

# A PROFILE OF ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Region II, Diocese of Virginia

Westmoreland County

2014

## WORSHIP

St. James has approximately 65 communicants in good standing. A goal for the new rector, in addition to the primary one of encouraging spiritual growth, would be to expand membership and strengthen financial support.

St. James celebrates Holy Communion on first and third Sundays at 11:15 am and on second and fourth Sundays at 8:30 am. Morning Prayer is celebrated on second and fourth Sundays at 11:15 am. On fifth Sundays the service varies. We use Rite I or Rite II in all of our services. There are also services of healing and Holy Communion at noon on Wednesdays, following an 11:00 am Bible Study.

Holy Communion and Morning Prayer are of prime importance to the congregation with considerable interest also being shown in Lenten Services. St. James participates in the annual Thanksgiving Service with Andrew Chapel Methodist Church and also joins with area Christian, Methodist, and Baptist Churches in noontime Wednesday Lenten services. An interdenominational Easter Sunrise Service is conducted with the clergymen of four denominations participating.

Christmas Eve services are held at 5:30 pm, and 11:00 pm drawing visitors from the local community as well as many parishioners. The festival of Lessons and Carols is well-attended on the Sunday preceding Christmas.

The liturgy at all services, with few exceptions, is from the 1979 Book of Common Prayer with responses at the 11:15 am service generally sung accompanied by the organist. We have a four-part choir and a choirmaster. Two or three times a year, the choir combines with other singers from the Northern Neck to form a festival chorus. They perform such works as Handel's Messiah, the Requiems by Brahms and Faure, Mendelssohn's St. Paul

Oratorio, and the Christmas Oratorio by Saint Saens. Prominent guest soloists and conductors often participate in these performances.

St. James has six lay readers.

## CONGREGATION AND STATISTICS

The congregation is comprised of descendants of old Virginia families, young families with children, and members of an extremely active retirement population. Our parishioners approach parish activities with interest, enthusiasm, and energy. In 2011, there were 65 communicants in good standing at St. James who regularly and actively participated in church activities. We have an average attendance of 25 at our 11:15 am service, and 10 in attendance at our 8:30 am service, held on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays.

Many of our members are individually involved in community affairs through various organizations other than the church. We make our facilities available to civic organizations such as the Habitat for Humanity, the Ruritans, Alpha Delta Kappa Sorority and the Westmoreland Garden Club.

## ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

### Outreach Program

St. James maintains an Outreach Program funded by contributions from members, fundraising, and memorial contributions. The funds are used to help families in need by paying for electricity, telephone, heat, groceries, rent, etc. Additionally, donations are made annually to the local volunteer fire department, rescue squad, hospice, Christmas funds, and other worthy causes. We drive and deliver for our community Meals on Wheels program, twice each year. We prepare and serve a community Lenten luncheon and pancake supper. We offer a free spaghetti dinner in December each year. We also adopt a "year round" Christmas family.

### Fellowship

Every Sunday, after the services, attendees meet in the Parish Hall for fellowship. Refreshments are provided by various parish families for all to enjoy. Since membership is rural and spread out over many miles, the coffee hour provides precious time to keep close contact with church members.

### Altar Guild

Altar Guild members prepare for church services and all church-related functions. These preparations include preparing the altar, caring for the linens, placing sacramental vessels, arranging flowers, and cleaning the brass and silver. The Altar Guild chairperson is responsible for purchasing the necessary supplies and coordinating the Guild.

### Sunday School/Nursery

St. James has a small, but lively, Nursery/Sunday School program that meets during the 11:15 am service.

### The Vestry

St. James has a vestry of nine members that are elected for a three-year term by the congregation at our annual meeting and dinner in November. A member of the Vestry may not be re-elected for at least one year after their current term expires. The Vestry is organized with a Senior Warden, Junior Warden, and a Register. The Treasurer is not required to be a member of the Vestry. The rector typically conducts all meetings, opens and closes with a prayer and offers spiritual guidance and leadership support.