons & Carols** in place of our usual Christmas service, and a silent art auction at a gala reception following the serve raised money toward our 2025 Worcester Cathedral residency. We are very grateful to the artist who donated his beautiful works for this cause and to all those who helped make the reception beautiful.



2023 was another year of growth and excitement in the Music Ministry of St. James.



December saw many members of the St. James Choir travel together to New Orleans to serve as the principal choir at Christ Church Cathedral for the **Diaconal Ordination of our seminarian, Austin Wendt**.

We are happy to report, we raised more than \$23,000 to help our choirs in their **2025 journey to Worcester Cathedral**. Many thanks to all who have contributed to what will be a life-changing pilgrimage to members of our choirs of all ages!

Current Music Ministry Membership: 56

- 33 St. James Choir
- 10 St. Cecilia Choir
- 13 St. Francis Choir

MINISTRY REPORT

FELLOWSHIP MINISTRIES

by Laurie Gaston

The definition of fellowship is a friendly association, especially with people who share one's interests. Fellowship at St. James centers on the sharing of our spiritual life, as we grow in faith and walk alongside one another throughout life's seasons.

The **St. James Sunday Coffee Hour** is always a good way to visit with each other in an informal setting. Coffee, lemonade, cookies, and muffins is served.

The James Gang

The James Gang is comprised of mostly retired individuals in our community. This year the group went on several interesting places including tours of St. Helena Catholic Church, Rosedown, Grace Episcopal Church, the LSU Military Museum, LIGO, and the NOEL Distillery.



Garden Guild

St. James Garden Guild works on keeping the gardens and premises of St. James beautiful to reflect the beauty of God's creation and as an invitation for others to get to know our parish. They have work days throughout the year to accomplish this mission.



Associate Vestry

The Associate Vestry successfully planned and executed several large events engaging all in the St. James community.

- In January, we had a memorable **pancake breakfast**. While the weather outside was stormy, inside fellowship took place over pancakes and sausage. The weather couldn't put a damper on everyone's enjoyment of the event.
- April's **Annual Crawfish Boil** included live music, activities for kids, and, of course, delicious crawfish.
- In September, the AV had a **family fellowship night** at Curbside Burgers for 50 kids and adults.
- The annual **Fall Hospitality Party** was hosted by Gretchen and Preston Petersen. Guests were greeted with champagne and a smile. The food was delicious and the ambiance was incredible. Over 175 friendly faces were in attendance.



MINISTRY REPORT

ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL DAY SCHOOL

By Bridget Henderson

Our mission: St. James is committed to developing each child's unique gifts by providing a strong foundation combining academic excellence and spiritual formation within a warm, loving, Christian community.

Serving students 18 months through age two in Pelican's Nest and providing leadership opportunities for our students in PreK-3 through the fifth grade in the Day School, St. James offers an integrated and accelerated curriculum designed to exceed national and state standards. Innovation is at the core of our instructional practices, appropriately integrating technology into lessons to enhance the learning and engagement level of students. A strong commitment to professional development, a robust curriculum that includes nine enrichment offerings, and academic enhancement teachers available to each grade level, all work together to provide a superior, well-rounded academic and social experience for each St. James student.



Our primary academic initiative this year has been Project Based Learning. The project approach begins with students making connections to a topic, resulting in a more personalized experience in the classroom. Project work encourages deeper interaction with learning content and inspires higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills. We continue to focus on social and emotional skills throughout the students' St. James tenure. This growth is achieved in many ways, including school-wide and individual classroom Morning Meetings; a Christian Education program steeped in the Episcopalian faith that reinforces the God-given dignity and individuality of each child as expressed through the Anglican tradition; relational strategies learned through our Guidance classes; and a strong extended community which includes unparalleled parental engagement and support.

A three-time recipient of the U. S. Department of Education National Blue Ribbon School Award, St. James has a legacy of building on the past while preparing for the future. In this, our **75th year**, St. James remains a premier academic institution and a family favorite year after year in our community.

We look forward to another exciting year.



CAMPUS MAINTENANCE: PROPERTY UPKEEP AND MAINTENANCE

by Sue Larisey, Chair Property Committee

The mission of the St. James Episcopal Property Committee is to operate and maintain the condition of the property, buildings, grounds, and furnishings of St. James. The Property Committee has continued its faithful stewardship this past year in addressing a variety of maintenance and upkeep issues of our church and school.

We started the year off with a focus on getting the front doors of the church repaired. The Property Committee got several quotes and decided to have the doors repaired by Ford Thomas. He removed the doors from their hinges and repaired them onsite. He removed the cracked and splintered mahogany at the bottom and replaced it, reusing our historic hardware and refinishing it to match. Later in the year, the committee voted to refinish the exterior of all the church doors. This effort will need to be redone yearly on the west-facing doors to keep this important first impression of our community looking sharp. Both projects were completed with committee budget funds.

The committee decided to change out the lights in the parking lot with much brighter LED fixtures funded by the maintenance budget. These lights make the newly renovated space more inviting and safer. Also funded by the maintenance budgets of the Church and Day School, but approved by the committee, was replacing the garbage disposal in the cafeteria dishwasher area. This was needed after replacing the dishwasher several years back and going without a disposal.

The property committee also approved updating the graphics for the newly installed outdoor campus map signage.

After we renovated the sanctuary space, the condition of the pews in the chapel was brought to the committee. The same pew expert who worked on the pews in the church has given us a quote and this has been passed along to the Campus Planning Committee to consider being included in upcoming interior refinishing to Atkinson Hall which includes the Chapel.

The committee authorized a bid to repair the elevator in Bishop's Hall that became inoperable. After extensive research our vendor found a new part that would communicate with our 20+ year-old elevator. The Property Committee voted to fund 50% of the project and paid the deposit. The work on this project is ongoing but the effort is very important as the 3rd floor has storage space for the Day School and many church ministries, including Gumbo.

The property committee authorized the church to fund the replacement of three failed HVAC air compressors in the Ministries Center from the maintenance budget.

The committee approved paying for the labor to replace the water heater in the Ministries Center in October which had failed after several repairs from Property Committee budgeted funds.

Lastly, the Property Committee approved a bid to do a first phase in the exterior landscaping behind the brick wall on N. 4th Street in front of Atkinson Hall. This effort included a significant amount of groundwork, removal of the existing plants which prohibited proper drainage, placing a rock hardscape and planting along the building. A second phase is being discussed that would include a fence or wall with a gate as a visible barrier to the plumbing of River Jordan and stop access to the space outside the chapel where a water hose connects.

The River Jordan is an ongoing project. There is currently a broken pvc part that requires the replacement of a few other connections. Repairs should be completed soon.



Thank you St. James for a wonderful
2023