

From the Rector

THE REV. JOSH HOOVER

josh@stjamesbirmingham.org

Please say yes.

A few years ago, in response to an idea that came from a St. James task force, the Vestry began to institute a series of Meet and Greets. Each month, two Vestry members would schedule a time and place that they were available for conversation with any members of the church who wanted to show up. Sometimes they came wanting to share something, but mostly the idea was to listen.

Every month, as part of the Vestry agenda, we would hear a report on how these conversations went, what ideas were shared and concerns voiced. I know that some of you recognized me or other leaders addressing your concerns in announcements or articles to the St. James community.

I want to start by saying thank you. Thank you to the Vestry members who hosted, scheduled and showed up for these Meet and Greets. And thank you to all the member of St. James who showed up in order to listen and share and deepen relationships with one another. I believe these meetings were very important to relationships in our community and keeping communication open and available for everyone.

One of the flaws of the meet and greets is that, no matter how we changed the day of the week or the time of day, we almost always had the same people attending. So this year, we are going to make some changes. Because having the leadership of your church listen to your voice is fantastically important, we want to find ways to have even deeper conversations with even more people.

The Meet and Greets will continue, but on an every other month basis, and we will be rolling out something new this year, the one on one interview. Vestry members have been asked to invite and sit down for an interview with one person per month. These should be interviews with people they don't already know quite well. It may be over coffee during the week, agreeing to meet during coffee hour, or even an invitation into their home.

Wherever the location and whatever the time, these interviews should take between 45 minutes and an hour and be an opportunity for them to better know someone in our community. They will be asking you about yourself, and about your hopes, dreams, and fears.

As you can imagine, this is not an easy thing to do. Vestry members will be going outside their comfort zones to both ask for an interview and to carry it out. But we believe that what we will learn about our membership, the ideas that will be added to those already serving in leadership, and the deepening of relationship that comes from sharing our stories will greatly enhance our decision making as the body you have entrusted to make church wide decisions. The ways we seek to continue to feed and be fed at St. James will be coming from all corners of our church.

And so, I end where I began. When a Vestry member calls or emails you, please say yes. We need you to help us strengthen and grow and become a more faithful church.

Thank you.

Faithfully, Fr. Josh

The Reverend Joshua A. Hoover, Rector
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WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays 8:00 a.m. in-person and 10:00 a.m. in-person and streamed on Facebook and our Website

Weeknights Compline 7:50 p.m. on Zoom

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday from 10 a.m.—3 p.m.

PASTORAL CARE

For pastoral emergencies, please contact Fr. Josh Hoover at 810-620-5402

The Spirit is a monthly newsletter published for members and friends of St. James. **We are always looking for photographs of church events!** The deadline for submission is the 15th of each month for the following month's issue. Please email articles and/or photos to:
parishadmin@stjamesbirmingham.org

Looking For A Little Muscle

PAM GRIER

Do you enjoy the fellowship of Coffee Hour? Do you have a few extra minutes afterwards? We need families, or individuals, to sign up to help breakdown the tables and chairs after the 10:00 a.m. Coffee Hour. You don't have to do the job by yourselves, just coordinate a few others in the room to get Centennial Hall ready for our Preschoolers on Monday morning. This would be a different group than those that sponsor coffee hour.

The coffee hour sponsors would get the food, etc. set up prior to 9:00 a.m., refill between services and clean-up afterwards. The clean-up would consist of putting food, etc. away and cleaning the kitchen/doing the dishes, while the other group will put tables and chairs away. Hopefully, we don't have people shy away from sponsoring coffee hour because the table/chair breakdown is too difficult. Please sign up on the sheet in Centennial Hall or at <https://stjames.rocks/coffee23>. Thank you in advance for making coffee hour go smoothly – something we can all appreciate!

Vestry Update

Minutes from Vestry meetings are posted in Centennial Hall after they are approved each month. For a more recent update, we include highlights here in the Spirit. At their February meeting the Vestry of St. James:

- Welcomed new Vestry members
- Participated in a leadership exercise
- Received Property Updates
- Received an update on hiring of a new bookkeeper
- Scheduled Meet and Greet and talked about interviewing church members
- Went over schedule for Lent



Joan of Arc Discussion Group

Lenten Opportunities

THE REV. JOSH HOOVER

It isn't too late to join us as we take time for self-examination, repentance, and recommitting ourselves to our faith in the season of Lent. Here are some of the ways you can still participate:

Lenten Soup Suppers

Thursdays through March 21 – Dinner at 5:30 p.m. Study from 6:15-7:15 p.m.

In their book, *The Last Week*, Biblical scholars John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg share the events and meanings of Jesus' last week, according to the gospel of Mark. As we make our own journey through Lent, we will follow Borg and Crossan through these final events in the life of Jesus. Each Thursday in Lent we will discuss another day, and what the events of that day might mean for us as followers. And preaching during Holy Week services this year will be based on what we learn from the book. Join us for fellowship and good food at 5:30 p.m. or simply join the study at 6:15 p.m.

Our schedule for Lent will be:

Thursday, February 29 – Chapters 2 and 3: Holy Monday and Holy Tuesday

Thursday, March 7 – Chapters 4 and 5: Holy Wednesday and Maundy Thursday

Thursday, March 14 – Chapter 6: Good Friday

Thursday, March 21 – Chapters 7 and 8: Holy Saturday and Easter

While you do not need to read the book to participate, it is very helpful. A limited number of books are available from Fr. Josh for \$10. You can also order them from Amazon. To sign up to bring soup or help set-up for the suppers, go to <https://stjames.rocks/soupsupper24>

Joan of Arcadia Discussion Group

Saturdays at 4:30 p.m.

If God appeared to you one day—in human form—and asked you to do something like get a part-time job at a bookstore, what would you think? What would you do? Did it even happen? These are some of the themes and questions that are central to the early-aught's show *Joan of Arcadia*.

From Jacob to Moses to Elijah to Joan of Arc, hearing voices or conversing with God is nothing new in our tradition. Yet in our day we are likely (with good reason) to be skeptical of people who boldly claim God told them to do something. We have seen religious visions turn violent and ungodly. All of this is what makes the premise of *Joan of Arcadia* so fascinating. It gives us an opportunity to discern—by watching, evaluating and discussing—what we believe is and is not realistic in these portrayals of God.

Join Amanda Reister in the lounge on Saturdays during Lent to watch an episode of *Joan of Arcadia*, share a meal, and discuss this "show about questions" to explore our faith, deepen our understanding, and better connect to each other. Even though it's a show about a teenage girl and her family, this is intended as a casual and multigenerational gathering that we hope appeals to all ages. We will watch the Pilot episode on February 24th starting at 4:30 pm and meet weekly through Lent.

For meal planning purposes, please let us know you plan to participate by signing up here: <https://stjames.rocks/JoanOfArcadia>. Pizza, snacks, and light refreshments are provided, but please feel free to bring anything else you'd like to enjoy while watching.

Lenten Opportunities—continued

Adult Forum

Sundays at 9:05 a.m.

Lenten Study: The Baptismal Promises

Our Baptismal Covenant features five questions that all start with the words, ‘Will You’. Put together they describe what discipleship looks like in the world. Discussions in the Lounge each week during Lent are meant to help us ask ourselves how we are living out these Baptismal Promises.

There is no Adult Forum on Sunday, March 3.

Our remaining questions are:

March 10 Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

March 17 Will you work for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being?

Easter Memorial Flowers

MARIANNE GANIARD

If you would like to contribute to the Easter Memorial Flower Fund please fill out the purple form included or go online at <https://stjames.rocks/easter24>. The Altar Guild will also be in Centennial Hall to take your contributions after both services on March 3, 10, and 17.

The deadline for submissions is Wednesday, March 20 in order for it to be mentioned in our Easter Service leaflet. Contributions in any amount, big or small, are welcome.

Holy Week

THE REV. JOSH HOOVER

Our Lenten journey will come to an end this year with the observance of Holy Week. Beginning Palm Sunday, March 24 we will walk together with Jesus and the Disciples through the events of this central part of the Christian life. This year, most especially we will be using the Gospel of Mark and, with the help of scholars Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan, will follow a coherent narrative that takes us through the week. We encourage you to join us for worship that will help unpack this sacred time and invite us more fully into the mystery of Christ’s final days, his passion and resurrection.

The themes and schedule of each day of the week are outlined below.

Palm Sunday, March 24 th	Eucharist at 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.	Palm procession and passion
Holy Monday, March 25 th	Eucharist at 7 p.m.	Kicking out the moneychangers
Holy Tuesday, March 26 th	Eucharist at 7 p.m.	Clashes with the authorities
Holy Wednesday, March 27 th	Eucharist at 7 p.m.	Anointing and Betrayal
Maundy Thursday, March 28 th	Eucharist with meal at 6 p.m.	Last Supper and Arrest
Good Friday, March 29 th	Episcopal Liturgy at noon	Trial and Crucifixion
	Stations of Cross for families at 3 p.m.	
	Reading the Bible on zoom at 7 p.m.	
Easter Sunday, March 31 st	Eucharist at 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.	Resurrection!

Senior Warden's Report

PAM GRIER, SENIOR WARDEN

St. James Members Warm My Heart

As winter is winding down (hopefully!) and spring approaches, there is a lot going on at St. James! As I transition from the Junior Warden position on Vestry to being the Senior Warden, I see much to be thankful for here at St. James.

Have you checked out the television in Centennial Hall recently? Fred Austin has done AMAZING work to display upcoming activities and photos of those recently past. It will keep us up to date on the many events going on here, since Fred revises it weekly. Thank you, Fred!

The **Property Committee** members have been working on repairs around the building and getting bids on the larger projects, such as tuck pointing outside the building and the water issue that involves Centennial Hall. We appreciate all of the time they give to our grand old building!

The **Pastoral Care Committee** recently warmed the hearts of parishioners that can't always make it into church by distributing adorable Valentine's Day bags to these folks. Thank you for letting these members know they are not forgotten! I know my mother loved hers!!

St. James Preschool has already begun enrolling for next fall! We are so glad to have such a wonderful program in our church! Thank you to Melissa and her terrific staff! Our **Junior Warden**, Angie Righter, is also the Treasurer for the Preschool and keeps us informed on the Preschool's activities. Thank you, Angie!

We all need to thank the **Finance Committee** and the **Parish Fund Committee** for the work they do all year long to keep us "in the black", but particularly at Annual Meeting time. It is a lot of work and takes great dedication.

Thanks, also, to Jane Barnes and all the groups that have stepped up for the **coffee hours**! We enjoy the fellowship opportunity that this provides. We will be looking for folks/families to sign up to help with the breakdown of tables and chairs after the 10:00 service so that Centennial Hall will be ready for our Preschoolers on Monday mornings.

Meanwhile, Michelle Boice, Lois Yeats and Amanda Reister have kept the Godly Play program in the **Sunday School** running smoothly. They could sure use a few helpers though! Might you feel a calling to work with our young people?

Many thanks to Deacon Patti for all the visits to St. Anne's Mead and to her **Outreach Committee** for the programs they plan at St. James (such as Rise Against Hunger) and in the greater metropolitan area (like Bound Together).

I also want to thank so many people that help out behind the scenes, from Altar Guild setting up on Saturday to dish washing when everyone else has left on Sunday to all the roles during and around our services. You may think no one notices, but we do! You are greatly appreciated!

These are just a few of the many wonderful things going on within our church. Are any of these activities calling to you? If so, please contact someone on that committee for more information, or get in touch with me (248-219-7464 or grierp@comcast.net) and we will get you started. Perhaps you have an idea you would like to see started at St. James. Don't hesitate to step forward and let us know!

New Office

THE REV. JOSH HOOVER

I'm delighted to tell you that Michelle Metry has finally moved into her new St. James home – the corner office on the second floor. From there she has a great view of the hallway and plenty of room to store what she needs as Parish Administrator and the financial things she is working on. This means that you can again ring the doorbell at Martin St. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays confident that you won't be left out in the cold. Literally! Special thanks go to Susan Kelly, Susan Reid, Angie Righter and Pam Righter for all their help in cleaning out the office, and helping Michelle move in and get organized.

March 2024

Music Notes

RICHARD NEWMAN

music@stjamesbirmingham.org

Lenten Choral Evensong

Please mark your calendars to attend our Lenten Choral Evensong on March 10 at 5:00 p.m. The anthem will be 20th century British composer Herbert Howell's *Like as the hart*. This piece was written during World War II and was part of a collection of pieces known as *In Time of War*. The canticles will be Thomas Walmisley's *Magnificat and Nunc dimittis in D minor*. Living a short life of forty two years, this is Walmisley's most significant composition for the church. Please support us by attending this Anglican tradition as we are the only church in the city of Birmingham to provide Choral Evensong.

Youth Music Opportunities

I would like to provide music education, both instrumental and vocal, to the youth of our church. All interested parents, please contact me. Rehearsals would be on Sundays from 11:15-noon. We can discuss the frequency of rehearsals based upon the interest and feedback that I receive. No prior musical knowledge is required. This is an exciting opportunity as I see much potential in our congregation!

Music During Holy Week and Easter

On Good Friday, there will be a small representation from the Adult Choir to sing anthems and lead the congregational hymn singing. For our Easter Day celebrations, we will have a brass quintet and timpani at both the 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. liturgies.

Holy Week and Easter are perhaps the most musically rich times of the liturgical year. But to provide for special instrumental music at Easter, we rely solely on your giving. Since January 2023, Easter brass is no longer part of the church budget. If having brass is meaningful to you and you are able, please consider making a donation of any amount to help defray this cost.

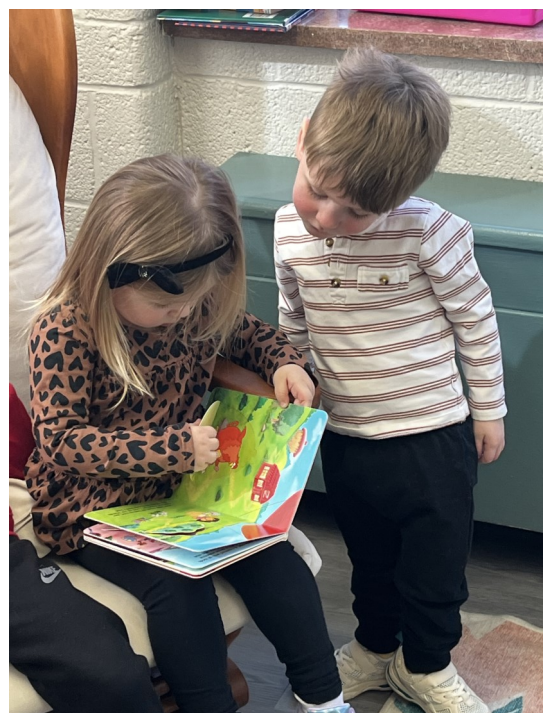
Visit: stjamesbirmingham.org/give, click on Give Now, select "Friends of Music" in the dropdown menu, and enter your amount. Thank you and Happy Easter!

Preschool Fun!

One Tot reading to another

Ms. Cathy with a Tot

Ms. Fabie doing calendar with her leader of the day



Preschool Notes from Miss Melissa

MELISSA WOJCIECHOWSKI

preschool@stjamesbirmingham.org

<https://stjames-preschool.org/>

Will the new month come in like a lion or out like a lamb? We have had an unseasonably warm winter. We are looking forward to spending more time outdoors as the weather continues to warm up.

Friday, March 15, the preschool is hosting a St. Patrick's Day Dance from 6-7:30 p.m. in Centennial Hall. Families will have the chance to enjoy some refreshments, partake in a photo op, and dance the night away to songs they have requested. It will be a fun night for all!

March is National Reading across America Month. It coincides with Dr. Seuss' birthday on March 2. In honor of Dr. Seuss, we declare the first full week of March "Dr. Seuss Celebration Week". We would like to invite you to come to the school and read the preschool children one of your favorite children's books. Please call (248-644-4071) or email (preschool@stjamesbirmingham.org) to set up a time.

With St. Patrick's Day right around the corner, the preschool will also be a scene of green! The children will be working on all things Irish and focusing on the colors of the rainbow that holds the pot of gold at the end. Will that pesky leprechaun who turns the preschoolers' classroom upside down return? Will they be able to catch him in one of their homemade traps? There is sure to be a lot of excitement trying!

Enrollment opened to the public on February 5 and classes are filling up fast! If you know anyone looking for a quality preschool program, please have them reach out for more information or to schedule a tour of the preschool.

May the luck of the Irish be with you!



Outreach Opportunities

PEANUT BUTTER FOR PONTIAC

THE REV. JOSH HOOVER

Every Thursday one of our great volunteers or a family comes into church to make peanut butter sandwiches. We donate these sandwiches to the Community Breakfast at All Saint's in Pontiac. You can help by taking the time to make sandwiches (it takes an individual about 45 minutes). To sign up, go to this link: <https://stjames.rocks/pbj>

You can also help by donating peanut butter or jelly. Simply drop off any donations in Centennial Hall on Sunday.

Sign Up to Host Coffee Hour!

Coffee Hour after both of our services is that chance to connect with our fellow parishioners and guests. We are in need of volunteers to sign up to host coffee hour in March and April!

A few notes: Coffee and tea are provided by the church; you will only need to provide the treats, you should plan for 20 following the service after the 8:00 a.m. service, and approximately 45-50 at the 10:00 a.m. service.

Please sign up on the sheet in Centennial Hall at <https://stjames.rocks/coffee23>

Sign Up to Sponsor the Altar Flowers, Sanctuary Candle or Livestreaming

Are you looking for a wonderful way to remember a loved one or celebrate a special occasion? Why not sponsor the flowers, the sanctuary candle or the livestream? Several dates are available and it is easy to sign up. There is sign up sheet in Centennial Hall, or you can go online at <https://stjames.rocks/sponsor>, or you can call Michelle in the office.

The cost is: Altar Flowers \$75
 Sanctuary Lamp \$50
 Livestreaming \$100
 Or ALL THREE for \$200

Thank You!

Thank you for all the prayers and well wishes you offered during my medical procedure and recovery in January and February. I am feeling better each week and hope to feel 100% soon.

I am blessed to work with Josh, Richard, and Melissa, who stepped in and covered for me when I could not be here.

Michelle Metry

Intercessions

IMMEDIATE PRAYER LIST

Penny; Ronald; Anne; Calvin;
Tom; Michael; Quenten; Bev; Jane
Barnes; Margaret; Michael Curry;
Anita; Mary; Rich; Daniel;
Cynthia; Sue M.; Linda Baldwin;
Patti Fraley.

SUSTAINING PRAYER LIST

Michelle; Richard; Noah;
Maryanna; Natalie; Chuck &
Mickie; Claire; Corinne; Evi; Pete;
Mary; Marty; Sally; Don; Bill;
Rachel; Dave; Sue; Mary Jo; Jean;
Dave; Rob; Jacob; Bob.

IN MEMORIAM

St. James Vestry

2022-2025

Michelle Boice
Pam Grier, *Senior Warden*
Nancy Schutte
Michele Wogaman

2023-2026

Fred Austin
Jane Barnes
Andrea Everett
Amanda Reister

2024-2027

Sophie Gable
Angie Righter, *Junior Warden*
Kathy Stange
Shar Wickens

Our Mission

INVITE you to the table

ILLUMINATE our spiritual journey

SHARE Christ's love with the world