



“Inspiring Change” – A Capital Campaign Investing in Our Future

Dear St. James Parishioners and Friends:

We are excited about how much St. James is changing and growing, attracting new members and serving the community of Clayton, Rabun County, and beyond. Here is what we have heard from new members and recent long-time members:

“We drove up and down Warwoman Rd. for quite a while, observing the beauty of the grounds of St. James, and we concluded that any church that took that great care of their property must do a good job of taking care of their people.” - Frances Daniel

“We attended St. James for about six to eight weeks, and the concern for the broader community was palpable.” - Dave Bellaire

Our previous Sr. Warden (Terry Kline) jokingly responded to my request for outdoor lighting: “Well, if you did not have so many programs going on, we would not need outdoor lighting!”

So many visitors say, “We felt authentically welcomed without being overwhelmed.”

Deacon Susi said to the entire congregation in the middle of the Pentecost Service, “Can you feel the love?”

Sandy Simon felt the love so much the following week on Trinity Sunday, in the middle of the service, he turned to Christy and said, “Will you marry me?” That has got to be a first for any church!

Having Chantal translate sermons into Spanish for Katy and Raphael once a month has been a special grace, and members have said, “The pause when she is translating gives me time to digest what was said.” We have a committee exploring starting an ESL class here!

We just finished the Shrimp Boil and are about to have our Flower and Garden Festival. Our Lunch and Learn seminars have been such a great service to the entire community. These special events are in addition to the recurring programs that are scheduled weekly and monthly (Contrarian Class, Study of Luke, Lectionary, Book Club, Retirees Lunch, etc.) So much is going on, and we wonder what might come next?

The vestry determined that the recent improvements made to our facilities, as mentioned in a recent Messenger article, would serve as the foundation for additional capital projects. A Capital Campaign Committee was formed and the committee has explored church needs and priorities and has made recommendations to the vestry.

The vestry is initiating the “Inspiring Change Capital Campaign,” and the projects to be included are as follows:

- CREATE ADDITIONAL SPACE FOR MEETINGS:** We have various church committees and offer programs that require meeting space. We also allow several community groups to use our church for meetings and other events. We need to create additional space in the Parish Hall for these activities. The current space can be reconfigured and soundproofed, using large openings like insulated French Doors, along with insulated windows so that we can continue to access the entire Parish Hall for large events. This will also allow the Choir to rehearse in the Parish Hall instead of crowding into the office and moving tables and chairs every week.

- UPGRADE THE KITCHEN: There is a need for a commercial refrigerator to hold food for special events, a deeper and larger sink for cleaning oversized items, a double oven, and possibly an ice maker. We have already created new storage areas in the kitchen.
- INSTALL A NEW ROOF: The psalms speak of the beauty of holiness, and sacred beauty is a value for St. James. When it comes time to replace our roof, which will be soon, we want to do it with beautiful architectural shingles.
- INSTALL A FIRST-CLASS, RELIABLE, DIGITAL BROADCASTING SYSTEM: We need to upgrade our digital broadcasting ability to better enhance the online viewing of our services. We have many members who live a portion of the year in other parts of the country, and it can be frustrating to watch our service on Zoom, as too often our meetings “break up” due to signal loss. A reliable broadcasting system may also attract additional viewers.
- INCREASE THE BUILDING FUND: Once all these projects are completed, remaining funds will be used to enhance our Building Fund for maintenance, improvements, and future capital projects.

We hope you will give prayerful consideration to contributing to our present and future as we raise \$300,000 for this capital campaign. We already have the commitment of over \$100,000 toward the campaign. We are asking you to complete the enclosed pledge card, reflecting your financial commitment toward the “Inspiring Change Capital Campaign.” You may elect to spread your pledge over a three-year period. Our entire vestry and Capital Campaign Committee are making those commitments. This capital campaign is focused on facility improvements and is separate from our annual stewardship campaign, which will occur later in the fall.

We stand at a sacred threshold. The “Inspiring Change Capital Campaign” is not just about buildings—it’s about belonging. It’s about creating spaces where our children can learn, we and our neighbors can gather, and our faith can flourish. This is our chance to shape the future of St. James—not someday, but now.

We’re not asking for donations. We’re inviting you to take ownership, to see your gift as a legacy of love, and to imagine the programs, ministries, and moments that will grow from your commitment.

Whether you choose a three-year pledge, an annual gift, or a legacy offering in your will, your generosity becomes the foundation for everything that comes next. This is not a campaign—it’s a calling.

Let us build together—not just with bricks and beams, but with faith, hope, and love. Let our gifts today echo through the generations. Let this be the moment we say, “I helped build that!”

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Jim, Priest in Charge
 Kathleen Johnson, Senior Warden
 Members of the Vestry
 Capital Campaign Committee

*Opportunities will be provided to ask questions or make comments about the Capital Campaign and the proposed projects.
 Dates of these meetings will be published in the Messenger and in the church bulletin.*