

St. James Episcopal Church

296 Titicus Road, North Salem, New York



Our Mission

**A trusting community that invites us to find God's light
in this beautiful space - through fellowship, music and liturgy;
to find the sacred in ourselves and help others on their journey;
and to share our gifts with a world in need.**



Thank you for visiting St. James. Wherever you are on life's journey, we welcome you to join us in worship and companionship. We believe that we are all seekers on a quest for meaning and purpose and wish to create a renewed communion with the Sacred, the Holy One, God. That search is done individually and together with joy.

In a word, St. James means Hospitality. We need and depend on one another to become more fully human and thus closer to our Creator. We do this in our prayer life, our social life and our outreach to the world around us. We are changing and evolving creatures of God and in these turbulent times, we strive to be a beacon of hope for each other and for our community.

St. James is an Episcopal church, part of the world-wide Anglican Communion. We honor the traditions of the past while welcoming people of all faiths. Our roots are deep as St. James has been serving North Salem and the neighboring communities since 1731.

Summer service



Blessing of the Animals



History

The story of St. James Church is bound up with the beginnings of this country.



1731 - The original church was started by the people of Salem with help from the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in England*.

1751 - A grant of land "for the first minister who would be called and ordained in Salem" was given by James Benedict and Timothy Keeler.

1761 - Measures to build a small church were taken since "a private house will seldom contain the people who went to Church." The first church building was erected on Titicus Road on the border of the Van Cortlandt manor.

1766 - Epenetus Townsend, who was born on Long Island, became the first official lay reader. The following year two wardens were elected and Epenetus Townsend was sent to England for the Holy Orders.

1768 - The Reverend Epenetus Townsend was formally installed on May 29th. He gave a Book of Common Prayer and a Bible from England to St. James Church, which are kept at the North Salem Historical Society in their fireproof safe.

1778 - 1785 - The Revolutionary War and imprisonment of Reverend Townsend closed the church. The Rev. Townsend and his wife were allowed to sail to Nova Scotia with Loyalists, but the ship sank and all aboard were lost at sea.

1786 - St. James Church was incorporated under the laws of New York State, becoming one of the original twelve parishes in the Diocese of New York.

1792 - The church was re-incorporated as "St. James Church in the town of North Salem".

1797 - The church building was in such bad repair that it was dismantled and the materials sold at auction.

1810 - The cornerstone for the second church building was laid at the present site. Money to help pay for this was given by Trinity Church on Wall Street in Manhattan.

1842 - A rectory was built on six acres of land owned by the church since 1766.

1869 - The third church building, the present one, was completed on the foundation of the second church, which had fallen into disrepair during the Civil War. It was paid for with money raised by the women of the church.

1912 - A second floor was added to the horse sheds behind the church to serve as a parish hall for the church and a meeting room for the community. Again, the women of the church raised most of the money.

1930 - The rectory and its land were sold.

1958 - The Parish House was completely renovated. The horse sheds were removed and new rooms built in their place, rooms that now house the North Salem Nursery School.

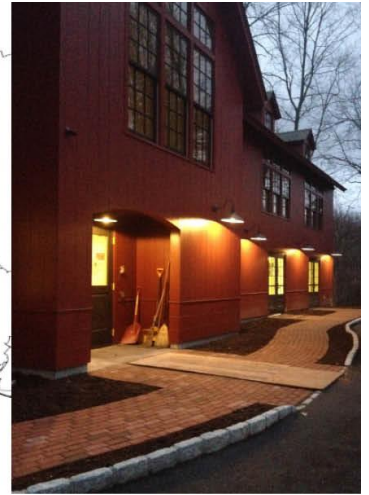
1985 - A hundred-year-old Odell pipe organ was purchased, refurbished, and installed in the church.

1989 - St. James Church is unyoked from its daughter parish, St. Luke's in Somers.

1994 - The sanctuary was completely refurbished.

2015 – The Parish Hall went through a complete renovation and was renamed the St. James Village Hall.

St. James's history is not just a story of land and buildings. It is a story of people, faith, belief, and determination, which we follow today.



Pancake Supper



Square Dance at Chase Meadows Farm



Ministries

Brewster Community Food Pantry

The food pantry is an ecumenical effort composed of volunteers from five different churches, including St. James. Physically housed at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Brewster, it is open two days a week to help families and individuals supplement their food needs. Residents in Brewster and surrounding towns, including North Salem, Somers, etc. are welcome. The pantry relies on grants and donations to keep it going. St. James often lends support through monetary and food donations.

Midnight Run

In 2012, the St. James Youth Group joined the Midnight Run Organization. Our young people and others from the North Salem community at large, come together to sort clothes, assemble toiletry kits, and fill dinner sacks with hearty food, fruits and drinks. Each young person is assigned a specific job for the night. By 9:00 pm the van is packed with food, Youth Group volunteers and chaperones and heads to NYC. By 10:30 pm, the volunteers are on the streets and visit five locations throughout the city where the homeless eagerly await to be fed. By 2:00 am it's time to head back home, but not before a stop in Yonkers at the Raceway Diner for shakes and burgers and sharing stories from the night.



Refugee Resettlement

In 2016 St. James parishioners lent support to the efforts of the Ridgefield Refugee Resettlement Committee. (located at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Ridgefield) St. James provided prayerful and

financial support as well as volunteers. A Syrian refugee family of four has since arrived and has been successfully resettle in Ridgefield. Volunteers from St. James continue to work with the family.

Friends of Karen

Each Christmas the Youth Group creates the Friends of Karen Giving Tree. We make ornaments and attach gift ideas for the Friends of Karen kids and parishioners buy gifts



Sullivan Men

A group home for the disabled, the residents often worship with us at St. James and are a welcome part of our faith community. They too, participate each year with the Friends of Karen Giving Tree.



Community

Over the years, St. James has provided support to the local communities in a variety of ways. In addition to supporting the Brewster Food Pantry, our ministers are regularly asked to deliver blessings or homilies at Memorial Day and other commemorative celebrations. They also regularly participate in the annual “Blessing of the Hounds” at the opening meet of the Golden’s Bridge Hounds in early October. This prayer of thanks for the open land, the foxes and other wild animals as well as the hounds, horses and riders carries on a tradition that has been a part of this very unique equestrian community for generations.

The St. James Youth Group is one of the primary sources for community service opportunities for local kids. Our beautiful Village Hall is available to all who wish to use it. The North Salem Nursery School at St. James is one of the main providers of pre-K education for local kids of all religious or non-religious denominations.



Music



Music is central to worship at St. James. Our priest, the choir, and the congregation are all highly attuned to the value that music brings to our services. We strive to achieve the highest quality music weekly. While each member of the congregation has his or her own taste in music, we hope that we provide something for everyone whenever possible. At St. James, the music program draws on Episcopal traditions, European classical music (from medieval chant to contemporary composers), gospel styles, Christian pop, and American music. Music in church has an entertainment value but it also helps us reflect more deeply on our spirituality.

St. James has a 13-rank Odell tracker organ and a Baldwin grand piano in the sanctuary. Preludes and postludes include masterworks by J.S. Bach, 19th century French organ music, and contemporary piano arrangements of hymns.

The music program has flourished under the dedicated and professional guidance of our current music director, Dr. Michael Mulder. Mike has been the organist at St. James since 2007 and the choir director since 2013. He has been performing music in churches since he played regularly in his parents' church as a teenager in Las Vegas.



Michael also teaches band in the Bedford Central School District at both Mount Kisco and Pound Ridge Elementary Schools. He has enjoyed a wide variety of roles throughout his professional life including composer (classical, musical theater, and children’s music), university-level music instructor, pianist on the Las Vegas Strip, and author of articles in several specialized music periodicals. Michael was born in El Paso, Texas and has lived in ten states and Canada. But he has spent the last 22 years in New York. Mike holds the following degrees: a doctorate in composition (University of Toronto), a master’s degree in piano performance (University of Nevada, Las Vegas), a master’s degree in music history (University of Michigan), a master’s degree in Education and Supervision (Baruch College), and a bachelor’s degree in music history (University of Colorado, Boulder).

Friends of St. James Music

Friends of St. James Music was established to support and supplement the parish’s music program. It has provided financial support for the special instrumental music at Christmas and Easter and sponsorship for various concerts throughout the year. Being a Friend is easy. All that is required is to come and enjoy the concert and services, bring your friends and make a modest financial contribution.



Facilities



Church

St James is a lovely, white, historic church set high on a hill in North Salem Center. It has been rebuilt and renovated many times over the years. The historical architecture of the church and it's rural setting offer all who enter an intimacy in which to worship, find comfort, and faith.

The beautiful stained glass windows complement it's quiet but elegant simplicity, and the refurbished sanctuary brings spiritual warmth as one approaches the altar. Our 100+ year-old tracker Odell organ, installed in 1985, offers a stirring accompaniment to the liturgy.

Beside our regular services, St James celebrates weddings, baptisms, confirmations, blessing of the animals and musical events.

St. James Village Hall

After various renovations throughout the years, the original carriage house was totally rebuilt and expanded in 2013.

During the renovation a huge glacial rock, visible from the old building had to be partially removed to make room for the footprint of the new building. A major project, it took considerable time and effort to complete. It is called by some “The Rock Of Ages” and is still visible in the back yard area.

The St. James Village Hall was dedicated on January 10, 2015 and serves the North Salem community as well as our parishioners. The parish offices, the beloved North Salem Nursery School, and our Sunday school are located on the first floor. An elevator is available as needed. Upstairs is a spacious meeting hall, displaying the original exposed beams as well as large windows, which flood the rooms with natural light.



In addition to church functions, the hall is available for community or private events such as receptions, concerts, meetings, dance classes, and yoga. The new kitchen, featuring commercial grade ranges and refrigerators, ample storage, and a large work area, has been designed to accommodate both large and small events. (maybe a picture of an event such as the cabaret)



June Cemetery

A pre-revolutionary cemetery, located across the street from St James, it is the resting place of many North Salem residents. On some patriotic national holidays the congregation processes en mass to the cemetery for a special remembrance service.



Columbarium

Due to the gracious generosity of a private donor, St James will have a columbarium created on the church grounds. It is currently in the early planning stages.

