



ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

A joyful, inclusive community



WHO WE ARE

The sign outside St. James proclaims “A joyful, inclusive community.” No better motto describes St. James Episcopal Church, a warm, vibrant gathering place for more than a century in San Francisco’s Richmond neighborhood on the west side of the city.

Our church community is a home away from home, where newcomers are welcome, and where worshippers find sanctuary, friendship and fellowship. Some of us are cradle Episcopalians. Others came from different church backgrounds, or no faith tradition at all.



All of us have found a place where we’re heard and accepted. At St. James, we strive to be open and welcoming, meeting everyone wherever they are on their spiritual journey. These values are reflected throughout our liturgy, a (mostly) traditional Episcopalian service where the core message is focusing on God’s grace, love, and mercy. Our liturgies draw from multiple sources including Common Worship and Enriching our Worship.

This is not a church where you will hear fire and brimstone sermons, rigid dogma, or judgment. We gather around the altar as we share communion. Another key element of our service is our “Life Changes,” in which parishioners can share important

developments in their lives and where we care for and support one another as we share our joys and celebrations, as well as our vulnerabilities and heartaches. We welcome new ideas in sermons and study groups, and welcome the movement of the Holy Spirit in the many ways we pray together. Occasionally, we are treated to sermons by our fellow parishioners. We delight in learning from each other.

We are rooted in San Francisco, and take pride in a culture of social justice and progressive values. We are open to exploring and learning from other faiths, including at present sharing our space with Mary of Pentecost, a Catholic community led by female priests. St. James’ former clergy include one of the first female clerics in Texas, and an openly gay rector who ably led our church for 14 years. We enthusiastically participate in Pride parades and conduct homeless outreach.

Our congregation has a rich prayer life, with community and individual prayer opportunities such as healing prayer at Communion and a weekly meditation service.

We love to gather in community to share food and conversation – at coffee hour, at parish luncheons, courtyard potluck barbecues, Shrove Tuesday pancake suppers, and special creative celebrations and fundraisers.

We have a strong commitment to loving service and to peace and justice, and a strong core of lay leaders and volunteers serving the parish.



OUR CORE VALUES

- *We are a welcoming, inclusive community, to friends old and new.*
- *We have a strong focus on social justice and outreach to our community.*
- *We focus on Scripture's message of mercy, love and grace.*
- *We hold hospitality as a key value of our church, gathering together for meals and quality time with each other.*
- *We nurture a rich prayer life and thoughtful contemplation of Scripture.*



OUR GROUNDS AND FINANCES

The church building dates to 1924, a modest stucco structure that has the feel of a quiet neighborhood church, but our roots go back even further than that – St. James was founded in 1890 as a “guild hall” on Clement Street between 5th and 6th Avenues, serving as a hub for neighborhood activities. The church is filled with natural light filtering through rich stained glass windows, providing a beautiful and homey feeling.

We are also blessed with a rectory (a two-bedroom apartment in the building next door), and the church hosts a small preschool on our grounds.

Like churches across the United States, we have seen a decline in numbers, and have a current membership of about 75-100 regular parishioners, with an average Sunday attendance of 55 over two services. Despite that, we are lucky enough to be on a strong financial footing, with an annual pledge of about \$200,000-\$245,000, and a forecasted 2026 budget of \$425,000. We receive rent from our major tenant, St. James Preschool, and from office space in the building which houses our rectory. The church is supported by a sizable endowment. More information from our annual report is available on the [Rector Search webpage](#).

Currently, we are in the midst of a significant renovation – paid for by funds from our endowment – to upgrade our electrical, mechanical and plumbing systems to make our church, rectory and preschool safer and in line with current building codes.



OUR ASK

- We seek a rector who is a natural relationship builder, interested in the lives of their congregants, who can enhance the loving spirit that identifies our community.
- We seek a big thinker who has vision for our place in this city, in our diocese, and in the world.
- We know that there are many ways for a rector to lead a church, and at St. James, we are looking for a leader who genuinely connects with people and appreciates their unique talents and abilities. We are hoping to find a rector who is excited to be a part of this congregation, willing to lead, teach, engage, and provide pastoral care when needed.
- We seek a teacher who will challenge us to understand what it means to be spiritual and how to bring our faith into our daily lives. We want to understand the Gospel in everyday terms and make it real in today's world.
- We seek a leader who can delegate, inspire, and encourage, who will willingly collaborate with lay leaders and stay aware and informed about parish finances.
- We seek a leader who can help us see how to love and care for ourselves, while challenging us to act out our Christian life in our neighborhood and with the people around us.
- We hope our new rector will have a strong support system, and a real interest in the lives of others. Finally, we're looking for a leader who respects the close-knit community we have at St. James and who can help nurture and sustain it.

TO APPLY

Contact:

Canon Denise Obando
Canon for Transition Ministries
deniseo@diocal.org (415) 869-7804



St. James Mission Statement

To bring an ever increasing number of people into an ever closer relationship with Jesus Christ so that God's love may be a transforming force for the communities in which we live.



WHO WE WANT TO BE

One major challenge we face is fewer families and young children. With about 75 active congregants, we only have 4-5 families with children (of any age). We are hoping to grow our congregation to make it more reflective of the neighborhood and city we serve.

We also hope to find more opportunities to serve our wider community. We've already started to build that foundation by participating in Vital + Thriving, a diocesan program that involved deep listening and parishioner input to help congregations discern how God is calling them to build the Beloved Community in their neighborhoods and cities.

We are eager and open to different ways to make that happen – but we need help balancing that need without burning ourselves out. Many of our lay leaders are juggling two or three roles on behalf of the church amid numerous other commitments of daily life.

Our hope is that our next rector can encourage and facilitate lay leadership and action; we do not expect or want a pastor to take all these challenges on themselves. But there is a general sense that we need a leader who can commit to working with, encouraging – and challenging – the congregation to take on the mission of living out our Christian faith.

Our church is a warm and welcoming community, and we are eager to find our next rector. We welcome your interest in our joyful, inclusive community.

Learn more about us:

stjamesf.org

Learn more about the Diocese of California:

Diocal.org



St. James Episcopal Church
4620 California Street
San Francisco, CA 94118
stjamesf.org