

ST. JAMES NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

# GRAPEVINE

GROWING TOGETHER IN LOVE OF GOD AND NEIGHBOR



## IN THIS ISSUE

FROM THE RECTOR- THE REV. C. PHILLIP CRAIG JR.  
VESTRY CORNER - THE 2023 VESTRY RETREAT  
THE ST. JAMES FOUNDATION REPORT  
BEHIND THE STEW  
NEWS FROM AROUND THE PARISH  
AND MORE!

ST. JAMES SUNDAY NIGHT YOUTH GROUP

# HAPPENING AT ST. JAMES

## SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES

8:00 a - RITE I

9:00 a - RITE II

10:10 a - Faith Formation

11:15 a - RITE II

## LIVESTREAM

9:00 &

11:15 a

- RITE II

## WEEKDAY OPPORTUNITIES

# M

### MORNING PRAYER

MONDAY - FRIDAY | 8:00 a.m.

Join us on Zoom

### LIVING WELL IN GRIEF

1st & 3rd MONDAYS | 5:00 p.m.

Graham Parlor or Zoom

# W

### YOUTH BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAYS | 7:00 a.m.

2018 South 16th Street

### WEEKDAY BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAYS | 11:00 a.m.

Graham Parlor or Zoom

### HOLY EUCHARIST

WEDNESDAYS | 12:10 p.m.

Celebrating Holy Communion

# T

### CHOIR REHEARSAL

THURSDAYS | 7:00 p.m.

Choir Room



MEN ON A MISSION - ASP INFO DISTRIBUTION



SJDS FUN WITH TURTLES



BAPTISM DAY!



# From the Rector

*"Come and See."*

John 1:39

Dear Parish Family,

What a delight to witness the wonderful turnout for our annual parish meeting on Sunday, January 8th. My thanks to all who were present. The spirit of the gathering was bright and hopeful - with gratitude for where we have been as a parish and enthusiasm for where we are headed together in 2023 (the Annual Report is still available online).

As you may recall, a key part of our meeting was the election of four new members to our Vestry. The Vestry has twelve members, with each new cohort of four serving for a three year term. The timing for this election was important, as our clergy and full Vestry then gathered for a winter retreat the weekend of January 14-15. That time included the passage of a balanced 2023 budget, a mutual ministry review for the Rector and Vestry, plans for advancing our parish strategic plan and a prioritization of program and facility needs in the year to come.

I'm grateful to report that our Vestry is fully engaged in both service and leadership for our parish. Senior Warden Leslie Jarrett and Junior Warden Alex Murchison complement each other well with their strengths and talents, and all members bring a unique diversity of experience and opinion. Wonderfully, all members are fully committed to their personal faith and to the advancement of our Christ-centered mission.

I look forward to sharing developments in the season ahead. In particular, look to hear more about the beginnings of a St. James Tri-Centennial Committee. It's not too early at all to begin planning for our 300th anniversary in 2029!

I would ask you to keep the good work on the St. James Vestry in your prayers. If you have questions or ideas, I know any one of them would be happy to talk with you.

Jesus invited his earliest followers to "come and see" where he was staying, so as to know him more fully. I invite you to do the same with folks you encounter. Invite them to St. James Parish - to come and see the good things happening here in our midst.

Blessings,

The Rev. C. Phillip Craig, Jr.

[phillip@stjamesp.org](mailto:phillip@stjamesp.org)

*Almighty and everliving God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with those who take counsel 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.*

**BCP 818**

# Vestry Corner

*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." -*

Lamentations 3:22-24

Gathering together for the vestry retreat started with words of wisdom (One in song form!) from the departing vestry members and followed with thoughtful, prayerful time considering where St. James is now and going in the future. The Vestry is passionate, excited and ready to make 2023 a great year and continue the positive energy we have become known for as a parish family.

Business wise, we are excited to announce we have passed a **balanced budget** for 2023. We are so grateful for all who have pledged this year. Your generosity has allowed us to fund a new position, the Executive Assistant to the Clergy. It is important to support the incredible work our clergy does by providing ways to enable their days to become more efficient and pastoral. Your stewardship has also allowed for a cost of living increase to all administrative staff and the clergy.

We reflected on recent events surrounding **Martin Luther King Jr. Day**. We appreciated recognizing clergy and parishioners from St. James walking and watching the parade downtown. Thanks to all who participated in the St. Stephens AME MLK Day Blood drive! Several folks noted how meaningful the ecumenical service was and hope others will mark their calendars to attend next year.

Another joyful update was hearing about the huge success of the **St. James Day School**. In one week, the school filled registration for the 2023-2024 school year with a healthy waiting pool of applicants. The enthusiasm and spirit of the teachers and the director, Ansley Trask was noted with the ways they not only are serving children during the hours they are at school but their care extends beyond the school hours in so many ways. We are very blessed to have this ministry at St. James.

Be on the lookout for a **Tri-centennial Committee** to be established over the next year in preparation for our 300th anniversary in 2029! This is such a significant event in the life of our parish and one we are fortunate to be able to celebrate. We plan to start kicking off events in 2024 as we lead up to 300 years of St. James Parish! Did you know - St. James Parish was established in 1729 as an official establishment of the Church of England within the New Hanover Precinct. Services were originally held in the courthouse at the intersection of Front and Market Streets. (See [stjamesp.org/history](http://stjamesp.org/history) for more!)

Over the next year we look forward to having visitors from several committees and each commission to our vestry meetings so we can continue learning how best to support and lift up the great work they are doing. In February we will be hearing from the **Speakers Series** and we hope you will join their upcoming offering with the Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston.

On **February 12th**, our combined faith formation will be a **This Is Us -Vestry Edition**. You will get the chance to ask questions and get to know the current members of the Vestry. We hope you'll take the time to offer up any suggestions or thoughts! Please also know we are available anytime, we are here to represent you. All members of the vestry have name tags with "Vestry" underneath it, so seek us out if you have any questions or comments!

-Leslie Jarrett (Senior Warden) &  
Alex Murchison (Junior Warden)



# ST. JAMES STAFF UPDATES



## THANKING FLORENCE ELLEN COWDEN

Dear St. James Parish Family,

I write to share the bittersweet news that Parish Administrator Florence Ellen Cowden will be stepping down from her role at the end of February. Her decision comes from a desire to be more available with support and presence to her beloved and extended family at this important time.

All who have encountered Florence Ellen during her tenure have experienced an extraordinary blend of care, faithfulness and compassion. She has been a true gift to me as Rector and to our entire staff over this past year. As Parish Administrator, she had modeled what it means to be “the heart” of our operation, for which we are so grateful. Florence Ellen and Web (and their family) will continue, of course, to be fully engaged as members of our family and in their special blend of ministries. We are blessed by their presence.

We now begin a search for our next Parish Administrator. The position description has been shared with a variety of professional and Episcopal platforms as of January 27th.

As always, my door is open for any thoughts or questions you may have. In the meantime, please join me in thanking Florence Ellen for her talent and service to our parish.

Blessings.

The Rev. C. Phillip Craig, Jr.

[phillip@stjamesp.org](mailto:phillip@stjamesp.org)

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As we move forward, we invite you to share the below opportunities with candidates you feel may be a good fit for our Parish Staff!

## PARISH ADMINISTRATOR

St. James Parish, Wilmington, is seeking a detail-oriented individual, with superior time management skills, to oversee parish facilities and coordinate daily operations of the church office, including campus maintenance, management of support staff, and parish events.

The ideal candidate should have experience managing resources and supervising programs and/or facilities, as this position facilitates logistics for church gatherings and activities and is the key contact with outside groups seeking to utilize space on the St. James campus.

This role is full-time and on-site. The Parish Administrator reports to the St. James Rector.

Candidates are invited to submit their resume, a letter of interest, and three references to [personnel@stjamesp.org](mailto:personnel@stjamesp.org). Deadline to apply is February 17, 2023.

## Staff Opportunities

### EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE CLERGY

St. James Parish, Wilmington, is seeking a detailed individual to support the Rector and other clergy in parish administration. The ideal candidate should be collaborative, efficient and well-organized. A priority for this position is confidentiality for all pastoral concerns related to parishioners, staff and all others.

This role is full-time and on-site. The Executive Assistant to the Clergy reports to the St. James Rector.

Candidates are invited to submit their resume, a letter of interest, and three references to [personnel@stjamesp.org](mailto:personnel@stjamesp.org). Deadline to apply is February 17, 2023.

# A Joyful Announcement from Steve Thomas

Over the past 18 months, Steve Thomas has been working on something very special. In addition to serving as our Senior Warden on the Vestry, Steve has been in the process of discernment. We take a moment here to share Steve's journey of discernment to ordained ministry, his current progress in answering that call, and the role of our parish going forward in supporting him on that path as his Sponsoring Parish.



In 2021, Steve attended The Path Conference at the Trinity Center and began to seriously consider a call to ministry that had been growing over several years. Steve is currently discerning a call to ordained ministry. The Episcopal Church has a very structured process to help facilitate this very personal and deeply spiritual time in a person's life. Steve's discernment process began formally last Fall (2021) with regular meetings with our Rector, the Rev. C. Phillip Craig, Jr. With Phillip's blessing, in the Spring of 2022, a Parish Discernment Committee was formed. Several individuals from our church family were brought together to help Steve answer questions such as, "is this truly God's call for you and your life?" through a series of intentional conversations.

Steve's own experience and faith has led him through the discernment process, along with the support of the many special folks who have been involved. With the recommendation of the Parish Discernment Committee, Steve's nomination was put before our St. James Vestry at the May 2022 meeting. Our Vestry formally and unanimously endorsed Steve to be considered as a Postulant for Holy Orders. This past Fall (2022), the Diocesan Commission on Ministry spent time with Steve at an overnight at Trinity Center in consideration of his call to become ordained. They recommended him to the Bishop to be recognized as a Postulant of the Diocese.

We are very excited to be able to share that earlier this month, Steve was officially recognized as a Postulant for Holy Orders of the Episcopal Church. Steve will be working closely with the Bishop in the next weeks to determine what his formation process will look like as he continues this path of discernment. We are honored to be a part of his journey.

Steve encourages any who might be feeling a "tug" from God to consider ways to serve more as either a lay or ordained Leader in the church to attend The Path Conference offered each Fall by our Diocese. Make time to listen to the voice of God.

## SHROVE TUESDAY

### SHROVE TUESDAY MORNING PRAYER

*Tuesday, February 21, 2023 | 8:00 AM | Zoom*

Join us for a special edition of Morning Prayer as we gather to celebrate Shrove Tuesday! Daily Morning Prayer is live on Zoom!

### SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER

*Tuesday, February 21, 2023, 6:00 PM*

Save the date! Shrove Tuesday is coming and with it, our Annual Pancake Supper February 21st is Shrove Tuesday. Shrove Tuesday is an important time to join with your parishioners, have a meal, and enjoy each other's company. Bring a friend or two and join us in the Great Hall on Tuesday, February 21 from 6:00 - 7:15 p.m. as we celebrate the last day before Lent. Proceeds from this event support the outreach efforts of our St. James Youth! \$5/per adult \$3.00/child Maximum for Family \$20.

## ASH WEDNESDAY

### ASH WEDNESDAY OPPORTUNITIES

*Wednesday, February 22, 2023*

- 7:00 AM - Morning Ash Wednesday Service
- 8:00 AM - Ash Wednesday Morning Prayer on Zoom
- 12:10 PM - Noonday Ash Wednesday Service
- 7:00 PM - Evening Ash Wednesday Service



# Faith Formation Opportunities:

## SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10:10 AM

### COMBINED FAITH FORMATION - Meets in Great Hall

- **February 5, 2023: Serving Our Young Neighbors: The Communities in Schools Program**
  - *Speaker: Louise Hicks, Executive Director at Communities In Schools of the Cape Fear.*
    - Louise is a parishioner at St. James who has served at Communities In Schools since 2005. She will talk to us about the various programs which CIS provides to support students and empower them to stay in school and to achieve new possibilities in their lives. She will tell us about expanded programs and new developments which have broadened the CIS ministry.
- **February 12, 2023: Combined Faith Formation**
  - Meet with wider parish family for a time of sharing with our Vestry.
- **February 19, 2023: Neighbors in the Old & New Testament**
  - *Speaker- Susan Ingle*
  - Susan is a parishioner at St. James and a popular Biblical studies teacher. She will lead us in a discussion of scriptural references to neighbors in the Old and New Testaments.
- **February 26, 2023: Journeying through the Wilderness: A clergy-led class and discussion of the season of Lent.**
  - *Speaker- St. James Clergy*
  - Join the clergy for a class on what it means to observe a "holy Lent" and how this season can prepare us to fully experience the joy of Christ's resurrection and live every day as Easter people.

### JUBI-LATTE ROUNDTABLE -

**Meets in Cookie's Office**  
On Sunday Mornings, our 6th-12th graders are invited to join us in Cookie's Office for the Jubi-Latte Roundtable, with coffee and conversation.

### FAITH ADVENTURERS - 2nd Floor Milton Hall

(4th and 5th graders): Grab a cozy seat and get ready to get lost in Namia. This winter/spring, we will set out to uncover the themes in *Wonder*.

### FAITH BUILDERS - 2nd Floor Milton Hall

(2nd and 3rd graders): Building Faith Brick by Brick. We will explore the Bible in an imaginative way using our minds, hands and LEGOS!

### FAITH FOUNDATIONS- 2nd Floor Milton Hall

(K5 & 1st Graders): Building a foundation in faith invites learning about God using the Bible as our road map. Explore, create and marvel at God's big love for us!

### FAITH THROUGH WONDER- 2nd Floor Milton Hall

(3s & 4s): Explore God's love for us. We will engage in stories, create crafts and enjoy time together exploring all the wonder in God's creations.

## WEEKDAY ADULT BIBLE STUDY: EPIPHANY

Concludes Wednesday, February 8 | 11:00 AM | Graham Parlor or Zoom

Mark your calendars! Our Wednesday Bible Study resumed on January 18th with our four-week series *Journey Through Epiphany: Living Well with All Your Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind*. The Rev. Cheryl Brainard leads this special course. The materials will soon be available online for you to download or you may call the church office for assistance with a printed copy.

## WEEKDAY ADULT BIBLE STUDY: LENT

Wednesdays beginning March 1st | 11:00 a.m. | Graham Parlor or Zoom

Join us March 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29 from 11 AM to 12 noon for a special Lenten series on Philippians led by Susan Ingle! Paul founded the church in Philippi and it held a special place in his heart. This 5-week study will feature an introduction to the Philippian church, and the following sessions will focus on one of the 4 chapters that make up the letter. The format of the study will be lecture/discussion. Please join us for this journey through one of Paul's most beloved epistles.



# Upcoming Opportunities

## ST. JAMES SPEAKER SERIES: THE REV. DR. SCOTT BLACK JOHNSTON

Wednesday, February 8, 2023 | 7:00 p.m. | St. James Parish

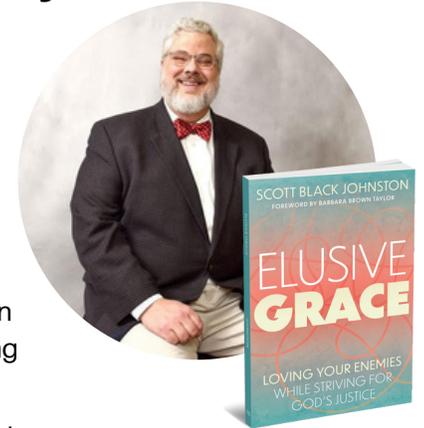
In partnership with First Presbyterian Church, St. James Episcopal Parish is pleased to announce our Spring Speaker: The Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston. On February 8, 2023, Dr. Johnston, author of *Bread Enough for All* and *Questions Preachers Ask: Essays in Honor of Thomas G. Long*, will be presenting from his most recent book, *Elusive Grace: Loving Your Enemies While Striving for God's Justice*.

In *Elusive Grace: Loving Your Enemies While Striving for God's Justice*, Dr. Johnston challenges us to consider how we as Christians face the increasing divide in our nation and in the world. As Johnston reminds us, we are called to participate in God's ongoing struggle for justice from a perspective of love.

Dr. Johnston is a husband, a dad, a friend, a pastor, a comic book reader, and a fan of almost any sport that involves a ball. Dr. Johnston serves as the senior pastor of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in Manhattan. He is always on the lookout for God and good conversation. This lends itself well to his writings. Dr. Johnston frequently writes about Reformed theology, preaching, psalms and prayers. His pieces focus on the challenges, absurdities and joys of an urban faith.

We invite the community to join us on Wednesday, February 8, 2023 for this special presentation. At 6:00 p.m. there will be a reception for Dr. Johnston in the Great Hall followed by his 7:00 p.m. presentation of "*Elusive Grace: Loving Your Enemies While Striving for God's Justice*" in the St. James sanctuary.

Livestreaming and replay opportunities will be available. Copies of *Elusive Grace: Loving Your Enemies While Striving for God's Justice* are available for purchase in the Parish Gift Shop!



## ECW EVENT WITH SHERI CASTLE

The Episcopal Church Women group is very excited to host an evening of wine, food and fellowship celebrating our first gathering of 2023. We have invited guest speaker Sheri Castle to kick off the celebration. Sheri is the host and producer of her PBS show THE KEY INGREDIENT. She has been the Contributing Food Editor at Southern Living Magazine since 1998; and is currently the Food Editor at Our State Magazine. She has written eight cookbooks; has worked with over 10 chefs to help develop and write recipes. Sheri is a New York Times Notable for her New Southern Garden Cookbook and was named cookbook of the year! Sheri is a prolific freelance writer, recipe developer, fellow Tar Heel!

Sheri is coming to St. James ECW to share some good southern storytelling with a dash of great recipes and fellowship.

**PLEASE SAVE THE DATE - TUESDAY MARCH 21 AND JOIN US!**

## PRAYING SHAPES BELIEVING

Mark your calendar for Praying Shapes Believing (PSB) which begins Thursday, February 16 at 6:00-7:15 p.m. in the Lippitt Room.

- Has it been a while since Confirmation?
- Are you thinking of making St. James your permanent home but have come from another denomination or faith group and want to know more before committing?
- Do you wish to deepen your faith or just want to get to know some folks?

If you answered yes to any of the above, this is for you! "Praying Shapes Believing" (PSB) is a class that offers something for the above scenarios and more. All are welcome.

PSB also serves as Confirmation Class for adults who want to be confirmed or received in April 2023.

In this 7-week class, we will begin with prayer and ice breaker questions to ponder, read through *Walk in Love: Episcopal Beliefs & Practices*, hear from a seasoned speaker, and get to know one another better. We invite you to come as you are - comfortable! We'll have some light refreshments.

If you have any questions or need a copy of the book, please contact or the Rev. Cheryl Brainard at [cheryl@stjamesp.org](mailto:cheryl@stjamesp.org).

# Happening at St. James

## IN OUR PRAYERS:

RUSSELL CLARK



## LIVING WELL DURING LENT

Join our parish in reading through our Advent devotional, "Living Well Through Advent." Copies are available now in the Church Office or the Great Hall on Sunday mornings? Have questions about the Living Well series? Reach out to The Rev. Cheryl Brainard at [cheryl@stjamesp.org](mailto:cheryl@stjamesp.org).

## LIVING WELL IN THE MIDST OF GRIEF & LOSS

1st & 3rd Mondays | 5:00 p.m. | Graham Parlor or on Zoom

When we face an ending or a loss, we can experience grief in a number of ways and one size does not fit all. Come join us as we take this journey together. Reach out to the Rev. Cheryl Brainard at [cheryl@stjamesp.org](mailto:cheryl@stjamesp.org) for more information.

## MORNING PRAYER

Mon. - Fri. | 8:00-8:30 a.m. | Zoom

Come join us for the Daily Office of Morning Prayer! Each weekday on Zoom with gather for a time of prayer and fellowship. If you would like a direct link sent to your email each morning, please reach out to [communications@stjamesp.org](mailto:communications@stjamesp.org)

## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

President's Day - Our St. James Parish Office and St. James Day School will be closed on Monday, February 20th in observation of President's Day. If you have questions please reach out to [admin@stjamesp.org](mailto:admin@stjamesp.org).

## THIS IS US: THE ST. JAMES VESTRY

Sunday, February 12, 2023 | 10:10 AM | Great Hall or Zoom

Join us for a special Combined Faith Formation- Meet with wider parish family for a time of sharing with our Vestry. Join us in the Great Hall to hear from our Vestry and getting to know our newest Vestry members.

## EPISCOPOSSE GATHERING

Thursday, February 16, 2023 | 7:00 PM | TBA

Ladies (21+) are invited to join us as we gather in February! This group meets once a month to discuss the Don't Mom Alone Podcast, books and the day to day challenges of living faith. Join together in prayer, fellowship, and connect with other women! If you have questions about this group or would like to RSVP to Erin Becker for directions, please reach out to Erin at [communications@stjamesp.org](mailto:communications@stjamesp.org).

## BREADBREAKERS RETURNS!

The St. James Breadbreakers are making plans for the 2023 Hospitality at Home Series. Our first gathering will be in March! Keep an eye on your emails for information about how to sign up to host and more.

## BREADBREAKERS AND BASEBALL

Save the date for April 2nd! Instead of our usual Hospitality at Home potluck, we'll be gathering together for the UNCW vs. NC A&T Baseball Game. The game starts at 1:00 p.m. stay tuned for more information regarding tickets!

## FOYER GROUPS

A new year has begun for our Foyer Groups! It's not too late to be matched with a group. If you are interested in being a part of a smaller fellowship group, please reach out to Sheila Osann ([osannshe@aol.com](mailto:osannshe@aol.com)) or Nina Inge ([ninabet55@gmail.com](mailto:ninabet55@gmail.com)).

## WEDNESDAY NIGHTS DURING LENT!

March 1st brings us the return of Wednesday Night Dinners and a clergy-led Lenten Study. Join us in Perry Hall at 6:00 p.m. (or 6:15 p.m. for the members of the Children's Choir) for a parish dinner and time of fellowship!



We see and hear the St. James Choir each week, and we might know the faces. With this Grapevine issue we continue to introduce the members of the choir!

# Our St. James Choir



**SAM CRAIG** - Hi! I'm Sam Craig. I'm new to St. James Parish, having just graduated in June from the University of Oregon, Clark Honors College. Although born in Alexandria, Virginia, I've spent most of my life in Oregon. The Pacific Northwest was a beautiful place to grow up. As an Eagle Scout, I fondly remember more than 150+ nights camping: from sunrise summits of Mt. St. Helens, to sleeping in snow caves on Mt. Hood, to "polar plunges" in the freezing Pacific Ocean. Oregon is also where I discovered my love for science and medicine. Since 2017, I've followed this passion by conducting research in surgical oncology, diagnostic radiology, and developmental biology. Through research, I've been able to contribute to a greater understanding of diseases such as breast and pancreatic cancers and spine disorders such as scoliosis. My passion, though, is to learn how to directly apply the findings of human research to heal human beings. This is the work of medicine, and the work I want to perform as a physician. Since graduating, I've been working at Wilmington Ear Nose and Throat Associates as a full-time clinical scribe, and volunteering at the Good Shepherd Center Medical Clinic, altogether building experience for when I start medical school in the future. If you want to talk about choir, nature, weird (but cool) biology facts, or grab a cup of coffee, please don't hesitate to reach out!



**TANYA HANNO** - Music and singing has been an integral part of my life and has carried me through every season and every decade. I grew up singing at Paul's Episcopal church in Akron Ohio. From there, I went on to sing in my college choir and performed in a small chamber ensemble. Once I completed my education obtaining a Master's & Doctorate in Physical Therapy, I began working here at New Hanover Regional Medical Center. I sought out community choirs to fulfill my desire to sing. Since living in Wilmington, I have sung in the Wilmington Choral Society, Carolina Vocal Arts, and Cape Fear Chorale. In 2015, my passion for singing and love for opera was rekindled when I attended Opera Wilmington's performance of Franz Lehar's opera "The Merry Widow," I was inspired to pursue voice lessons and a dream of singing in a local opera and sing as a soloist in choir performances. Once I started taking voice lessons with Dr. Nancy King, I found myself wanting and needing to learn so much more about music, theory, composers and music history. I decided to go back to school to pursue a Bachelors of Arts with a focus on classical voice performance. So, while continuing to work full-time as a Physical Therapist at the hospital, I took on the challenge of pursuing my music degree. In December, 2021, I received my degree in music. This has opened up many doors and opportunities for me to pursue singing as a soloist, perform in ensembles of local opera and continue to sing in local community choirs. I began studying voice with Sara Westermarck a few months ago, and she encouraged me to consider joining her at St James to sing and to worship with the choir. This has been one of the best decisions I ever made - from the very moment I stepped into the choir rehearsal room, I have felt welcomed and supported by the entire choir family. It is a real joy and privilege to be able to sing in this choir and share messages of hope and faith through my voice and through song. Sometimes the lyrics/text in the music reveals profound messages to my heart and soul that I otherwise might have missed in context of a passage that is read. Another reason I really enjoy this choir is the many wonderful people I have met and gotten to know. This choir is a family, we sing together, we serve together and we genuinely care about, support and uplift each other. In my short time that I have been singing in this choir, I have witnessed an incredible group of gifted and talented singers and musicians perform beautiful music each and every week. I am so grateful for the opportunity to sing with this choir and lead with song and worship with our collective voices under the capable leadership, direction, and humor of our musical director and organist, John Sullivan.

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## CHOIR REHEARSAL

*Thursdays | 7:00-8:30 p.m. | Choir Room*

Choir practice always begins with vocal warm ups peppered with encouraging quips and anecdotes from Choir Director John Sullivan. As a transition from warmups, we sing through the hymns for the upcoming Sunday to polish up the phrasing and four-part harmonies. Then we work on our parts for upcoming anthems. But hold onto your seats, because the rapid-fire musical quotes and jokes will delight you and keep you ready for more singing! Remember when you sing for church you pray twice. And the Lord says make a joyful noise!! So come join the fun in the choir room—we always have an extra chair!

If you are interested in learning more about joining the St. James Choir, please reach out to [music@stjamesp.org](mailto:music@stjamesp.org).

## AROUND THE PARISH



**PAULA SHIELDS** - Every day I read a Psalm. Within the Psalms is a repeated exhortation to SING, to sing praises to God and perhaps accompany that singing with music- harp, lute, lyre, trumpet (as organs weren't invented yet.) King David understood the pure joy of singing and praising God and playing an instrument solely for God's glory. Though I cannot play an instrument, I can sing and I can definitely praise. Being in choir gives me the opportunity to express that joy and participate fully in worship, praise and adoration. I love the work of learning a piece of music. I treasure the cooperative energy present as we musicians strive toward that corporate goal of praising God with our voices and instruments. I am grateful for the generosity the choir members and John who accept my untrained voice and allow me to be a part of this choir. Thank you, new friends! I came to this group because of an introduction to John Sullivan after attending a Faith at Five event, outside at Mt. Lebanon Chapel. I honestly thought it was going to be a jazz concert! That was the first time we were allowed to sing together since the arrival of COVID. My thanks to everyone at St. James who made it possible for us to participate in worship throughout the lockdown. My joy is singing with this choir, "Soli Deo Gloria" to God alone glory.



**GRAHAM WESTERMARK** - Hans Graham Westermarck, is a sophomore at Hoggard High School who is passionate about science, French, and music. He participates in Hoggard's cross country and sailing teams. He began singing in the St. James Youth choir at age 10. He is also a founding member of the Boy's Choir of Wilmington in which he sang for two years. At age 12 Hans began singing treble (boy soprano) with the St. James Adult Choir alongside his mother Sara, and his non-binary sibling Alex. During Covid he hit a huge growth spurt growing taller (now 6'4") and changing his voice. During the voice change he has sung alto, and tenor parts. Currently Hans sings baritone in the St. James Adult Choir. Other musical experiences include studying piano for four years with Martha Hayes, singing in the musical "Oliver" with Thalian

Association, singing for two years the soprano choral parts of Messiah Choruses with St. Andrews Covenant Presbyterian Church, and placing third in the youth division at the state level of The National Association of Teachers of Singing Annual Auditions. This year Hans is looking forward to competing in the National Association of Teachers of Singing auditions held on February 18th with three Art Song selections.

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## Get Involved at St. James

### **STREAM TEAM RECRUITING!**

We're working to build out a new ministry, the St. James Parish Stream Team. Our St. James Livestream now has a set up that allows us to remotely aim our livestream camera during the service from an iPad. Stream Team Members will be trained on how to direct the camera during the service while they sit with their family! If you are interested in learning more about this ministry, please reach out to [communications@stjamesp.org](mailto:communications@stjamesp.org).

### **MoM: GOOD SHEPHERD CENTER**

*Tuesday, February 7, 2023, 4:00 PM*

The MoM Squad has agreed to serve meals to the homeless on the first and third Tuesday of each month. We are covered for January, but need volunteers for March. Please let us know if you can serve on either March 7 or 21. Shifts run from 4:30 PM to about 7 PM. The guys who have already done this found it to be a very simple, yet highly rewarding, experience. If you can stand for 45 minutes, you can do this! Reach out to Brian McMerty to volunteer! ([bcmcmerty@arris.partners](mailto:bcmcmerty@arris.partners))

### **SHARING THE CARING!**

Ever wonder who sends cards when there's a member of our church family who suffered a loss, is celebrating a birth, or even just needs a reminder they're loved? The Care Guild is on it! To help us reach all of the folks in our parish family in need of care, we need more volunteers! As part of the Care Guild, volunteers write and visit those who may not otherwise hear from friends or family regularly. The Care Guild's mission is to help each person know they are important and loved. If you would like to join the Care Guild, please reach out to Beth Souther to sign up! [bethsoutherfish@gmail.com](mailto:bethsoutherfish@gmail.com)

### **SECOND SATURDAYS**

*Saturday, February 11, 2023*

St. James Outreach invites you to join us for the 2023 Second Saturday Cleanups with Cape Fear River Watch. St. James participation with the clean-ups will begin on February 11, 2023 at 9:00 am. A location will be shared closer to the date. You can sign up on CFRW's website or contact parishioner David Joyner for more information ([davidbilljoyner@gmail.com](mailto:davidbilljoyner@gmail.com)).

# Outreach & Community

## OUTREACH SPOTLIGHT: HELP HUB

*By Bill Bivins St. James Parish Rep., Help Hub Advisory Council*

The Help Hub is one of the major outreach ministries supported by St. James Parish.

As one of the three founding member churches, St. James has contributed financial and volunteer support since 2015. St. James parishioners regularly volunteer as greeters, advisors and data entry assistants; and parishioner Sonja McFarland serves as the director.

Located at the Harrelson Center, Wilmington's Campus for Non-Profits, the Help Hub provides emergency financial assistance to those in need, and offers referrals to on-site Partner agencies and other community resources. Each person's emergency situation is respectfully assessed to determine the best plan to mitigate a crisis. Walk-in hours and volunteer shifts at the Help Hub are scheduled from 8:30 am until 12:00 noon Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week.



In 2022, the Help Hub provided assistance to more than 1600 households, significantly exceeding the 1200 average from past years. A total of \$300,392 in assistance was provided in 2022, with an average of \$187 to each household receiving assistance. These payments covered emergency needs for housing (46% of total assistance in 2022), power/gas utilities (31%), water utilities (15%), transportation (5%), medical (1.5%), and other needs (1.5%).

Housing assistance is particularly critical because of Wilmington's lack of affordable units. Rental rates continue to increase, with average monthly costs for rent exceeding one third of household budgets for at least 50% of our local households. For 2023, in addition to receiving financial assistance for housing, recipients will be invited to participate in budget and money management instruction through a collaboration with our Harrelson Center partner, the Kairos Center.

To address health care concerns, a nurse from Community Care of the Lower Cape Fear is onsite during walk-in hours.

The Help Hub assists with securing health coverage, affording copays, obtaining essential medications, and connecting guests to other health related resources. Health navigation assistance is supported financially by the Ministering Circle of Wilmington and Live Oak Bank.

Each morning as the Help Hub opens, all are welcomed and a prayer is offered, usually by one of the guests. These are often very humble and moving prayers of thanks and praise; and our guests' sentiments inspire us to cherish things in life which we often take for granted. As one example, just before Thanksgiving guests were sharing what they were grateful for in their life. Jonathan, one of our guests who was recovering from a traumatic brain injury and seeking assistance with his rent, wrote: "I have access to a pen and notepad, I have a phone, I can see, I know how to read and write, I live in America, I woke up this morning, I ate this morning, I smiled while here, and I got to witness the generosity of others at the Help Hub." After receiving assistance, Jonathan later called to say 'thank you' and ask about volunteer opportunities.

In 2021, Help Hub funding came from various donor groups: about 45% from churches and other faith organizations, 26% from nonprofit organizations and foundations, 17% from individuals, and 12% from businesses. The support of each of these groups has been essential to the mission and ministry of the Help Hub, and everyone is invited to participate in the work of the Help Hub. For more information, to make donations, or to access the volunteer interest form, please visit the Help Hub at [www.harrelsoncenter.org/help-hub](http://www.harrelsoncenter.org/help-hub).

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## Service Opportunities

If you are interested in learning how you can serve with our church family, there are tons of great ways to get involved! Here are a few ministry opportunities with immediate availability to serve (aka, we need you):

- Lectors/Readers
- Acolytes/Crucifers
- Greeters
- PenPals
- Altar Guild
- Ushers
- Wedding Guild
- Chalice/LEM
- Sunday School Teacher
- Office Volunteer Ministry
- Parish Shop
- St. James Choir

# EXPERIENCING GLORY RIDGE

by Henry Beard

"Every year, during the inferno of North Carolina summers, my youth group and I have traveled to Marshall, North Carolina, to a small camp named Glory Ridge. Glory Ridge is a week-long religious and volunteering experience for teens to go out into the impoverished community of Marshall, North Carolina, to help repair and rebuild homes for low-income community members that otherwise could not afford such work. For the third time in my high school career, I returned to Glory Ridge this past June.

The camp resides on a mountainside in a wide-open space of lush green grass with a sprawling view of the mountains of North Carolina. It is a quick walk down to the bathhouses, where the shock of first-time campers is. At Glory Ridge, the water comes out of a well nearby, and the hot water supply runs thin. It takes a few hours, but campers eventually realize that this will be their home for the next week.

Worksites are the dedicated homes that five to six campers will be assigned to rebuild; whether we are replacing a gutter system or demoing a fallen deck, everything is completed with the guidance of one adult and one Glory Ridge staff member. In Marshall, along a long winding road an hour away from camp, a widow had suffered a house fire three months prior and had not had the necessities of running water or power. She had no choice but to bathe in a nearby river for months. The next worksite was of another widow whose trailer had slowly started deteriorating. The hazardous front steps had been aged and needed replacing. The final worksite was of a woman named Betty and her grandchild, Toby. Betty's back deck had rotted away, leading to growing safety concerns in their lives, and Betty had even recently fallen through a rotten board, breaking her foot. Immediately, I knew I wanted to work on Betty's home.

Monday morning, we arrived and met Toby and Betty. Toby was a jubilant kid. While working, he would bring us water and tell us about himself. From his anecdotes, it became overt Toby's life was far from ordinary. Betty's home was quaint and needed work, but she did not have the resources to repair it. The back deck was far from child friendly, with planks missing and a faulty handrail, but by Tuesday, the group had demoed the whole thing, and by early Friday morning, the deck had been entirely replaced with a robust wooden deck fit for Toby and his grandmother.

The ride from Glory Ridge to Wilmington this year took nine hours, which gave me more than enough time to reminisce on the week. The sheer gratitude of my residents, the humbling feeling the Ridge bestows upon me year after year, and an overabundance of other ineffable feelings began reforming how I saw everything. I now understand that the things I am so effortlessly able to take for granted are to be treasured, and the connections you build with people are far greater than any gift you can give them. Toby and his grandmother's unwavering faith also instilled a new understanding of Christianity and how to carry it in my day-to-day life to better those around me.

Adjusting to the traditional world is never easy after arriving home. However, this year I decided that with my newfound perspective gained from Glory Ridge, I would try and play a more significant part in my community. Whether it would be restarting Heritage Club at New Hanover or partaking in Wednesday morning bible study service, these small acts allow me to reignite the same feeling once again I felt at Glory Ridge.



## GLORY RIDGE: 2023 MISSION EXPERIENCE

June 11-17

Plans are in the works for Glory Ridge 2023! We are looking for youth and adults to join us in serving others at Glory Ridge. If you're interested in participating and have questions, reach out to Cookie at [Cookie@stjamesp.org](mailto:Cookie@stjamesp.org).

# yo!

## Youth Opportunities

### **SUNDAY MORNINGS: JUBI-LATTE ROUNDTABLE**

*Sundays | 10:10 a.m. | Cookie's Office*  
Our youth put the Latte in Jubi-latte. During the Sunday School hour, 6th-12th graders gather for a special roundtable in Cookie's Office. Get ready to be caffeinated and talk about God. If you're interested in participating and have questions, reach out to Cookie.



### **STARBUCKS HIGH SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY**

*Wednesdays | 7:00 AM | 16th St. Starbucks*  
The Starbucks Bible Study is a favorite. We've consistently had an average of 25 participants each week. All St. James High School Youth are invited to join us each Wednesday for our weekly "Check In & BIBLE STUDY. Grab your favorite Starbucks Beverage & a tasty muffin or pastry. Enjoy this mid-week opportunity to talk, share, learn, listen, laugh and explore faith with friends. Hope YOU will JOIN US! If you're interested in participating and have questions, reach out to Cookie at [Cookie@stjamesp.org](mailto:Cookie@stjamesp.org).

### **MISSION TRIP: QUITO, ECUADOR**

In July, 2023, St James Youth Ministries will be partnering with "EDUCATION EQUALS HOPE" in QUITO, ECUADOR. During our 9-DAY Mission, we will worship, partner with Children's Ministries, experience a new culture and see the Face of Christ in the people around us! We will unite as we are woven together in unity and in love. Young people who will have completed the 9th, 10, 11, or 12th Grades in June 2023 may apply. We have space for 15 youth, and 5 adults! If you're interested in participating and have questions, reach out to Cookie at [Cookie@stjamesp.org](mailto:Cookie@stjamesp.org)

### **YOUTH GROUP**

*Sundays | 5:00-7:00 p.m. | Youth Room & Perry Hall*  
Sunday nights are for our Youth! After all the day's activities are done, Youth Group provides the perfect time to recenter on Christ and recharge with friends for the week ahead. Keep an eye on our calendar for special meetings!



### **GUARDIAN ANGEL PRAYER EXPERIENCE**

The Guardian Angel Prayer Experience is an opportunity to engage with our St. James Youth through the power of prayer. If you agree to be a "Guardian Angel" during Lent, you will receive information about a young person who will be assigned to you. Keep your identity as their "angel" a secret and to pray for them each day. While prayer is the primary focus of this program, tangible expressions of your support, encouragement, and love through cards/notes help show your young person that you truly exist. Please plan to write to your young person during the first week of Lent to let them know that you are there! The Guardian Angle Prayer Exprience will conclude Palm Sunday, April 2nd at a special gathering with our "angels" and our youth. Although your identity will not be known throughout this program, please be assured that each young person will have the comfort and joy of knowing that someone in this parish is truly their earthly "Guardian Angel."  
**Deadline to sign up to participate is February 6th!**  
If you're interested in participating and have questions, reach out to Cookie at [Cookie@stjamesp.org](mailto:Cookie@stjamesp.org)

### **EVENTS FOR YOUR CALENDAR**

- Brunswick Stew Super Bowl Sale - February 5
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner- February 21
- Guardian Angel Prayer Experience- February 22
- Happening #79 - March 5
- Guardian Angel Celebration- April 2
- Youth Sunday- May 14
- Silent Auction- May 14-17

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL SUMMER 2023

Save the date! Our 2023 St. James Vacation Bible School is scheduled for July 31-August 3rd. If you would like to help plan, organize, or donate to this year's VBS, please reach out to Ansley Trask at [christianinformation@stjamesp.org](mailto:christianinformation@stjamesp.org)!

We'll be sharing more information about how to register and sign up to volunteer as we get closer to the summer!

## CHILDREN'S CHOIR PRACTICES

Join us on Wednesdays from 5:45 to 6:15 p.m. in the Children's Chapel for Children's Choir practice. Please contact Mr. John at [music@stjamesp.org](mailto:music@stjamesp.org) if you have any questions! Below is a look at the practice and performance schedule for the spring.

Spring Session 2023:

- March 1
- March 8
- March 15
- March 22
- March 29

Presentation: April 2 | Palm Sunday

## CHILDREN'S CHAPEL SHEPHERDS

Looking for a fun way to engage with Sunday mornings? Consider joining our Children's Chapel shepherds. To help safely direct our little ones to and in Children's Chapel on Sunday mornings, we're in need of some additional adult hands to assist our Clergy and Sunday School teachers as they lead the Chapel. These special shepherds are so important to our Children's Ministries. Visit our website to sign up! [stjamesp.org/childrens-chapel/](http://stjamesp.org/childrens-chapel/)

## BUSY BAG MINISTRY

Did you know that we have special Sunday morning activity bags available for those who get the wiggles or need something to do with their hands? You can find our Busy Bags in the transept entrance each Sunday. If you would like to donate to the Busy Bag ministry, please reach out to Ansley Trask at [christianinformation@stjamesp.org](mailto:christianinformation@stjamesp.org).

## FAMILY FUN EMAIL LIST

Did you know we have a special email list for families with kids? Email Erin Becker at [communications@stjamesp.org](mailto:communications@stjamesp.org) to have your contact information added today!



## REGISTRATION UPDATE

Thank you for helping spread the word about SJDS! We are full for next year but are currently adding families to our wait pool. The 2023-2024 calendar will be released by mid February. Thank you again for your support!

## SUMMER CAMPS

St. James Day School Summer Camp registration is **FULL!** We were blown away by families' response to this year's camp offerings. All three of our camps are currently at capacity, however if you would like to join the waiting list, please reach out to Ansley Trask at [director.dayschool@stjamesp.org](mailto:director.dayschool@stjamesp.org).

- June 12-16: Adventure to Australia: Grab your passport and head Down Under.
- June 26-30: Adventure to Africa: It's a jungle out there! Join us for an SJDS safari!
- July 17-21: Pop, Bubble, Fizz. Messy fun science camp!

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

It feels like just yesterday that we were celebrating Christmas with joyful carols, bright-lit trees, well-orchestrated pageants, and fun-filled gatherings. And yet, here we are, a mere few weeks from beginning our Lenten journey toward Easter, beginning with Ash Wednesday.

Here at SJDS, we will mark Ash Wednesday just as we do in church—the imposition of ashes. These ashes are often the burned remains of palm leaves used at the previous year's Palm Sunday service. Each year, we place them on our foreheads in the form of a cross to serve as a reminder of our mortality—that we are dust, and to dust we shall return—and that we ultimately depend on God for life.

Before Ash Wednesday, I encourage you to tell your child about this day and what they can expect. Tell them, for example, that we mark our foreheads with ashes to remind us that our lives depend on God. That way, they will be less anxious and begin to understand what this important day is all about.

ST. JAMES PARISH



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# ST. JAMES PARISH



EST. 1729

Rector **The Reverend C. Phillip Craig, Jr.**

Associate Rector **The Reverend Cheryl Brainard**

Associate Rector **The Reverend Joseph "Gray" Hodsdon**

Organist Choir Master **John Sullivan** | Parish Administrator **Florence Ellen Cowden**

Parish Coordinator **Bill McKenzie** | Finance Administrator **Maria Hollopetter**

Director of Youth Ministries **Cookie Cantwell**

Day School Director & Children's Ministries Coordinator **Ansley Trask**

Communications Director **Erin Becker** | Registrar **Marybeth Tallman**

Facilities Manager **Wes Clewis** | Sexton **Norman Sutherland**

## VESTRY

Senior Warden **Leslie Jarrett**

Junior Warden **Alex Murchison**

Treasurer **Mike Brown** | Clerk **Diane MacAskill**

Class 2023: **Kay Dougherty** | **Tom Hackler** | **Leslie Jarrett** | **Al Marr**

Class 2024: **Rachel Colonna** | **Web Cowden** | **Alex Murchison** | **Barbara Whitesides**

Class 2025: **Dean Gornto** | **David Joyner** | **Erin Trask** | **Brandon Candler Tully**

## Contact Us

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Visit us online: [www.stjamesp.org](http://www.stjamesp.org) | Facebook: [facebook.com/stjamesp](https://facebook.com/stjamesp) | Instagram: [@StJamesParish](https://instagram.com/StJamesParish)