

All You Need to Know About the St. James' Episcopal Church Annual Meeting February 5, 2023

The St. James' Episcopal Church will hold its 207th Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 5, 2023. This meeting will be held in-person & on zoom (meeting ID coming soon) directly following the 10:45am worship. The State of the Parish and the 2023 Budget will be presented. Warden and Vestry positions will be voted upon.

The Vestry Slate being presented is:

Bill Spalding, Junior Warden (2023-2025)
Judy Holmes - 3yr term (2023-2026)
Marie Hughes - 3yr term (2023-2026)
Bob Lee - 3yr term (2023-2026)

In addition to nominations by the Nominating Committee, nominations may be made by written petition of fifteen (15) "members in good standing" *as defined by St. James' By-Laws (see below). The petition must also be signed by the Nominee. Nominations by petition shall be submitted to the Chair of the Nominating Committee (Susanne Rynkiewicz) at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the Annual Meeting, but not more than thirty (30) days prior. (Accordingly, the dates for submitting nominations by petition for 2023 are January 8-17.)

***Definition of Members in Good Standing:**

Any member of the congregation above the age of eighteen (18) years provided that such person shall be a stated worshiper in the Church, that such person should be an active Communicant of this Parish (receives Communion at least three times per year), and that such person shall contribute to the support of this Parish (with time, talent and treasure).

Learn a little more about Vestry Candidates



Judy Holmes

I would like to thank those who have placed their faith and trust in me by nominating me to a seat on the St. James' Vestry. It was a surprise to be asked since I am a relative newcomer to St. James, having pretty much arrived here virtually during the COVID pandemic. Pre-pandemic, I was at a crossroads in my spiritual life. It's funny how we seem to categorize events these days as happening pre-or-post-pandemic. I am Lutheran and spent most of the last 20 years as a member of Atonement Lutheran Church in the Valley section of Syracuse. During the summers of 2018 and 2019, I attended Lakeside services at St. James. During the fall and winter, I attended services at Holy Trinity Lutheran in Skaneateles. When COVID hit in March 2020, churches closed their doors and I was reeling. St. James' online worship carried me through Lent and Easter. I hung around virtually; emailed Becky, asking whether a wayward Lutheran could join St. James' Racial Justice and Reconciliation Commission—the answer was yes; and Kip invited me to participate in St. James' virtual church choir. I knew Kip via MasterWorks Chorale, where I was participating in its virtual choir projects. Long story short, I am still here post-COVID.

I sing in the real-time choir and I am learning how to be an Altar Guild person. I am still at a crossroads in both my faith life and in finding my way after "retiring" from full-time work at the end of June 2022. I am a dual-career person, having spent half of my working career in healthcare as a registered nurse and the other half of my working career as a journalist, working for newspapers and as a communications manager at Syracuse University. I am here at St. James because of the simple statement on the website: "Whoever you are, wherever you find yourself in your journey of faith, you're always welcome at St. James'!" In my journey, I have always struggled with the question—how do we know we are using our spiritual gifts in the ways in which God intended? Ten years ago, I had this philosophical conversation with a past mentor, Pastor Rick Bair, former chaplain at SU's Lutheran Campus Ministry. In an email exchange, he wrote these words: You are a gifted child of God and you are utilizing the gifts God has placed in you for the benefit and service of the world God so loves. Your basic call or vocation is to be a baptized, loved child of God; your station(s) is/are all the roles through which you enact that vocation -- i.e., as daughter, wife, mother, journalist, volunteer, etc." The Spirit works in funny ways. I am here at St. James, embarking on a new adventure as a member of the Vestry. I have much to learn. I look forward to many Spirit-led adventures as a member of this faith community and discovering together how to use our gifts in the ways in which God intends.

Marie Hughes

From the moment I walked into St. James' on the third Sunday in October 2014, I felt at home. The ushers greeted me, some of the parishioners welcomed me, and our priest, Becky, asked in her sermon, "Are you where God wants you to be?" That alone would have been enough, but at Communion I was asked, "What is your name?" and from that day on, I have found my spiritual home and family at this amazing church on the Lake. At my meeting with Becky the next week, I told her it was very important for me to become an active part of St. James'. I had just moved back to New York after living 41 years in Northern New Hampshire, where I was very involved in my Episcopal Church and headed towards becoming a Deacon at the request of the Bishop and my priest because there were so few priests in the North Country, and I was already responsible for leading Morning prayer one Sunday a month. It did not take long for Becky to ask me if I would become Clerk of the Vestry. I accepted, and have held that position for the past seven years. Therefore, I must admit, when I received the phone call asking if I would serve on Vestry, I was literally "blown away." I never dreamed I would be given such an honor. Not only does it make me feel honored, but so humbled to serve in the church I love and feel at home.



I grew up as the oldest of 10 children with parents who were very committed to both service to God and their country. We learned at an early age what it meant to help others whether working at our local church functions or helping our elderly neighbors. Therefore, I have always felt a strong sense of giving. As a teacher and having been an educator for 50 years in mostly poor, rural areas, there was also plenty of opportunity to practice what I had been taught. At St. James', besides being Clerk of the Vestry, I am a licensed Prayer Minister, and help regularly at the 6 PM service. I am a Lector and Communion Minister. Thanks to Nancy Graham, I am a Stephen Minister, and because Kip said "yes" when I asked, I am a choir member as well. Serving occasionally as an acolyte is one of the greatest honors for me. Helping with the Rescue Mission and serving on the Board of Habitat are also important parts of my service. Presently, I am also preparing to take first vows as a Benedictine nun in the dispersed Order of St. Luke. That will occur this June after my three years of preparation, and with the encouragement and support of everyone at St. James',

My seven years as Clerk of the Vestry has given me an historical perspective on what has happened in those years, and it will help me as I reflect on what happened and what was learned during various issues and decisions. As Clerk, I had no input in any Vestry matters, but because I had to record everything at each meeting, that will help me immensely as we go forth this year and make some very important decisions about the future of our parish. I am deeply honored and grateful for this opportunity to serve at St. James' in a way I never dreamed possible.



Bob Lee

Bob and his wife Nancy have been members of St. James for over a year. After raising their two sons, Robert, and Michael, in New Jersey, they moved to Spafford ten years ago after they fell in love with the area. Bob had a successful career as a technologist and administrator in the health care field for over thirty years. Together they now own Balsam Rose Soap Co. and have met many new friends working with customers, other businesses, and community organizations. Bob also spends a lot of time taking care of the family dogs, Lily Bear and Rosie Girl. Finding the right spiritual community has always been important to Bob and he is thrilled to be a part of the St. James family along with being very honored to be nominated to the St. James Vestry.

Bill Spalding, Junior Warden

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve St. James for another 2-year term as Warden. The past 3 years on the Vestry and then as Warden have been quite different than I imagined they would be. Who knew the world would turn upside down in 2020. Thankfully, I have received support from the rest of the Vestry, our Rector, our Staff, the many committee members and most important the Holy Spirit. I was born and raised here in Skaneateles. After a 10-year sojourn in Cortland where I met my wife, Molly, I moved back home. My grandparents and my parents were St James' members. I was christened and confirmed here. Molly and all three of my children were baptized in the lake here at St. James'. My business, Upstate Temperature Control, is based here in Skaneateles servicing HVAC Control systems for larger commercial buildings throughout Upstate. I am excited at the opportunity to give back through service on the Vestry.

