



MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH

The People

CLERGY

The Rt. Rev. Shannon Duckworth Bishop
The Rev. Chris Duncan Rector
The Rev. Hillary Peete Associate Rector
The Rev. Lynn Hooks Associate Rector & Day School Chaplain
The Rev. Dr. Don White Assisting Priest



STAFF

Taylor Bravender Director of Communications
Samantha Chaney Custodian
Austin Clark Associate Organist
Shannon Gallier Director of Music
Laurie Gaston Parish Life Coordinator
Bridget Henderson Head of School
Quinetta Jackson Custodian
Darell Lee Sexton
Dwight Nichols Facilities Manager
Cheryl Olinde Director of Finance
Carrie Grace Potter Director of Family Ministries
Jacques Pourciau Director of Operations
LaShondra Smith Custodian
Andree Williams Day Porter
Jessica Wilson Receptionist



VESTRY

Third Year

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

Second Year

Amos Davis
Barbara Garon
Suzette Howe
Nancy Roberts
Stewart Ross
Susan White

First Year

Shannon Hannaman
Randal Johnson
George Murrell
Dorsey Peek
Chuck Plattsmier
Matt Saurage



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Sr. Lindsay Turner



The Season of Lent: Turning (or ReTurning) Toward God



THE REV. CHRIS DUNCAN

With the busyness of the carnival season and Mardi Gras behind us, the season of Lent arrives quickly by solemn invitation. The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday with words that set the tone for the coming forty days: “*I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent...*” In other words, the season of Lent is given to us as a gift. Too often, we can misinterpret it as a season of shame or guilt, but instead, it is a time set apart to slow down, to take an honest look at our lives in faith, and to turn again toward God with intentionality and hope.

The word Lent comes from the Old English *lencten*, meaning “springtime.” Even as Lent calls us to reflection and repentance, it is also a season of renewal. Just as the earth begins to awaken from winter, Lent prepares our hearts for the new life of Easter. From the earliest centuries of the Church, Lent developed as a time of preparation for Easter, especially for those preparing for baptism. By the fourth century, the forty-day season was firmly established, mirroring the forty days Jesus spent fasting and praying in the wilderness. Over time, the whole Church came to share in this season of spiritual discipline and renewal.

The Book of Common Prayer names specific practices that shape a holy Lent:

- Self-examination and repentance
- Prayer, fasting, and self-denial
- Reading and meditating on God’s holy Word

These practices raise important questions for us: Why do we fast? Why do we take on acts of piety? Why do we intentionally deny ourselves certain comforts or routines?

The Season of Lent: Turning (or ReTurning) Toward God

We do not fast to punish ourselves or to earn God's favor. We fast to loosen our grip on distractions, bad habits, and excesses that dull our awareness of God in our lives. When we set something aside, we become more attentive to what sustains us: God's grace. Therefore, hunger, in all its forms, reminds us of our dependence on God alone.

Acts of piety (i.e., prayer, worship, acts of generosity, service, etc.) are not intended to prove our faithfulness. Instead, they are practices that shape us by realigning our hearts with God. Lent invites us to return to these practices, not as obligations, but as pathways back into deeper relationships with God and with each other.

Self-examination and repentance are often the hardest disciplines to follow. They require honesty, humility, and trust in God's mercy. Ultimately, the act of repentance is about turning away from what diminishes life and turning toward God's unending grace that restores life. It is not about shame. Instead, it is about the promise and hope that frees us to rest in God's love.

In the end, Lent is not about doing more, but about becoming more attentive to God's presence, to our need for grace, and to one another. Lent is returning to that foundational call to love the Lord and love our neighbors. Faith is never meant to be lived in isolation. As I shared with you in my challenge to "Commit to Coming," St. James is better when the people are gathered together. Worship is richer, fellowship deeper, and our own lives are strengthened when we are active participants in the life of the Church. Lent is an opportunity to recommit to Sunday worship, to spiritual formation, to our shared prayer, and to being present with one another. God works in and through the community we know as the Church. Show up matters. Your presence matters.

As we walk this Lenten journey, we receive once more the Church's invitation to observe a holy Lent. May this season be an opportunity to deepen our faith, renew our hope, and live out God's unending love.



LENT, HOLY WEEK, & EASTER

PALM SUNDAY

Sunday, March 29 | 10:30 A.M.

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Thursday, April 2 | 7 P.M.

GOOD FRIDAY

Friday, April 3 | 7:30 A.M., 12 P.M.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Friday, April 3 | 1 P.M.

EASTER EGG HUNT

Saturday, April 4 | 9:30 A.M.

THE GREAT EASTER VIGIL

Saturday, April 4 | 7 P.M.

EASTER SUNDAY

Sunday, April 5 | 7:30 A.M., 9 A.M., 11 A.M.

SPRING SAVE THE DATES



**ST. JAMES
GUMBO DINE-IN
& TAKE-OUT**

**Friday, February 27
11 A.M.**



**CHORAL
EVENSONG**

**Sunday, March 29
5 P.M.**



**HIGH SCHOOL
SENIOR SUNDAY**

**Sunday, April 19
10:30 A.M.**



**ANNUAL
CRAWFISH BOIL**

**Friday, April 24
6 P.M.**

WHAT'S NEW IN CHILDRENS MINISTRIES & FELLOWSHIP

Look around the pews, and you'll see parishioners of all ages. We love to see the kids line up for Children's Chapel, teens leading younger kids as faithful acolytes, and grandparents sitting with grandkids. There is truly a place for all ages at St. James. We are growing our ministries this spring for youth and young adults! Whether you have a child in middle school or know a young adult, please keep the Jr. EYC (rising 6th through current 8th graders) and 20s30s group in your prayers. If you have questions, want to get involved, or would like to support these groups, please contact Rev. Hillary Peete or Carrie Grace Potter.

Jr. High EYC

Programming for this age group has been a request from so many of you - even those without children or grandchildren who fall into this category, which shows just how committed you are to the children and the future of this church. As kids this age begin the search for who they are, we want to be part of that identity. We'll try to do that by offering space for community, questions, and of course... food! Jr. High EYC will meet once a month following the 10:30 service. Save the dates: Feb. 22, March 15, April 19, May 17.

Children's Communion Class

In researching resources to teach these lessons, I came across one titled "What Are We Doing?" which seems perfectly apt. If only there were a simple answer. Luckily, children thrive in asking "But, WHY?" so I'm sure we'll get to the bottom of this Holy Mystery together. We hope to establish this as a bi-annual Lenten practice for children where we look at scripture and liturgy, take a tour, and even bake bread for Sunday Eucharist, so that children can feel how essential they are to our congregation as they make their way to the altar rail. Our first class is at 9:15 on Sunday, March 1. It continues each Sunday through March 22, when students who have completed at least 3 of the 4 classes will be recognized at the 10:30 service. All Pk4-5th graders are welcome.

Young Adults (20s30s)

Society is at the crossroads of constant connection and an epidemic of loneliness. We interact with a lot of people in our real and digital worlds, but often wonder who truly *knows* us. The remedy for this is to lean into community, to gather with others seeking authentic relationships, and to be brave enough to invite others in. This spring, the young adults group begins monthly meet-ups to do just that. Our gatherings are social in nature, but offer so much more! Plan to join us to connect with friends, welcome newcomers, and build a meaningful community.

Upcoming Events:

Trivia Night @ Barracuda Taco Stand - March 23 @ 6 p.m. (*adults only, please*)

Mid City Beer Garden - Saturday, April 18 from 4-6 p.m. (*the patio is dog friendly, but you must be 18+ to enter.*)



PARISH LIFE AT ST. JAMES



St. Joan of Arc



Sunday School



Community Connections Sunday



Choral Evensong



St. Nicholas Sunday



Community Connections Sunday



St. Joan of Arc



AV Pancake Breakfast

PARISH LIFE AT ST. JAMES



PARISH LIFE AT ST. JAMES



St. James Christmas Feast



Quinetta's Birthday Celebration



AV Pancake Breakfast



AV Pancake Breakfast



St. Nicholas Sunday



Annual Meeting Children's Activities



St. Joan of Arc



2026 Clergy Conference

OUR 75TH YEAR OF GUMBO

GUMBO is almost here, and we are delighted to invite you to our longtime Lenten tradition that is now celebrating its 75th anniversary!

This beloved tradition began many years ago when the ladies of the church approached the Vestry with a request for air conditioning in the Sunday School classrooms. When the expense could not be approved, they didn't give up! A committee was formed, pots were stirred, and Gumbo was sold on Fridays during Lent to raise the needed funds. From that first Friday onward, GUMBO became more than a fundraiser; it became a joyful expression of faith, fellowship, and perseverance.

Over the years, proceeds from Gumbo have supported many meaningful ministries and projects, including the Choir's residence in England last summer, Outreach ministries, St. Luke's Church rebuilding efforts, and improvements to our church organ. What an incredible legacy built one bowl at a time! This year, we invite everyone who has served at GUMBO, supported GUMBO, or simply enjoyed GUMBO, to come celebrate with us. A jazz trio will provide background music, and we'll have photos and GUMBO memorabilia on display as we look back on 75 wonderful years of food, fun, and fellowship.

Dine-in and take-out lunches (\$12) with convenient drive-through service will be available on Friday, February 27th, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Frozen quarts (\$18) will be available for purchase after Sunday services on:

- March 1
- March 8,
- March 15
- March 22

Pre-orders may be placed at stjamesgumbo.square.site or by calling the church office on February 27th from 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

We hope you'll join us as we celebrate this milestone anniversary!



GET CONNECTED WITH REALM

St. James is planning to create an updated Church Pictorial Directory in 2026. The last version was released in 2022 in part due to Fred and Jan Frey. As we start the new year and prepare for this undertaking, now is a good time remind everyone about registering for our church database system, Realm. If you are new or if you didn't see the information when we converted in 2022, Realm is how we keep current contact records for the St. James Church family and share them securely with other members. Of course, you can update your own personal privacy settings. It also holds all our sacramental records, and we use it to facilitate our online giving.

How Do You Sign Up on Realm?

How do you get started on Realm? There are a few different ways you can sign up on realm. The first option is to go to our website, click "About", then click "Membership Database" in the drop down menu. From there you will be taken to Realm. The second option is to sign in or sign up for Realm. You can also Follow the images below (the PDF directions) with a step-by-step guide on how to sign up for Realm.

Why Do We Use Realm?

While the Realm system primarily serves the administrative needs of our staff, it also offers some exciting opportunities to support the ways you interact with the church. Not only does this improve work life for the staff, but it also makes it easier for you and all our members to connect with each other. If you have any issues creating a profile, have questions, or need an invitation to register, contact Jacques at the church office.

How to Sign Up for Realm:

1. Go to st.jamesbr.org
2. Click "Membership Database"
3. Click "Sign Up"
4. Fill out the information to create an account.
5. Click "Submit"
6. Wait for an email from Realm.

You can also download the PDF step-by-step guide off of our website under "NEWS" or by downloading the PDF from the "Getting Connected with Realm" email sent out in early February.



MILESTONES

celebrating the blessings of life

Milestones submitted from December and January

In thanksgiving for those baptized at St. James:

David Jeddie Smith, III on January 25, 2026.

In thanksgiving for the marriages of:

Katherine Ann LeBleu, daughter of Doug and Heather LeBleu, and **Jacob Michael Loupe**, son of Daryl and Jamie Loupe, on November 15, 2026.

In thanksgiving for the births of:

Georgia Mae Leonard, great-granddaughter of Bahin Leonard, on November 20, 2025.

Canaan Michael Boles, great-grandson of Chet and Janie Coles, on December 23, 2025.

Jack Charles Lawrence, son of Catherine and Seth Lawrence, on December 24, 2025.

McKenna Rose Birch, granddaughter of Gene Birch, on January 9, 2026.

In thanksgiving for our new members:

Samuel Gladden
Matthew Castello
David and June Fitzgerald
Hannah Johnson
Walker Weindorf
Dottie Reid
Sarah Bowden



Flower Donations:

In thanksgiving of marriage blessing by Samantha Stice and Warren Kahao on December 7, 2025.

In thanksgiving of Father Drew Harmon and family by Anya Hudnall on December 7, 2025.

In celebration of the Ordination of The Reverend Casey R. Duncan on December 14, 2025.

In memory of Sue Ligon Coles by Chet & Janie Coles on December 14, 2025.

In memory of B. Phillips, Charley Row, & Bobby McCall by Gordon & Lou Ellis on January 11, 2026.

In memory of Catherine E. Evans by The Evans Family on January 25, 2026.



FROM THE VESTRY

SR. WARDEN LINDSAY TURNER

As we look back on 2025, my heart is full of gratitude for the many ways God has been seen through the people and voices here at St. James. This past year has been a blessing - from strong attendance and new members joining our parish family, to the renewed spirit of welcome and warmth that makes this place feel like home to anyone who steps through our doors. We have seen growth not only in numbers, but in the deeper connections and sense of belonging that make our community so special.

I want to offer my sincere thanks to our Vestry members who have completed their terms: Will Benton, Margaret Boudreaux, Randy East, Alison Rodrigue, and Shirley Young. Your faithful service and love for St. James have made a lasting impact. A special word of thanks to Gary Field, who led with laughter, compassion, and a heart of faith that inspired us all.

We also joyfully welcome our new Vestry members: Shannon Hannaman, Randal Johnson, George Murrell, Dorsey Peek, Chuck Plattsmier, and Matt Saurage. Your willingness to serve is a gift, and I am excited to see how your ideas and dedication will help guide St. James in the years ahead.

We give thanks for the faithful work of our clergy and staff, whose leadership and care shape the life of our parish every day. Our children's chapel and ministries continue to flourish, reminding us that the Church's future is alive in our youngest members. We are also grateful for the strength of our budget, the vitality of our Day School, and the continuing construction and enhancement projects. All signs of a parish well-prepared for the future.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are filled with hope. This year brings opportunities for growth, connection, and service. From the relaunch of youth and young adult ministries, to celebrating our 75th Anniversary Gumbo, and supporting the Day School's accreditation. Strengthening our outreach, growing spiritually, and deepening the bonds of our parish family remain our shared calling.

What makes St. James strong isn't our buildings or budgets — it's all of you, the people who show up to worship, serve, and care for one another. Thank you for being part of a community that not only lifts each other up but also celebrates life's joys together. I'm truly grateful to be part of this remarkable parish and excited to see all that we will share in the year ahead.



Senior Warden

Lindsay Turner



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

St. James Annual Nativity Pageant

