St James (Wichita)

TYPE	DIOCESE	NAME
Congregation	Kansas	

TYPES OF WORK	POSITION TITLE/ROLE
Full Time	Rector/Priest-in-Charge

ROLE SUMMARY/DESCRIPTION

St. James Episcopal Church seeks a pastoral, collaborative, adaptable rector whose first gift is presence – a preacher and liturgist who will lead a beloved, rooted parish toward the next generation alongside its lay leaders.

CURRENT STATUS	RECEIVING NAMES FROM	TO
Receiving names	09/29/2026	10/31/2026

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

For more information or to apply, email the Canon to the Ordinary with a cover letter (addressed to the Parish Search Committee), an up-to-date resume, and a Vocation Hub portfolio:
The Rev. Patrick Funston
Canon to the Ordinary
e. apfunston@episcopal-ks.org
v. 785.706.1223

CANDIDATE NARRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1. How do you approach pastoral care in your ministry?, 2. How are you preparing yourself for the Church of the future?, 4. How have you experienced and addressed conflict in ministry?, 5. What has been your experience leading change in the Church?, 10. What theological convictions shape your ministry?

CONTACT

NAME	Patrick Funston
ROLE	Canon to the Ordinary
ORGANIZATION	Episcopal Diocese of Kansas
PHONE NUMBER	7857061223
EMAIL ADDRESS	apfunston@episcopal-ks.org

POSITION DETAILS

ORDERS OF MINISTRY	GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION
Priest	Great Plains

WORK ENVIRONMENT

MINISTRY SETTING

In Person

Urban

PAROCHIAL REPORT DATA

AVG. SUNDAY ATT.	ANNUAL BUDGET
115	573549

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW NARRATIVE

The budget for 2026 has been over $580,000 with 98 member units (individuals, couples, or families) pledging an amount exceeding what was budgeted for pledged giving. About 25 units chose not to pledge but make regular donations to the budget. St. James members are faithful in giving and honoring their pledges.
An elected Endowment Board oversees the "St. James Perpetual Memorial and Endowment Fund (PMEF)" and the St. James Church Legacy Society. The Board monitors the distribution of the Endowment's returns to outreach ministries, future/current capital needs, and administrative expenses for the PMEF. At the end of 2025, the Endowment had almost $1.5 million in assets. Since 1992, the Fund has distributed well over $2.2 million benefitting St. James and outreach.

FINANCIAL RESOURCE TYPE None

STIPEND, HOUSING, AND BENEFITS

COMPENSATION/SALARY DETAIL

RANGE $75,001 - $100,000

DETAILS

$90,000-$100,000 cash stipend plus housing allowance

Negotiable based on years of experience and medical/health insurance needs.

HOUSING/RECTORY TYPE

TYPE OF HOUSING PROVIDED Cash Stipend

DETAILS

Included within the cash compensation above via vestry-adopted housing allowance resolution.

SECA REIMBURSEMENT DETAIL

REIMBURSEMENT OFFERED n/a

DETAILS

SECA Reimbursements are not normative in the Diocese of Kansas.

MEDICAL & PENSION BENEFITS DETAIL

PENSION PLAN

In compliance with CPF requirements

HEALTHCARE OPTIONS

Negotiable

DETAILS

Diocesan policy mandates a minimum employer-contribution of 100% of the employee+1 premium Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield PPO80.

VACATION, CONTINUING EDUCATION, AND OTHER BENEFITS

VACATION & LEAVE DETAILS

Four weeks, including 5 Sundays, per year.

CONTINUING EDUCATION DETAILS

Two weeks annually.

SABBATICAL PROVISION DETAILS

St. James follows diocesan policy of non-vested paid sabbatical accrued at two weeks per year of service to be taken at some point during the fifth through seventh year in the position.

TRAVEL/AUTO ACCOUNT DETAILS

Mileage reimbursement for ministry-related travel.

EQUIPMENT/PHONE DETAILS

Desktop computer and printer in office; no phone provided.

OTHER BENEFITS OR COMMENTS

DIOCESAN COMPENSATION INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE)

FORMAT PDF

MINISTRY CONTEXT AND DESIRED SKILLS

WHAT ARE YOUR COMMUNITY'S HOPES FOR THIS POSITION?

St. James is an active parish community with potential for growth. We want to serve as a welcoming visible presence for God's work in the complex larger Wichita community.
There are several complementary leadership attributes that our parish wants to see in our next Rector. This priest needs to be collaborative in the approach to leadership, eager to work with others, inviting them to share together their expertise, viewpoints, and insights. The rector will work with the Vestry and other leaders to shape goals and plans together, rather than prescribing a course of action. This priest should be responsive to evolving needs and circumstances and react with wise flexibility. When challenges and opportunities arise in the life of the church, the rector must be a trustworthy guide through change and transition. St. James' prays for a servant leader who lives out a faithful calling and commitment to loving service to all people as made in the image of God.
We hope that the next rector will be equipped to help the parish grow in our corporate health and engagement. We want a rector who recognizes gifts in others and cultivates them in current and emerging leaders. When conflict happens, we hope that our rector will respond with directness, interpersonal skill, and grace.
There are a variety of ministry skills that the parish hopes to see a new rector excel in or champion them in others in the parish. The members love warm, reverent leadership in liturgical worship and academic/theologically based preaching – thought-provoking while very relatable and practical. St. James looks for a rector who has a vision and, ideally, experience with promoting church growth. We are steadily growing the programs for children, younger families, youth, and young adults for an even more vibrant, visible, welcoming, loving community. The church seeks a prayerful rector who will model a genuine spirituality while helping others to listen for God's movement in their lives.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Adaptive Leadership, Collaborative Leadership, Congregational Development, Leadership Development, Servant Leadership

MINISTRY SKILLS

Academic/Theology, Children & Family Formation, Church Growth, Community Building, Pastoral Care, Prayer & Spirituality, Preaching, Spiritual Direction, Worship & Liturgy, Youth & Young Adult Formation

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

English

LANGUAGES WRITTEN

English

LANGUAGES REQUIRED TO LEAD WORSHIP

English

1. **What is your organization's mission and focus?**

   Describe your core mission and ministry priorities. What values guide your work, and what is your community or organization striving to embody in this season of ministry?

"Our mission is to worship and glorify God, proclaim the Gospel through word and deed, and serve our community and world as disciples of Christ." This mission is expressed each week through a simple premise: Whoever you are and wherever you find yourself on your journey of faith, you are welcome here.

Worship anchors everything else. Our common life is centered in reverent, God-focused worship as the Eucharist is celebrated at every weekend service, each reflecting a distinct expression of our shared Anglican tradition. Traditional and other forms of spiritual music enriches our worship and draws us more deeply into prayer.

We proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ. Scripture-based preaching invites reflection, spiritual growth, and faithful action in daily life. Faith formation takes place through Adult Forum, Education for Ministry (EfM), Bible studies, and programs for children and youth supported by gifted volunteers who are eager to partner with a rector in strengthening discipleship across generations.

We seek and serve Christ in all persons through partnerships with Episcopal Social Services (ESS) Breakthrough and St. Francis Ministries; members participate in Sandwich Saturday downtown, run the Pocket Change Ministry, and deliver food baskets and household supplies in Advent; a team works with the Justice Together coalition. Annual and seasonal events open our doors to hundreds of people who otherwise might not enter, and event proceeds support our community.

We respect the dignity of every human being. Welcome is more than a phrase to us: it is a core expression of our faith. No one is measured by what they might contribute or where they come from, and belonging here has never depended on believing or worshiping the way anyone else does. Those who arrive with hard questions or wounds from another tradition find a welcome here.

2. How would you describe your ministry context?

Share about the setting and community you serve. What are the unique characteristics of your context - such as urban, rural, or suburban dynamics; multi-faith or multicultural environments; community partnerships; or social and cultural factors that shape your ministry?

St. James stands at the corner of Roosevelt and Douglas Avenue in the historic College Hill (CH) neighborhood in east central Wichita. Douglas Avenue is one of the main arteries connecting east Wichita to the downtown business district. The CH neighborhood was developing in the 1920's when St. James' Church was built. The neighborhood is a mix of middle/upper middle class, early 20th century and mid-century homes. There are commercial properties on Douglas and other streets bordering CH. There is a large beautiful city park on Douglas very close to the church. This setting offers opportunities to engage people from a variety of backgrounds and life experiences while remaining rooted in a strong sense of neighborhood identity.

There are several other churches in the CH neighborhood or adjacent: Blessed Sacrament, a busy Roman Catholic parish with a parochial school, Plymouth Congregational, East Heights UMC, College Hill UMC, and Grace Presbyterian. All are active congregations. St. James is part of the Wichita Minster, a network of 5 Episcopal parishes and 2 support organizations previously mentioned. The closest of those parishes in distance (2 mi.) is the historic St. John's, downtown.

Wichita (pop. 400,000+) is a racially/ethnically diverse city. Approximately 60% is White, 17% Hispanic, 9% Black, and 14% other groups. There are many congregations in Wichita directly serving the Black and Hispanic communities - our efforts with them have been primarily through support organizations. Wichita has on-going challenges with homelessness, mental health issues, and gun violence. The parish has strong relationships with ESS Breakthrough and Justice Together, organizations dedicated to addressing systemic challenges and strengthening the broader community.

Our Associating Priest is CEO for ESS Breakthrough. Many of our parishioners volunteer in support of Justice Together, St. Francis Ministries and ESS.

Our parishioners come from throughout Wichita and the surrounding communities. The members' educational level is high with many having professional degrees. Many are deeply engaged in civic life, education, healthcare, business, the arts, and nonprofit service. While St. James benefits from the wisdom of many long-time members, we are also encouraged by growing participation among younger adults, families, and newcomers seeking a thoughtful and welcoming Episcopal community.

3. How would you describe your congregational/diocesan leadership culture?

Reflect on how your community approaches leadership - what styles and qualities you value in clergy, how leadership is shared between clergy and laity, and how you navigate change and challenges.

At present, leadership is shared between laity and clergy, with a heavy emphasis on lay leadership. Our parish is too large for one rector to directly manage every ministry and event, thus lay leaders have stepped up to ensure things keep running smoothly. Our parish values collaboration, encourages emerging leaders, and cultivates new opportunities for service and discipleship. Many parishioners who have attended other churches in other dioceses/traditions state that the culture of shared leadership at St. James is among the parish's greatest strengths and they hope this tradition continues to flourish.

We have an active and engaged Vestry that is very supportive of our parish needs and of the role and mission of the rector. The unexpected death of our rector in 2025 was a profound loss for the congregation. As the parish grieved, members relied on one another, their faith, and the leadership of the Vestry to navigate a difficult season with compassion and care.

The sentiment in the parish is that the Vestry handled the transitional period well, and many gave special thanks and positive feedback for a town hall session in which the Vestry answered questions from the parish and made progress towards getting everyone on the same page, while letting those who felt pain express themselves and get answers from leadership. This was an important way to begin the healing process, with transparency and congregational involvement.

A particular strength of St. James historically has been as a consistent producer of seminarians. We have two active currently, and several more individuals in the discernment process already. Lay Eucharistic Ministers are present, and we try to be there for each other as a parish in times of need.

*From the Vestry - Following our previous rector’s resignation and death, the diocese encouraged the vestry to work with our interim rector to reflect on parish leadership’s role in those difficult days. Since then, the vestry has recognized signs of triangulation and conflict-avoidance that masked our rector’s health issues and lack of energy. Having reflected upon and discussed those difficult times, the vestry has committed to leading the parish with healthier and more transparent communication patterns, including a new approved communication plan.

4. How would you describe your congregational/diocesan liturgical styles and practice?

Share how worship is shaped in your community - what influences your liturgical life, how you balance tradition and innovation, and how liturgy reflects your theology and context.

St. James parishioners greatly appreciate the weekly worship services of the Holy Eucharist with their reverent broad church liturgical practice and style. Weekly services are scheduled at 5:30 pm on Saturdays and 8:30 am and 10:45 am on Sundays. Saturday we conduct a Rite II, spoken word service with Eucharist. At 8:30 on Sunday we conduct a Rite I service with limited hymn singing. At 10:45 on Sunday we conduct a Rite II service accompanied by an adult vocal choir. Additionally, there is a volunteer adult handbell choir and there are supplemental instrumentalists on occasion. All hymns are from the 1982 Hymnal and Lift Every Voice and Sing, supporting worship that is both rooted in tradition and vibrant in participation.

St. James parishioners actively participate in the liturgical "work of the people." Worshippers can follow the order of the service with bulletins or the Book of Common Prayer. Congregational participation in the liturgy and hymns is strong. People are comfortable with sharing the Peace, venturing out of their pews to bless each other. There is a committed group of acolytes and Chalice Bearers. There is a very devoted Altar Guild. Lay leadership is visible throughout the liturgy and reflects the parish's long-standing commitment to shared ministry between clergy and laity.

5. How does your congregation/diocese approach cultural identity and inclusion?

Reflect on how your community engages diverse cultural identities, fosters belonging, and responds to the needs of a diverse or evolving population.

While our congregation may not reflect every demographic represented across Wichita, parishioners share a deep commitment to serving neighbors and supporting those experiencing hardship. That commitment is expressed through generous support of outreach ministries, charitable initiatives, and community partnerships.

Given the desire to be welcoming, fostering a sense of belonging is a priority and a challenge. Knowing names is a first step. Newcomers are quickly given name tags and everyone is encouraged to wear them. Volunteers from the Welcome committee greet people when they enter the church. The Connect committee is working on promoting opportunities for social interaction.

We continue to develop intentional pathways that help newcomers become active participants in parish life, ministry, fellowship, and discipleship.

6. Other Information

Use this space to share any additional details about the role or organization that would help candidates discern their fit - such as organizational culture, special projects, or unique opportunities and challenges.

In September 2024, the parish launched the INVITE/WELCOME/CONNECT project which mirrored successful strategies presented by the national program then customized for St. James. Lay leaders volunteered and working committees were formed. These committees have met periodically to set goals and put into action their plans. The Invite committee has done personal invitations, mailings, social media, and advertising at public events. The Welcome committee has welcomers at the door for services and other events, reestablished a coffee hour at services, and done receptions for Guild Hall Players (GHP) participants. The Connect committee has created an activities brochure, offered free movie nights, hosted the Greening of the Church, and worked in support of Second Sunday Breakfasts and other parish family events.

The Creation Care Team has taken on the maintenance of the beautiful parish gardens and building on a re-occurring basis. They have also made many presentations live, in print, and on-line.

Several annual popular public events are traditions at St. James. The annual Oyster Dinner and Olde English Tea, both organized and staffed by laity, draw people into the church for raising money for local charities. The GHP, supervised by a team including church members with theatre expertise, completed their 20th season of plays and musicals, performed by over 100 local artists and craft-people in front of over 1000 people from the area.

The parish is very excited to welcome and connect a steadily increasing number of youth and young families. As this vibrant ministry continues to flourish, we offer Sunday School on the first and third Sundays of each month at 9:30 a.m., providing opportunities for children to explore and grow in their faith. Children's Chapel is held during the 10:30 a.m. service on the first Sunday, while a family-friendly Family Service is offered on the third Sunday at 10:30 a.m. This summer St. James hosted an Ecumenical Vacation Bible School (VBS) that engaged children from several CH congregations run by our volunteers and others from those churches. The parish youth program was suspended in 2025 because of low participation and leaders stepping down. Recruiting volunteers and participants for these programs is very challenging, but with the gradual appearance of newcomers and returnees to the church, there is cautious hope for renewal.

MINISTRY MEDIA AND LINKS

Parish Website	**https://stjameswichita.org/**
Parish YouTube	**https://www.youtube.com/@StJamesWichita**
Parish Facebook	**https://www.facebook.com/stjameswichita**
Centennial Celebration Article from Diocesan Magaz	**https://episcopal-ks.org/st-james-wichita-turns-100/**

NARRATIVES

1. **Describe your congregation's/diocese's theology or spiritual identity.**

   Reflect on key moments or experiences that have shaped or challenged your congregation's theological understanding or self-identity.

Our identity is well expressed by “Whoever you are and wherever you find yourself on your journey of faith, you are welcome here,” and by the words of the baptismal covenant: We “proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ, seek and serve Christ in all persons, strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.” Our identity is rooted in inclusive orthodoxy from the pulpit, with sermons always centered on the Scripture readings from the Bible. We place a strong emphasis on the openness of the Eucharist, and host events that engage other denominations, as well as the secular community in our city.

The central spiritual identity of St. James is one of compassion. Seekers, questioners, and those exploring spiritual questions all find a place within our community. In addition to our inclusivity, this shows itself through our ministries: we do many works of mercy in the community, ministering to the poor, the sick, the homeless, and children in need. While parishioners bring a variety of perspectives and experiences, we are united by our shared faith in Christ and our commitment to worship, service, and community.

The liturgy and the Scriptures aid in promoting growth of diverse thinking. As a congregation predominantly of college-educated people, we appreciate preaching that one “can chew on,” and we aren’t afraid to grapple with difficult topics; however, we celebrate the fact that our leaders rarely, if ever, tell people that they must interpret Scripture a certain single way. It is seen as a point of strength that we recognize and appreciate learning traditional interpretations, but welcome alternate points of view, so long as they do not threaten the dignity of others.

5. How does your congregation/diocese sustain its spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being?

Ministry is deeply meaningful and often demanding. Share how your community nurtures its collective health and sense of call.

Our congregation seeks to sustain a healthy and vibrant parish life through worship, fellowship, and shared ministry. Prayer is central to our community. Twice a year we offer Choral Evensong in the Anglican tradition offering opportunities for reflection, renewal, and connection with God.
During Lent, we re-introduced a weekly Rite I service of morning prayer providing a meaningful expression of our Anglican tradition. The addition of Children's Chapel beginning this month on Sunday mornings reflects our dedication to welcoming and forming our youngest members in a way that is engaging and age-appropriate.
Our parish also finds joy in gathering beyond Sunday worship. Community events such as Woofstock bring together parishioners, neighbors, and their beloved animals in a celebration of creation, hospitality, and fellowship. At St. James, parish events including the annual Blessing of the Pets, book club, Oyster Dinner, English Tea, church gardening, Sunday coffee hour, and breakfast provide opportunities to build relationships, strengthen our community, and celebrate our shared life of faith.
Our commitment to long-term sustainability is reflected in our successful 100th Anniversary Capital Campaign, which raised significant support for major facility improvements, building repairs, and Outreach Ministries. Looking ahead, we have already begun setting aside funds annually toward our 200th Anniversary celebration in 2120. The centennial also included special events and a commemorative hymn, strengthening parish fellowship and identity.
In terms of physical well-being St. James does not currently have any established practices; however, our parish understands the importance of physical well-being and look forward to re-starting in the future.

7. How does your congregation/diocese approach pastoral care?

Reflect on how your community walks with one another and with neighbors through life's joys and challenges - what guides your approach?

St. James values a visible, accessible, and compassionate pastoral presence that helps people navigate both life's celebrations and challenges. Our approach is rooted in the belief that pastoral care is a shared ministry.

As is the case in many Episcopal churches, pastoral care never seems fully adequate to meet the needs of the congregation, and St. James is no different. In response, we have expanded our ministry of care by increasing the involvement of our deacon following his retirement from the teaching profession. He now provides more frequent hospital and home visits and is leading the effort to identify, train, and support additional lay Eucharistic visitors.

Pastoral care at St. James extends beyond clergy leadership. Parishioners deeply appreciate the care provided by our lay ministers and volunteers, recognizing that pastoral care is not the sole responsibility of the rector, but of the whole faith community. Members of the congregation share in the ministry of caring for one another through times of illness, grief, transition, and celebration, and we are seeking a rector to lead, guide, and direct that ministry to ensure its continued growth and success.

9. What does stewardship mean to your congregation/diocese, and how do you practice it?

Describe how your community approaches generosity, resource management, and financial discipleship.

Stewardship at St. James genuinely encompasses “time, talent, and treasure.” Parishioners demonstrate remarkable generosity through financial giving, volunteer leadership, service, and active participation in parish life.

We are very grateful for how we are able to use the resources God has provided. The congregation has demonstrated a long history of faithful financial stewardship. Parishioners consistently support the parish through generous annual commitments and regular giving. The Vestry and parish leadership are committed to responsible financial oversight, thoughtful planning, and transparent management of resources.

Financial stewardship campaigns are in the Fall and rather low-key. Many express thanks for a campaign that is more spiritually focused and not aggressive or manipulative. In addition to mailings, a centerpiece has been laity sharing during worship services what the ministry of St. James means to them and why they give. The stewardship campaign ends in November with an in-gathering and blessing of pledges during worship.

An elected Endowment Fund Board oversees the “St. James Perpetual Memorial and Endowment Fund” and the St. James Church Legacy Society. The Endowment provides an important foundation for future ministry and supports both parish initiatives and outreach efforts.

One of the greatest expressions of stewardship at St. James is the generous sharing of time and talent. Dozens of ministries are sustained by dedicated volunteers who serve in worship, formation, outreach, hospitality, governance, music, and pastoral care. Another way parishioners contribute their time and talents include serving on diocesan boards, planning committees, and board of directors for ESS.

13. How does your congregation/diocese incorporate accessibility and inclusion in your shared life?

Share how your community strives to create welcoming, inclusive spaces for people of all abilities, backgrounds, and experiences.

St. James is committed to creating a parish environment where people of all abilities can participate fully in worship, fellowship, learning, and ministry. In the 2000s, a long railed ramp with a comfortable slope was installed alongside the main interior entrance to the Nave. This ramp goes down from the ground level to the lower-level education wing and the main public restrooms. In the second stage of the remodel, those restrooms were made fully handicapped accessible.

Over the last 5 years we've made the church more accessible to those in wheelchairs and those who have walkers. A portion of the middle pews were removed to allow wheelchairs/walkers to be accessible in the middle of the Nave. During Communion, ushers notify the Celebrant and Chalice Bearer about people with mobility concerns to administer the elements. While not commonly utilized, we do provide hearing assistance devices upon request.

This summer an elevator accommodating a wheelchair and up to 2 additional people has been installed to the south basement. An elevator to the second floor is being installed to be completed in early 2027 and the second floor restrooms have been upgraded to be ADA compliant.

St. James is regarded as an accepting spiritual home by those who attend in the queer community. The parish is described as a safe place to just "be," allowing individuals to be as open or as private as they choose about their sexual orientation or gender identification. Many parishioners have found at St. James a community marked by compassion, hospitality, and acceptance. Some long-term members have encouraging stories about their own coming-out with the support of this community. Gay couples, some with children, are a commonplace part of the parish. St. James has been a welcome haven for several going through gender identity transition. Many LGBTQ+ people are in leadership or support positions at St. James and their queer status is seen as just another aspect of their identity. Some, including allies, say the parish should work to be more visible in the Wichita queer community to let others know this is such a good spiritual place to be.