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*Igniting Passion for Jesus Christ to Change Lives*

# ST. JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH 210<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING



**FEBRUARY 8, 2026**

**10am**

St. James' Episcopal Church Annual Report 2026

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Agenda.....	3
Rector .....	4
Senior Warden Report .....	5
Vestry: Nominating Committee.....	6
Vestry Slate Biographies .....	7
Vestry: Stewardship.....	9
Staff: Buildings and Grounds.....	10
Staff: Operations & Communications .....	11
Staff: Organist .....	12
Staff: Music and Technology.....	13
Staff: Children & Family Ministries .....	15
Pastoral Care.....	16
Altar Guild.....	17
Jail Ministry .....	18
Racial Justice and Reconciliation Commission.....	18
Prayer Chain.....	20
Thrift Shop .....	21
Thrift Shop Financial Report.....	23
St. James' Foundation .....	24
2025 Financial Report .....	25
2026 Budget Narrative/Overview .....	27
2026 Budget.....	29
Minutes from St. James' 2025 Annual Meeting.....	30

# AGENDA

Call to Order The Rev. Pilar Parnell

Prayer for the Parish

*Almighty and everliving God,  
source of all wisdom and understanding,  
be present with us here  
as we take counsel at St. James'  
for the renewal and mission of your Church.  
Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory.  
Guide us to perceive what is right,  
and grant us both the courage to pursue it  
and the grace to accomplish it;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Opening Remarks

*Welcome*

*Vestry Slate Election Open for 1 Hour*

Secretary Election

Marie Hughes

Appointment of Head Teller

Nicole Bova

Naming of Tellers

Vestry Members

John Buterbaugh & Tara Covert

Approval of the 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes

Stewardship of Finances Report

Jamie Bova

State of the Parish

The Rev. Pilar Parnell

Outgoing Vestry Recognition

The Rev. Pilar Parnell

The Report of the Elections

Nicole Bova

Incoming Vestry Commission

Closing Prayer/Adjournment

The Rev. Pilar Parnell

# RECTOR'S REPORT

*The Rev. Pilar Parnell*

Dear St. James' Family,

It has been a wonderful year of ministry and serving the world alongside of you, in the hope of God's Kingdom. This year we have seen many changes in staff, ministries, and have added an unexpected construction project on top of all of that. I am so grateful for our vestry, wardens, and extremely dedicated staff. Their support and hard work has allowed us to continue to thrive.

Last year, our focus was centered on living into our baptismal covenants more fully, year-round stewardship of our time, talent and treasure, welcoming our newcomers, and continuing to develop a strong family ministry. We accomplished these goals through ministry training, celebrating our ministries with special services this spring, talking honestly about our finances, and hiring Sarah Jones as our Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries. All these things have allowed us prepare for what is next.

As my first year serving all of you is behind me, this year our focus will be stronger community engagement internally, to help us build stronger relationships between all three services, encouraging volunteering for our church programming, and helping us all get a better picture of what St. James' does on a day-to-day basis. We are a community that is so solidly focused on outreach to the wider community (pastoral care, food pantry, thrift shop, creation care, the RJRC etc..), that we sometimes lose sight of the in-reach needed to keep our Sunday services, fellowship and educational programming going. With the budget deficit the way it is and with the several cuts we have needed to make to comfortably plan for the coming year, which you can read more about in the proposed budget, it is time for us to think about how we can all work together continue to sustain this wonderful community that does so much to share God's love with the world. We need more enthusiasm and hands on commitment around church leadership, serving on vestry, and volunteering to help with liturgy and fellowship. So, this year we will find ways to build energy and excitement around all of us, collectively and individually, discerning where God may be calling us to grow in our spirit and place in this community.

I continue to be in awe of all of you. The joy St. James' has as a body is a light in the darkness that we have seen so much of this year. Our community continues to be filled with people who are deeply committed to the Kingdom of God and I am looking forward to all that is ahead of us.

Thank you all for your continued support!

Yours in Christ,  
Mother Pilar

# SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

*Doug Smith*

The years 2024 & 2025 represented a challenging time for St. James'. They were years of both transition and tragedy. Father Joe Mitchell was our interim priest following Becky's retirement in '23. The subsequent search brought Mother Pilar Padrón Parnell (triple P as I often refer to her as) and her family to St. James'. So much for the transition.

The tragedy occurred on March 12th, 2025. A 150 ft tall soft maple tree, on the eastern boundary had been identified as a potential hazard. One of the main trunks hung precariously over Mother Pilar's son George's bedroom. During the removal process, the trunk in question broke off at its base and fell onto the sunroom and garage. The full extent of the damage was not realized until interior walls were exposed to the framing which uncovered several more problems identified by a structural engineer.



Built in 1814 and remodeled several times, the rectory's 2nd floor was seen to have a 2 1/2" deflection from front to back. Exposed wires and plumbing were found to be not up to current code standards. Second floor joists had been cut to accommodate ductwork and were unsafe. The kitchen was about 30 years old and the outside aluminum siding was dated. To further complicate the project, the insurance would only cover the problems they considered were caused by the falling tree.



Fortunately, a former parishioner, Hazel Smith, had willed approximately \$650,000.00 many years ago to St. James' with the express purpose of maintenance of our buildings and grounds. And while that principle cannot be invaded, that specific part of the St. James' investment portfolio had grown so that most of the rectory rebuild expense will be covered.

We currently have a projected re-occupancy date of May 1st. At that time Mother Pilar and her family will have moved six times in about 1 1/2 years, (Virginia to Skaneateles, to Mandana, then Onondaga St., then to East Lake Rd, next to Franklin St. and finally back to the Rectory this coming May), Exhausting to say the least!

Meanwhile, other problems have surfaced in the parish hall. The kitchen floor, believed to be original from 1959, needs to be replaced. One of the windows in the Lakeside Room has a rotting frame, and a replacement has been ordered. There are roughly 24 more windows of the same vintage

which will ultimately fail in a similar fashion. This project alone should be a reminder to all parishioners that the financial needs of St. James' are ongoing and require us to maintain our pledged giving.

A significant addition to our staff occurred this year when Sarah Jones agreed to move from Tyler, TX to Skaneateles to head up youth and family ministries. She and her husband, Tristan, with two children have bought a home in the Skaneateles school district and I understand Sarah has not missed temperatures in the high 90's experienced in Texas. Youth group and Saints in training is growing!

Additionally, the music department welcomes Nick Kilkenny and Robbie Padilla as our new choir director and organist respectively. More transition! I'm told that the choir has never sounded better. Small in number but confident in voice. Thank you, Nick and Robbie. New members are always encouraged to join us on Thursday evenings at 6:30 p.m. in the main church.

I feel very confident that the soon to be elected Wardens, John Devins, Sr. Warden, and David O'Neill, Jr. Warden will be up to the task of monitoring the condition of our property while at the same time acting as sounding boards and offering advice to Mother Pilar. Additionally, new vestry members John Spear, Amy Tuttle, Meg Osborne, Molly Spalding and Diane Steckel offer new perspectives to our governing body.

## VESTRY: NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Doug Smith, Chair

### 2026 Candidates are

**Senior Warden:** John Devins

**Junior Warden:** David O'Neill

**Vestry:** Amy Tuttle (3 year term)

**Vestry:** Meg Osborne (3 year term)

**Vestry:** John Spear (3 year term)

**Vestry:** Molly Spalding (2 year term)

**Vestry:** Diane Steckel (1 year term)

### Wardens



**John Devins:** I am excited to be considered for senior warden on St. James' Vestry. My wife Stephanie and I joined St James in 2017. I continue to be thankful to be a part of such a wonderful, loving faith community. At St. James, I have served two years on Vestry, was a member of the Stewardship committee, as well as served as an usher, assisted with lawn mowing, and helped the "unofficial" table wranglers' team which prepares the parish hall for events. Stephanie and I moved to Skaneateles in 1988, and had 3 children attend Skaneateles schools. We are blessed with 8 grandkids. Upon graduation from St. John's University, College of Pharmacy, I worked 39 years in a variety of sales and marketing positions in the healthcare industry. It would be an honor to continue to serve on St. James' Vestry as we continue our exciting path forward!



**David O'Neill:** Hello, my name is David O'Neill and I want to thank St James for the opportunity to serve on the Vestry. My wife, Helen, and I have been blessed with two amazing daughters and four equally amazing granddaughters (with 7 ladies in my life, it is not a surprise I believe in strong and independent women). At a difficult time in my life, the people of St James 'were there for me and my family and they continue to be there whenever I need support. Through my association with the Mission of Miracle, my wife and I started attending services at St James' and quickly felt at home. I traveled to El Salvador for the Mission as a team member and eventually became part of the planning committee for a total of 11 Missions with two extra trips to bring down supplies. When St

James 'setup a Spanish service for the local migrant workers I got to know more of the people at St James. More recently, I have helped with the setup of the Outdoor Lakeside Service and was part of the team that maintained the lawn for the church and rectory. I am truly thankful for the community that is St James 'and for the friendships that have come from it. Since joining St James' my faith is continually growing stronger. I am inspired by what I hear and see at St James 'and by the people of St James'. A quote from one of my favorite musicals comes to mind when I am at St James'. "To love another person is to see the face of God."

## Vestry Candidates



**Meg Osborne:** Although I was raised in the Catholic church here in Skaneateles, both my great grandfather, Harry Horne, and my grandfather, Lucian Horne, were members of St. James'. I never knew either of them, but that family connection and welcoming community at St. James' made it the perfect church home for me and my husband, Bruce, when we relocated back to the area from New York City in 1997. I have felt surrounded by love, support and inspiring examples of faith from my St. James' family - through joyful times and especially difficult ones. As a two-time cancer survivor, I was deeply cared for with meals, prayers and rides to treatment. It is a privilege to be part of this community and I'm not sure I'll ever be able to sufficiently give back what I have received. I'm honored to serve once again on the

Vestry after 25 years since my last service. Over the years at St. James', I have taught Sunday school, participated in the Outreach Committee and currently co-chair The Racial Justice and Reconciliation Commission, co-coordinate the Diversity Book Club, have worked on the Three Sisters Garden project at Merriman Circle and volunteer with Safe & Warm, making and delivering meals to our unhoused neighbors in Auburn. There are simply so many opportunities to live out the Gospel at St. James.' I retired in 2021 after a career spent primarily in higher education as a counselor and professor. My husband, Bruce, retired a few years later from OCC, where he taught design. He's now the organist at Skaneateles First Presbyterian church after spending 20 years as organist at St. James'. We have a 25-year old daughter, Zoe, who lives and works in Philadelphia. Our lab mix, Maddie, keeps the nest from feeling too empty!



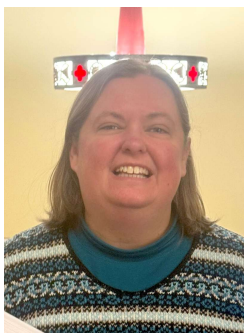
**Molly Spalding:** I have been attending St. James for more than 20 years. My husband, Bill, is a St. James cradle Episcopalian. We have three grown children, a granddaughter and one on the way. I have been involved in many ways at St. James, beginning with Sunday school when the kids were younger to altar guild, Creation Care, Stephen Ministry, the Rescue Mission (Merriman Circle), centering prayer and Dive Deeper. I've been a member of the Racial Justice and Reconciliation Committee (RJRC) since its inception and a participant of the Safe & Warm program of which I am a board member now. My faith has grown over the years at St. James and I look forward to continuing that growth through my work on the Vestry.



**John Spear:** I am pleased and honored to be asked to join the St James 'vestry. Lorrie and I live on Owasco Lake from May to October and move home to Apalachin, NY in the winter. We have a son and two grandchildren. After retiring from Lockheed Martin, I worked with Habitat volunteers building and renovating several homes in the Binghamton and Auburn areas. We have worshipped at St. James 'since the late 1990s. It is home! I participate in the Racial Justice and Reconciliation commission, the Diversity Book Club, the weekly bible study, Digging Deeper and the Jumble Sale. For the last several years I have been on the mowing team and performed the annual maintenance of the equipment. I look forward to serving on our vestry.



**Diane Steckel:** What a wonderful way to start the New Year being asked to serve on Vestry! My name is Diane and I am a long-time parishioner of St. James'. In my 30+ years at St James', I have volunteered for many ministries at church. Each ministry, including Sunday School teaching, Outreach efforts, Altar Guild and Stephen Ministry has enriched my life and allowed me to meet great people. I am currently the head of Altar Guild. I live in Skaneateles and am married to Chad Steckel. We have 2 grown children Peter and Allison. I love to keep busy so in my free time I am a member of the Junior League of Syracuse and the Skaneateles Garden Club. It would be an honor to serve on the St. James' Vestry.



**Amy Tuttle:** My name is Amy Tuttle and I am a candidate for St. James' Vestry. I have been a member of St. James' since I was born. My parents have been members of the church since 1974. I was baptized and confirmed at St. James'. I have been involved with many ministries over the years. Currently, I am an usher at the 8:30 service, assist with Altar Guild, volunteer at both the Samaritan Center and the soup kitchen at SS Peter and John Church and help my mom collect and deliver food, toys and blankets to give to Meachem Elementary School. I was on the Vestry from 2018-2021.

In my personal life, I am a Registered Dietitian and work for the Onondaga County Health Department WIC program. I have a BS in Nutrition and Dietetics from Marywood University and a MS in Community Health from SUNY Cortland. I serve on the Board of Directors of the Skaneateles Ecumenical Food Pantry and am involved with the Marywood University Alumni Association. My hobbies include traveling, going to the theater and knitting.

## VESTRY: STEWARDSHIP

John Devins, Chair

In 2025, our parish was presented with some significant unexpected challenges! These challenges also provided new ways to show how special our faith community is to so many and the amazing way that people respond.

We asked our parishioners to prayerfully consider how we can all invest in St. James' with our time, talent and treasure, to sustain our ministry for generations to come.

We concluded the fall campaign with a special joint service on November 21, followed by brunch. At this service, we shared the results of our stewardship season, with a special blessing over our pledges with thanks for our community's generosity of heart.

The results of our campaign are as follows:

- We received a total of 104 pledges, which is the third year of 100+ pledges!
- 41% of active families pledged vs 45% of active families in 2025
- 2026 pledges totaled \$353,940 which is +\$4,763 vs 2025
- 

The Stewardship, Vestry and Finance Committees thank all of you for your generosity and faithfulness.

2025 Stewardship Committee

Carol Murphy David O'Neill Kris Perkins Jamie Bova, Treasurer The Rev. Pilar Parnell



## STAFF: BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

*Laura Posecznick*

The main highlight and focus for 2025 unfortunately the accident of the tree falling on the rectory. This caused massive damage that is still under re-construction.

### • **Ongoing**

- St. James 'is blessed to share our building with SLA (Skaneateles Lake Association), Play2Learn, BlueBird Music, AA, and ALANON. More people in the building means more cleaning, more upkeep, more supplies, etc. Due to expense cuts, St. James 'will be looking at other options for building cleaning.
- Bugs: St. James' will not be using Orkin pet control helping in extra expenses.
- Bats: Beginning in May, bat protocols will be in place. It is important to keep doors shut-even interior ones. And there will be "noise" devices in plugs that will be emitting a high pitch "annoying" sound. If you see one on the ground, please plug it back in or notify a staff member.
- Lakeside Service: A big thank you to the Lakeside Crew: Quattrociocchis, O'Neills, and Davis families. We move to one service at 10 a.m. Lakeside beginning June 21. As always we can use all the extra hands we can to help set up and clean up these wonderful worship services. If you can join the team even for one Sunday, please see Laura Posecznick.
- Lawn Care: A very special Thank You to the St. James 'Mowing/Leaf Team: Led by the organized and dedicated John Spear who led Barb Carmody, Brian Davis, John Devins, John Helgren, Jim Iles, David O'Neill, Steve Osborne, and Dave Palen. If you can join this team-please contact John Spear.
- Smoke Alarm Batteries/Lights: Staff are trying to keep up with replacing these items when needed unless they are far too high or there is a complication.

As stated in Doug Smith's warden report, there are many larger upkeep items that are required this upcoming year such as lower level windows. The Vestry will be exploring bids and efficient ways to tackle the rotting windows.

Moving forward, St. James' will be leaning on volunteers to assist in keeping our building "ship shape". Also, unfortunately we ask that people be aware of those in the building and check to make sure doors are locked, etc. Staff will be making some additional adjustments to tighten our security in the building.

In conclusion, it will be a great day when the Parnell family can return home. The destruction and reconstruction of the rectory has been an enormous burden on Mother Pilar and her family. Thank you to everyone who have helped with this project.

## STAFF: OPERATIONS & COMMUNICATIONS

*Laura Posecznick, Director*



Another year, and yes again, more change! This past year brought St. James' new service times and new programming. It didn't take us too long to work out the kinks and things are bumping along pretty smoothly. In addition, we had staffing changes creating some new work flows. New signs, new communication mediums, and new organizational tools to push St. James' into the 2026. The good news is I believe we are set for a while with this plan. The transition time is officially over and St.

James' is poised to build on the strong faith foundation Mother Pilar has created.

St. James' is maximizing its space with numerous renters requiring room set ups, clean ups and shuffling when there are conflicts. Allowing so many wonderful organizations such as Play2Learn, BlueBird Music, Skaneateles Lake Association, AA, and Alanon to utilize our rooms is a great way to build partnerships locally. And the income from these rentals supplement our budget.

In 2026, there will be a few additional pivots such as reduced ministry & expense budgets along with cutting costs in the area of supplies, technology and bulletins. Things may seem a bit confusing but I am sure we can all rise to the occasion to honor what is truly important which is worshipping the Lord.

For communications, we are continuing to reach out to parishioners using weekly doings that focus on simply our schedule of activities; ministry minutes that include some descriptions of what is happening in our ministry areas such as CreationCARE, Racial Justice & Reconciliation, Outreach, etc, our website [StJamesSkan.org](http://StJamesSkan.org) is updated daily, Facebook & Instagram social media posting, e-blasts to our database, and we have received some wonderful PR coverage locally on our clergy and staff. Please take time to stay informed by reading any and all communications. As always, reach out to me or the Parish Office if you have any questions.

Moving forward into 2026, the communication priority will be to continue working to reach our parishioners in as many ways as possible. In addition, there will be a strong effort to expand outward locally to spread the word on how the holy spirit is moving here at St. James'. This new drive needs everyone's help to engage. The most powerful communication effort is and always has been "word of mouth". All the pretty pictures, eloquent copy, and multiple medium angles can't replace the person to person interaction. Your testimonial and positive experiences can make a huge difference in reaching those yearning for something more. In today's cruel world, more and more individuals are seeking solace, peace, a reason why, and a blueprint on how to move forward in their lives. St. James' is uniquely positioned to offer enriching liturgies, consistent positive



messaging of the love of Jesus, and a diverse selection of ministries for service involvement. For St. James' to move out of the "red", the formula is simple; more people bring in more resources.

As life at St. James' levels and the rectory gets fully repaired, the Parnell family can once again take a deep breath in their home, and the transitions behind us, the hope is that the spring and summer months will launch a new calm, steady, contemplative period. We will look to leave our problems and concerns in the hands of a loving God. And with our sleeves rolled up, take action and engage in service, worship, and the much-needed work it will take to turn this world from a frightening and uncertain time to one that is based in love, peace and respect for all of God's creations; people, animals, and environment.

## STAFF: ORGANIST

*Robbie Padilla*



I have had the pleasure of serving St. James' as the organist since November 2025. Besides getting to play on an incredible organ, I have felt very welcomed by the staff, choir members, and congregation here.

This Skinner organ is regularly maintained by Kerner and Merchant of East Syracuse. The most recent tuning was performed on December 1, 2025. I was present for the beginning of the tuning and was given a tour by Hawley Arnold, who was very helpful. The organ currently is tuned to a pitch of roughly A435, slightly lower than the modern standard of A440. This is okay for singing and other instruments (flute, violin, etc.) need to tune down slightly to match pitch.

There have been a few keys not functioning correctly, noted by me and others who practice on this organ. I notified Kerner & Merchant has come to address these issues as of February 3, 2026.

Since I am still new to St. James', I don't have much more to report on the organ, but I am excited to learn more as I serve this church.



## STAFF: MUSIC AND TECHNOLOGY

*Nick Kilkenny, Director*



Greetings, St. James' community! The music and technology departments have undergone some changes in the past few months and have some exciting updates on the horizon.

**Traditional Music Ministry (8:30 am):** In the summer of 2025, the wonderful Justin Oei was called to a new position at a church in Virginia, leaving an opening for a choir director and organist. After some transitions in the summer and fall, Dr. Nicholas Kilkenny became the choir director and St. James' hired Robbie Padilla as organist. The partnership between Nick and Robbie has provided meaningful music ministry, keeping the message of the week as priority and elevating that message with music. The choir meets every **Thursday at 6:30pm** for a weekly rehearsal to practice the choral anthem, hymns, and service music of the upcoming week. This group is small, but mighty, as I'm sure you've heard during our weekly service.

**Contemporary Music Ministry (10:45 am):** In November 2025, Michael Larkin stepped down from his position as Director of Contemporary Music and Technology. Because Nick has worked so closely with Michael and the band as the Assistant Director, he was asked to answer the call of assuming the post of director. The structure and music has relatively stayed the same, with an additional rehearsal once a week on **Wednesdays at 7:00pm**.

**Technology:** Along with Michael's departure, St. James' was informed by our two staff media engineers that they would be taking some time away. Rather than filling these positions, Nick was tasked to pair down the technology so it would be manageable for him to operate during service without hiring new engineers. This made it possible for the music and technology ministries to contribute to the budget deficit. However, there were some aspects to the service that had to be removed, including the slideshow that allows the in-person and online congregation to see the lyrics and order of service clearly. What this ultimately comes down to: Nick, in addition to leading the music ministry for both services, organizing, preparing, and operating the livestream from under the organ, which includes setting up the hardware and software, changing camera angles, adjusting clergy, lectern, and music ministry volumes, and troubleshooting any technological mishaps during service.

**Outdoor Services** In the summer of 2025, St. James' implemented a one-service Sunday which alternates music between traditional hymns and contemporary music each week. The music ministry plans to keep this plan in place to allow for variety and give the volunteers the flexibility they need to rest and recuperate from a busy Winter and Spring.

**A Hopeful Return of the Slideshow** In recent years, the slideshow at St. James' has allowed for more accessibility for those participating in-person and online to easily follow along with the service without the need for bulletins, a separate device like a phone or tablet, or having to hold a hymnal. However, with the loss of the media engineers, it has been impossible for them to continue for the past three months. With the bulletins being removed from service, it means that the lyrics for the hymns and songs contemporary music will no longer be available in one convenient location. The technology department feels now more than ever that the slideshow is imperative for the congregation to have the ability to participate with the music, but **we need volunteers** to make it happen. It is our hope to have a rotation of members, similar to those that read the readings and prayers each week, to progress the slides for the music lyrics during the service. The process is very easy, and if you've ever opened a computer and pushed a button, you can be an integral part of our weekly service. With enough volunteers, we can implement this almost immediately. Please reach out to Mother Pilar or Nick if you are willing to volunteer.



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**A call for volunteers:** The music ministry and technology is a vital part of the community of St. James' and there's always room for more members, either regularly or on a per diem basis. Here is a list of areas where you can join and make a contribution to our services each week: Join the

- Choir
- Join the Praise Band
- Help set up or run the live stream
- Help set up and clean up the outdoor service
- Change the slides during the service

**Upcoming Concerts:** As part of a way to alleviate some of the music and technology budget, the music ministry is going to provide a couple of concerts each year that will be free and open to the public with accepted donations. These will be a variety of traditional and contemporary music, highlighting the talents of our wonderful members in addition to inviting guests of various musical genres to share their talents as well.

**Music Education:** In addition to his role at St. James', Nicholas is a passionate music educator. He is a lecturer of music at Nazareth University, has performed at some of the world's biggest stages, and is looking forward to working with parishioners and the Skaneateles community to provide music lessons over the summer. Instruments include voice, guitar, bass, and keyboard to start, with the possibility of adding more instruments if there's enough voiced interest. These lessons will be provided at a cost that is below market to allow for more accessibility for lower-income families, and a portion of each lesson will go toward the music and technology budget

for more and larger offerings from the music ministry. If you or your friends or family members are interested in taking lessons over the summer (any age!) please reach out and/or keep an eye out for updates in the late Winter/early Spring.

## STAFF: CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY

*Sarah Jones*



I have greatly enjoyed my first four months here at St. James and I can't wait to see the progress that can be made with time and efforts.

### **Children and Family Ministries**

#### Mini-Saints:

Our wonderful mini-saints program is still led lovingly by Cindy Fowler. The kids love her calm demeanor and the wonderful bible lessons that she teaches. We have maintained consistent attendance week to week of two to six kids.

#### Saint-In-Training:

For our Saints-In-Training curriculum we have been following the gospel lessons while sprinkling in some biblical knowledge and parables. Helen O'Neill has been a wonderful and consistent volunteer for the class and I am so thankful for her efforts. Average attendance is 6-12 kids.

Looking ahead I am planning on bolstering our family ministries with having a park play meet up once a month when the weather is nice. I am also planning some family wide fellowship opportunities such as a bowling night.

#### **Youth**

The youth have volunteered twice at the Saint Peter and Saint John's soup kitchen and cooked a meal for the residents of the Ronald McDonald house. We have also had lots of fun with a trip to an escape room and our Wednesday Night youth gatherings which will continue through the school year.



Looking ahead we will continue our once a month service work through out the school year. As well as fun activities such as berry picking, movie nights, and summer lake days.

## PASTORAL CARE

*Nancy Graham, Coordinator*

Be kind to one another, and reach out with love

We are all providing Pastoral Care at St. James when we make a phone call to check on someone, send a card, visit someone in the hospital, or in a care facility, prepare a meal, lend a listening ear, provide a ride and pray for those in need. All of these ministries build our faith community of care. We are creating our St. James family of love and support.

A Pastoral care (mini) training class will be offered late winter (2026). The class will be based on a Stephen Ministry book, Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart. It will be a 6 week interactive training for anyone interested in learning pastoral skills to help relate to those going through a difficult time. The class will be 2 hours on Saturday mornings the last week of February and the month of March. People trained will have pastoral skills to offer to your family, friends and the people of St. James'. This is a way to reach out with love and care as can all benefit from helping support each other.

We also have many ministries within Pastoral care; starting with the power of prayer in many different forms. Our prayer teams are available for confidential prayer during the Eucharist at the Peace Altar, bringing concerns for yourself or for another. You may also come in silence seeking the prayerful presence of a pray-er, for God already knows your concerns.

Our prayer chain is available through Corinne Buterbaugh who sends prayer requests to a team of prayers to hold you close in prayer during a stressful time, and our prayer list is printed in our weekly bulletin.

Our prayer shawls are knitted by parishioners and placed on the altar to be blessed. All are welcome to take a prayer shawl to someone who would appreciate this comfort.

Eucharistic Visitors take communion to anyone not able to get to church. Call to ask for someone to bring communion to you or someone you know in need.

Another from of reaching out with prayer is our Martha's who prepare and freeze meals to be taken to those not able to cook. They prepare healthy meals with special needs as requested.

Altar flowers are also delivered to people on our prayer list with a prayer included If you would like to help with any of these ministries, contact Nancy Graham. These are just a few ways to reach out with love and kindness at St. James.

## ALTAR GUILD

*Diane Steckel*

Thank you to all of the Altar and Flower Guild members who work so diligently to make worship at St. James so special. Working primarily behind the scenes, Altar Guild makes it possible for St. James to offer four distinct services every week plus additional services for Christmas and throughout Holy Week. Altar Guild sets the altar, polishes the brass, washes and irons linens, fills candles, puts up and takes down the aisle torches, arranges flowers, and cleans up after every service. We also track and order all supplies, including flowers and plants.



Team members generally serve on Saturday mornings once a month and the following Sunday before or after the service they normally attend. Time commitment is about 90 minutes monthly. Training is provided.

Despite our wonderful group of devoted members, Altar Guild needs more men and younger women. We'd love to have young families involved, too.

Unsure if Altar Guild is for you? Consider shadowing a team to see what it's all about. Contact Diane Steckel ([dmsteckel55@icloud.com](mailto:dmsteckel55@icloud.com)).



## JAIL MINISTRY/ANGEL TREE MINISTRY

*Cindy Bright and Ellen Kulik*

This past year was another busy and rewarding time for our jail ministry group as we served the men and women at the Cayuga County Jail in Auburn. Our dedicated team of jail ministers distributed *Recovery Bibles and Workbooks, Jesus Calling books and Daily Bread booklets* to hundreds of inmates. In 2025 St. James invested \$1,455.89 in purchasing 120 *Jesus Calling* books. The people in the jail tell us that it is one of their favorite resources for spiritual guidance and encouragement. In the next few months, we hope to expand our volunteer team, after several new people complete the application and vetting process.

In a related program, St. James Church has continued its support of children of incarcerated parents by participating in the *Angel Tree Program*. In December 2025 we were able to surprise 25 children from 11 families with clothing and delightful gifts, all given on behalf of their parents who are behind bars. To further support the families, each caregiver received a \$60 Wegman's gift card. This heartfelt initiative is entirely funded through donations and the tireless efforts of many St. James parishioners. The response to the gifts was overwhelming and heartwarming. One caregiver sent multiple texts and memes expressing her gratitude. Other were taken aback by their surprise Wegman's gift cards. Even the delivery volunteers felt God's blessing when they met the families.

Each of these programs make a meaningful difference in the lives of incarcerated individuals and their families. We look forward to continued opportunities to serve others in the coming year.

## RACIAL JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION (RJRC)

*Meg Osborne, Debra Rose Brillati and Judy Holmes*

The Racial Justice & Reconciliation Commission had a busy and productive 2025. Our meetings are on the first and third Mondays of the month and are regularly attended by 10 – 12 members. We developed several new projects and continued to nurture ongoing projects.

### **DIVERSITY BOOK CLUB**

Diversity Book Club continued in 2025 with the following selections:

*The False White Gospel* by Jim Wallis, *The Wind Knows My Name* by Isabel Allende, *Sold* by Patricia McCormick, *Black Birds in the Sky* by Brandy Colbert, *James* by Percival Everett, and *The Color of Water* by James McBride

### **SAFE & WARM**

Every Friday, volunteers from St. James', Skaneateles First Presbyterian Church, The Quaker Meeting and Nucor Steel gather in the St. James' kitchen to prepare 150 – 200 bag lunches for delivery to our unhoused neighbors in Auburn. Additional volunteers deliver the meals to the hotels and facilities housing those with no permanent home. This year the drop-in center transitioned from the Harriet

Tubman AME Zion church to Westminster Presbyterian church, where visitors can warm up, have a hot drink and a snack, and pick up any personal hygiene items they need. Our diocese awarded a \$5,000 grant to the program to support the purchase of food and other necessary items. Safe & Warm now has 501c3 status and a board of directors, including Debra Rose Brillati, Linda Lavery, Dan Johnson and Molly Spalding.

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

Emma Cowley continues to share the stories in *Ministry Minutes* about the achievements of our brothers and sisters of color that historically haven't gotten the attention they deserve.

## **IMMIGRATION**

The Racial Justice and Reconciliation Commission hosted two sessions designed to help people sift through the often conflicting rhetoric concerning migration, immigration, refugees and asylum. "Immigration Basics over Coffee" was held March 2. The conversation included basic information about the U.S. immigration system and how new Executive Orders affected the work of local and national organizations, including Episcopal Migration Ministries, Catholic Charities and Interfaith Works of CNY. A "Know Your Rights" training session was held on March 9. The curriculum, created by the New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC), provides information for migrant families and their advocates.

## **UNDIVIDE US**

In April 2025, the Racial Justice & Reconciliation Commission, in collaboration with other churches in Skaneateles and Auburn, hosted a screening of Undivide Us, a documentary that explores the polarization around our country, at Auburn Public Theater followed by facilitated small group discussions. We expected perhaps 50 attendees but had to move into the large theater at APT when over 130 people showed up. The subject matter clearly struck a chord with many of our fellow citizens and inspired the RJRC to pursue training from filmmaker Kristi Kendall so that we could offer discussion groups in our own communities in the hope of creating greater understanding among our neighbors. Ten of our members attended a four-hour training in December. A grant from our diocese made this possible. In January 2026, we facilitated our first dialogue circle with 8 individuals from different walks of life and perspectives who found the experience to be very positive and healing.

## **A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR MUSLIM BROTHERS & SISTERS**

We reached out early in 2025 to Masjid Isa ibn Maryam (the Mosque of Jesus, Son of Mary) in Syracuse and began to discuss ways our congregations could work together. We, including everyone from St. James', were invited to attend an evening Iftar, the fast-breaking meal at the end of each day of fasting during the month-long Ramadan. A group of us were able to attend and were greeted with such warmth and hospitality by everyone we met. It was a wonderful time of sharing, laughing, learning and feasting!

## **EASTER SEASON BIBLE STUDY: THE RADICAL LOVE OF JESUS**

The Racial Justice and Reconciliation Commission presented "The Radical Love of Jesus," an Easter Bible Study May 1, 8 and 15. The sessions were based on thoughts and writings of theologian Howard Thurman, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., theologian John Dear and theologian Jim Wallis. The

sessions were titled: “The Good Samaritan: Not the Sunday School Version,” “Peacemakers vs Peacekeepers” and & “Reuniting with the Real Jesus.”

## **GARDENS NOURISH AND CREATE COMMUNITY**

Each summer, the St. James’ Racial Justice and Reconciliation Commission supports community gardens at the Auburn Rescue Mission at Merriman Circle and at the Hillbrook Juvenile Detention Center in Syracuse. Both gardens flourished during the summer season, despite the wet and cold spring, oppressive heat in July, the August dry spell and an invasion of Japanese beetles.

If you’d like to join the St. James’ Racial Justice and Reconciliation commission or just lend your talents to some of our projects, feel free to reach out to Meg Osborne at [mhosborne7@gmail.com](mailto:mhosborne7@gmail.com) or Debra Rose Brillati at [debra\\_rose@live.com](mailto:debra_rose@live.com). Everyone is welcome!

## **ST. JAMES’ PRAYER CHAIN**

*Corinne Buterbaugh*

For many decades, St. James parishioners have formed a “prayer chain” to pray for parishioners and their families and friends experiencing illness, loss, or other challenges and in thanksgiving for births, new jobs, and other happy occasions.

Originally, prayer requests were made by phone, a cascade of members calling each other. Now, prayer requests are emailed to our 29 members, who pray on their own, at their convenience.

In 2025, St. James prayer chain members prayed for 229 individuals. We welcome new members! All it takes is an email address and the willingness to pray. Contact [corinnebuterbaugh@gmail.com](mailto:corinnebuterbaugh@gmail.com) to join.

How it works: To request prayer for an individual, get his or her permission, and then ask me ([corinnebuterbaugh@gmail.com](mailto:corinnebuterbaugh@gmail.com)) to add that person to the email prayer chain. If the situation is a sensitive one, ask for prayers without mentioning names (ask for prayers “for a friend,” for example) or using only the individual’s first name or initials. God knows the details!

To add someone to the printed prayer list, which is also available online, contact the church office or Nancy Graham ([nancygraham4@gmail.com](mailto:nancygraham4@gmail.com)).

# ST. JAMES' THRIFT SHOP

*Linda Lavery*



St. James' Thrift Shop by Barb Burton St. James' Thrift Shop Celebrated its 75th Anniversary in 2025! The Thrift Shop was started by seven ambitious women in 1950 with a \$75 loan from the church. Today, we have grown to a group of approximately 40 committed and dedicated volunteers, working six-seven days a week. We are proud to report 2025 was our best year ever.

**Total sales were \$127,148 and we donated \$106,163 to 50 organizations locally, nationally and internationally (up \$22,735 from 2024) In fact, \$43,055 of those funds were donated directly to St. James'. Also included in our donations was \$12,000 for the new Skaneateles Public Library.**

This past year, due to the political environment many organizations supporting incoming refugees had to close. As a result, we could no longer donate material items (baby items, small appliances, household items etc) to these groups. Our Financial Committee was very proactive in finding ways for us to financially support other

organizations who are helping refugees and those affected by ICE. We also continued to make significant clothing donations to the Dr. Weeks Elementary School, one of the poorest school districts in Syracuse.

Sadly, long term volunteers Helen Dayal and Bun Sell passed away in 2025. And, due to health and personal reasons, Jean Bailer, Lois Laxton and Jennifer Evans stepped down from the board. These three ladies were committed to the shop for years, serving in numerous positions. We want to publicly acknowledge and thank them for their incredible years of service.

The shop has been so blessed with an abundance of donations. These blessings call us, once again, to seek more volunteers. We need help sorting donations, hanging clothing and placing items in the shop. We only ask for three hours per month. If you can help please contact Suzanne Beatty or myself at the shop 315-685-5060. Those of us working at the shop love what we do. Please come help us make the world a better place!

**St. James' Thrift Shop Donations for 2025**

**Episcopal Relief and Development  
Interfaith Works  
Red Cross for L.A. Wildfires  
World Central Kitchen  
Planned Parenthood  
EMMAUS  
My Father's Kitchen  
Habitat: Cayuga County  
Habitat Cayuga County Urgent Needs  
Eastern Farm Workers  
Mathews 25 Farm  
Erin's Angels  
Skaneateles Storks  
Samaritan Center  
Tiny Homes for Good  
Laker Limo  
Aurora of CNY  
Community Cares  
American Friends of the Episcopal  
Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ)  
El Salvador Scholarships for Girls  
OnPoint for College  
SAVES  
St. Peter and St. John Soup Kitchen  
Sleep in Heavenly Peace  
Skaneateles Fire Department  
Skaneateles Lake Association  
for the Milfoil Boat  
Hospice of Cayuga County  
Vera House  
Mary Nelson Youth Center  
Dr. Weeks Elementary School  
Onondaga County Food Bank  
St. Lucy's Food Bank  
Episcopal Relief and Development  
Dig Deep Water for Indian Reservations  
One Simple Wish  
Bike for Life  
Baldwin Foundation  
Francis House  
Skaneateles Food Pantry  
Spafford Food Pantry  
Rescue Mission  
Town of Skaneateles Outreach  
Haitian Eye Health Project  
Salvation Army  
Episcopal Relief and Development: Caribbean Storm  
Trinity Episcopal Church: Trinity Place  
Farmworkers Solidarity  
NPR**

# ST. JAMES' THRIFT SHOP 2026 BUDGET

Laura Bigness

ST. JAMES THRIFT SHOP BUDGET 2026		
<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>		
INCOME FROM SALES		130,000.00
INCOME FROM CREDIT CARD FEES		3,000.00
<b>TOTAL OPERATING INCOME</b>		<b>133,000.00</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>		
FIXED COSTS		
	RENT	18,000.00
	PARKING	150.00
	PHONE/INTERNET	2,500.00
	RUG CLEANING	2,500.00
	TRASH PICK UP	2,000.00
	JANITORIAL	3,500.00
	BOOKKEEPER	1,500.00
<b>TOTAL FIXED COSTS</b>		<b>30,150.00</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>		
VARIABLE COSTS		
	CLOVER/MERCHANT FEES	4,500.00
	MEMBERSHIP FEES	500.00
	OFFICE EXPENSES	2,500.00
	MAINTAINANCE & REPAIRS	3,500.00
	SUPPLIES	2,000.00
	ADVERTISING/PROMOTION	1,000.00
	ENTERTAINMENT/FELLOWSHIP	4,000.00
	EQUIPMENT	2,500.00
<b>TOTAL VARIABLE COSTS</b>		<b>20,500.00</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>50,650.00</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>		<b>82,350.00</b>
	40% NET INCOME	32,940.00

# ST. JAMES' FOUNDATION

Steve Osborne, Chair

The St. James Episcopal Church Foundation was formed as a New York not-for-profit corporation in 1992. The purpose in establishing a Foundation was (and is) to support the mission of the Episcopal Church in the United States, the Diocese of Central New York and St. James Episcopal Church and to provide an instrument through which members of St. James may make significant and lasting contributions to the life and work of the church. The Foundation funds are managed by Alesco Advisors of Pittsford, NY and are part of the Diocese of Central New York funds managed by Alesco.

The St. James Foundation funds are currently held in seven different accounts or “sleeves” depending on how the funds were allocated for use to the church by the donors. These seven accounts, or sleeves, support a wide range of the church’s work, with specific accounts to be used for Christian Education, Outreach Activities, Clergy and Staff Support, Mission, and Capital Expenditures, and General Operations along with a separate sleeve for funds left to the church to be used for specific restricted purposes.

The largest account, or sleeve, is the fund that was left to the church to support capital improvements and upkeep of our buildings. And it is that particular account that was referred to in the letter to the congregation dated December 17, 2025 dealing with the ongoing construction of the rectory. As the repairs to the rectory have been estimated to bear a final cost well in excess of the \$240,000 insurance settlement, this has put a serious dent in the sleeve of the Foundation’s funds that is used for capital expenditures. There is ongoing discussion and a commitment by the vestry, finance committee and the Foundation Board to explore all options to restore this capital expenditure fund back to a level that will give us comfort in knowing that our buildings and grounds can and will be fully and properly maintained in the years ahead.

Our funds have performed very well over the years and the vestry and Foundation Board are quite satisfied that the fund managers are performing in a wise and judicious manner. We can take comfort in knowing that the monies that have been left to St. James will continue to support the life, work, and mission of the church for many years to come.



# 2025 FINANCIAL REPORT

Nicole Bova

## Recap

Income from overall ‘Giving’ was under our projected budget by 11%. Wage expenses were under budget due to timing of health insurance billing, as well as staffing changes during the year. Administrative expenses held close to budget. Several of the expense areas came in underbudget as we worked through staffing transitions. There were several programs and/or purchases that had money designated for use that were not spent. Overall, the net income was primarily driven by the culmination of all expense areas in total being under budget by \$16,000.

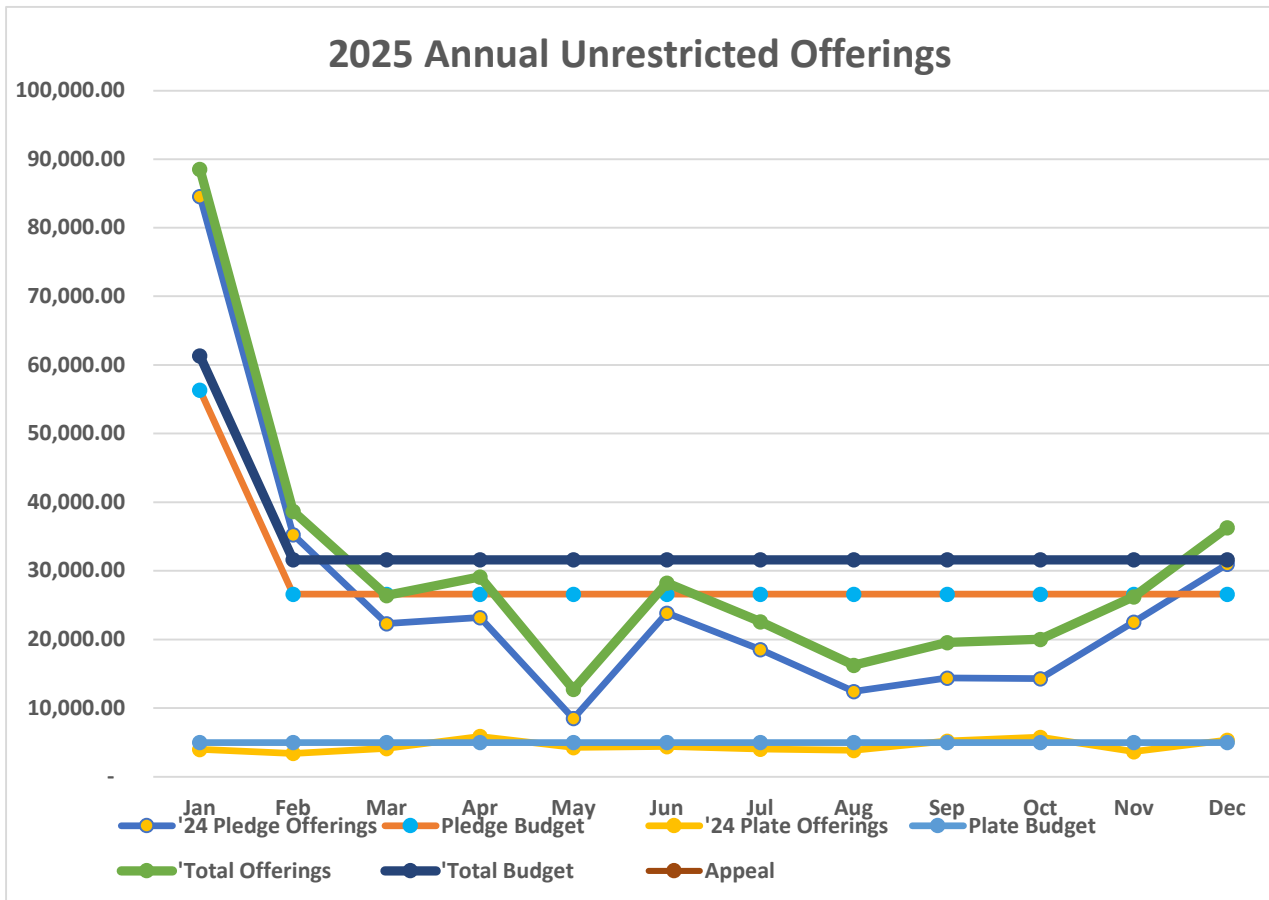
### Finance Committee - 2025 Operating Financial Report

Category	2025 Actual	2025 Budget	Budget Variance	2024 Actual	Change From Prior Year
<b>Revenue</b>					
Income From Giving	\$ 391,423.70	\$ 416,677.00	\$ (25,253.30)	\$ 448,085.47	\$ (56,661.77)
All Other Income	196,843.56	188,109.18	8,734.38	125,359.00	71,484.56
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 588,267.26</b>	<b>\$ 604,786.18</b>	<b>\$ (16,518.92)</b>	<b>573,444.47</b>	<b>\$ 14,822.79</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Wages	363,817.59	368,406.32	(4,588.73)	385,695.28	(21,877.69)
Administration	39,646.10	39,669.88	(23.78)	42,506.00	(2,859.90)
Church Property	63,030.98	65,715.47	(2,684.49)	62,634.18	396.80
Education	3,494.26	6,300.00	(2,805.74)	3,524.03	(29.77)
Ministry	13,896.20	20,912.35	(7,016.15)	12,268.46	1,627.74
Outreach	76,102.96	78,023.18	(1,920.22)	68,245.74	7,857.22
Pastoral Care	4,569.88	3,400.00	1,169.88	3,215.86	1,354.02
Visibility	2,877.30	3,500.00	(622.70)	2,542.34	334.96
Worship	14,800.78	18,250.00	(3,449.22)	17,418.72	(2,617.94)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>582,236.05</b>	<b>604,177.20</b>	<b>(21,941.15)</b>	<b>598,050.61</b>	<b>(15,814.56)</b>
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>	<b>6,031.21</b>	<b>608.98</b>	<b>5,422.23</b>	<b>(24,606.14)</b>	<b>30,637.35</b>

## 2025 Giving Highlights

Pledges in the current year were 11% less than the 2025 Projected Budget.

With pledge totals continuing to trend downward over the last several years, it is important to recognize the connection of giving to the overall financial health of the parish. Without the income provided from pledges and plate, we would be unable to fund various programs and aspects of the daily operations here at St. James’.



YTD Through December 2025				
	Budget	Actual	Variance	%
<b>Pledge Offerings</b>	349,177.00	310,845.50	38,331.50	-11%
<b>Plate Offerings</b>	60,000.00	53,781.20	6,218.80	-10.4%
<b>Total Offerings</b>	409,177.00	364,626.70	44,550.30	-10.9%
<b>Prepaid Pledges</b>		29,720.00		
<b>Annual Pledge</b>	349,177.00			
<b>Annual Plate</b>	60,000.00			
<b>Annual Total</b>	409,177.00			

# 2026 BUDGET NARRATIVE

*Nicole Bova*

For the annual operating budget preparation, each committee chair and key staff member were asked to submit budget requests early in the fall so that the finance committee could assemble these requests and evaluate expenses against income. Budget season runs in coordination with our stewardship campaign, as giving is the primary source of income for which the church operates on.

For 2026, a proposed budget with a deficit of \$39,000 was thoroughly reviewed and discussed by both the finance committee and Vestry. The committees will be tasked to closely watch as the year unfolds to ensure that the budget is closely followed, keeping in mind the prudent reserve for cashflow.

## **2026 Budget Highlights**

- The St. James' Foundation income commitment is budgeted back to a 5% draw on the operating sleeves, down from the previous year of 10.5%. A larger draw will be made from the Leadership sleeve, funds gathered during the Give to Grow campaign, to support the total salary and benefit package of the new position of the Director of Children, Family & Youth Ministries.
- The plan for pledged income for the year is \$353,940 from 104 households. Increased from the prior year by approximately \$5,000, but down in the number of pledges received which stood at 114.
- Thrift Shop commitment to the St. James' operating budget remains at 40% of profit, including 10% going directly to outreach.
- Wedding income expected to remain steady, as several non-member weddings have been scheduled in the new year.
- Building income remains steady as all tenants will continue on with contracts, with hopes of new renting opportunities to come.
- Wages and wage-related expenses are projected to be increased by a 2.6% COLA (cost of living adjustment). This is the amount recommended and approved at the Diocesan convention of 2025. Note: only employees who have held their current position for a year or more were eligible for COLA raises.
- New accounts have been established for family ministry, overall shifting the way expenses were allocated in prior years.
- Administrative expense, which includes office supplies, sees a large reduction of budgeted expenses, as we will begin to eliminate bulletins on a weekly basis, helping to reduce the overall paper supply and printing fees. This also helps to reduce the church's carbon footprint.
- Music and technology have seen large cuts as we have scaled back streaming measurements and reduction of staffing for slide advancement.

- Building and grounds expenses will increase overall by 4.0% or about \$2,500. The largest increase is the 10% increase in cost of the parish's liability/fire insurance premium.
- Ministry expenses are down as we kept a large portion of this expense area comes with the retirement of our beloved deacon, The Rev. Dr. Chuck Stewart, this past year.
- Outreach ministry decreased overall in correlation with the decrease in the draw from the outreach sleeve at the Foundation.

Overall, the total budgeted income for 2026 is \$613,371, which is a 1.4% increase from the prior year. A large portion of this is the sleeve draw from the Foundation to fully cover salary and benefits expense for the new position established in late 2025 of Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry. Expenses are up by 8.0% from the prior year; again, a large portion contributing to wage and wage-related expenses. The projected loss for the year is \$38,880, which is a large swing from the prior year income of \$608. In the prior the initial projected loss greatly drove the need to increase draws from the Foundation.

Thanks to everyone on the finance committee who worked hard to provide timely and accurate financial reporting. Also, the staff and Vestry provided insight and guidance throughout the entire process, thank you!



St. James' 2026 Budget		2025	change 2025 to 2026	2026	% Change
<b>INCOME</b>					
Building Use		\$ 15,500.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 15,600.00	
Foundation Income		\$ 132,044.18	\$ 3,722.27	\$ 135,766.45	
Pledges & Plate Givings		\$ 409,177.00	\$ 4,763.00	\$ 413,940.00	
Christmas/Easter/Ash Wed		\$ 7,500.00	\$ -	\$ 7,500.00	
Funeral Income		\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00	
Thrift Shop		\$ 32,940.00	\$ -	\$ 32,940.00	
Wedding Income		\$ 3,625.00	\$ -	\$ 3,625.00	
Other Income		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
RJRC Program Income		\$ 1,500.00	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	
Altar Guild Income		\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>\$ 604,786.18</b>	<b>\$ 8,585.27</b>	<b>\$ 613,371.45</b>	<b>1.4%</b>
<b>EXPENSE WAGES</b>					
Subtotal - Wage Expense		\$ 368,406.32	\$ 75,700.59	\$ 444,106.91	20.5%
<b>EXPENSE ADMINISTRATIVE</b>					
Subtotal - Administrative		\$ 39,669.88	\$ (6,054.88)	\$ 33,615.00	-15.3%
<b>EXPENSE CHURCH PROPERTY EXPENSE</b>					
Subtotal Church Property		\$ 65,715.47	\$ 2,586.46	\$ 68,301.93	3.9%
<b>EXPENSE EDUCATION EXPENSE</b>					
Subtotal - Education		\$ 6,300.00	\$ (690.00)	\$ 5,610.00	-11.0%
<b>BUDGET Ministry</b>					
Subtotal - Ministry		\$ 20,912.35	\$ (8,648.36)	\$ 12,263.99	-41.4%
<b>BUDGET OUTREACH</b>					
Subtotal - Outreach		\$ 78,023.18	\$ (8,243.58)	\$ 69,779.60	-10.6%
<b>BUDGET PASTORAL CARE</b>					
Subtotal - Pastoral Care		\$ 3,400.00	\$ -	\$ 3,400.00	0.0%
<b>BUDGET VISIBILITY</b>					
Subtotal - visibility		\$ 3,500.00	\$ (1,000.00)	\$ 2,500.00	-28.6%
<b>BUDGET Worship Expense</b>					
Subtotal - worship		\$ 18,250.00	\$ (5,575.00)	\$ 12,675.00	-30.5%
Total Expenses (including one-time purchases)		\$ 604,177.20	\$ 48,075.23	\$ 652,252.43	8.0%
<b>Net Income</b>		<b>\$ 608.98</b>	<b>\$ (39,489.96)</b>	<b>\$ (38,880.98)</b>	
Net operating income/(expense) (including one-time purchases)		\$ 608.98	\$ (39,489.96)	\$ (38,880.98)	
one time purchases (funded via savings)		\$ -		\$ 0.00	
<b>Total Expenses (excluding one-time purchases)</b>		<b>\$ 604,177.20</b>	<b>\$ 48,075.23</b>	<b>\$ 652,252.43</b>	
<b>Net operating income/(defecit)</b>		<b>\$ 608.98</b>	<b>\$ (39,489.96)</b>	<b>\$ (38,880.98)</b>	

# MINUTES FROM ST. JAMES' 2025 ANNUAL MEETING

*Marie Hughes*

**209<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting St. James' Episcopal Church, Skaneateles, NY  
February 2, 2025**

**The Rev. Pilar Padrón Parnell opened the polls at 11:00 AM for an hour of voting for the Vestry slate.**

**The meeting was called to order at 11:35 and opened with a prayer and Mother Pilar welcomed everyone to the Bruch and the meeting.**

**Opening Remarks/ Logistical matters:** Parishioners were reminded of the following:  
Please respond to emails to the Office Manager concerning availability to help with services. Please do not call or contact staff after hours unless there is an emergency.  
Book rooms for events through the office during office hours.  
There will be no paper directories this year to protect the privacy of parishioners.

**Election of Secretary:** Justin Oei made a motion to elect Marie Hughes as Secretary for the meeting; seconded by Carol Murphy: approved by all present. The motion passed.

**Tellers introduced:** Senior Warden Bill Spalding was head teller assisted by Margie Amberge and Diane Steckel.

**2024 Minutes:** Diane Bodin made a motion to accept the 2024 Annual minutes as written; seconded by Meg Osborne; approved by the parishioners. The motion passed.

**Stewardship/Financial Report:** Jamie Bova presented the budget as found on pages 24 to 28 in the Annual meeting booklet. Some of the highlights of the report were as follows:  
The year finished with a \$24,000 deficit because of a continuing decrease in overall giving and because of a transition year. Donations of \$65,000 kept the deficit smaller than projected. Pledges were actually 12% less than the 2024 budget had expected.

The 2025 pledges are slightly higher with twenty-two new pledges as an encouraging trend. The draw from the Foundation will be 10.5% this year instead of the usual 5% to balance the budget but that cannot continue.

The Finance Committee and Vestry have approved this \$80,000 in two draws from the Foundation to alleviate \$72,000 increase in the 2025 budget. The staff will be receiving a 4% COLA increase as suggested by the Diocese.

Jamie Bova thanked the Finance Committee for its diligence and the staff plus Mother Pilar for all the work in crafting the budget. Then Bova asked for questions concerning his presentation.

Questions asked: Where did the deficit come from? Bova explained that the transition year and the hiring of a new Rector were part of the reason as well as a decrease in pledges.

Another question concerned ways to increase funds. Bova cited wedding income increase and rent from organizations use of the building. He noted the important contribution of the Thrift Shop in helping to balance the budget by their generous contributions to the church. (The Thrift Shop volunteers received a round of applause.)

The other question concerned the contribution to the Diocese. The explanation was an assessment or 10% of the budget is set by the Diocese, and 6% more is considered a pledge. Also noted was the wages went from \$385,000 to \$368,000 because of the loss of the children's ministry director. Bova received thanks and applause for his excellent work as Chairperson of the Finance Committee.

**State of the Parish:** The Rev. Pilar Padrón Parnell began her report by telling the parishioners how blessed she feels to be Rector at St. James.' She said our budget will enable the church to look at staffing needs, and that stewardship will be a year-round issue at St. James' where we will consider Time, Talent, and Treasure. The church will be looking at the whole body instead of just the financial part of Stewardship. The Capital Campaign of Give to Grow is on hold but there is \$500,000 in a sleeve of the Foundation to support new staff this year. The funds will be used to support someone, lay or clergy, to assist with youth and growth in the church. The money should cover three to five years for a new staff member. As Rev. Pilar stated, "We are taking a leap of faith here." In order to grow as a Christian community and involving our children in ministry, the additional staff is needed. The Rector said, "The children are not our future, they are our present."

The Rector noted the several new members we have been acquiring and explained the welcome packets that have been prepared for every new parishioner which contains a commitment letter, a car magnet, and other welcome materials.

The "Get Involved" booklet has been updated and the Rector noted the need for more Eucharistic ministers, ushers, and thrift shop volunteers.

In closing The Rector said to expect amazing things to happen here at St. James' as all live our faith life. (The Rector received a round of applause from the parishioners.)

**The Polls closed at 12:00 PM and the votes were then counted by the Tellers.**

**Outgoing Vestry Recognition:** The Rector presented the outgoing members of the Vestry, Bill Spalding, Margie Amberge, and Diane Steckel with gifts and gratitude for their leadership.

**Election Report:** The new Vestry members are John Devens, Junior Warden, John Buterbaugh, David O'Neil, Kris Perkins, and Kathy Ploufe. All received a majority of the vote present. Doug Smith made a motion to accept the new Vestry members; seconded by James Brown; approved by the parishioners.

**Commission of the Incoming Vestry:** The Rev. Pilar Padron Parnell commissioned the incoming Vestry members.

**A Video Presentation put together called, “Looking to the Future” was then shown and the meeting ended at 12:32 PM with a prayer.**

**Nancy Graham called the meeting to adjourn; seconded by Bill Spalding and James Brown; approved by all.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Marie P. Hughes



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