



WHAT IS GOD'S CALL FOR US?

OUR MISSION, VISION
& STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

PENTECOST, 2016



St. James'
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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An appendix consisting of our Strategic Planning Methodology, Foundational Assumptions, Tactical Plans, and a complete transcript of all Comments & Suggestions from the February 18 Visioning Dinner is available upon request in the parish office.

How This Document Was Written:

After considering the possibility of engaging in a strategic visioning process over three successive monthly meetings, the St. James' Vestry determined to enter into such a process so as to clarify for themselves, the clergy, staff and the entire congregation what God is calling us to be and do now and in the immediate future. To begin, the Vestry hired consultants from Leadership Forward in Atlanta and North Star Strategies in Delaware to help guide the process. The Vestry also appointed a 12-person Steering Committee to work closely with the consultants and oversee the process.

The consultants, in turn, invited members of the congregation to provide their thoughts, opinions and vision for the church using SchellingPoint's alignment optimization technology—a system by which the diverse opinions of a large group of people can be compared, so as to measure quantifiably the alignment of the group's opinions and beliefs.

To begin, the consultants interviewed 12 representative members of the congregation selected by the steering committee. Those interview responses were then used to create a two-part online survey. All members of the congregation were invited to complete the survey and 425 (41%) participated online (as well as 13 members of the Youth Group, who completed a modified form of the survey). The results of this survey process were shared and discussed at two meetings at St. James' on February 18 and 21, at which more feedback was solicited and recorded during small group discussions.

The consultants then facilitated a two month process in which the steering committee met regularly to analyze all the survey data and feedback and ultimately write the first draft of the strategic plan. The Vestry then considered that draft, edited it and composed this summary over the course of three meetings. The Vestry's review and editing of the steering committee's work resulted in this latest draft.

Steering Committee Members: Alison Harkey (Chair), Warwick Alley (Vestry), Steve Boone, Lana Boyle, Gib Ford (Senior Warden), Iris Isaacs (Junior Warden), Martha Lockey, John Matlock, Rev. Jamie McElroy (Rector), Barbara Neil (Vestry), Alli Sherman (Vestry), Leigh Ann Wilkins.

Vestry Members: The Rev. Jamie McElroy (Rector), Gib Ford (Senior Warden), Iris Isaacs (Junior Warden), Warwick Alley, Guy Boyll, Alice Douglas, Tom Fortner (Treasurer), Gray Fowler, Cyndie Harrison, Ray Lewis, Lee Malouf, Barbara Neil, Angie Noble, Regan Painter, Crymes Pittman, Susie Puckett, Kathy Russell (Clerk), Alli Sherman, Mike Upton, Kenny Womack.

Our Mission:

To Grow in the Knowledge and Love of God as Revealed in Jesus Christ

by...

- *seeking and serving Christ in all persons;*
- *continuing in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship;*
- *providing worship that nourishes spirituality;*
- *supporting parishioners' journeys through life;*
- *helping parishioners develop spiritual gifts through ministry;*
- *fostering connections and a sense of belonging within our St. James' parish family;*
- *ministering to the greater Jackson community.*

Who We Are:

St. James' strives to seek and serve Jesus Christ in all persons, as a loving, joyful, and prayerful community that actively welcomes diverse views and beliefs.

God's Call To Us At This Time:

We believe we are called to strengthen and grow parishioner involvement and leadership in all aspects of the life and ministries of our church.



Living Into God's Call – A Summary

(Please see the Road Map and Strategic Objectives for more detail)

We believe we should continue to develop and strengthen the Committee system of ministry leadership...

- by inviting more parishioners to serve on Committees, rotating off within 2 to 3 years;
- by offering leadership training to all vestry, staff and volunteers serving on Committees;
- by charging staff to support and empower Committee Chairs and Members to set agendas, lead meetings, and recruit parishioners to participate in the ministry of the Committee;
- by having at least one Vestry member serve on each Committee;
- by creating new Committees and Sub-Committees as the need arises.

We believe that all leaders of the parish—clergy, staff, vestry, committee members, guild members, etc.—should invite every parishioner into the life and work of the church...

- by offering a spiritual gifts discernment process to help parishioners understand the sort(s) of ministry in which they will fit best and find greatest spiritual satisfaction;
- by offering myriad opportunities for all parishioners to build personal relationships within the church—by expanding and strengthening the Foyers small groups program (with the help of a newly created Foyers Sub-Committee), and by offering an array of community building events inspired by the interests and desires of our parishioners, (as overseen by a newly created Activities Sub-Committee);
- by continuing to develop and strengthen St. James' systems of communication to parishioners (including the creation of a new quarterly parish newsletter);
- by specifically targeting young adults in their twenties and thirties, as well as newcomers, to join in the work of ministry and the community life of the church.

We believe we should develop robust Newcomer Ministries that effectively *invite* newcomers to come to St. James', that effectively *welcome* newcomers when they visit, and that effectively *connect* newcomers into the life and work of the church...

- by continuing to strengthen and empower the newly formed Newcomers Ministry Committee;
- by developing systems by which staff will track newcomers from visitor to fully connected member—the same way we track those in need of pastoral care.

We believe we should explore the possibility of a new Music Outreach Ministry...

- by forming a committee of interested lay leaders to consider how we might build on our pre-existing relationships with the Academy of Ancient Music and the Mississippi Chamber Music Guild to offer the Jackson area a unique series of musical offerings year in and year out.

We believe we should increase opportunities for parish engagement in Outreach ministries...

- by getting more people involved in our existing Outreach ministries;
- by developing more “hands on” opportunities for our parishioners to participate in Outreach ministries in the Jackson area in a way that is relevant to people here;
- by specifically developing ministry partnerships with St. Mark’s and St. Christopher’s, the two predominantly African American Episcopal churches in Jackson;
- by exploring the possibility of developing a Spanish language service at St. James’ (*Is there a need for it? How would it work? What resources would be required? Could we do it?*)
- by finding creative ways to involve all parishioners in our mission trips so that everyone feels represented by those going outside the Jackson area to do ministry.

We believe we should improve the stewardship process by which we gather our annual pledges...

- by involving the congregation in the budgeting process from the beginning—so as to solicit parishioners’ feedback upfront regarding how we spend our money;
- by continuing to improve our communication of the breadth of St. James’ budget, and the fundamental need for pledges from all parishioners.
- by doing all we can to avoid making the congregation feel badgered by the call for pledges.

We believe we should create a Stewardship Committee (separate from the committee that oversees the annual pledge drive) to be charged with...

- developing a planned giving program;
- determining a strategy for paying down the capital debt;
- exploring the possibility of growing an endowment.

We believe we should recruit more parishioners to participate in our pastoral care ministries...

- by continuing to grow and strengthen our established pastoral care teams;
- by reinvigorating the St. Nicholas Guild—a ministry devoted to bringing meals and otherwise pastoring to families with newborn babies.

We believe our clergy should do as much as they can to develop relationships with our parishioners, while using their limited time most effectively.

We believe our worship services, adult education, children & youth ministries, the St. James’ School, as well as our parish-wide fellowship gatherings are excellent and inspiring. We also believe we must continually improve and grow those ministries so as to live into our mission.

We believe we must develop systems of accountability to ensure implementation of our plans—a process to track progress and measure success.



Roadmap of Activities in this Strategic Plan

(Please see Strategic Objectives section for more detail)

	2016	2017	2018 to 2020
Mission and Values	Mission Statement Measure Success	Continue to Measure Success	Continue to Measure Success
Members and Newcomers	Track Newcomers Invite Newcomers Welcome Newcomers Connect Newcomers Share Newcomer Ideas Expand Foyers	Invite Fondren Continue to implement Newcomer Ideas	Continue to implement Newcomer Ideas
Ministries	Activities Committee Expand Pastoral Care St. Nicholas Guild Research Hands On Outreach Communicate Outreach Activities Outreach Sunday Increase Outreach Awareness Explore Music Expansion Outreach Partnerships Partner with African American Churches Share ideas from Visioning Dinner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worship / Music Ideas • Pastoral Care Ideas • Fellowship Ideas • Camp Bratton-Green • Intergenerational Interaction Ideas • Adult Ed Ideas • Children's Ideas • Youth Ideas • Outreach Partnership Ideas • New Ministry Ideas 	Explore Spanish Language Service Continue to implement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worship / Music Ideas • Pastoral Care Ideas • Fellowship Ideas • Camp Bratton-Green • Intergenerational Interaction Ideas • Adult Ed Ideas • Children's Ideas • Youth Ideas • Outreach Partnership Ideas • New Ministry Ideas 	International Outreach Mission Trip Education Mission Trip Engagement St. James' Presents VCS Partnership Continue to implement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worship / Music Ideas • Pastoral Care Ideas • Fellowship Ideas • Camp Bratton-Green • Intergenerational Interaction Ideas • Adult Ed Ideas • Children's Ideas • Youth Ideas • Outreach Partnership Ideas • New Ministry Ideas
Leadership and Organization	Vestry Calls Committee Vision Committee List Define Committee Terms Define Roles Define Committee Roles Increase Volunteers Celebrate Successes Vestry Connection to Committees Leverage Large Events Leadership Training Spiritual Gifts Church Newsletter Update Brochures New Ministry Process	Prayers of People Continue to strengthen Committee Structure	Continue to strengthen Committee Structure
Finances and Stewardship	Involve Congregation in Budget Process Stewardship Calls Stewardship Committee Stewardship Education	Endowment – Retire Debt	Endowment – Planned Giving

Strategic Objectives

Mission and Values

Objectives	Actions	Accountability
The St. James' mission statement will communicate who we are and serve as a guide for decision making.	Mission Statement Communicate the mission statement to parishioners.	Vestry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the systems for accountability to ensure implementation of our plans. • St. James' will have several indicators of success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Our spiritual strength - Our parishioner involvement - Our attendance at services - Our financial health 	Measure Success Develop a plan to track indicators of success and review periodically.	Vestry

Members and Newcomers

Objectives	Actions	Accountability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a comprehensive system for following up with newcomers. • Have a robust newcomer ministry. • Have an intentional process for connecting newcomers to ministries. • Invite our Fondren community neighbors to events at St. James'. • Remain attractive as the culture shifts away from attending church. 	<p>Invite Newcomers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Develop new flyers/business cards that are easy to pass out. 2) Make more intentional efforts to go out into the community to tell them about the great things we are doing. <p>Welcome Newcomers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Reinstate the greeters program. 2) Encourage nametags at all church events. 3) Invite newcomers to Wednesday night dinner / Parish parties 'on the house' <p>Connect Newcomers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Develop a list of the ministries that the church has, so that people can have a “menu” of where they might like to get involved. 2) Hold a ministry fair in the fall so that representatives from each ministry can set up a table and let everyone know about what they do. 3) Develop a photo directory. <p>Invite Fondren</p> <p>Determine most effective methods to invite Fondren neighbors to St. James' events. Implement and track results.</p> <p>Prioritize Suggestions from Congregation</p> <p>Steering Committee to provide the Newcomers committee the ideas from the Visioning Dinner to review and prioritize.</p>	<p>Newcomers Committee</p>

Members and Newcomers (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Accountability
	<p>Staff Track Newcomers Have staff track the newcomers with date and interactions, based on Mary Parmer's suggestions.</p>	<p>Staff</p>
	<p>Foyers 1) Make Foyers another subcommittee of Parish Life. 2) Set up the first meeting in an easy venue with help from staff.</p>	<p>Parish Life, Staff</p>

Ministries

Objectives	Actions	Accountability
Continue to offer high quality worship	<p>Prioritize Suggestions from Congregation Steering Committee to provide the worship and music committees the ideas from the Visioning Dinner to review and prioritize.</p>	Worship and Music Committees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicize our existing musical events to attract more people from the Jackson community. • Plan expansions of our music ministry in a way that furthers the mission of St. James' and uses our resources wisely. 	<p>St. James' Presents Package music programs into a series called "St. James' Presents". 1) Increase promotion of existing events. 2) Continue music partnerships where they fit with the mission and resource priorities.</p> <p>Music Expansion Have a forum to explore an expansion of our partnerships with outside music organizations.</p>	Music Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously improve our pastoral care ministry. • Recruit more members into our lay-volunteer pastoral care ministries. 	<p>St. Nicholas Guild Reinvigorate St. Nicholas Guild using online scheduling so many parishioners can be involved with distributing meals to families with a new baby.</p> <p>Prioritize Suggestions from Congregation Steering Committee to provide the Pastoral Care committee the ideas from the Visioning Dinner to review and prioritize.</p>	Pastoral Care Committee
Continue to offer high quality Adult Education	<p>Prioritize Suggestions from Congregation Steering Committee to provide the adult education committee the ideas from the Visioning Dinner to review and prioritize.</p>	Adult Education Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of fun activities that involve young families. • Have fun Youth events to help kids decompress from school. • Increase the ways our youth can engage. 	<p>Prioritize Suggestions from Congregation Steering Committee to provide the children and youth committees the ideas from the Visioning Dinner to review and prioritize.</p>	Children and Youth Committees

Ministries (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Accountability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to have opportunities for fellowship. • Create more opportunities attractive to young men under 40. • Expand ministries attractive to young adults. • Increase the active engagement of people under 40. • Strengthen the intergenerational culture within St. James' community. • Use Camp Bratton-Green for retreats to strengthen families. 	<p>Activities Committee Create an Activities committee that is a subcommittee of Parish Life, with co-chairs.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Have some activities likely to be attractive to specific age or demographic groups. 2) Have the staff "launch" by identifying, asking and supporting the leaders. Staff goes to the first meetings then steps back. 3) Divide up the responsibilities into smaller pieces - one off events or specific activities. <p>Camp Bratton-Green Continue to explore and offer opportunities for retreats at Camp Bratton-Green</p> <p>Prioritize Suggestions from Congregation Steering Committee to provide the fellowship committee the ideas from the Visioning Dinner to review and prioritize.</p>	<p>Parish Life Committee, Staff</p> <p>Activities Committee</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get more people involved with our existing outreach activities. • Increase feeling of ownership by members for outreach. • Increase "hands on" outreach activities. • Concentrate the majority of our outreach work in the local area in a way that is relevant to Jackson and the surrounding region. 	<p>Increase Outreach Awareness Increase awareness of opportunities to do outreach</p> <p>Outreach Sunday Have an Outreach Sunday to provide an opportunity for connecting with volunteers.</p> <p>Research Hands On Outreach Subcommittee of Outreach to research hands on activities within the existing organizations that we support.</p> <p>Prioritize Suggestions from Congregation Steering Committee to provide the outreach committee the ideas from the Visioning Dinner to review and prioritize.</p>	<p>Outreach Committee</p>

Ministries (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Accountability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase our partnerships with community groups as we do outreach. • Develop ministries in partnership with African American churches for predominantly African American neighborhoods in Jackson. • Invite the children that we help through Stewpot to our vacation church school after issues related to resources and the unintended consequence of the loss of current families have been mitigated. 	<p>Partner with African American churches Explore working together with St. Mark's and St. Christopher's.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Listen to opportunities that they identify. 2) Consider the need for vacation church school among low income African American children. 	<p>Staff</p>
<p>After confirming the need and doing good resource planning, actively invite Spanish speaking families in the Jackson area to a new Spanish language worship service on Sundays.</p>	<p>Spanish Language Service Communicate the need for a Spanish language service and the specifics of the plan in an open forum similar to the Labyrinth process.</p>	<p>Outreach Committee</p>
<p>Continue working with international organizations through the Diocese.</p>	<p>Connection to Mission Trips</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Increase education with the congregation on the value of mission trips. 2) Look for ways to provide a deeper personal connection for all parishioners, such as donating items to the missionaries. 	<p>Outreach Committee</p>

Leadership and Organization

Objectives	Actions	Accountability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement the vision of a lay Committee / Commission structure. • Empower lay leaders to recruit for St. James' ministries with guidance from clergy and staff. • Have a process to communicate ministry programs and opportunities and to actively engage more lay volunteers. 	<p>Committee Structure Vision Re-communicate the vision and expectations for the committee structure.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Define and communicate terms related to committees, e.g. commission, ministry teams. 2) Communicate the vision and details of the committee structure 3) Communicate roles and expectations <p>Define Roles Clearly define the role of priests, vestry, wardens, staff and parishioners as they relate to the committee structure.</p> <p>Celebrate Successes Communicate and celebrate progress towards the vision.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Update the list of Committees and assess where they are with respect to the vision. 2) Share the progress of committees as they move towards the vision of the new structure. <p>Spiritual Gifts Create a small group ministry on spiritual gifts discernment.</p> <p>Leadership Training Hold leadership training for staff and committee leaders so that they have the tools to recruit, lead and empower their members.</p> <p>Church Newsletter and Brochures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Produce a quarterly church newsletter. 2) Update the brochures on ministries and put on website. 	<p>Staff</p>

Leadership and Organization (continued)

Objectives	Actions	Accountability
Foster new ideas that flow from members leading to new ministries.	<p>New Ministries Develop and communicate a standard process for starting new ministries.</p>	Staff
Encourage vestry members to dedicate themselves to more than attend a monthly business meeting.	<p>Vestry Calls Vestry continues to call five or six families each month, and then pray for these families at Vestry meetings.</p> <p>Vestry Connection to Committees Have at least one Vestry member on every committee.</p>	Vestry
Clergy to do all they can to develop relationships with parishioners while using their limited time most effectively.	<p>Prayers of People Explore the possibility of going through our directory and praying regularly for congregants in our Sunday Prayers of the People.</p> <p>Leverage Large Events Clergy to use large events as an opportunity to interact with many parishioners at least briefly.</p>	Staff

Finances and Stewardship

Objectives	Actions	Accountability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have personal conversations with all parishioners regarding the mission and vision of St. James' as it pertains to stewardship. • For long-term financial sustainability, continue straight talk on the importance of stewardship in a spiritually healthy community. • Have proactive education about stewardship. • Encourage church leaders to be open to having personal conversation with members about pledging. 	<p>Reconstitute a Stewardship Committee Create a separate committee that is different from the committee that manages the annual pledge drive.</p>	Staff
	<p>Stewardship Education Proactively seek and share education about stewardship.</p> <p>Prioritize Suggestions from Congregation Steering Committee to provide the stewardship and finance committees the ideas from the Visioning Dinner to review and prioritize.</p>	Stewardship Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize the need to give with a grateful heart and to fund and fulfill our mission. • Strive to do pledge campaigns in a way that people do not feel "badgered". 	<p>Budgeting Process Open up the budgeting process to engage the congregation in the formation of the budget prior to the pledge campaign.</p> <p>Stewardship Calls Use follow up calls for the pledge campaign to listen to the person and to inquire about what they already like, or would like to see, at St. James'. Don't just ask for the pledge or money.</p>	Pledge Campaign Committee
Establish endowment funds created through planned giving and special gifts.	<p>Endowment Funds Create endowment funds in two phases.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Retire the debt before fundraising for an endowment fund. 2) Create endowment funds through planned giving. 	Stewardship Committee