

Here's a revised version of your article that weaves the various ministries and outreach efforts of St. James Episcopal Church into a more cohesive and compelling narrative. The goal is to highlight the church's mission and impact without listing programs one by one, while still honoring the depth and breadth of its work:

Grace in Action: The Living Mission of St. James Episcopal Church

In the heart of Upper Montclair, St. James Episcopal Church rises not just as a place of worship, but as a living, breathing expression of faith in action. For over a century, this vibrant congregation has embraced a simple yet profound calling: to love, serve, and walk alongside others—especially those most in need.

At St. James, service isn't a side project. It's the heartbeat of the church. Whether through a warm meal, a safe place to land, or a word of encouragement, the people of St. James embody a theology that sees Christ in every neighbor and justice as a sacred responsibility.

This spirit of compassion takes many forms. On any given day, you might find young adults with special needs gaining confidence and community at *The Sky's the Limit Thrift Store*, or neighbors quietly restocking the *Free Little Pantry* on the church lawn—ensuring no one in Montclair goes hungry. Through partnerships with local

ministries like Christine's Kitchen and Martha's Pantry, St. James extends its table far beyond its walls, offering nourishment and dignity to those facing food insecurity.

But the church's reach doesn't stop at the town line. St. James is deeply engaged in global solidarity, supporting children with disabilities in Jerusalem, building schools in rural Africa, and delivering healthcare in Haiti. In Ukraine, the church has responded to the cries of war with tangible aid and steadfast prayer. These efforts reflect a belief that love knows no borders—and that faith must be lived out in both local and global contexts.

Closer to home, St. James walks with those navigating some of life's hardest journeys. Through its support of asylum seekers, incarcerated parents and their children, and families in crisis, the church offers more than charity—it offers presence, partnership, and hope.

Yet what truly sets St. James apart is not just what it does, but how it does it. With humility and joy, the church fosters a culture of radical welcome. Its inclusive worship, progressive theology, and commitment to racial justice and LGBTQ+ inclusion create a spiritual home for those who may have felt unwelcome elsewhere. Its preschool, youth programs, and music ministries nurture the next generation with love and intention.

In all things, St. James seeks not to lead from above, but to walk alongside. As one parishioner put it, "At St. James, we don't just give—we grow."

In a world hungry for connection, justice, and grace, St. James Episcopal Church offers a powerful witness: that faith, when lived fully, can transform not only communities—but hearts.