



The Historic St. James Missionary Baptist Church

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Website Redesign, Development, Launch, and Ongoing Support

Issue Date	May 4, 2026
Proposal Due Date	June 3, 2026
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The Historic St. James Missionary Baptist Church is soliciting proposals from qualified web design and development firms to redesign, develop, launch, and support a modern church website that strengthens digital hospitality, improves visitor and member experience, enhances trust and security, and supports phased implementation over time.

- **Current website URL:** <https://stjbc.org>
- **Livestream and media channels: YouTube** – The Historic St. James Missionary Baptist Church
 1. **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/thehistoricstjames>
 2. **Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/stjames1865/>

1. Introduction

The Historic St. James Missionary Baptist Church invites proposals from qualified vendors to redesign, develop, launch, and support a modern church website that better serves visitors, members, staff, and the wider community. The selected vendor should be able to translate ministry goals into a clear digital experience that is welcoming, secure, maintainable, and scalable over time.

The church intends to approach this work in phases. Phase 1 emphasizes foundational design, core content architecture, security, and essential public-facing functionality. Phase 2 emphasizes expanded engagement features, deeper content experiences, integrations, automation, and ongoing optimization. Vendors may recommend refinements to sequencing, but proposals must clearly distinguish between Phase 1 deliverables, Phase 2 deliverables, and any optional enhancements.

2. Church Background and Current Context

The church seeks a website that supports ministry communication, outreach, discipleship, member engagement, and community connection, while preserving its historic identity and story. The site should welcome new visitors, provide easy access to information and next steps, and offer a reliable platform for ministry content and church operations.

Vendors should assume that the church values the following dimensions in its digital presence:

- **Spiritual:** discipleship, worship, pastoral care, and spiritual growth.
- **Historic:** memory, continuity, narrative, heritage, and archives.
- **Business:** stewardship, administration, finances, processes, and sustainability.
- **Sociocultural:** community, relationships, outreach, and public witness.
- **Technological / Operational:** usability, security, integrations, data handling, and maintainability.

3. Project Goals and Success Outcomes

The website should help the church clearly communicate its identity, improve digital hospitality, support ongoing engagement, and create reliable operational pathways for ministry. At a minimum, the selected vendor should design a solution that advances the following goals:

- Present a visually welcoming, professionally designed website that reflects the church's mission, ministry, and historic identity.
- Make it easy for visitors to understand who the church is, what to expect, and how to take the next steps.
- Improve member access to announcements, events, sermons, ministries, resources, forms, and giving.
- Strengthen content workflows so information is accurate, timely, and easy to update.
- Support discipleship, communication, and connection through clear pathways such as prayer, care, membership, groups, and service.
- Provide secure, responsible handling of personal information and online interactions.
- Establish a maintainable platform with documentation, analytics, and role-appropriate administrative access.
- Improve clarity, trust, and conversion across core user journeys such as Plan Your Visit, Watch, Give, Contact, and Next Steps.

4. Project Scope

The proposed solution should address design, content structure, development, launch preparation, training, documentation, and support. Vendors should identify which services are included in the base proposal and which are optional add-ons. Vendors should clearly state all assumptions, exclusions, dependencies, and church-provided inputs associated with the proposed scope.

4.1 Phase 1 - Foundational Scope

- Discovery and planning, including information architecture and user pathways.
- Visual design for a modern, mobile-friendly church website.
- Homepage and key public-facing pages, including but not limited to About, Ministries, Plan Your Visit, Events, Contact, and Give.
- Core content migration and content formatting for agreed-upon pages.
- Clear homepage pathways such as I'm New, Watch, Give, and Next Steps.

- Basic events calendar and rotating announcements.
- Basic next-step pathways such as interest in following Christ, baptism, membership, serving, and prayer.
- Foundational ministry overview pages and links to individual ministries.
- Analytics setup and baseline reporting.
- Secure hosting and production launch support.
- Administrative training, documentation, and post-launch support.
- Basic quality assurance testing across agreed-upon devices, browsers, and core user journeys prior to launch.

4.2 Phase 2 - Expanded Scope (First Half 2027)

- Expanded sermon archive and media library with improved filtering and organization.
- Testimonies, stories, and digital history/legacy content.
- Enhanced forms, workflow automation, and follow-up emails.
- Special campaign pages, featured giving initiatives, and impact storytelling.
- Blog, devotional, or ministry update capabilities as approved by the church.
- Optional digital store/resources section for books, studies, conference resources, or ministry products.
- Additional integrations with church systems, email tools, livestream platforms, and administrative workflows.
- Ongoing optimization recommendations based on analytics and usage patterns.
- Ongoing enhancements based on approved priorities, user feedback, analytics, and operational needs.

5. Functional and Content Requirements

Vendors should explain how their proposed solution will meet the following requirements. Responses should clearly identify whether each item is included in Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Requirement Area	Expected Capability
Brand, Story & Identity	Mission, vision, beliefs, leadership/staff bios, service times and location, ministry overview, and a compelling presentation of church identity.
History & Legacy	Ability to support church story, timeline, founding narrative, milestones, archives, and legacy-oriented content now or in future phases.
Information & Engagement	Events calendar, announcements, news updates, social links, visitor FAQs, and pathways for ongoing online engagement.
Discipleship & Next Steps	Interest forms or pathways for following Christ, baptism, membership, joining a group, serving, prayer, and pastoral care.
User Experience	Simple navigation, strong mobile experience, readable typography, accessible structure, clear calls to action, and clean page layouts.
Operations & Administration	Easy content management for non-technical staff, documentation, role-based permissions, and workflow clarity.
Giving & Stewardship	Secure online giving, designated funds, prominent giving access, and optional campaign or impact pages.
Media & Livestream	Livestream integration, replay access, sermon archive support, and scalable media organization.

6. Technical, Hosting, and Platform Expectations

Vendors should describe the recommended content management system, hosting environment, architecture, and rationale for the proposed technical stack. Responses should be written in a way that a church leadership team can understand, even if the solution includes technical complexity behind the scenes. Vendors should also state any technical assumptions, third-party dependencies, licensing implications, and long-term maintenance requirements associated with the proposed solution. Vendors should identify which responsibilities will remain with the vendor after launch and which, if any, will transfer to the church.

- Recommended Content Management System (CMS) and reason for selection.
- Hosting provider or hosting model, including environment management and support responsibilities.
- Approach to scalability, uptime, updates, and maintenance.
- Approach to media handling, streaming integrations, and third-party services.
- Approach to integrations such as giving platforms, forms, email tools, analytics, and church management systems.
- Content migration assumptions, dependencies, and responsibilities.

6.1 Ownership and Content Responsibilities

Vendors should state their assumptions regarding church-provided content, including written copy, images, videos, sermon media, historical materials, branding assets, and approval workflows. Proposals should identify what content services are included, such as content strategy, copyediting, migration, formatting, image optimization, or content entry. Vendors should also identify ownership of final website files, design assets, and administrative access after launch.

The church shall retain ownership of its website content, form submissions, visitor/member data, domain assets, and church-provided materials. Vendors must clearly describe any license rights they require to host, process, secure, back up, or otherwise operate the website and related systems. Vendors must also explain data export options, transition support, and what happens to church data, files, and administrative access upon termination of services.

6.2 Acceptance/Testing Criteria

Vendors should describe their quality assurance process and identify how launch readiness will be validated, including testing of forms, mobile responsiveness, key integrations, and critical user pathways. Vendors should also describe the acceptance process, including how defects, revisions, and final approval will be handled prior to go-live.

7. Security and Data Protection Requirements

Security is a material requirement of this RFP. Because the website may collect personal information, process form submissions, and connect to online giving or financial systems, vendors must demonstrate a clear, responsible, and sustainable approach to security. The church expects vendors, not volunteers, to own technical security responsibilities.

Required Security Controls

- HTTPS enforced site-wide with automatic SSL certificate management.
- Vendor-managed updates for all site components, including CMS core, plugins, themes, and server-side security patches as applicable.

- Role-based administrative access with clear account management procedures.
- Strong password requirements for administrator accounts.
- Daily automated backups using incremental/delta-aware capture with periodic full snapshots.
- Documented recovery process, restoration timelines, and restoration responsibilities.
- Clear explanation of what data is collected, where it is stored, and how it is protected in transit and at rest, where applicable.
- Heightened protections for children’s information, including minimal collection, restricted access, and strong retention/deletion practices.
- Secure integration practices for third-party systems, including giving, financial, and reporting tools.
- A clearly documented split between vendor responsibilities and church responsibilities for security, access, integrations, and ongoing maintenance.

Preferred Security Controls

- Multi-factor authentication for administrator accounts.
- Spam, bot, and brute-force mitigation.
- Web application firewall or equivalent protection.
- Security monitoring, malware detection, and documented incident response procedures.

Potential Disqualifiers

- Church is responsible for security patching.
- No documented backup strategy or recovery procedures.
- Vague answers on data protection.
- Lack of documented security protocols.
- Unclear ownership of security integration.

8. Accessibility, Usability, and Quality Expectations

The church expects the final website to be easy to use for visitors, members, staff, and volunteers across a range of devices and levels of technical comfort. Vendors should explain how they design accessibility, clarity, and quality control. Vendors should also describe how they validate usability and quality before launch, including testing of forms, navigation, mobile responsiveness, and other critical user pathways.

- Mobile-first and responsive layouts.
- Readable typography, sufficient contrast, and intuitive page hierarchy.
- Accessible navigation and page structure.
- Support for Alt text and captioning for key content, where applicable.
- Form usability and clear confirmation messaging.
- Testing processes across devices, browsers, and core user flows.
- Approach to visitor experience, member experience, trust, and conversion optimization.

9. Vendor Qualifications

Proposals should demonstrate relevant experience and the ability to work effectively in a church or nonprofit environment.

- Background and years of relevant experience.

- Portfolio examples of church, nonprofit, or community-oriented websites.
- Team structure and key personnel who would work on this engagement.
- Relevant certifications, specialties, or platform partnerships, if applicable.
- References, preferably from churches or nonprofit organizations.
- Statement describing the vendor’s approach to collaboration, communication, and service in a ministry context.
- Description of comparable projects involving phased delivery, content migration, or ongoing support/retainer arrangements.

10. Proposal Response Requirements

Proposals that omit required sections or fail to clearly distinguish Phase 1, Phase 2, and optional services may be deemed non-responsive. Proposals must be complete, self-contained, and sufficiently detailed to allow the church to evaluate the vendor’s qualifications, approach, scope, and pricing without extensive follow-up.

To be considered responsive, proposals should include the following sections in the order listed below:

- Executive summary
- Understanding of the church’s needs and project goals
- Recommended approach and project methodology
- Proposed sitemap/information architecture approach
- Phase 1 scope, deliverables, assumptions, and timeline
- Phase 2 scope, deliverables, assumptions, and timeline
- Security approach and responsibility matrix
- Platform, hosting, and integration recommendations
- Content migration approach
- Testing, launch, and post-launch support plan
- Training and documentation plan
- Team members and relevant experience
- Pricing and fee structure
- Optional services or alternates
- References

11. Pricing Requirements

Vendors should provide transparent pricing with enough detail for the church to compare proposals. Pricing may be fixed-fee, phased, or milestone-based, but it must be clear. Vendors should clearly identify any pricing assumptions, exclusions, and conditions that could affect total project cost. Vendors should specify whether post-launch support is included for a defined period after go-live and, if so, for how long.

- Phase 1 price and what is included.
- Phase 2 price or pricing framework, and what is included.
- Any monthly retainer, maintenance, hosting, or support fees.
- Hourly rates for out-of-scope requests, if applicable.
- Emergency support fees, if applicable.
- Third-party licensing, plugin, hosting, or subscription costs that are not included in the vendor fee.

- Any recommended optional add-ons with separate pricing.

12. Project Timeline

The church may adjust the transition from phase 1 to phase 2 due to unforeseen circumstances.

Milestone	Date
RFP issued	May 4, 2026
Deadline for vendor questions	May 13, 2026
Responses to vendor questions issued	May 16, 2026
Proposal deadline	June 3, 2026
Finalist interviews/presentations	June 15-17, 2026
Vendor selection	June 18, 2026
Anticipated project kickoff	TBA

13. Evaluation Criteria

The church expects to evaluate proposals holistically. Cost is an important factor, but not the only factor, and evaluation may include the following:

- Demonstrated understanding of church needs and ministry fit.
- Quality of proposed design, strategy, and user experience approach.
- Technical capability and implementation quality.
- Strength of security, backup, and data protection approach.
- Ability to communicate clearly and collaborate effectively.
- Relevant experience and references.
- Total cost of ownership and pricing clarity.

14. Submission Instructions

Submit proposals electronically in PDF format to the contact listed on the cover page. The email subject line should read: **Website Proposal - [Vendor Name]**. Proposals should be complete at the time of submission. The church reserves the right to request clarifications, conduct interviews, reject any or all proposals, negotiate scope, or cancel the solicitation without award. Any proposal received after the submission deadline will be rejected and will not be considered.

15. Terms and Conditions

- This RFP does not obligate the church to select a vendor or award a contract.
- The church may accept or reject any proposal in whole or in part.
- The church may request additional information, presentations, or revised pricing from one or more vendors.
- All proposal materials submitted may be retained by the church for evaluation purposes.
- Any final engagement will be subject to contract negotiation and approval by the church.
- Any selected vendor will be required to enter into a mutually acceptable written agreement prior to the start of work.

Appendix A. Phased Feature Summary

The following summary reflects the church’s current phased approach. Vendors may recommend refinements but should clearly indicate how their proposal aligns with this structure and note any proposed changes to phase placement, along with the rationale for those changes.

Feature or Capability	Phase
About hub: mission, vision, beliefs; leadership; service times and location	Phase 1
Ministry overview page and links to ministry pages	Phase 1
Events calendar and rotating announcements	Phase 1
Plan Your Visit page with what to expect and FAQs	Phase 1
Social links and online community touchpoints	Phase 1
Next Steps hub: follow Christ, baptism, membership, groups, serve	Phase 1
Prayer request and core connection pathways	Phase 1
Simple navigation and clear homepage paths	Phase 1
Analytics setup	Phase 1
Online giving page, designated funds, and prominent Give access	Phase 1
Testimonies and stories section	Phase 2
Digital history/archive enhancements	Phase 2
Sermon archive improvements and filtering	Phase 2
Weekly devotionals or ministry update capabilities	Phase 2
Follow-up automation after forms	Phase 2
Advanced registrations, auto-reminders, and workflow automation	Phase 2
Campaign pages and impact storytelling	Phase 2
Digital store/resources enhancements	Phase 2

Appendix B. Proposal Checklist

A responsive proposal should include, at a minimum:

- Executive summary
- Understanding of the church’s needs and project goals
- Recommended approach and project methodology
- Proposed sitemap/information architecture approach
- Phase 1 scope, deliverables, assumptions, and timeline
- Phase 2 scope, deliverables, assumptions, and timeline
- Security approach and responsibility matrix
- Platform, hosting, and integration recommendations
- Content migration approach
- Testing, launch, and post-launch support plan
- Training and documentation plan
- Team members and relevant experience
- Portfolio examples
- References
- Pricing and fee structure
- Optional services or alternates
- Security documentation summary
- Key assumptions and dependencies