



ST. JAMES  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ST. JAMES  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
BUILT IN 1890  
HAS BEEN PLACED ON THE  
NATIONAL REGISTER  
OF HISTORIC PLACES  
BY THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



# THE MESSENGER

2024 VOLUME 2



# MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH

The People

## CLERGY

The Rt. Rev. Shannon Duckworth Bishop  
The Rev. Chris Duncan Rector  
The Rev. Dr. Drew Harmon Senior Associate Rector  
The Rev. Lynn Hooks Associate Rector & Day School Chaplain  
The Rev. Dr. Don White Assisting Priest  
The Rev. Pat Lyle Deacon

## STAFF

Paul Allman Facilities Manager  
Samantha Chaney Custodian  
Austin Clark Associate Organist  
Eydie Comeaux Director of Family Ministries  
Shannon Gallier Director of Music  
Laurie Gaston Parish Life Coordinator  
Bridget Henderson Head of School  
Darell Lee Day Porter  
Dwight Nichols Sexton  
Cheryl Olinde Director of Finance  
Melissa Parmelee Director of Communications  
Jacques Pourciau Director of Operations  
Jaslyn E. Schexnayder Receptionist  
LaShondra Smith Custodian

## VESTRY

### 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





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FROM THE VESTRY  
Ben Dampf





# FROM THE RECTOR



If the season of Lent is for fasting, then Easter through Pentecost is for feasting. In fact, every Sunday is an Easter celebration, and therefore our entire life together as a worshipping community is built around the idea of “feasting.” The word “feast” comes from the old old French word “feste” and the Middle English word “fête.” In both cases, the word is rooted in the Church’s calendar, marking days or seasons of rejoicing or, quite literally, partying. Therefore, feasting in a religious context is not about overindulgence, which our human nature is naturally good at doing. Instead, feasting is about celebrating how God is at work in your life, within the Church, and throughout all of creation.

Throughout scripture, we see the importance of both feasting and fasting within the life of faith. Fasting is the act of abstaining from something to be reminded of our dependence on God and to return to God in penitence. While our culture (and human nature) is not great at fasting, we are also not great at feasting... at least in the manner described above. Perhaps scripture can help shed some light on this whole idea. For instance, when three strangers wander into his camp, Abraham welcomes them with food and water, not even realizing that he is hosting angels (Genesis 18:1- 7). Through his actions, Abraham creates a feast of hospitality. Also, when God gave the covenant to Moses, the Israelite elders feasted on Mount Sinai to celebrate God’s gift of order and dominion (Exodus 24:9-11). Many of the stories of Jesus revolve around feasting as well. Jesus’ first miracle in the Gospel of John is at the wedding in Cana (John 2:1-12). Jesus does not just create a little wine to get through the celebration, but rather an overflowing abundance as a sign and symbol of God’s provision and grace that is abundant.

Furthermore, every Gospel shares a version of the miracle story of Jesus having compassion on the crowds of people gathered and multiplying the loaves until each person had their fill. This was not a light snack but a feast on the mountainside. Finally, the night before he died, Jesus gathered with his disciples, took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them. At the end of the meal, he instructed his disciples to continue to do this as often as they gathered. In Acts of the Apostles, we see that they did just as Jesus had commanded them and lived in community with the act of breaking bread together at the heart of their common life in faith (Acts 2:44-47).



# FROM THE RECTOR

Feasting is an essential aspect of church life and something important happens when we gather to break bread with one another. Of course, feasting in the sacrament in Sunday services remains at the heart of our worshiping life together. This holy act unites us one to another no matter our difference or backgrounds. Similarly, gathering in fellowship to feast is a time to create a sense of community. It is a time to catch up, create new bonds, share our joys and struggles, and encourage each other in our faith.



At St. James, we excel at more than just breaking bread with one another. We excel at celebrating and feasting. Just look at our longest-held and most beloved traditions, and you'll see that food is often at the heart of each gathering. Whether it's the St. James Gumbo during Lent, the Crawfish Boil during Easter, the St. James Feast in July, the Fall Hospitality Party, or the Sunday coffee hour, these are not just meals; they are feasts. They are joyous celebrations of how God is at work in our lives, within the Church, and throughout all of creation.



This idea of feasting and fellowship through shared meals has been on my mind because Coleman Hall and the Atkinson Building will be renovated this summer. Although only for a few weeks, we will lose space at the heart of our church for community and fellowship. Too often, we take these things for granted. Therefore, I challenge you to renew your spirit of feasting in faith and community. Join us during our coffee hours in the courtyard in June while Atkinson is renovated or for the St. James Feast on July 21. Join us for Blessing of the Backpacks and the Back to School Bash on August 11 even if you don't have a student in your household. Join us for the Fall Hospitality Party and St. James Lenten Gumbo. St. James is the people, and we are called to be in community as members of Christ's body, the Church.



As the old saying goes, "The more the merrier." This adage is certainly true when the good people of St. James come together to feast. After all, there is much to celebrate despite life's ups and downs, for God is at work in your life, within our incredible congregation, and throughout all creation.



# APPROACHING THE FINISH LINE

*Preserving Our Past, Securing Our Future*

## Projects Completed

In 2017, the effort began to raise funds to fix the church's exterior bricks and explore how the interior might be renovated. This effort started through the *"Love of Christ Always"* capital campaign. This campaign was a focused effort with only a handful of members. Nonetheless, the campaign was highly successful in raising \$2.2 million. These funds were paid to repoint the bricks and served as seed money for future efforts. Then, in 2020, even though the *"Preserving Our Past, Securing Our Future"* campaign was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Vestry voted to proceed with the church interior renovation, which included a new organ, restored original wood flooring, new lighting, updated electrical, a fire suppression system, upgraded sound system, cameras, and edit room for live streaming, and much more. On the outside, drainage was installed to stop water from getting under the church, and other general beautification steps were taken, including the new pavers and gardens in the front. During the spring of 2021, the capital campaign was finally launched with over \$4 million pledged. As we headed into the summer of 2021, a payment schedule was created to repay the loan from the endowment, and we began tackling other projects around campus, such as exterior painting around the campus, Bishops Hall interior renovations, and repairs to our fencing and walls. Things did not slow down after that, either.

In 2022 and 2023, as the donations for the campaign continued to come in strong, projects included:

### Parking Lot



### Werlein Windows



### Landscape Projects along N. 4th Street





## Flat Roof Replacement



## Interior Renovation Ministries Center



## WHAT'S NEXT

We have certainly accomplished a lot in the past several years. Yet, more is still to come as part of the *"Preserving Our Past, Securing Our Future"* campaign. We must finish strong. Those projects and expenses include the following:

### Atkinson Building Interior

Coleman Hall, the parlor, foyer, chapel, and second-floor Sunday School space were last renovated after the fire in the early 2000s. Therefore, it is time for a fresh coat of paint and new carpet. This work will begin on the Tuesday after Memorial Day (May 28) and will take several weeks. Please stay tuned to *The Herald* and the weekly bulletin insert to follow the ongoing renovation progress.

### Finish Repaying the Endowment

When the capital campaign was put on hold in the spring of 2020, the Vestry authorized money from the Barnes Fund to be used on loan to keep the church interior restoration on track. In hindsight, this was a prudent decision as this action kept construction costs significantly lower. The final amount borrowed was \$600k. After the conclusion of the capital campaign in 2021, the Vestry created a repayment schedule with \$50k repaid each year (2021, 2022, 2023, 2024) and a balloon payment of the remaining \$400k balance in 2025. Repaying this loan from the Barnes Fund is vital to the long-term support of St. James' ongoing ministries and upkeep.

### Repay Past Capital Improvement Spending

As shared during the capital campaign, past capital improvement projects did not always raise the funds needed to cover costs, which subsequently cut into available cash. Therefore, some of these funds will go toward repaying the church and school for these used funds to secure St. James' long-term financial position better.



### Are we done yet?

On one hand, St. James has incredible facilities that serve as tools of ministry. On the other hand, those tools require a lot of care and attention, and unfortunately, that takes money. Therefore, the answer to "Are we done yet?" is that we will never be "done." A congregation should plan to have capital improvement projects every 5 to 10 years to ensure the ongoing maintenance does not slip into being deferred and thus cost exponentially more. Therefore, what are some capital improvement projects that could be on the horizon but are beyond the current scope of the "Preserving Our Past, Securing Our Future" campaign?

### The River Jordan and the Surrounding Courtyard

The River Jordan is a beautiful feature when it is running. Unfortunately, as the fountain has aged, it spends more time out of order. The Property Committee recently inspected the River Jordan, and the report said that the walls are failing. In other words, the walls of the basins and river are beyond repair. At the same time, due to the drought last summer, the slate in the surrounding courtyard has shifted and broken. Therefore, the Vestry has authorized the Property Committee to engage the congregation to explore how best to proceed with this space. Stay tuned for more details to come over the next year.

### Day School Renovation & Expansion

With the addition of classes for 18-month-olds, 2-year-olds, and Pre-K3, the Day School is beginning to run out of space. Enrollment is soon to surpass 300 and continues to grow. In the summer of 2019, Killgore Hall was redeveloped to use the first floor for 18-month-olds and 2-year-olds. Soon, the Day School will expand into the second floor of Killgore and renovate the remainder of the campus. Once again, stay tuned for more details over the next year.

### Solar Panels

St. James received a gift to begin exploring the addition of solar panels. Since that gift, the church has also explored the possibility of other grants to expand this project. The church will soon begin conversations with engineers to design a reasonable plan that can be used for grant applications.

### Chiller Tower and Boilers

Both the chiller tower and boilers are well past their expected lifespan. Therefore, a time will come when they both need to be replaced or a new system installed that is more efficient and offers better climate control in various zones. This need is only in the beginning stages of exploration.





## Capital Campaign Progress Report

When the *Preserving Our Past, Securing Our Future* campaign launched, the original goal was \$3.5 million. However, due to the incredible response of roughly 80% of the congregation, St. James surpassed this goal by \$500k. This was exceptionally fortunate as construction costs have continued to rise compared to the original projected costs. This inflation was also combatted through the acquisition of historic tax credits. Below is a simple breakdown of the project's revenues and expenses, including elements from the *Love of Christ Always* campaign. As long as giving remains strong on the remaining \$700k balance from the capital campaign, St. James should finish with a small surplus that can be used as the seed money for future capital improvement needs.

### Revenue

	<i>Budget/Projection</i>	<i>Actuals</i>
Love of Chris Always	\$2,217,023	\$2,217,023
Preserving Our Past, Securing Our Future	\$4,059,866	\$3,301,696
Designated Gifts	\$78,451	\$78,451
Gumbo Donation	\$101,000	\$101,000
Historic Tax Credits	\$870,659	\$748,536
Endowment Loan	\$600,000	\$600,000
<b>Funds Available</b>	<b>\$7,926,999</b>	<b>\$7,046,706</b>

### Expenses

	<b>Projections/Actuals</b>
Exterior Church Brick	\$1,350,293
Church Restoration	\$1,343,228
New Organ (3 Manual upgrade included, estimated)	\$934,420
Various Exterior/Interior	\$844,210
Parking Lot, Landscaping, and Drainage	\$806,762
Misc. Admin: CPAs and Consultants	\$217,412
Werlein Windows	\$552,750
Endowment Repayment	\$600,000
Campus Flat Roofs	\$627,800
Past Capital Project Repayment	\$247,131
Contingency (projected remaining balance)	\$402,993
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,926,999</b>

### Questions?

Contact Trey Roberts ([treyroberts@lamar.com](mailto:treyroberts@lamar.com)) or The Rev. Chris Duncan ([cduncan@stjamesbr.org](mailto:cduncan@stjamesbr.org))



# MEET MOTHER LYNN



## Mother Lynn Hooks , Associate Rector & Day School Chaplain

Mother Lynn, from Baton Rouge, joined the church staff in March and will continue her Day School responsibilities where she has been for three years. She was drawn to her current role by the parish's commitment to community and school values and aims to strengthen the relationship between the church and school communities over the next year.

Lynn's family is her and her husband's, Michael, pride and joy: Ryan, an LSU enthusiast, is marrying Steph, a Tulane fan; Rachel, an 8th grade math teacher and justice advocate, is married to Luke, the Tennis Director at Southern Oaks Athletic Club; and Raphe, a recent graduate from LSU in chemistry, is looking forward to a career in environmental chemistry.

Lynn loves steak with cabernet, and her first job was painting parking lot stripes at Bon Marche Mall. A little-known fact is that she carpooled with Michael to kindergarten and competed in the Junior Olympics in gymnastics. In her free time, she enjoys running, coffee, and spending time with her family, often cooking or restaurant hopping. She loves dancing to Trombone Shorty and "Louisiana Saturday Night" at football games.

### More about Mother Lynn education and experience:

- Most recently served as Priest-in-Charge at two parishes in the Diocese:
  - St. Paul's-Holy Trinity in New Roads and St. Mary's in Morganza
- Iona Collaborative, Seminary of the Southwest
- AC Marble School for Theological Formation Licentiate of Theology
- Theological Formation Licentiate in Theology
- 25 years of teaching Christian Education, St. Luke's Episcopal Day School
- Bachelor of Liberal Arts, LSU



# CONGRATS 2024 HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

Granison Alexander  
 Greta Allain  
 Elizabeth Arey  
 Ava Blakeman  
 Jonathan (John Luke) Boagni  
 Maya Breland  
 Jett Carmouche  
 Stewart (Cole) Cayton  
 Anthony Comeaux  
 Ethan Courter  
 Risley Elliott  
 Blake Fair  
 Fred (Major) Frey  
 Jordan Hu  
 Sally Hurst  
 Laurence (Trey) Lambert  
 Olivia (Via) Lofton  
 Isabelle McDermott



Samuel (Sam) Messina  
 Benjamin Neil  
 Morgan Netterville  
 Adrian Buie O'Neal  
 Elizabeth Odeh  
 Thomas Odom

Thomas Odom  
 Bryan Olsson  
 Ethan Ott  
 Georgia Pittenger  
 Ryann Richard  
 Alden Romano

Fuller Stevens  
 Kevin (Burke) Tarleton  
 Hudson Thomas  
 Olivia Van Hook  
 Parker Vidrine  
 Caroline Welsh  
 Hayden Willett





# GUMBO

St. James  
GUMBO  
MENU

TAKE-OUT  
→



Thank you for an incredible  
Gumbo 2024!

Save the Date for next year's Gumbo:  
**FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2025**

Introducing next year's Gumbo leaders:  
John Sykes, Chair  
Erin Piper & Caroline Ross, Vice Chairs

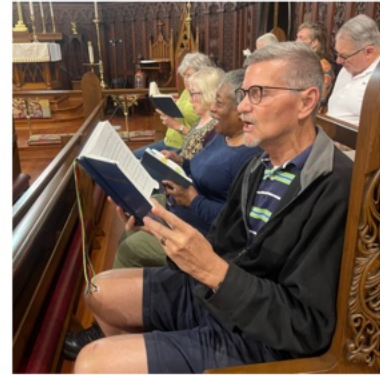




# HYMN-A-THON

Hymn-A-Thon 2024 was a huge success! Thank you to those who contributed to our choir members and directly to the Worcester Residency Fund. Raising over \$23,000, the event exceeded its fundraising goal. With a little over a year remaining, the Music Ministry is excited to announce we are at 62% of our fundraising goal!

Follow us to learn more about upcoming ways to support the fund including Sunday's Choral Evensong and an evening of music and fine wines in the fall, with our first ever Cabaret!





# PARISH LIFE AT ST. JAMES





# PARISH LIFE AT ST. JAMES





# PARISH LIFE AT ST. JAMES





# PARISH LIFE AT ST. JAMES





# PARISH LIFE AT ST. JAMES





# MILESTONES

*celebrating the blessings of life*

*In thanksgiving for the birth of:*

Spencer Bayne Allen, grandson of Emily and Woody Wood on January 24, 2024.  
Sutton Mae Jackson, granddaughter of Amy and Scott Westbrook on February 4, 2024.  
Elizabeth Elliott Boudreaux, daughter of Elliott and Raegen Boudreaux on February 29, 2024.  
Katherine Grady Jackson, daughter of Anna Katherine and Austin Jackson on March 13, 2024.  
Paul Joseph Howe, grandson of Suzette and Ralph Howe on March 24, 2024.  
Grayson Hays Gladney, son of Charles and Maggie Gladney on April 2, 2024.

*In thanksgiving for those baptized at St. James:*

Christopher Miles Bourgeois on April 7, 2024  
Sutton DuBose Bullock on April 7, 2024  
John Francis Hodginson on April 7, 2024  
Thomas Franklin Lawrence on April 7, 2024

*In thanksgiving for the marriage of:*

John D. Ray, son of John and Brenda Ray, married  
Rebeka Irene Knezevich, daughter of Michael  
Knezevich and Jennifer Levy Bourgeois, on April 13,  
2024.

*In thanksgiving for our new members:*

Chap Arst  
Sheree and Brad Blanchard and family  
Drew and Teresa Boatner  
Bryan and Kate Carter and family  
Kailea Gilmore  
Amber Hall  
Joseph and Chadwick Possa and family  
Heidi and Zachary Walker and family  
JR Whaley and family  
McGehee and Heather Woolf and family

*Milestones submitted from February, March, and April.*

Each quarter, St. James shares milestones within the church family such as the birth of child/grandchild, weddings, baptisms, and new members. Please share your milestones by contacting the church office: [church@stjamesbr.org](mailto:church@stjamesbr.org) (225-387-5141). Submissions are due the last Monday of the month in July, October, January, and April.



## ALTAR FLOWERS

*Donations between February and April*

In memory of Emmett Boudreaux by Margaret Boudreaux.

In memory of Mike Larisey by Sue Larisey.

In memory of Charles W. Clark Jr. & Grace C. Clark by Charles & Peachy Melancon.



# FROM THE VESTRY

SR. WARDEN BEN DAMPF

Greetings, St. James! On behalf of the Vestry, I have much to share and limited space, so please allow me to jump right in. As you've now likely heard, the Vestry's Legacy Giving Committee (Will Benton, Chair) formed the 1844 Society to recognize members of our parish who have committed future gifts to St. James through their estate planning. These gifts, big and small, are critical to sustaining St. James' future.

The Associate Vestry attracted over 300 people at our annual Crawfish Boil held on April 12th. This event is a church-wide favorite as it brings together the entire St. James community for fun and fellowship.

One week later, the Day School celebrated its 75th anniversary at the annual soiree! As always, the event drew rave reviews from those in attendance. Many thanks to Bridget Henderson, the faculty, staff, and volunteers for all of their hard work.

In other Day School news, Tyler Gray (President), Angela Domingue (Vice President), Drew Reilly (Secretary) and Jared Soileau are finishing up their terms on the Board of Trustees. Josh Pesses will take the reigns as the board's next President in July. The school is primed for success next year and beyond. As the Capital Campaign marches on, Louisiana's Department of Revenue has approved various tax credits for the completed and upcoming construction projects that continue to preserve and improve St. James' facilities.

I conclude with another warm welcome to Reverend Lynn Hooks, our new Associate Rector and Day School Chaplain. Mother Lynn hit the ground running in late March and has already added tremendous value to the ministries of St. James. All who have met her will attest— her enthusiasm for St. James is highly infectious!



## 1844 Society

The 1844 Society was established by the Vestry to recognize and celebrate parishioners who have made a bequest or other planned gift from their estate to St James Church.

Legacy donors will receive a yearly invitation to a special event and be listed in the Annual Meeting Report, unless your preference is to be listed as anonymous.

To be included in the 1844 Society, please give written notice using the enclosed form confirming your legacy gift is in place. If you have already included St. James in your Legacy Giving, then please let us know using the enclosed form.

Thank you in advance for your generosity and vision. Your gift will help secure the future of St. James Church for generations to come.

Please contact Fr. Chris, [cduncan@stjamesbr.org](mailto:cduncan@stjamesbr.org), to learn more.







205 N. FOURTH STREET  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70801  
225-387-5141  
CHURCH@STJAMESBR.ORG  
STJAMESBR.ORG

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## WORSHIP WITH US

### SUNDAYS IN-PERSON

8 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I  
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II  
5 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

### SUNDAYS ONLINE

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

### WEDNESDAYS IN-PERSON

12 p.m. Holy Eucharist II with healing prayer



*Family Ministries Easter Egg Hunt*



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