

Greetings!

I am thrilled to be joining you as the next rector of St. Luke's!

Over the past month, I have loved getting to know your church and school communities—as has my whole family: my wife, Peyton, and our children—son, John, 15, and daughter, Alex, 10. All four of us are looking forward to moving to Mobile in June and joining in the life of your church! And our children are already soaking up all they can about the school and look forward to enrolling next year!

Appropriately enough, my first Sunday with you will be Pentecost Sunday, June 9, when we celebrate the sending of the Holy Spirit to empower the disciples to become apostles and form the first church—the body of the risen Christ—and serve the world in Jesus' name. I hope to see many of you then, and, in the weeks and months thereafter, to sit down with each of you one-on-one to hear about your hopes and dreams for St. Luke's.

St. Luke's has so many strengths, and is filled with such spirit, and I feel so grateful for this opportunity. You all are giving me, Peyton, John and Alex such a gracious gift by inviting us into your parish family, and by calling me to be your rector. Over the coming months and years, I will do all I can to honor that gift by creatively collaborating with you to realize all the more God's hopes for St. Luke's.

Wishing you all blessings and peace,

Jamie

BIO

The Rev. Jamie McElroy comes to St. Luke's Episcopal Church and School from Jackson, Mississippi, where he served five and a half years as Rector of St. James' Episcopal Church and School. During his time at St. James', he helped exponentially grow parishioner involvement in church ministries by rebuilding the church's committee system, and by guiding the congregation to articulate its mission and vision for its work as the Body of Christ. Thereby the congregation creatively developed its pre-existing ministries—including St. James' pre-k school—while also conceiving and growing many new ministries.

Before coming to St. James', Jamie served three years as Canon for Outreach & Evangelism at St. Peter's Episcopal Cathedral in St. Petersburg, Florida, seat of the Diocese of Southwest Florida (and his wife, Peyton's, hometown).

Prior to moving to the Southeast, he worked in the San Francisco Bay area, serving four years as Director of Children, Youth & Young Adult Ministries at St. Bede's Episcopal Church in Menlo Park, California, while also serving as a chaplain and service learning coordinator at Trinity, Menlo Park—St. Bede's pre-k through 5th grade school—as well as the director of Los Ayudantes, an English literacy tutoring program for Latino school children in Redwood City, California.

Jamie earned his Masters of Divinity at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific (the Episcopal seminary that is part of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California), and he was ordained at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco in 2009.

As a young adult, before following the call to ordained ministry, Jamie worked as a newspaper reporter in North Carolina, wrote a non-fiction book (published by Simon & Schuster) entitled *We've Got Spirit*, about the best high school competitive cheerleading team in the country (from Kentucky), taught high school journalism in Massachusetts, helped his wife, Peyton, found and run a small theater company in Boston and New York City, and did public relations work for the Yale University School of Music.

Jamie and Peyton met as undergraduates at Yale, where Jamie got his B.A. in English Literature. Peyton eventually went on to earn her Masters in Philosophy of Religion from Yale, then a PhD in Philosophy from Stanford. For the past eight years, Peyton has taught applied ethics, moral philosophy, critical thinking and religious studies at colleges in the Tampa and Jackson areas and has plans to continue doing so here in Mobile.

Jamie was born and raised in Washington, DC and attended the DC Public Schools from kindergarten through high school. He credits his parents with planting the seeds of faith through their devotion to public service—exemplified by their devotion to the DC school system as teachers, activists, fundraisers, and volunteers.

Jamie found his way to the Episcopal Church at the age of 27 when he was baptized at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. Peyton, a cradle-Episcopalian, served as sponsor at his baptism and is, in a sense, his sponsor in all things, challenging and inspiring him every day. Their two kids, son, John and Alex, are constant sources of joy, who are growing up way too fast.