

# St. James' Episcopal Church Profile 2024



***Igniting Passion for Jesus Christ to Change Lives***

*St. James' Episcopal Church  
Skaneateles, New York*

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## Welcome to St. James' in Skaneateles, New York

St. James' is a warm, welcoming, active and vibrant community of faith, blessed with a beautiful historic building in a majestic setting on the northern shore of Skaneateles Lake. Our parishioners enjoy worship in a variety of styles – both traditional and contemporary – and participate in a wide variety of spiritual practices, programs and ministries offered in our parish.

At St. James'...

- We invite all to the Lord's table ... "whoever you are and wherever you are in your journey of faith."
- We seek to share God's love in the world and, as followers of Jesus, we seek to live our mission of igniting passion for Jesus Christ to change lives.
- We seek to build the Kingdom here: we believe that individual small acts of kindness matter; we take care of each other and we reach out to identify and meet the needs of our community and the world.
- We are committed to providing three different worship services each Sunday with a common liturgy, but each with a different feel and style.
- We are committed to and respectful of our Episcopal traditions, but we are also open to new experiences and spiritual practices and seek to maintain a certain informality and warmth in all of our worship services so that all feel invited and welcome to participate.
- We have a collaborative and can-do spirit: our Clergy, staff and lay leaders work together to plan our worship, ensure regular communication, and provide programs and activities that meet the changing needs of the parish and our community.



We look forward to welcoming a new Rector to join and lead us in our faith journey as we continue to grow as a parish and carry out our mission to ignite passion for Jesus Christ to change lives.



## Search Committee Prayer

*Holy One, Creator of all, send your Spirit to watch over and guide St. James' and its Search Committee as we work to find a new Rector.*

*In unity help the Search Committee to listen and respond with wisdom and gratitude in all conversations, every step of the way.*

*We pray for continued patience for the Search Committee and the St. James' Parish, and commit to observe Your timing for this process.*

*We further pray that you give the Search Committee the spiritual strength to seek Christ in the midst of the many distractions, challenges, and hardships locally and in the world that add weight to the decisions of the day. Please also lift up their families and provide extra care for them during this busy time.*

*Finally, Lord, we pray for our next Rector and their loved ones, that You, God, would give them a profound love for St. James' and the inspiration and strength to leave their current position and answer our call.*

*All this we pray in your beloved name,  
AMEN.*



## What St. James' is Looking for in a new Rector

The people of St. James' wish to continue the momentum that has been building as we have grown into an active program church with varied spiritual and educational opportunities and numerous ministries and outreach. We seek a Rector who believes in our mission and who will join us and guide us on our journey.

We seek a Rector who is welcoming, accessible, and caring; who enjoys working collaboratively with others, both within the Church and the broader community; who is excited by and will value our various forms of worship and the possibilities for growth and outreach; who has a sense of humor; and who enjoys spending time with parishioners of all ages.

In developing this Parish Profile, the Search Committee sought input from the parish by holding several listening sessions and conducting a parish-wide survey, the results of which informed this summary of the essential skills that we are seeking:

**Excellent Preacher:** The ability to regularly deliver thought provoking, relevant and engaging sermons that challenge us to grow in our faith and service to God and God's people.

**Collaborative Manager:** A servant leader who will work collaboratively as a team with staff, Vestry and lay ministry leaders, listening with an open heart and mind, learning from experience, and offering new and fresh ideas with a collective vision.

**Gifted Liturgist:** The ability, interest, and desire to plan and conduct Episcopal based liturgical services in a variety of different styles (traditional and contemporary) at multiple weekly services and special services throughout the liturgical year.

**Pastoral Caregiver and Counselor:** The ability and desire to provide compassionate care for our parishioners and attend to their personal, emotional and spiritual needs, especially during challenging times in their lives, and a willingness to visit parishioners at home or in the hospital as needed. The desire to support existing lay pastoral care leaders and to raise up new ones.

**Shepherds Church Growth and Development:** A shepherd who will guide us on our journey of faith and help us to maintain and build a strong church community by: inspiring members to be actively engaged and helping them to discover their own gifts for ministry and service; exploring new ways to attract new members, particularly young families, children and teens; and fostering stewardship as a faith practice.

## Who We Are

### A Brief History

The land on which the church stands was originally inhabited by the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. Moravian missionaries arrived in the mid-1700's, and a marker on our Church building notes that these missionaries built a "Pilgrims' Hut at St. John's Beach" on St. John Baptists' Day, 1750. The earliest Christian lay services were held in the homes of parishioners in the 1790's and Anglican services were held in the area by 1794.

By the year 1805, there was a two-room building on the site of the current church which housed a post office, a general store, a day school and a designated place for public Sunday worship. St. James' was organized in January of 1816, with the Rev. William Atwater Clark presiding over the congregation and the first \$1500 pledged toward the construction of a church building. In 1827-1828, the first church building was erected. It was made of wood and painted white with green blinds, with three pointed windows on each side and a square tower with a bell and a clock on top. The parish grew, and in 1847, the first rectory was sold to fund enlargement and remodeling of the church.

In 1873, the original wooden church was torn down, and the cornerstone laid for a new church made of limestone, and on January 6, 1874, the beautiful church that we worship in today was consecrated. The baptistry was added in 1886 and the sanctuary was enlarged in the years 1899 to 1901 and a Tiffany window portraying the Madonna & Child was added in the chancel. The side altar was added in 1961 and was dedicated as a Peace Altar during the Persian Gulf War. In 1959, a Parish Hall was constructed adjacent to the Church, and over the years this building was updated, including the addition of a projection screen in the main function room and wheelchair accessible bathrooms in 2006.

There have been four organs since the church was built, including one built by Hilborne and Frank Roosevelt (first cousins of Theodore) and donated to the church by members of the Roosevelt family to honor Lydia Roosevelt, who was the church organist for thirty years, and her son Henry Latrobe Roosevelt. In 1927, the Roosevelt organ was sold, and the current Ernest M. Skinner organ, Opus 644, was installed.

In 2013, St James' engaged in a Master Planning process and successful capital campaign entitled "*Standing Tall for Generations to Come.*" Over the next several years, St. James' made significant improvements to our Main Church building and Parish Hall to preserve their historical character and architectural beauty and to enable and enhance our worship and mission. As a demonstration of our commitment to mission, the Vestry committed to tithe 10% of the funds raised through the *Standing Tall* campaign to be used directly for mission through a separate fund managed by the St James' Foundation. The building improvements had a primary focus on making our Church home more welcoming and accessible to all and included, among other things, a replacement slate roof, a new accessible communion rail in the nave, a new accessible entrance and an elevator in the Parish Hall.

In 2016, St. James' celebrated its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary and continues to be an active parish deeply intertwined with the history and life of Skaneateles.

There have been seventeen rectors at St. James' since it began. Most recently:

The Rev. Gladstone "Skip" Adams  
1994 - 2001

After serving as Rector of St. James', Rev. Skip became the Bishop of the Diocese of Central New York. He retired as Bishop in 2016 and relocated back to Skaneateles, and Bishop Skip and his wife currently worship in our parish.

The Rev. Robert De Wetter  
2002- 2009

Robert arrived at St. James' with his young family and brought a unique preaching style that drew people in to the parish. He was outgoing and involved in the community, and he added the contemporary service which attracted many young families. All of these things contributed to the parish growing substantially during Robert's tenure.

The Rev. Dr. Rebecca Coerper  
2010-2023

Under Becky's leadership, St. James' made the transition from a pastoral Church to a program Church. During her tenure, two major capital campaigns were undertaken: one to finance building renovations and improvements and one to fund Leadership initiatives. Ministry and Outreach became more focused with the creation of our Month of Community Service and through a period of discernment that identified specific areas of concentration and new community partnerships. Faith formation and education programs expanded and, despite the challenges of the pandemic, the parish continued to grow.

Following Becky's retirement, and the resignation of her husband Kip Coerper as our organist and choirmaster, the summer of 2023 was a period of great transition. Fortunately, we were able to rely on the support of our Diocese and the assistance of the St. James' resident Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Gladstone "Skip" Adams, a retired priest and parishioner, The Rev. Dr. Jim Corl, and our Deacon, The Rev. Dr. Chuck Stewart, to lead us through weekly worship and assist in carrying out the ministries of St. James' alongside our many Lay leaders, Vestry and Staff. In the fall of 2023, we welcomed the arrival of our Interim, The Rev. Joe T. Mitchell, and our new organist, Justin Oei.

We eagerly await what God has in store for us in the years to come.



## **Our Mission:**

### ***Igniting Passion for Jesus Christ to Change Lives***

## **Our Core Values:**

- We embrace a willingness to try old things in new ways in order to reach people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- We appreciate that faith is a journey, that people are in different places in that journey, and that we must understand, respect, and love each other in the midst of these differences.
- We welcome differences of opinion and varied perspectives on issues and expect that such differences will be addressed with respect, love, honesty, directness, and acceptance of each person.
- We believe we are called to be peacemakers, practicing love and forgiveness in every relationship and activity.
- We are committed to personal integrity as we strive for excellence in all that we do.
- We are passionate about the wellbeing, education, safety, and nurture of children and youth. We welcome the participation of children, youth and families of all types, in all areas of our common life.
- We seek to engage people in small groups of ministry, learning, caring, growing, fellowship, and service.
- We believe that every ministry, activity, and action taken by the Church and its members must answer the question, “Does this help us to ignite passion for Jesus Christ to change lives, and to welcome all to seek, to share, to serve, and to celebrate God’s love and forgiveness?”



## Congregation Overview

	Year*			
	2019	2021	2022	2023
<b>Active members* (as reported in Parochial Report)</b>	635	662	680	505**
<b>Average Sunday Attendance</b>				
<b>7:30 Rite 1 service</b>	25	18	14	15
<b>9:00 Rite 2 traditional service</b>	54	37	42	40
<b>10:45 contemporary service</b>	83	54	50	56
<b>Sunday School Enrollment</b>	22	na	35	35
<b>Youth Confirmations</b>	3	1	0	1
<b>Adult Confirmations</b>	0	6	0	0
<b>Baptisms</b>	3	9	7	9
<b>Funerals</b>	10	12	14	7
<b>Wedding (includes non-members)</b>	3	8	4	4

\***NOTE:** 2020 is omitted due to the pandemic

\*\* The decrease in the number of active members reported between 2022 and 2023 is a result of a variety of factors: (1) during this time, St. James' changed its internal software system for maintaining membership records and, as part of the data transfer to the new system, engaged in a detailed review of records, resulting in the removal of deceased, relocated and inactive members that had previously not been reported; (2) following the pandemic, reporting in 2021 and 2022 included online worship participants, which have not been included in 2023; and (3) natural attrition due to relocation and other reasons.



## Our Worship

St. James' offers a variety of worship services each week to provide a diverse range of options that meet the varying needs and preferences of our parishioners. While our services vary in style, from traditional to contemporary and from quiet and contemplative to more spirit and praise-filled, all have a certain informality and warmth, so that all feel invited and welcome to participate.

On Sunday mornings, three distinct services are offered:

- **7:30 am – Holy Eucharist Rite I** - *This a quiet and contemplative service without music, traditional in its format, using the Book of Common Prayer.*
- **9:00 am – Holy Eucharist Rite II - Traditional Worship with Choir** - *This is a traditional Episcopal service, with organ and choir, a formal processional and recessional, and communion typically taken by kneeling at the rail.*
- **10:45 am – Contemporary Eucharist with Worship Band** - *This is an informal service with contemporary music. Typically, the Rector does not fully robe and communion is offered by the Priest standing at the front of the nave.*



At our services, all are welcomed to the Lord's table. Passing of the peace can be a lively time, as smiles, handshakes, and hugs abound. While this has not been as much the case since the pandemic, greetings and

warm exchanges are once again being joyously welcomed. Services are family-friendly and a “kid’s corner” with small toys, activity baskets, and space to spread out is provided in the rear of the church. The 9:00 and 10:45 services are streamed live on Facebook each week, and large projection screens located at the front of the church are used to display the liturgy, readings, prayers and musical lyrics. Traditionally, a full-word printed Bulletin has also been provided at these two services to ensure that everyone feels welcome and so that all can follow along and fully participate with ease.

In the summer months, the 10:45 service is held outdoors in the adjacent park overlooking Skaneateles Lake. A team of St. James’ volunteers set up our outdoor altar, a tent for the band and a few rows of park benches and folding chairs. Many parishioners and summer visitors bring lawn chairs and blankets (and even their dogs) to join us in this joyful worship experience.

Services are also regularly held on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. In the past this has been a “healing service” with Eucharist and more recently, since the pandemic, has been a service of Evening Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer, led by lay leaders within the Church and streamed live on Facebook. Currently, a noon-time Healing Eucharist is also being offered by our Interim Rector.

Throughout the year, and particularly during Advent and Lent, there are numerous special worship services of various types and styles, including self-guided meditation and services with special music. Another significant service is held on All Saint’s Sunday, when the community is welcomed and photos of loved ones who have passed are displayed throughout the Church, with special recognition to those in our parish who passed in that particular year.

## **Parish Governance and Administration**

### **Our Vestry**

The Vestry of St. James’ is comprised of nine members and two Wardens who are each a member of the parish in good standing, nominated by a Vestry approved nominating committee, and elected at an Annual Meeting of members held in February. Vestry members typically serve a three-year term. The Wardens serve two-year terms with the opportunity to serve two terms consecutively. Terms are typically staggered with approximately one-third of the Vestry up for election each year and one Warden elected each year.

The Vestry meets regularly on the fourth Tuesday of the month. Historically, the Rector has run the meetings with the assistance of the Wardens. The Vestry has established a Finance Committee to assist with the monthly review of financial reports generated by the Parish Administrator, financial policy recommendations, and annual budget preparation. Our Rector also attends these Finance Committee meetings, providing input and guidance as needed in a collaborative manner with the members.

Vestry meetings consist of a healthy mix of planning and discernment, review and approval of operations and projects, review of financials as presented by the Finance Committee, personnel updates and future program discussions. Making sure that the Rector has a safe outlet for discussion and the level of support needed to do their work, especially when navigating difficult situations, is an important role that our Vestry takes seriously.

To see the current members of St. James’ Vestry and their biographies visit: <https://www.stjameskan.org/vestry/>

## Our Church Staff

St. James' is blessed with a dedicated and talented staff. Over the past several years, particularly during the pandemic and in this time of transition, our staff has been flexible and committed to doing what needs to be done to meet the needs of the parish. Several people on our staff have switched roles and titles over the years as circumstances have changed, always working collaboratively and as a team to support the Rector and the parish.

Currently, in addition to our Interim Rector, The Rev. Joe T. Mitchell, our clergy and staff consists of:

### Clergy:

Deacon - The Rev. Dr. Charles N. Stewart. Deacon Chuck is a former parishioner who was ordained as a deacon in 2016 and has been assigned by the Bishop to work in conjunction with the rector and staff of St. James'. His work for St. James' is in addition to other work for the Bishop and the Diocese, as well as his volunteer work as a chaplain at SUNY Upstate Hospital in Syracuse.



### Church Administration:

Operations & Communications Director - Laura Posecznick. A member of St. James' since she was 13 years old, Laura joined the Staff in 2016 as the Volunteer Coordinator and Children's Ministry Team Leader. Thereafter, she transitioned into roles as the Director of Congregational Life and Chief of Staff, before assuming her current title and role as Operations and Communications Director. Laura oversees four main areas of the church: volunteer coordination and training; supervision of the children's ministry; communications including strategic planning, creating, and executing weekly and seasonal newsletters, social media, e-blasts and website content, as well as outside advertising/PR; and providing administrative and logistical support for all worship, programming and building use, including database maintenance and facility oversight.



Laura (right) says: "As senior staff member, I organize and support the St. James' parish, tackling the details, large and small, that allow clergy, ministry and lay leaders to concentrate on spreading the Holy Spirit."

Parish Administrator – Nicole Bova (on left in lower image). Nicole handles all oversight of the parish office, including building scheduling and coordinating of volunteers for worship services. Nicole also oversees financial reporting and information, including bookkeeping for the St. James' Thrift Shop.

## Ministry, Music and Technology Staff:

Pastoral Care Team Leader – Nancy Graham

Interim Director of Children’s Ministries – Mo Allyn

Organist and Choirmaster – Justin Oei

Director of Contemporary Music and Technology – Michael Larkin

Assistant Director of Contemporary Music and Technology – Nick Kilkenny

Web Assistant – Danielle Larkin

More detailed information about our staff, their backgrounds and responsibilities is available on our website.

## Our Buildings

### The Church

The Church in which we worship today was consecrated on January 6, 1874, and is included in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Skaneateles Historic District. We are blessed to be the stewards of this beautiful, architecturally significant church with an ideal lakeside setting and a long history that is deeply intertwined with the families and community of Skaneateles. In addition to housing our sanctuary and primary worship space, our building also includes a small Chapel and several meeting rooms on the lower level.

Substantial repairs and renovations were made to the building over the past ten years to protect its historic character and to make our Church home more welcoming and accessible to all. This included, among other things:

- Replacing the historic slate patterned roof in-kind, with the help of a Landmark Preservation Grant, making repairs to the eaves, and addressing related structural and drainage issues
- Renovating the Chancel and Nave by moving the lower altar forward and creating a new accessible communion rail to bring the celebration of the Eucharist closer to parishioners and to create a larger, more flexible space within the main level of the chancel for worship and for community use
- Removal of pews at the front and rear to improve accessibility and construction of a new entry narthex to allow room for the ushers and Rector to greet people as they enter and leave the Church without needing to stand in the rain or cold
- Improvements to sound and media, including the installation of retractable screens at the front of the Church



- Refurbishment of the Chapel, located on the lower level of the Main Church, to allow for more flexible usage
- Refurbishment of the historic Ernest M. Skinner Organ, Opus 644, which was originally installed in 1927
- Repair and restoration of the Rose Window above the narthex, with the assistance of a Landmark Preservation Grant

The result of these projects was to refresh the space and create a more open feeling in the sanctuary, as well as to enhance the worship experience with improved sound and technology. The investment in technology really paid off when the pandemic hit, as we were well positioned to provide online streaming. In addition, the renovations to the Chapel, as well as to the Nave and Chancel, have allowed for more flexibility and hosting of community events at St. James', thus bringing more people through our doors.



## **The Parish Hall**

The Parish Hall serves as the center of much of our parish life. The main level houses the Church Offices, the Sacristy, and a large function room with kitchen.



For many years, the basement of our Parish Hall was home to a local nursery school that used much of the classroom and office space on the lower level. While the parish supported the school as a mission of the church, over time, the dual use of this space presented challenges for both and planned renovations would have required the school to vacate for at least two years. So, in 2014 the nursery school found an alternate location within the Village. The Church has since refurbished all the lower-level space to provide staff offices, improve Sunday School rooms and the nursery, and add a conference room and meeting space used by both the Church and the community. Recently, one of the rooms has been further refurbished to provide space for a new nursery school program not affiliated with St. James'.

In 2018, the final phase of the major construction funded through the Standing Tall campaign was completed with the construction of a new handicapped accessible entrance to the Parish Hall, with an exterior heated sidewalk, and installation of an elevator to make the Chapel and the lower level of the Main Church and Parish Hall accessible.

## **Community Use**

The Parish Hall is generally available for use by the community for a nominal fee, subject to availability and Church needs. In addition, St. James' regularly provides space for certain community organizations, including AA, which meets twice a week. Our space has been used by a local community children's program for dance classes, and adult yoga classes led by an outside provider are regularly held in the Parish Hall. The Skaneateles Lake Association leases office space in the lower level of the Parish Hall.

Skaneateles is a popular wedding destination, and St. James' is often host to weddings of non-parishioners. Baptisms and funerals also are often requested to be held at St. James'. Sometimes what starts as a location preference for some people ends up as an introduction to faith. Many have commented on how warm, inviting, and welcoming our services are for those of other faiths and non-religious people.

## The Rectory



The Rectory was purchased by the Church in 1907 and is located adjacent to the Church and Parish Hall. It is an attractive two-story historic home with a gable roof and Federalist details. The main floor includes an entryway, large living room, dining room, half bath, and a spacious eat-in kitchen and enclosed sun porch, both with a view of the Lake. The upper level has three bedrooms, a small office and a full bath. The lower level has a study with side entry to the church driveway, two bedrooms and a full bath. The private backyard has a lawn sloping down to a seating area lakeside. Off street parking is provided.

In 1994, an extensive remodeling was undertaken to provide a new kitchen, new full bath on the lower level, a new roof, new furnace and complete redecorating. In 2001, all windows were replaced and a stone patio with landscaping was added to the rear of the home. In the summer of 2023, having contracted a full inspection, many deferred maintenance projects were tackled providing: electrical updates; new flooring in the lower level; repairs to the roof and the kitchen and sunroom ceilings; replacement of the kitchen countertop and window and of the ceiling in the second-floor bath. Additionally, extensive rebuilding of the garage roof, door and side deck entrance to the sunroom was completed in the fall of 2023.





## Parish Life

St. James' offers parishioners numerous ways to get involved in Parish life, explore their faith, and engage in various ministries and outreach.

### Christian Education and Formation

**Adult Study.** St James' offers a variety of adult education classes and small group discussion opportunities throughout the year. An adult Bible Study is held weekly, led by Deacon Chuck Stewart, to provide a "deeper dive" into the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday liturgy. During the seasons of Advent and Lent, an adult study is usually offered that focuses on a special topic, book, or series of devotionals. Periodically, classes are offered for those who want to be confirmed, received or reaffirmed or just want to learn more about the Episcopal Church.

**Spiritual Direction.** St James' has trained five members of the parish in the practice of "spiritual direction," which enables them to be available as a companion to another parishioner on their journey of faith, enabling and encouraging that person to pay attention, respond, grow, and live out what they are hearing and experiencing in their relationship with God. Typically, the two meet once a month for an hour in a safe and quiet place of their choosing.

**Centering Prayer.** Centering prayer is held three times a week via Zoom. This contemplative practice of silent prayer comes out of the Christian mystical tradition and seeks to "open an awareness of God who is within us." We have a dedicated community of practitioners, and participation has expanded to include not only members of our parish, but also others in our local community who are not members of St James', and even some who reside outside of Central New York.

**Religious Orders.** St. James' recognizes and supports those within our parish who seek to join the traditional religious orders of the Episcopal Church. Within the last few years three parishioners have taken vows in the Episcopal religious orders: one in the dispersed Benedictine Order of St. Luke, and two others in the Third Order of St. Francis. All three are active members in our church serving as prayer leaders, lectors, acolytes, Eucharistic ministers and however else may be needed.



## Youth Programing

### Sunday School

St. James' offers two Sunday morning programs for young children:

“Mini-Saints” – This program is for children ages 3-7. Classes are based on Montessori style teaching methods that encourage children to physically engage with toys and play that help them understand the teachings of the Bible. An experienced parishioner teaches this class in a way that encourages focus and calm, and the children learn that the classroom, and the church, is a special place where they have an opportunity to “talk to God.”



“Saints in Training” – This program for children ages 7-12 is currently taught by our Interim Director of Children’s Ministries, Mo Allyn. It is a fun, inviting, energetic and interactive way to learn about faith. The curriculum is adapted based on the age of the children enrolled in a given year, but generally uses the “Dig In” website as a resource and leads the kids to walk in Jesus’ footsteps from his birth to his resurrection and ascension, with the goal of not just learning about the historical Jesus, but getting to know him personally, as a friend who can make a difference in their lives today. Additionally, the kids are encouraged to begin thinking about their “gifts” and how their “gifts” can be shared with the church and the different communities that they are a part of.

### Youth Activities

In addition to Sunday School, each year children put on a Christmas Pageant and participate in a variety of activities, such as a Summer Carnival, Halloween Game Night and Easter Egg Hunt. Other special events are planned during the year, such as a recent “Pedals, Pipes and Pizza” music day on which kids from St. James’ and the community could explore and learn about the Church organ and other instruments used in worship.

The Middle and High School ages continue to be a challenge. Some limited programming was planned in 2023, such as a Halloween Game Night, but attendance was low. Currently, there is no formal regular programming for these age groups.

## Communion & Confirmation Classes

St James' periodically offers a communion class for children (usually age 5 and up) where they meet with the Priest and are able to get up close and "hands-on" to gain an understanding of this central part of our worship and the materials used for communion and how we handle them with respect and care.

Confirmation classes are held intermittently depending on the number of children who may be ready to take this step. The format has varied over the years but generally involves assigning a mentor for each confirmand to engage with them on this important step in their faith journey. In 2023, one youth was confirmed when the Bishop visited our parish in the Fall.



## Ministries



*“God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.” 1 Peter 4:10*

There are so many ways to serve at St James’ that we recently printed a 20-page brochure to describe the numerous ministries and volunteer opportunities available in our parish. Our list of Ministries is summarized below, and for more details, our “Get Involved Ministry Guide” can be accessed through our website at <https://www.stjameskan.org/volunteering/>

### Worship

- Acolytes
- Ushers
- Altar Guild
- Eucharistic Ministers/Visitors
- Lectors/Readers



St. James’ offers three unique worship services on Sundays and currently offers two distinctive services on Wednesdays. A dedicated team of staff, clergy, lay leaders and volunteers make this happen each week, and for many parishioners, the liturgy, prayer and worship become more meaningful through their participation in these worship ministries. These volunteers are also called upon to assist with funerals and other special services.

## Music

- Traditional Choir
- Contemporary Worship Band
- Audio-Visual Worship Technology

St. James' is blessed with a vibrant music ministry that enhances both our traditional and contemporary worship services. Special musical offerings are also offered throughout the year, often including local musicians and guest performers. Our Choir, which currently consists of 15 members led by our Organist/Choirmaster, Justin Oei, is a central part of our 9:00am Sunday Rite II Worship. Our 10:45 am Sunday Contemporary service (and summer lakeside service) has a focus on uplifting and vibrant contemporary praise music.

The contemporary worship band is comprised of 10 members and is led by our Director of Contemporary Music & Technology, Michael Larkin. Another part of our music ministry is our Audio-Visual Technology support, which is provided for most all worship services with the assistance of staff and volunteers. Our sound system and large screen technology, installed as part of our building renovations in 2015, enhances our experience of our live musical offerings and allows for quality on-line streaming of our worship services, which began during the pandemic in 2020.



## Pastoral Care

- Eucharistic Visitors
- Healing Prayer
- Parish Nurses
- Pastoral Card/Flowers
- Prayer Chain
- Prayer Shawl Ministry
- Stephen Ministry



St James' strives to care for and stay connected to those in our parish who are sick, homebound, grieving, struggling or in crisis. We provide a variety of ways to share God's love with others in their time of need, including: through a trained Pastoral Care team of 14, including 8 active Stephen Ministers who can provide intentional, weekly one-on-one care; multiple prayer ministries; home-delivery of communion through trained Eucharistic Visitors; and simple kindness through delivery of a thoughtful card, flowers, and hand-made prayer shawls.

## Cooking and Serving

- Martha's
- Reception Ministry (Funerals and Memorial Services)
- St. James' Meals on Wheels
- Wedding Assistants and Greeters



Through these ministries, volunteers prepare and deliver meals to individuals and families suffering from illness, loss or just temporarily unable to cook for themselves, and provide receptions for bereaved families following funeral and memorial services. St. James' is a popular venue for weddings, and our parishioners step up to assist in the preparations for parish members and non-members alike, volunteering to serve as assistants and greeters to be the friendly face of St. James.'

## Social Justice

- CreationCARE (environmental ministry)
- Racial Justice & Reconciliation Commission
  - Diversity Book Club
  - Sacred Ground
  - Safe & Warm
- Cayuga County Jail Ministry



Our Creation CARE and Racial Justice & Reconciliation Commission ("RJRC") ministries promote educational opportunities, guest speakers and special events for the parish and broader community, focused on environmental stewardship, cultural and racial diversity and racial justice issues. In 2023, the RJRC was very active, hosting 6 meetings of the Diversity Book Club, 7 special presentations with an average attendance of 25, and 4 events in partnership with Harriet Tubman AME Zion Church in Auburn. In addition, the RJRC continued to lead small group

sessions of “Sacred Ground” using the eleven-part series of documentary films and readings and curriculum developed by the national Episcopal Church as part of its commitment to racial healing, reconciliation and justice. In the past three years, St. James’ has formed 6 Sacred Ground circles, with a total of 44 people participating in the program. Recently, the RJRC introduced the “Safe & Warm” outreach program in collaboration with other churches in Auburn to provide weekly bag lunches to the homeless.

The Jail ministry includes people from St. James’ and other local churches who visit inmates at the Cayuga County Jail in Auburn to offer prayer, support and Bible Study. St. James’ parishioners also deliver Christmas gifts to the families of the incarcerated.

## Global and Community Outreach

- Month of Community Service (October and May)
- Auburn Rescue Mission (Merriman Circle)
- Cayuga County Habitat for Humanity
- InterFaith Works (refugee resettlement)
- Soup Kitchen at SS Peter and John, Auburn
- Christmas Gift Baskets
- Christmas Giving Tree
- El Salvador – Companion Diocese
- Mission of Miracles (Medical Mission to El Salvador)

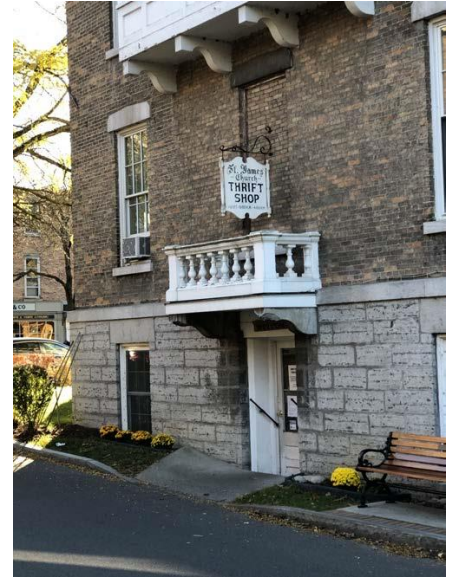


St. James’ is an active and engaged parish dedicated to making a difference in our local community and beyond. Each October and May, St. James’ focuses on local needs and coordinates with a number of charitable agencies to provide what is needed in both donated goods and volunteer service. In 2015, a year-long discernment process led St. James’ to identify three areas of local vulnerability in which to serve – affordable housing, mental health, and youth – resulting in the formation of a long-term relationship with the local Rescue Mission which operates Merriman Circle, a transitional housing project in nearby Auburn. St. James’ volunteers support a variety of activities and programs at Merriman Circle, with many of them focused on children. Other local organizations and projects supported by St. James’ are listed above.

The parish also has a relationship with its companion diocese in El Salvador and has sponsored several mission trips, including medical missions, to El Salvador over the years. St. James’ keeps the parish informed of needs around the world as they arise, and our parishioners often answer the call by individually supporting needs such as disaster response through Episcopal Relief and Development and, most recently, assistance for the vulnerable and displaced in the Middle East through support for the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem.

## St. James' Thrift Shop

For more than 50 years, St. James' has operated a Thrift Shop in the Village of Skaneateles. The Church rents this retail space just off East Genesee Street, our "main street," two blocks from the Church. The Thrift Shop has a dedicated group of over 30 volunteers who regularly sort through donated items and work in the shop during retail hours. The Thrift Shop has its own governing Board and officers, made up of parishioners and community volunteers, that maintain the financial records and oversee operations and charitable donations. The Thrift Shop Board reports to the Vestry. Our Parish Administrator serves as bookkeeper and the Thrift Shop financials are presented on a consolidated basis with St. James' Church.



Over the past several years, the Thrift Shop has made significant improvements, including updated lighting and shelving and the addition of credit card sales, resulting in increased revenues. The Thrift Shop contributes 40% of its profit to St. James' each quarter, and the remainder of its profits are donated to other local, national and international not-for-profit organizations selected by the Thrift Shop Board. The shop also regularly donates clothing and home goods to meet specific requests from area schools and refugee resettlement organizations. In 2023, the Thrift Shop contributed a total of \$25,135 to the St. James' Operating Budget and the Church's current Operating Budget projects contributions of \$27,320 to St. James' in 2024.

## Diocesan and Ecumenical Activities

St James' participates in the Skaneateles Ecumenical Clergy Group, which includes five other local churches and meets monthly. Traditional events held by this group include:

- "Ashes to Go" on Ash Wednesday
- Blessing of the Animals in the park
- Community Thanksgiving Worship
- Stations of the Cross walk through the village on Good Friday
- Bell Choir/Music Concerts
- Easter Morning Worship in Clift Park



St. James' and the other churches all provide donations to the Skaneateles Ecumenical Food Pantry and have vouchers to give to people in need of food or help with transportation.

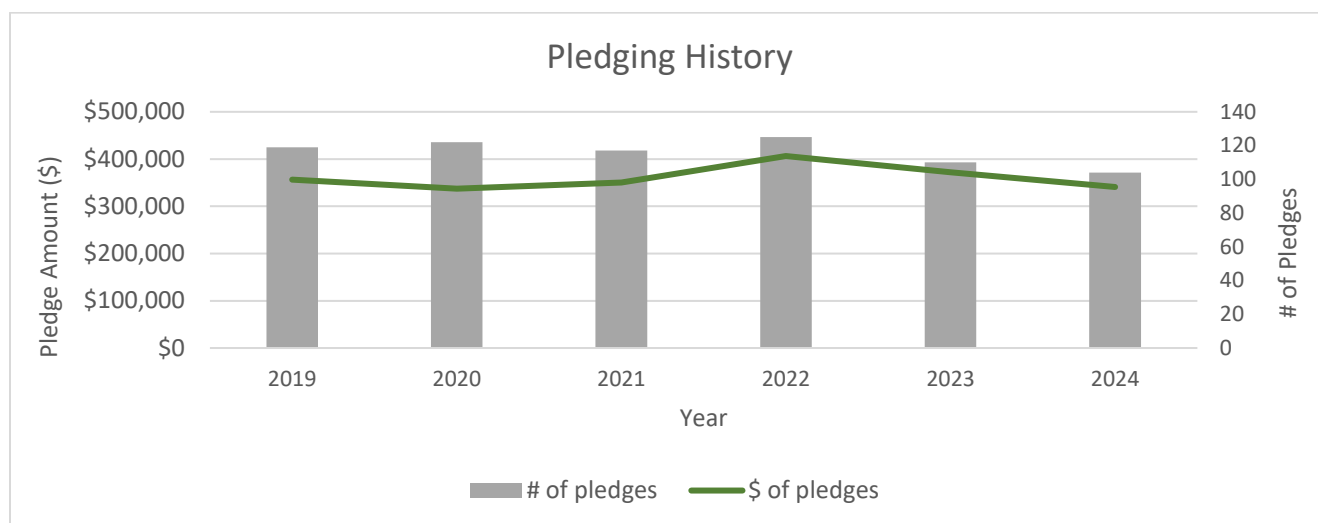
St. James' clergy and lay people are also involved at the Diocesan level as representatives on the Central New York Diocese's Commission on Ministry and on the Diocesan Foundation Board. Members of St. James' have also served as delegates to Convention and participate in events and programming offered by the Diocese of Central New York.



## Finances

### Stewardship

The annual stewardship campaign seeks to collect pledges to support the annual operating budget of the Church. Each year, the stewardships committee selects a theme to present to the parish. In 2022, the campaign brought in 105 pledges (12 of which were new) for a total of \$369,150. In 2023, 104 pledges were received, for a total of \$340,847 to support the 2024 Operating Budget. This does reflect a continued trend in reduced pledging over the past couple of years.



### Operating Budget

An Annual Budget of approximately \$550,000 is developed jointly by our Finance Committee and Vestry and includes all aspects of our operation. In four of the last five years, revenues (including pledges, plate donations, as well as income from endowed and restricted funds held in the St. James’ Foundation, and other sources) have exceeded our total expenses, resulting in an end-of-year budget surplus. In 2023 there was a small budget deficit of approximately \$16,500; however, this was less than projected given various factors related to the transition and increased costs of services and supplies.

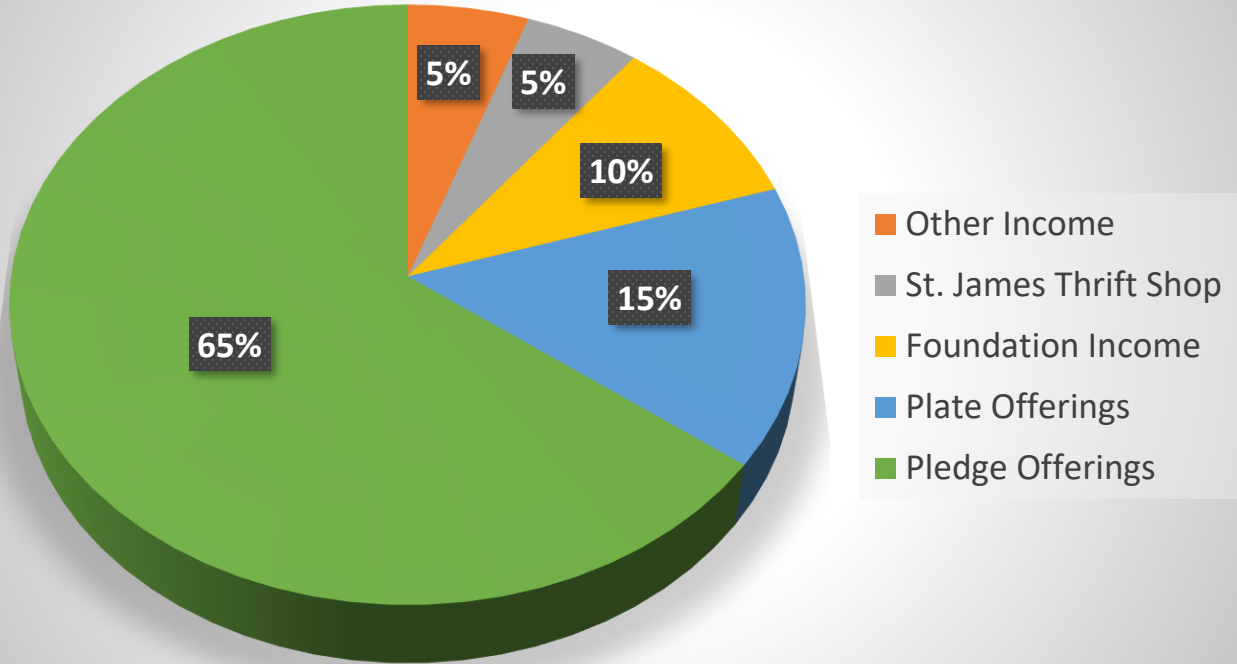
Overall, we are thankful for our financial success in generally maintaining a balanced budget and growing our revenues over a five-year period. Our goal is to be fiscally responsible while supporting the needs of the parish and the important work carried out by our Rector, Staff, and Laity through operations, services, and programs.

Operating Budget 5-year Summary			
	Revenue	Expenses	Income
2019	\$ 488,239.39	\$ 486,486.53	\$ 1,235.51
2020	\$ 502,972.39	\$ 472,180.80	\$ 30,791.59
2021	\$ 547,578.33	\$ 494,767.15	\$ 52,811.18
2022	\$ 572,534.41	\$ 542,580.63	\$ 29,953.78
2023*	\$ 540,189.55	\$ 556,741.98	\$ (16,552.43)

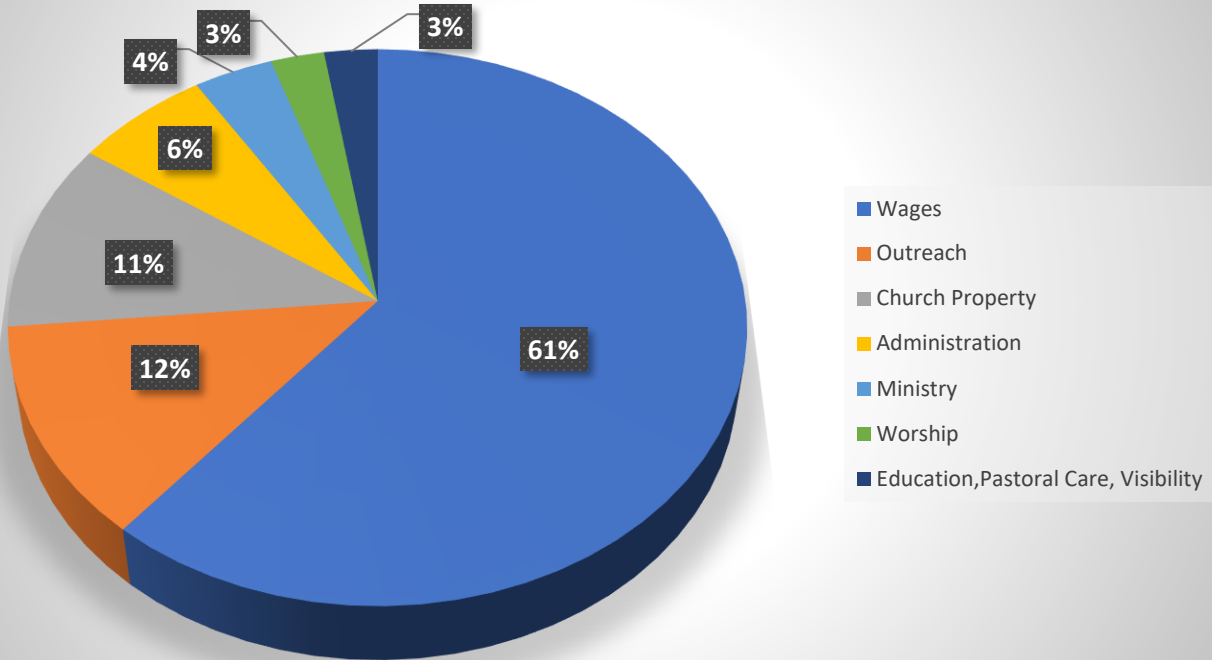
Data from the St. James’ annual report, current report available at [www.stjameskan.org](http://www.stjameskan.org)

\* Transition year

### St James Operating Revenue 2024 Budget



### St James Operating Expense 2024 Budget



Additional financial details and the most recent Annual Report are posted on our website and are available on request.

## **The St. James' Foundation**

The St. James' Episcopal Church Foundation currently holds endowed and restricted funds gifted to St. James' in the amount of approximately \$2,100,000. There are seven separate accounts managed within the portfolio from charitable gifts given to the Church:

- **The Vera Howard Fund**, established in 1992, supports Christian education
- **The Hazel Smith Fund**, established in 1992, supports capital expenditures
- **The St. James' Fund**, established in 1993, is used for general support of the church
- **The Outreach Fund**, established in 1998, supports outreach activities
- **The Bishop Kellogg Fund**, established in 2000, supports general operations
- **The Leadership Support Fund**, established in 2020, supports leadership - specifically clergy and staff – such as, but not limited to, salary, sabbatical funding, postulant support and funding a search process
- **The Mission Reserve Fund**, established in 2021, holds the remainder of funds donated for mission as part of the “*Standing Tall for Generations to Come Campaign*,” a comprehensive capital campaign launched in 2013 primarily to support facility renovations and improvements

The St. James' Foundation Board of Directors, which is comprised of the Rector, Wardens and parishioners appointed by the Vestry, oversees the Foundation and provides a report to the parish each year at the Annual Meeting. The Foundation Board recommends and the Vestry approves the amounts, if any, to be disbursed from the various Funds each year based on the particular needs for the mission and ministry of the church and the purposes for which such Funds are held. The assets of the St. James' Foundation are managed by an independent investment advisor as part of the Unified Investment Fund of the Episcopal Diocese of Central New York, which is overseen by the Investment Committee for the Episcopal Diocese of Central New York. Several parishioners from St. James' also serve on this Diocesan Committee.

## **Give To Grow Campaign**

In 2022, the church launched the “Give to Grow” Campaign to specifically raise monies for the Leadership Support Fund of the St. James' Foundation. In establishing this Fund, the Vestry recognized that continued growth is dependent on the development of leaders for every aspect of our worship, continuing education, community service and life as a Christian community. The Give to Grow campaign specifically focused on raising funds in the near term to support the hiring of a part-time Assistant Rector (which position the Vestry had approved for hiring in 2023) and over the long-term to support other leadership-focused initiatives and various needs of our clergy and staff. The fundraising goal was set at \$500,000 and as of year-end 2022, the Give to Grow Campaign received commitments or actual gifts totaling approximately 60% (\$300,000) of its goal. Following the announcement of Becky Coerper's retirement, it was determined to pause the fund raising for this campaign (and hiring of an Assistant Rector) while St. James' transitions to a new Rector. Because of the generosity and success of the campaign to date, a new Rector will be well positioned to work with the Vestry to hire an Assistant Rector of their choosing when the time is right.

The Give to Grow Campaign team also focused on Planned Giving. Specifically, the Give to Grow Committee was charged with defining, developing and communicating the planned giving tools available for parishioners who wish to consider future giving through estate plans or otherwise. As a result of these efforts, there is now an informational Planned Giving page under the “Giving” tab on the St. James' website and specific Vestry members have been appointed as parish contacts for Planned Giving.

## **St. James' Today: Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities**

St. James' Church is a vibrant and active parish with dedicated staff, lay leaders and volunteers. St. James' is a place of authentic hospitality, open and welcoming to all, and is highly visible in the community, particularly in the summertime when outdoor worship services are held by the lake. We value our diverse liturgical offerings and the varied backgrounds of our parishioners, and we seek to meet the needs of our parishioners wherever they may be on their journey of faith. Our members care for one another and generously share their time, talent and treasure to fulfill our mission of "Igniting Passion for Jesus Christ to Change Lives."

Over the past ten years, St. James' has grown into an active program church with many spiritual and educational opportunities, numerous ministries and expanded and growing outreach. We have a regularly updated website and other forms of regular communication, printed, verbal and electronic, that serve us well and keep parishioners informed and engaged. The overwhelming majority of parishioners who completed our recent survey said that they have a sense of excitement about St. James' future.

Yet, despite these many strengths, St. James' also faces challenges as we look to the future:

- Over the past few years, we have been blessed to experience growth in membership, especially among young families. We seek to engage these members and to attract additional younger members, and families with young children. This remains a priority and is essential to the long-term health of the Church. Finding ways to attract and engage more young adults and youth, particularly middle and high school age, and provide more Christian education opportunities and activities for these age groups remains a challenge
- We recognize that continued growth of the Church requires raising up new leaders, and we seek a Rector who will help our parishioners to recognize and develop their own gifts for ministry and mission, and who will help to develop and support Christian education for adults, as well as children and youth
- Although St. James' is in a strong financial position and is blessed to have the resources provided by the St. James' Foundation, the aging of the parish and concerns about a drop in pledging over the past two years has focused attention on the need to strengthen our stewardship program to increase pledging units and encourage planned giving. We must pay attention to the financial health of the parish, which is critical to our mission and supports the many services and programs offered to the parish and the community. Stewardship, and the sharing of our gifts of time, talent and treasure, need to be encouraged as spiritual practices
- Since the pandemic, opportunities for fellowship have decreased, and the parish has expressed the desire to focus more in this area. Having more fellowship opportunities can help to foster connections, particularly among those who choose to worship at different services on Sundays and may not have a chance to otherwise interact

- Deep political divisions in our society have created tensions within churches, and St. James' has not been immune to this. In recent years, St. James' has made a significant commitment to social justice, and understands this ministry as something we are called to do as followers of Jesus. Yet, in these politically divisive times, sermons and programs focused on social justice issues can create tensions and concerns that the church is becoming "too political." We seek a Rector who will support our social justice ministry, and who does not shy away from preaching in this area, yet who is sensitive to different perspectives and can navigate these political divisions with love and understanding. In these challenging times, many are seeking a voice of hope and good news

Despite the challenges named above, we believe that there is great opportunity at St. James' to build on our existing strengths, engage children, teens and families, develop new ministry and lay leaders, enhance connections within the parish and the broader community, and to continue to grow and share God's love in the world.

St. James' is ready to welcome a new Rector who will join with us in our mission and guide us on our journey of faith, inspiring us in word and deed, filling us with the Holy Spirit, and igniting passion for Jesus Christ to change lives!



## Our Location – Skaneateles, Central New York and the Finger Lakes



St. James' Episcopal Church (far right in the above photo) and the adjacent rectory are located in the Village of Skaneateles (pronounced "skanny-atlas") on the north shore of Skaneateles Lake in Central New York State. The Village has a population of 2,600 and is located within the Town of Skaneateles, which has a population of 7,200 (inclusive of the Village) and approximately 3,000 households.

Skaneateles Village is considered the "Eastern Gateway to the Finger Lakes," a region of Central and Western New York that includes eleven "Finger Lakes" that were carved by ancient glaciers. Skaneateles Lake curves south for 16 miles surrounded by private homes, cottages, farmland, wineries and beautiful views. The Lake is used for boating, swimming and other recreational purposes. It is one of the cleanest lakes in the country and has served as the water supply for both the Town of Skaneateles and City of Syracuse since the 1890's. Skaneateles Village and the area surrounding the Lake is a popular summer destination, with numerous seasonal residents and renters causing the population and activity to increase significantly in the summer months.

Residents of Skaneateles enjoy a walkable village with historic character, quality public schools and library, and numerous recreational opportunities. A Community Center with an indoor pool, 2 indoor ice rinks, gymnasium and fitness center, and a public park with a walking path, baseball fields, tennis, pickle ball and basketball courts and outdoor pavilion, are both located in the heart of the Village. The Skaneateles Central School system includes a primary school (grades K-2), intermediate school (grades 3-5), Middle School (grades 6-8) and High School (grades 9-12) all on one campus within the Village. Skaneateles Central School District is known for excellence and was recently ranked in the top ten school districts in Upstate New York, according to the publication Buffalo Business Insider. The Village has numerous shops in its main business district, as well as a grocery store and hardware store. Other churches within the Village include First Presbyterian Church, Grace Chapel, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Skaneateles United Methodist Church and St. Mary's of the Lake Church (Roman Catholic).

Skaneateles Village is truly a community center for its local residents, as well as a favorite tourist attraction. Annual events include a summer Curbside Festival and Antique/Classic Boat Show and a popular "Dickens Christmas," which is held from Thanksgiving through Christmas Eve each year. In addition, the Skaneateles Festival, a world-class music festival, is held over a four-week period in July and August with

numerous concerts, performances, and educational opportunities for youth held at an outdoor pavilion at nearby Anyela's Vineyards overlooking the Lake and various other venues (including St. James' and other local churches).

The City of Syracuse, population 146,000, is located 18 miles northeast of Skaneateles and boasts many excellent restaurants, theaters, performing arts centers, and museums. These include Syracuse Stage, Landmark Theater, the Red House, the Everson Art Museum and the Museum of Science and Technology. Syracuse University offers cultural and educational opportunities and NCAA Division I Sports. Syracuse has first-rate health care at a variety of hospitals and medical centers, including SUNY Upstate, which has a medical school and operates Upstate University Hospital with a regional emergency trauma center and Children's Hospital in downtown Syracuse and Upstate Community Hospital on the southwestern side of Syracuse approximately 20 minutes from Skaneateles. The smaller city of Auburn, population 27,000, is located 7 miles to the west and also has a small hospital and offers theater, restaurants, shopping, museums and historic sites, including the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park and the Seward House Museum. The Adirondack Mountains in northern New York are within easy driving distance and contain 2000 miles of the most scenic hiking trails and camping in the Northeastern United States.

**Additional Resources:**

[Villageofskaneateles.com](http://Villageofskaneateles.com)  
[Townofskaneateles.com](http://Townofskaneateles.com)  
[Fingerlakes.com](http://Fingerlakes.com)  
[Skaneateles.com](http://Skaneateles.com)

[Skanfest.org](http://Skanfest.org)  
[Skaneatelescommunitycenter.org](http://Skaneatelescommunitycenter.org)  
[Skanschools.org](http://Skanschools.org)  
[Visitadirondacks.com](http://Visitadirondacks.com)  
[Skanlibrary.org](http://Skanlibrary.org)

**Our Diocese**

The Diocese of Central New York covers a large geographic area, stretching from the Pennsylvania border to the St. Lawrence River just south of the Canadian border, and from the Finger Lakes to the Adirondacks. The Diocese includes the cities of Syracuse, Utica, Binghamton, Auburn, Watertown and Oneida and consists of 11,000 communicants worshipping in over 80 congregations across the region. St. James' is part of the Syracuse/Finger Lakes West Deanery, which consists of 11 parishes.

The Right Reverend Dr. DeDe Duncan-Probe was installed as the 11th Bishop of Central New York, on December 3, 2016. The Diocese is headquartered in Syracuse, which is an easy drive from Skaneateles. For more information on our Diocese, visit their website at <https://cnyepiscopal.org/>



We welcome you to join us here at St. James'