



## Communications Manual

This guide creates a set of standards and gives direction on how to communicate a message consistently.

Adhering to this Communications Manual will help accomplish—

### OUR MISSION

Invite you to the table  
Illuminate our spiritual journey  
Share Christ's love with the world

### OUR COMMUNICATION VALUES

Reinforce the fact that St. James is a unified church working toward a common vision.

Communicate simply and clearly by eliminating unnecessary wording or complicated content.

Present information in a language, style, and method that is easily understandable to everyone from the first-time guest, to the long-time member.

Deliver excellence in timeliness, accuracy, design, ease of use, and clarity.

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# Communication Tools at St. James

St. James uses many different tools in an effort to effectively share news and information with parishioners, visitors and the general community.

The following list details the purpose and use of each method of connection with a defined target audience. Deadlines for information submission are included.

## **WEBSITE** (*stjamesbirmingham.org*)

Provides usable/actionable information about St. James and its ministries.

Significant changes to website content are approved by the Rector in coordination with the Communications Committee, then submitted to the Parish Administrator for posting.

## **MONTHLY UPDATE NEWSLETTER** (*The Spirit*)

Communicates monthly with news articles, features and photographs related to ministries, events, clergy reflection, summary of Vestry meetings and finances. Sent digitally by email blast and posted on the website. Submission deadline to the Parish Administrator is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month. Print copy mailed by request to the Parish Administrator or placed in the Narthex.

## **WEEKLY UPDATE EMAIL** (*This Week at St. James*)

Communicates weekly opportunities to serve and connect; published each Friday with Wednesday submission deadline to Parish Administrator. It is also posted on the website.

## **WEEKLY UPDATE** (*The Light*)

Presents calendar of information for worship services, adult and youth formation activities, outreach opportunities and fellowship events as an insert in the Sunday Worship Bulletin. It is also posted on the website. Deadline for submitting material to the Parish Administrator is Wednesday.

## **BROADCAST EMAILS**

Provides information to large and small audiences; proofing by someone outside of ministry area is suggested when emailing a large audience.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Provides a personal connection with staff members through the sharing of ideas, activities, events, and interests on multiple platforms. Information is submitted to the Associate Rector for posting.

## **SUNDAY WORSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Highlights new and current key events, programs, etc. to invite and encourage parishioner participation with a call to action and name of contact person.

## **TV SCREEN IN CENTENNIAL HALL**

Promotes events or shares progress and results of ongoing programs Sunday mornings.

Contact the Parish Administrator or Associate Rector to utilize this TV.

## **BULLETIN BOARD IN CENTENNIAL HALL**

Displays current financial reports, Vestry minutes and other business of the Vestry. Items such as community events must be approved by the Rector.

## **REMIND 101**

A mobile phone application (APP) used by the Associate Rector to text youth and parents information on upcoming formation and fellowship events.

## **SIGN UP GENIUS**

Online signup sheets and forms for events and volunteer opportunities.

# Style Guide

## BASICS

- Always include the St. James logo and logotype on every public piece
- Include the tagline, *Walk with us in God's love*, when appropriate for the format
- Always include the complete address, phone, email and website addresses
- Every piece should cover the most important question our audience asks: What's in it for me?
- Then follow up with the necessary basics of:  
Who, What, Where, When, Why and How (call to action)

Any publication that will be viewed by more than 20 people should be proofed for:

effectiveness  
consistency  
clarity  
overall design quality

## THINGS TO WATCH

There are different guides for writing that are neither right nor wrong, but we should be consistent. This section includes St. James style preferences based on Associated Press (AP) Style except as noted.

**ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS** Avoid in general, particularly when referring to events or groups.

*Example:* Eucharistic Minister (not EM)

If it is necessary to use an acronym, spell it out on first usage and supply the acronym in parentheses after.

*Example:* the Episcopal Youth Event (EYE)

**ACADEMIC DEGREES** A Master of Divinity degree or a master's degree in divinity.

A Bachelor of Arts degree or a bachelor's degree.

**ACTION VERBS** Use active, not passive voice, to engage the user in a decision to act.

**DATES** Drop reference to year when appropriate. *Example:* Tuesday, March 9 (not Tues., Mar 9, 2017)

Use cardinal numbers, not ordinal numbers for the date. *Example:* May 2 (not May 2nd)

**EMAIL** Do not hyphenate the word email. *Example:* email (not e-mail) Email addresses should be lowercase. In printed materials, italicize email addresses.

**PHONE** Separate with dashes, not periods.

*Example:* 913-685-1161 (not 913.685.1161)

**PRONOUNS** Whenever possible, pronouns should not be used for God the Father, the Trinity, or for the Holy Spirit.

**TITLES** Enter all titles in italics for easier readability in text rather than underlined or with "quotes".

*Example:* Marcus Borg's *The Heart of Christianity*

**TIMES** Write consistently and concisely. Use a.m./p.m., lowercase with a space after the number within text, or uppercase AM/PM in all caps title, with a space after the number.

*Example:* 6 p.m. or 6:00 PM (not 6pm or 6 P.M.)

**WEB ADDRESS** In print copy, *italicize*, not underline web addresses.

*Example:* *youthspecialties.com* (not youthspecialties.com)

*Note:* Microsoft Word will by default add an underline under email addresses. Press "control+z" immediately after web address addition to remove the underline.

In all media, do not use www.

*Example:* *stjamesbirmingham.org* (not www.stjamesbirmingham.org)

## SPECIFIC TO ST. JAMES AND EPISCOPALIANS

- Centennial Hall, not Fellowship Hall
- Capitalize all names of rooms: the Breakfast Room, the Lounge, etc.
- The Reverend, not Reverend *or* the Rev., not Rev. for written priest title; “the” is always included and is not capitalized unless it’s at the beginning of a sentence
- Bishops are “the Right Reverend” or “the Rt. Rev.” Only the Presiding Bishop is “the Most Reverend: or “the Most Rev.”
- Episcopal, Episcopalian: Episcopal is the adjective; use Episcopalian only as a noun referring to a member of The Episcopal Church. *Example:* She is an Episcopalian and she is also an Episcopal priest.
- In a title or as a proper noun, the abbreviation “St.” is preferred.

## PUNCTUATION, SPELLING, AND GRAMMAR

This section describes the grammar, word choice, punctuation, and spelling errors that occur most often.

**APOSTROPHE** Don’t use apostrophes in plurals. Example: CDs, URLs, FAQs, 1990s, etc.

### CAPITALIZATION

**Apostles:** Capitalize, as found in the Book of Common Prayer, when used as part of the name of an apostle.

**The Bible:** Lowercase “the,” capital “B,” without italics. *Example:* He reads the Bible every day.

Lowercase bible as a nonreligious term. *Example:* My style book is my bible.

**Biblical:** Lowercase in all uses.

**The Book of Common Prayer:** Like the Bible, lowercase “the” and title case Book of Common Prayer, no italics. In citations, spell out: (Book of Common Prayer, p. 207), not (BCP, p. 207).

**Books of the Bible:** Capitalize the names of the books, but do not capitalize “the”.

*Example:* She quoted from the Book of Ruth and the Gospel of John.

**Bishop:** Capitalize when part of a proper name, but lowercase in all other uses.

*Example:* Bishop John Doe was the bishop of that diocese for seven years.

**Diocese:** Capitalize as part of a proper name, such as the Diocese of Rochester, but lowercase in all other instances. *Example:* He was the fifth bishop of that diocese.

**Gentile:** Lowercase

**God:** Capitalize when referring to the one God, Allah, the Father, the Son, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Redeemer, the Holy Spirit. Lowercase when referring to the deities of polytheistic religions and in words such as god-awful and godlike.

**Gospel:** Lowercase unless referring to a specific book in the Bible.

*Example:* Today’s gospel reading comes from the Gospel According to St. Luke.

**Holy Days and Feast Days:** Capitalize the names.

**Major events in the life of Jesus Christ:** Capitalize the Last Supper, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension. Use lowercase when the words are used with his name.

*Example:* The ascension of Jesus into heaven took place 40 days after his resurrection from the dead.

Proper names: Capitalize proper names for rites that commemorate the Last Supper or signify a belief in Christ's presence: the Lord's Supper, Holy Communion, Holy Eucharist. Capitalize the sacrament Baptism in addition to sacramental rites: Confirmation, Penance (sacrament of Reconciliation), Matrimony, Holy Orders, and the sacrament of Anointing the Sick (formerly Extreme Unction)

Scripture: lowercase

**COMMAS** In lists of three items or more, don't use a comma before and/or.

*Example:* He went to the store, office and park. (Not, He went to the store, office, and park.)

**EXCLAMATIONS** Use sparingly. Do not overuse!!!!

**HYPHENS** Make every effort not to hyphenate words at end of line. Add a "hard" return if necessary to avoid a hyphen. Avoid hyphenating website addresses

Use a hyphen between two or more adjectives when they come before a noun and act as a single idea.

*Example:* three-week class, 12-week series, sign-up table

**NUMBERS** Spell out numbers one through nine, use numeral for 10 and above.

*Example:* one, two, three (not 1, 2, 3) or 10, 11, 12 (not ten, eleven, twelve)

**PERIODS** Use one space, not two, after periods and at the end of sentences

**PERIODS** Use one space, not two, after periods and at the end of sentences. Omit periods in bulleted lists with incomplete sentences.

**QUOTATION** With punctuation, the period and the comma always go inside the quotation marks.

*Example:* The Bishop said, "No." "Yes," said the Bishop.

Place the dash, the semicolon, the colon, the question mark, and the exclamation point within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.

Use quotation marks around a word or words used in an ironical sense (the "debate" turned into a free-for-all) or with a word or words being introduced to readers on first reference (we invite you to "test drive" our volunteer opportunities).

Quotation marks include an opening and closing character; "...". Hatch marks, "..." indicate inches and feet.

## VISUAL HIERARCHY AND TYPOGRAPHY

Visual hierarchy communicates the organization of information by giving some elements more importance than others. This important principle is conveyed by signals such as scale, value, color, spacing and placement.

When these signals are used with type, they visually express our spoken voice. If too many signals are used, it creates confusion at the expense of readability. Use no more than three signals in a headline and one within text to create emphasis. These signals include change of color, typeface, size, all caps, italic and boldface.

### **BOLD, ITALIC, RED CAPS**

This example uses six signals for emphasis from the text: different typeface, size, bold, italic, color, all caps

## DASHES

- EN Dashes serve primarily to connect numbers (1-10). An EN dash is half the width of an EM dash.
- EM Dashes express strong breaks in sentences. Although the substitute of two hyphens is unavoidable in some web documents, the EM dash should always be used in all other material without spaces around it.
- Hyphens connect linked words and phrases and they break words at the ends of lines.

## FONT SIZE

The best for reading is 10–12 pts size. This applies to all printed material. If you want to make your text smaller than 10 pts because it won't fit, eliminate some text or go to a larger size paper.

## LEADING

Leading is the vertical space between the lines of your text. As a rule the leading should be two points larger than the size of your type. The default setting in most software is 120 percent of the type size (11/13.2).

*Good example:* 11 pts text should have a leading of 13 pts=11/13

Reducing the leading creates visual denser text. Adding leading creates a lighter text block.

*Bad example:* 11 pts text with a leading of 9 pts=11/9

You don't want the leading too tight, even when you need to make room for your text. Edit text or go to a larger size paper.

## UNDERLINE

Underlined text is a carryover from the days of typewriters and is now only used to indicate hyperlink text. Boldface and italics are better choices for text emphasis in print copy. Custom underlines (rules) are sometimes created as a design element.

## WHITE SPACE

The space surrounding visual elements, or white space, should be considered as important as the type and other visual elements. It helps to eliminate the feeling of clutter and is an important tool in establishing visual hierarchy.

If a page or screen has very little material, consider combining it with another page or screen before filling the space with visuals that will detract from the established visual hierarchy.

## WIDOWS

A widow is a single word on the last line of a paragraph that breaks the visual continuity of the text. Eliminate, if possible, by altering the line breaks above it, and move at least one other word to the last line.

## WRITING FOR THE WEB

People read online content differently than they do print materials. The physical limitations of computer monitors, as well as a hyperlink environment, prevent people from reading for long periods of time or in a linear fashion. Understanding these differences is crucial to communicating effectively on the Web.

In today's information age, people are more accustomed to the reading style of web copy and are more impatient with lengthy print copy. In other words, Web copy translates well into printed material but print copy does not translate well into Web copy. Guidelines to consider:

- Website visitors want to find a specific piece of information so they can complete an action
- Users scan information; they don't read every word
- Information should be obvious and self-explanatory
- Menus should be simple and easy to navigate

### *Text Content*

- Define the most important items to communicate
- Employ the “inverted pyramid” style of writing. Place the main point of the topic in the first or second sentence instead of leading up to the topic with introductory material
- Make one point per paragraph
- Use short phrases or sentences to make a point
- Use the active not passive voice
- Avoid repetitive, over-emphasized words and insider abbreviations or terms
- Eliminate vague modifiers, e.g., *really*, *very*, *actually*, *sort of*

### *Visual Readability*

- Use a website typeface such as **Arial, Times Roman**
- Avoid “click on” or “click here.” Just make the subject a hyperlink  
*Example:* Register now. (not “Click here to register.”)  
*Example:* Connect at our special events. (not “Click here for special events.”)
- Break text into bite size pieces for quick and easy review
- Break up text with white space

## **PROOFREADING AND EDITING**

Copy without proper proofreading and editing can potentially turn off readers. It’s important that all communication pieces for the general public and Sunday morning are reviewed and proofed.

**ACCURACY** Cross-reference dates and days of the week with a calendar. Cross-reference Scripture references.

**BASICS** Does the copy include the necessary basics of: Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How (call to action)? Does the call to action include appropriate contact information, e.g., complete address, phone with extension, email, website addresses, etc.?

**CONSISTENCY** Look for consistency with punctuation, style, and formatting throughout the piece. Compare with our Style Guide on page 4. Include review of capitalization, indents, font size, typeface, leading, alignment, page breaks, hyphens, etc.

**NAMES** Double-check accuracy on names, phone numbers, and extensions.

**SPELLING** A single misspelling can convey that the information or audience is not important or valued. Do not rely on your computer’s spelling and grammar checkers.

**TERMINOLOGY** Step into the shoes of a guest and consider what their reactions may be to certain words or phrases. If so, it is likely the message may not be understood by our audience.

### **HOW TO PROOF**

- Work from a printout, not the computer screen, but use computer shortcuts below
- Use a blank sheet of paper to cover up the lines below the one you’re reading. This technique keeps you from skipping ahead of possible mistakes
- Use the search function of the computer to find mistakes you’re likely to make. Search for “it,” for instance, for “its” and “it’s,” for opening parentheses or quotation marks
- End with a spelling check, using a computer spelling checker or reading backwards word by word. Remember that a spelling checker won’t catch mistakes with homonyms, e.g., “they’re,” “their,” “there” or certain typos like “he” for “the”
- Have someone, preferably unfamiliar with the material, proofread your work before it becomes public. Don’t rely on your computer’s spelling and grammar checkers.



## PHOTOGRAPHY FOR PRINT AND ELECTRONIC PUBLICATIONS

Photographs featuring St. James parishioners engaged in church activities and events or recognition for individual accomplishments, e.g., Eagle Scout awards, strengthen our connections with each other. Aim for vibrant and active photos that tell a story.

To assure a selection of timely, quality photos for on-going print and electronic needs, a core group of photographers will be identified. Each photographer is responsible for a specific event.

### *Website*

- Photo updates are periodic for a fresh look of the site or are required for staff or vestry changes
- Most photos are banners for each page on the site and the focal point must be centered in horizontal format with space on the left and right side to allow for better viewing on mobile phones
- Photo quality is important as viewers form an instant impression of St. James
- Individual photos on the About>Our Staff page should be in a square format
- Since website photos are usually planned in advance, ask subjects to wear clothing with color for more visual appeal
- Submit photos to the Parish Administrator

### *Monthly Update Newsletter (The Spirit)*

- Timely photos for event and parishioner recognition
- Many of these photos are impromptu covering an event or activity; take several so that a selection is possible
- If possible, try for a pop of color in clothing or the background
- Submit photos to the Parish Administrator

### *Social Media*

- Timely photos for Facebook and Instagram sharing fun and friendly ideas, activities and interests
- Submit photos to the Associate Rector

## Visual Standards

### THE POWER OF CONSISTENCY

A brand has power. A strong brand message begins with a logo and consistency. Consistent usage of the St. James logo is just one aspect of building a strong representation of who we are as a church. This consistency should be applied to all the ways we communicate at St. James. The purpose of this section is to help us maintain a unified and clear representation of St. James to our congregation, guests and the community.

Every public contact you make represents an impression of who we are. From letterhead to signage, from email to packaging a sermon—all are a form of media and all have a capacity to affect how St. James is perceived internally and in the community. Consistency simply shows that we care about how information is presented which, in turn, shows individuals that we care about them.

## VISUAL IDENTITY

### LOGO

The Logo and Logotype designed for St. James were developed to convey a unified visual presentation for our wide variety of communications. The shell logo, historically used for our parish, is based on the symbol for St. James the Greater. It was designed with hand calligraphy to reflect the importance we place on coming together as people of a faith community and the feeling of family. The traditions of the Episcopal Church and our Anglican connection are continued by the typeface selection, inspired by early 20th century British typography. The light blue of the shell and the red type match the colors of the national Episcopal Church shield, and the dark blue picks up the color of our St. James processional cross.

Electronic files of the logo and logotype are available from the Parish Administrator.

The Logo and Logotype should appear on all communications intended for external and internal audiences.

### LOGO COLORS



PANTONE Matching Color	279C	Red032C	280C
RGB Web Safe	65R137G219B	244\$42G65B	0R39G118B
CYMK	C68M34Y0K0	C4M95Y76K1	C100M72Y0K18
Hexadecimal	4278D3	D8001D	00277

The color on printed pieces will be affected by the material on which they are printed and the printing or copying process. Offset printing is the most accurate but monitors and copiers/printers vary and affect the accuracy of digital printing. The PANTONE color should be used for matching as close as possible.



**St. James**  
Episcopal Church

Three Color



**St. James**  
Episcopal Church

Gray Scale



**St. James**  
Episcopal Church

One Color:  
Black only



Logo only

**LOGO: SAFE AREA**

The logo needs clear space around it for strong visual impact. A minimum of .25 inch on all 4 sides should be clear of all other type and graphics. This may need to be modified for use on small formats, such as business cards: good judgement should be used according to the use.

.25 inch safe area to be left empty.



**LOGO: IMPROPER USE**

To help maintain a unified visual presentation, the Logo and Logotype should not be altered.

Substituting typeface or font

Redistributing elements

Altering size relationship when Logo and

Logotype are used together:

*An exception may be made when the logotype is rotated to fit a narrow vertical format, such as a banner.*



Unauthorized colors

Distortion such as slanting, stretching, or twisting

*To avoid stretching the logo, hold down "shift" key while dragging a corner handle*



Adding effects such as drop shadows

Redrawing or substituting visual elements



## TYPE FAMILIES

Agenda is the typeface used for the Logotype. It is a humanist sans-serif typeface designed in the 1990's by Greg Thompson and based on Edward Johnston's classic 1916 typeface designed for the London Underground. If available, it may be used for titles, headlines and text. You do not need Agenda installed on your computer to use the Logotype. The Logo and Logotype are available in a ready-to-place graphic file in the church office.

Adobe Caslon Pro should be used as the serif typeface for text or headlines. It is the 20th century adaptation of the classic typeface originally designed by William Caslon in the 1720s as the first truly English typeface. Like Agenda, Caslon speaks to our Anglican heritage but the 20th century adaptation makes it appropriate for our digital age. If unavailable, another version of Caslon, Garamond or Times New Roman should be used.

Myriad Pro should be used as the sans-serif typeface for text or headlines if Agenda is unavailable.

Arial should be used as the third choice if Myriad is unavailable.

## EMAIL GUIDELINES AND SIGNATURE

- Check emails at least once per work day and respond within 36 hours; Reply to every message that originates from a person
- Always use a church email address vs. a home-based email address if possible
- Always include the phone number when recommending people call someone
- Always include the URL address (web link) in the message when referring to a specific website
- Include this signature format when replying to all messages

(logo)

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# Social Media Guide

## **ST. JAMES USAGE**

St. James follows the national Safe Church guidelines and the social media guidelines established by the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan.

While the website is primarily for communicating information, social media is about building relationships. Social media platforms appeal to different audiences and enable them to communicate with each other.

Communication guidelines on previous pages should be followed when representing the church and a specific ministry area.

Also be aware of the following items:

### **BE ACCURATE**

Take time to be accurate in what you write and make sure you have all the facts.

### **COPYRIGHT**

Material posted on the internet is many times intended to be reposted or shared, but without “*express permission, copying or distributing those works will constitute infringement of copyright unless the fair use doctrine applies.*” (The Associated Press Stylebook 2017) The terms and use of many social media sites define restrictions that apply to material posted. It is important to be careful when choosing to use material posted by others to the web or on social media platforms.

### **PERMISSION FOR PHOTOS**

No images of children under 18 may be posted without the prior consent of a parent or legal guardian.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS**

All St. James media accounts, including Facebook Groups and Pages should include the ministry name, St. James and the shell logo for the profile picture.

[STYLE GUIDELINES FOR THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH](#) is a reference tool designed to enable development of consistent but flexible communication by dioceses, parishes and other entities of the Church.

[https://aa86e41e7d951355383bcb342165bfeaa4f2927aec8e5d7de41f.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/uploaded/s/0e6193111\\_1494001115\\_styleguide-2014-external-revised3.pdf](https://aa86e41e7d951355383bcb342165bfeaa4f2927aec8e5d7de41f.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/uploaded/s/0e6193111_1494001115_styleguide-2014-external-revised3.pdf)

Specific guidelines pertinent to our Parish are incorporated in this St. James Episcopal Church Communications Manual.