

May 1, 2022

# Annual Parish Reports

## 2022



**St. James'**  
*Episcopal Church*  
LEESBURG, VIRGINIA

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## **Annual Meeting Agenda**

- 11:15 AM Welcome & Prayers – Father Earl Mullins
- 11:20 AM Reading and Approval of the Minutes from the 2021 Annual Meeting – Jane Roth
- 11:25 AM Introduction of the Candidate Slate for Election of Vestry Class of 2025
- 11:35 AM Distribution of Ballots and Voting for Vestry Class of 2025
- 11:45 AM Expressions of Appreciation – Father Earl Mullins
- 11:55 AM Financial Report – John Forcier
- 12:00 PM Junior Warden’s Remarks – Tom Horne
- 12:05 PM Senior Warden’s Remarks – Fred Williams
- 12:10 PM New Rector Discernment Committee Report – Stacy Cleveland
- 12:20 PM Announcement of New Vestry Class of 2025 – Father Earl Mullins
- 12:25 PM Questions & Open Forum
- 12:45 PM Closing Prayers

## 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes

### St. James' Episcopal Church Annual Meeting Sunday, April 18, 2021

**NOTE:** *Due to the Commonwealth of Virginia & Diocese directives for COVID 19, the Annual Meeting was held via Zoom video conferencing.*

The Rev. Earl Mullins opened the Annual Meeting at 11:15 am. He welcomed those attending. His welcoming remarks were followed by opening prayers for Joy and God's creations, and for the annual meeting.

Father Earl introduced Vaughn Vigil, Deacon of the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, who would be assisting with the technical logistics of the meeting. Vaughn introduced himself as an IT professional, who has assumed the role of Zoom specialist for the Diocese of Maryland. He applauded St. James' for the wonderful work the parish is and has been doing through the pandemic.

Jane Roth, Registrar, read the minutes of the October 4, 2020 Annual Meeting after which, Ed Hatrick made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and voted upon favorably.

Father Earl thanked the Vestry Nominating Committee (Susan Moffett, Lisa Krepich, Fred Williams, Jane Roth, Wayne Newell, Carolyn Briles, Karen Knobloch, and Terry Prevost) who considered the nominations of 56 Vestry candidates for the Class of 2024. The final candidates are: Fiona Ahrweiler, Sherri Dennis, Denny Farrington, George Garlick, Gary Gegenheimer, Christopher Hatch, Tamsyn Knight, and Mike Scott. Father Earl reminded those eligible to vote (members of the parish in good standing) voting would be open until 12:00 pm.

A Year in Review video was then presented, and Father Earl thanked Ara Bagdasarian and Mary Frances Forcier for pulling it together.

Father Earl then recognized new members of the parish since the last annual meeting: Cindy Helba, John and Missy Jennings, and Nick and Linda Smith and family.

Father Earl expressed thanks to members of the Class of 2021: Wayne Newell, Carolyn Briles, Karen Knobloch, Terry Prevost, Jane Roth, and Fred Williams. He noted that Fred and Jane will continue as Officers: Sr. Warden and Registrar respectively. Other officers are John Forcier, Treasurer, and Tom Horne, Jr. Warden. In addition, he expressed appreciation for Maddie Reece, Youth Representative, who completed a one-year Vestry term.

Father Earl then expressed appreciation to those helping us to stay connected during these unusual times. These include Pastoral Associates, the Card Ministry, Bill Brooks, Chair of the Finance Committee and the entire Finance Committee, Ken Getty, Dan Thomas, and Don Scheuerman, and their commitment to the Property Committee and church maintenance, Karen Knobloch and Mary Lou Leipheimer for Stewardship, Mary Frances Forcier for serving as webmaster, ensuring

publication of the E-Pistle and using her communications expertise to keep maintaining Christian formation and engaging children; the Sextons, Adan Cortes and Francisco Ramos, Margaret Akers for coordination of the Altar Guild, Di Cook for the beautiful flowers, the Re-Gathering Committee, Fred Williams, Dottie and Jeff Brannock, Kay Gregg, Jane Roth, and Rachelle Schroeder for their work in logistics to returning to phased opening of in-person worship; the A/V Media Team, including Bryan Welsh, Mark Snow, Ara Bagdasarian, Don Young, and the music ministries—Dr. Steven Cooksey, Walter Litzenberger, Rachel Newell, and the Corner Chorale and the 11:15 Choir. A short video honoring the choir was then shown. Father Earl then thanked Kay Gregg for being the heart and soul of St. James', and congratulated her on her retirement.

The financial report was then given by John Forcier, Treasurer, and Bill Brooks, Chair of the Finance Committee. John thanked Bill for his leadership of the Finance Committee. Bill then reported that St. James' had received over \$143,000 through the Payroll Protection Program in 2020, which has been fully forgiven by the federal government. He shared these monies were critical in covering salary and benefits for an eight-week period. There was a small budget surplus at the end of 2020 which, in addition to the strong giving, was in part a result of not hiring a budgeted clergy assistant. Bill indicated over \$105,000 was spent on parking lot and masonry repairs, repairs and replacement of the Narthex roof, installation of back flow valves to meet code and A/V upgrades to the Nave and Parish Hall. He emphasized that these expenses were all met through donated funds, including the Kitty Boyd and Foundation Funds. Bill reiterated the importance of keeping St. James' in mind with parishioners' estate planning.

John recognized Halstead and Halstead, the accounting firm, which was critical in their support of St. James' and maneuvering through the Payroll Protection Program administrative process. They were instrumental in obtaining Employee Retention Credit, which provided a fully refundable tax credit for up to 50% of qualified wages paid to employees. This resulted in realized savings and reduced the budget deficit by almost 80%. He also shared that a 2021 Payroll Protection Program loan has been approved. The investment loan for IT and HVAC upgrades is continuing to be paid back, and funding of all ministries has been retained at the pre-pandemic levels. John shared that income is 76% from pledges with 16% from consistent non-pledge giving, 4% from loose plate offering, 4% from interest investment income. On the expense side: 55% is salary and benefits, 4% outreach (pledge to Diocese in support of their outreach efforts), 26% administrative and property, 9% debt repayment, and 4% other including among other programs, Newcomers and Pastoral Associates. John mentioned the Monthly Mission Partners flow through and are not included as a budget expense. In 2020 Monthly Mission Partners received about \$20,000 from parishioners. Father Earl reinforced the criticality of the Finance Committee as a ministry of the parish, and thanked Bill, John, and all members of the Finance Committee for their commitment and dedication.

Prior to Fred Williams, Sr. Warden presenting his report, Father Earl thanked Fred for his vision and moving the parish forward. Father Earl stressed that his intelligence, heart, vision, and organizational expertise have been and continue to be invaluable. Fred honors the past while being willing to take bold steps for the future.

Father Earl then announced the Vestry Class of 2024: Fiona Ahrweiler, Sherri Dennis, Christopher Hatch, and Mike Scott.

Stacy Cleveland, Chair of the New Rector Discernment Committee presented her report. On behalf of the committee, she thanked the parish for their support, and shared they are working with The Reverend Sarah Brockenbrough, Transition Minister, Diocese of Virginia as a consultant on the process. She shared the Committee has determined three phases to the process: (1) Discovery, Vision, and Planning stage; (2) Receiving/Reviewing Applications stage; (3) Discerning and Calling stage with presentation to the Vestry. The Committee has contracted with Holy Cow consulting to do a congregational assessment, which involves developing a parish survey to be launched in May. The survey will focus on “who we have been” and “who we are now.” Participation will be online as well as via paper. In conjunction with the survey, there will also be focus group meetings held online as well with in person potentially based on metrics and Diocese pandemic norms. These will foster parish interaction and help guide us in where God is calling us. The results of the survey and focus groups will be a portfolio, which will provide an overview of the church and its strategic goals. This process will take approximately eight weeks and include updating the website and online presence. She reported the Diocese typically allows 9 to 12 months for the Search process. The Committee is moving along at a consistent pace, but does not plan to hurry the process in any way. Father Earl thanked the Committee for their dedication and shared St. James’ is in good hands. He expressed appreciation to Stacy for her clarity and conciseness.

Terry Prevost, outgoing Junior Warden, was not present, and prepared a video report, which unfortunately was not available. In Terry’s written report submitted, he thanked Father Earl and Fred for their guidance and support, and expressed deep appreciation to Ken, Dan, and Don of the Property Committee and all they have accomplished to maintain the church. Under their leadership:

- The Narthex roof was replaced.
- Vestry approval was secured for the Janney House roof replacement starting later this month.
- Plumbing and electrical improvements were made that were required by the fire code compliance inspection and the town of Leesburg.
- Security was improved by re-keying the Nave and Narthex locks.
- Air scrubbers and higher-rating HVAC filters were installed in preparation for regathering.
- Repairs to the baptismal window were facilitated, and generously funded by a parishioner.
- Installation of the upgraded A/V system was coordinated.
- The parking lot was patched.

He also spoke of the Accessibility Taskforce (Steve Mayo, Chair; Ed Hatrick; Andy Durot; Jane Roth) and their work to make St. James’ accessibility to those with disabilities. Plans are progressing, but have been delayed due to supply chain challenges with the pandemic and COVID related labor shortages. Father Earl thanked Terry for his commitment to the parish.

Tom Horne, incoming Junior Warden then spoke. Tom thanked Terry and the Property Committee for their excellent work in keeping the church in order and well maintained. He then shared a story of his hero George Washington as he crossed the Delaware River as it reflected leadership and risk taking. Father Earl thanked Tom for his leadership and taking on this important role.

Fred Williams, incoming Sr. Warden then gave remarks. Fred spoke of the parish’s search for their 25<sup>th</sup> Rector. He paid tribute to the Reverend John Smith, who was the 22<sup>nd</sup> Rector of St. James’ and

passed away on Easter Sunday. He spoke of three enduring themes of St. James' as enumerated by Reverend Smith: (1) Energized risk grounded in faith, (2) Worship centered on giving praise and thanks to the Lord and (3) You care for each other and for others. These principles manifested in our risk to initiate a new A/V system critical to successful online streaming during the pandemic; focused worship lead by Father Earl; adding drone shots of the Nave to remind parishioners of our place; Family Compline; Christmas trees in and outside the church and inside/outside crosses during Lent; and, caring through the card ministry, St. James' Community Garden, expanded Grace to Go, and initiating a COVID Relief Fund for those in the parish needing financial support. In addition, St. James' was a vaccination center for the COVID vaccine for the underserved community in partnership with St. Gabriel's.

In addition, through Father Earl, faith has been deepened through the Disciples in Christian Community (DOCC) program, a course on the Old Testament and most recently, the Sacred Ground class focused on creating space for difficult, yet respectful conversations about race and racism.

Fred also spoke of the ongoing work of the Vestry in creating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), a focus on Communication and Membership, Efficient Use of the Space, and the Future of the Preschool. In addition, the goal to hire a Director of Communications and Administration is well underway. The number of Facebook followers has increased from 600 to over 1,000 during the pandemic with Christmas reaching 2,448 followers over all 3 services. With the SOPs internal processes have been documented, and a healthy rotation included for leadership transition. With this rotation, Tom Horne, Jr. Warden is now Chair of the Property Committee, with John Forcier, Treasurer, assuming Chair of Finance.

Efficiencies will also occur with the move of church offices to the Parish House in and around June 1, 2021. The preschool will be housed in the connected buildings of the Janney House and Rittenhouse. Fred closed with a reference to the quilt hung over the entrance to the Parish Hall and created by the Circle of the Kings Daughters, who were critical in raising the funds to purchase the deed to the church building. Their motto, as depicted on the quilt, is "Look up, not down; look forward, not back; look out, and not in, and lend a hand."

Father Earl then reviewed the new worship schedule:

- Sunday, April 18, 2021
  - 7:45 AM In-person worship, live-streamed, Traditional Holy Eucharist Rite I
  - 10:00 AM Pre-recorded Contemporary Online Virtual Worship Service Rite II
  - 11:00 AM Annual Parish Meeting via Zoom
- Sunday, April 25, 2021
  - 7:45 AM In-person worship, live-streamed, Traditional Holy Eucharist Rite I
  - 9:00 AM Pre-recorded Contemporary Online Virtual Worship Service Rite II
  - 10:15 AM Coffee Hour via Zoom
  - 11:15 AM In-person worship, live-streamed, Traditional Holy Eucharist Rite II
- Parish Retreat, Shrine Mont
  - Father Earl encouraged participation in the Parish Retreat on Memorial Day Weekend.
- Summer Schedule

- Beginning Sunday, June 6, 2021 through Sunday, August 29, 2021, in-person worship will be held at 7:45 AM, Rite I and 10:00 AM, Rite II. Both services will be live-streamed. There will not be a pre-recorded service.

Father Earl reminded everyone of the Question-and-Answer Forum following the Annual Meeting. He requested that members of the Music ministries remain on after the Forum. He also thanked his wife, Patti, for her unfailing support. He then expressed blessings for the lives of those who passed away since the last Annual Meeting: The Reverend John Smith, Jean Brown, Elin Frymoyer, and Kenetta Russ.

Father Earl closed the Annual Meeting with a prayer for those who died and a prayer for quiet confidence.

Vaughn Vigil, Deacon of the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, gave the dismissal.

The Annual Meeting ended at 12:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Roth, Registrar

## Officer Reports

### **Senior Warden's Report by Fred Williams**

"...Open the Eyes of our Faith..." -May 1 Collect

"I will exalt you, Oh Lord, because you have lifted me up and have not let my enemies triumph over me." -Psalm 30

"Follow me..." -John 21:19

As we all know, there are times when we may be uncertain and fearful of our future. But knowing God is in control, we can confidently follow the way of Christ. There are also times when wealth, power, and fame make us feel self-reliant, self-secure, and independent from God, but Christ also warns us not to be trapped by the false security of prosperity. Depend on God for our security, and we will not be shaken when worldly possessions disappear.

Follow me, he said.

We began in 2021 in a time of national and local uncertainty and fear, but having faith in God, we in the St. James' community also started the year 2021 with a renewed sense of who we are and who we might become as followers of Christ. In small, albeit, socially distanced groups, we got to know and care for each other more fully through the many ministries that continued even during COVID. We also experienced many firsts at St. James' as we lived into the phrase, "Open the eyes of our Faith," including:

- Our first regular Children's sermon and Chapel.
- The first use of our sacred space to support COVID vaccinations for under-served people in Leesburg.
- Our first use of the Parish Hall kitchen by Monthly Mission Partner, A Farm Less Ordinary to can and preserve their produce.
- Our first major act of vandalism this century, perhaps ever, which led us to supporting the mental health services of Loudoun County.
- Our first use of the old Rectory as a consolidated office for clergy and staff.
- Our first renovation in decades of the rooms on the first floor of the Janney House, making them more welcoming and purposeful.
- Our first Genesis stewardship campaign.
- Our first regular rotation of ministry leaders under our newly adopted policies.
- Our first member of the congregation in over a decade to be accepted by the Virginia Theological Seminary as a seminarian, Kara Laughlin.

Our goals and focuses in 2021 were to look forward and prepare the way to welcome our new Rector, and for that person to be able to hit the ground running on arrival. This took several forms:

Early in the year, a Diocesan dialogue series on matters of faith and race called Sacred Ground was offered and subscribed to, resulting in the filling of a second class. It opened the eyes of many to lessons not known and potential opportunities ahead.

A nomination committee was formed to recommend candidates to the Vestry for the St. James' Discernment Committee that would begin the search for our new Rector. That committee was launched after we worked with the Diocese and the Bishops to understand how it would work and how different and improved the process to find a new Rector would be.

Another committee was created to choose candidates from the 56 who were nominated for the Vestry class of 2024—a similar committee that was created just weeks ago to choose the 8 wonderful candidates that we will be voting on this morning.

Work began by Fr. Earl and the St. James' members of the Paxton Board of Visitors to stabilize and clarify our organizational relationship with the Paxton Board of Trustees.

The Re-gathering team, ushers, acolytes, choir, musicians, A/V team members, altar guild, and staff all came together to resume wonderful worship services which could be experienced in-person or online.

Children and teachers returned to St. James' Preschool; we returned to Shrine Mont.

Planning by our Accessibility Taskforce continued with a sense of mission and persistence, despite the frustrating scarcity of contractors and supplies.

As Spring became Summer, our Discernment Committee worked many hours, quietly discerning who WE are to enable them and discern what capabilities we wanted in our new Rector.

Throughout all of these, YOU, the congregation, were present. YOU prayed for the committees, YOU answered surveys and took part in feedback sessions, and with the Discernment Committee, YOU answered the questions:

**Who have we been,  
Who we are now, and  
Who God is calling us to be.**

YOU were patient with the process.

We learned that overall we are a church that is marked by the strengths to create transformational experiences for both our members and those whom we serve in ministry. We were reminded that we feel strongly that a good sermon, moments of community and connection, and times when pastoral care have been provided are when we feel most fulfilled and connected to the Church.

We learned that the factors that drive satisfaction at St. James' include how we govern, how well we manage conflict, how we engage in ministry, and the quality of our education and formation programming.

We learned that we are theologically progressive and, at the same time, somewhat diverse in our theological perspectives. Our ability to hold these together under one roof is a strength we have as we welcome new members whose faith journey is also diverse.

We learned that compared to other churches, we are average in many categories, but that our key strengths lie in worship and music. Our one area where we learned we are well below average is in stewardship and giving to the church. The very successful Genesis campaign last fall began to tap this wonderful opportunity for improvement.

Overall, the Discernment Committee found that we are a congregation that is growing stronger. We learned during the pandemic that we could experiment to address things in new ways, and that in the right circumstances and with the right pastoral care, we are more capable of change than we ever knew.

As Summer became Autumn, the Discernment Committee was knee deep in accepting and analyzing candidates, and the Vestry turned its attention to one of its primary responsibilities: Property. Our goals were to maintain our place of worship, to enhance the hospitality and accessibility of our spaces, and to ensure our cemetery and columbarium will be places of respect, dignity, and reflection. We have now made certain major property decisions as Tom Horne has described in his Jr. Warden report. We believe the plans now in play are respectful, responsible, and doable in the time frames described.

We also hired Elizabeth Bullock as our Director of Communications & Administration to help manage the daily rhythms of the office and foster our expanding use of technology, especially in communications.

As Autumn became Winter, YOU the congregation came through with our Genesis stewardship campaign. Our Treasurer, John Forcier and the Finance team then put together a Vestry approved balanced budget for 2022. And...

Alleluia! Fr. Chad found us and we found him. God surely had a hand in this call as we followed his lead. Fr. Chad and his family are now somewhere in their travels from Houston, and if all goes according to plan, his belongings will arrive sometime this week and he, his wife Cinnamon, and their two boys will begin to get settled in their new home. We can't wait for his official start on June 6.

But first, we have to say our goodbyes to Fr. Earl. However, that will not be today. Today is about giving thanks for the whole congregation of St. James' and to vote for our new Vestry members. But in two weeks, on Sunday, May 15, we will give thanks to Fr. Earl and his time with us. Details on how you can be a part of that celebration will be distributed this coming week. Please plan to join us on that day in worship and at the luncheon that will follow.

In my previous annual report to you, on April 18, 2021, I closed with the exhortation of the King's Daughters of St. James':

Look up, not down,  
Look forward, not back,  
Look out and not in, and

Lend a hand.

To this, I will now add Jesus' simple words to Peter: "Follow me"

Amen.

## **Junior Warden's Report by Tom Horne**

### **"Preserving the Past, Addressing Current Needs, and Creating a Vision for the Future"**

This has been an active year in addressing the property needs of St. James' Church. Long overdue repairs were made, a needed response to acts of vandalism were accomplished, work commenced to address the accessibility needs of the physically challenged, provisions made for the protection of historic records, consolidation of the church offices in the Parish House, improvements made to maintain structural integrity and safety, building improvements made consistent with charitable bequests, and a contract finalized to provide for the future preservation of the historic stone structure. I want to thank all of those on the Vestry, Property Committee, Accessibility Committee, Elizabeth Bullock (Dir. of Administration & Communications), Fred Williams (Senior Warden), and Father Earl Mullins for their hard work, dedication, and support for these various projects. The various undertakings have been summarized in this report. Funding for these projects has come, in some measure, from the gifts of prior members of the Church who have remembered St. James' in their testamentary giving. These giving persons are Frank & Ann Myers, Valerie Symington, & Katherine (Kitty) Boyd. They were each devoted members of the church and active in their community. Frank & Ann lived a short distance from downtown Leesburg near the Big Spring, north of town. Frank was a warden of the church, longtime Rotarian, and Chairman of the County Board of Equalization. They were long devoted members of St. James' Church. Valerie Symington was not only a member of St. James', but a person with a keen and giving spirit. She lived an exemplary life that was marked by her many contributions, financially and personally, including Ida Lee Park and the Temple Hall Farm Regional Park, north of Leesburg that are among the objects of her bounty. Kitty Boyd was the President of the local historical society, painter, community activist, and longtime member of St. James' Church.

#### The Parish House:

The church offices were moved from the Janney House to the Parish House in August of 2021. This resulted in a more efficient use of space and one that has helped preserve a little-used historic building. A non-functioning half bath on the second floor has been made functional, electrical and technological needs have been addressed, and the copier has been moved out of the Janney House kitchen and into the church office. The second floor now houses the Choir Director's office, the choir room, the kid's choir room, and the accountant's office. The first floor houses the Rector's office and the administrative offices. Repairs have been made consistent with code compliance. The first floor now has a bathroom that is now handicap accessible. Necessary floor repairs have been made. The basement remains open for use by various church groups. The congregation is welcome to come visit the new offices.

#### The Janney House & Narthex:

Consistent with the desires of former parishioner, Kitty Boyd, as expressed in her will, the Janney Parlor and Rector's Study on the first floor of the Janney House have been painted and carpeted. The room outside the Rector's Study, now used by the Vestry, has been named "The Katherine (Kitty) Boyd Room" in her memory. A large screen television has been installed to permit meetings to occur virtually in the room. Some of St. James' historic records have been relocated to the Thomas Balch Library, located a few blocks from St. James', for their protection and availability to members of St. James', as well as to the public. The electrical system has been upgraded and heat brought to the restrooms on the first floor. A contract has been signed to commence work on the bathrooms to make the accessibly compliant. It is expected that this long overdue work will be completed this year. The contractor selected to perform the accessibility work has been contracted to also make some modifications to the second floor preschool classroom, in efforts to make it larger and compliant with county flooring requirements. The roof has also been replaced.

#### The Nave (Sanctuary) & Rittenhouse:

As a result of vandalism to the Nave of the church, repairs were made to one of the stained glass windows, a pew, and several crosses. This work was done with careful attention to detail by the loving hands of skilled craftspeople. A contract was signed for the work to commence next year on the original deteriorating stone work on the Nave and Rittenhouse over the next two years. This work will be coordinated with needed carpentry and gutter/downspout maintenance.

#### Outdoor Property:

The playground was mulched to provide a safe ground covering. Landscaping of the property as well as attention to the historic tree in the parking lot has occurred. Parking issues have been addressed.

#### The Future of St. James' Property:

There is still a need to replace the roof of the Parish House and to repair the chimney. An estimate of this work has been prepared. There is a dead tree adjacent to the Parish House that straddles the property line with the neighboring property. Steps have been taken to identify the best means to accomplish the issues relative to the tree. A dialogue has begun with the town of Leesburg with respect to plans for Wirt Street and North Street. Other discussions have begun with the county with respect to the cemetery that is adjacent to the new courthouse construction. A lien grant was corrected with respect to a construction easement in the area of the cemetery. A study was undertaken to see what can be done with the sheds on North Street that are both unsafe and in a dilapidated state.

#### Use of the Building:

A Facility Usage Policy has been refined and the community has been provided a place of respite and revitalization. The Parish Hall served as an immunization site. The Senior Center has been provided an Emergency Evacuation site. Teens and young adults are learning cooking skills through the use of the Parish Hall kitchen by Mobile Hope. A Farm Less Ordinary uses the Parish Hall kitchen to can the produce that they grow. The Loudoun Symphony Orchestra & The Loudoun Lyric Opera have both had concerts and productions in the Nave and Parish Hall. The building continues to be used by a variety of church functions and other outreach projects.

#### Thoughts and a Prayer:

We are a church with a rich history. To sit in the Nave and gaze at the sunlight casting a palate of colors across the beamed expanse captures a special moment in our lives when the problems of the

moment fade into our hopes for the future. We remember those who have gone before us and have made an impact on our lives. They have inspired us by their presence. We see them in the beauty of this place we call our church home. This is God's home where all find a welcoming presence. There remain many things that need to be addressed in the future as the building ages and, like all of us, needs a little repair. Electrical and plumbing issues are constantly recurring. The parking lot, the sheds, water intrusion, continuing grounds maintenance, etc. We look forward to sharing these challenges with you. Future generations will be able to pray and find inspiration within the boundaries of St. James' with the help of volunteers and the financial assistance demonstrated by the Myers, Boyd, and Symington families. Let us be guided in such a way that:

Upon reflection, we may find hope;  
In action, we may find the will to persevere;  
And in faith, we may find answers to life's many questions.

It is my fervent prayer that our church will be preserved for many future generations to come.

## **Treasurer's Report by John Forcier**

As Treasurer of St. James', I am happy to share good news regarding our financial condition.

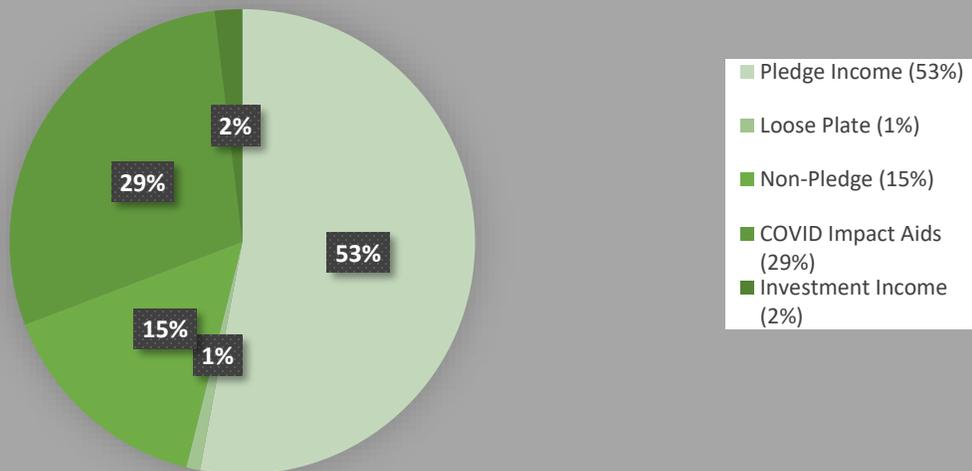
I offer my deepest gratitude for the faithfulness and generosity of the people of St. James', the hard work of Adán Cortes, Elizabeth Bullock, Kay Gregg, Dr. Cooksey, and our stalwart volunteers, as well as the steadfast leadership of the Vestry, wardens, and Fr. Earl.

Our accounting firm, Halstead and Halstead, has also been a tremendous resource, particularly during the COVID pandemic and its associated financial challenges.

A look back at the past year (2021):

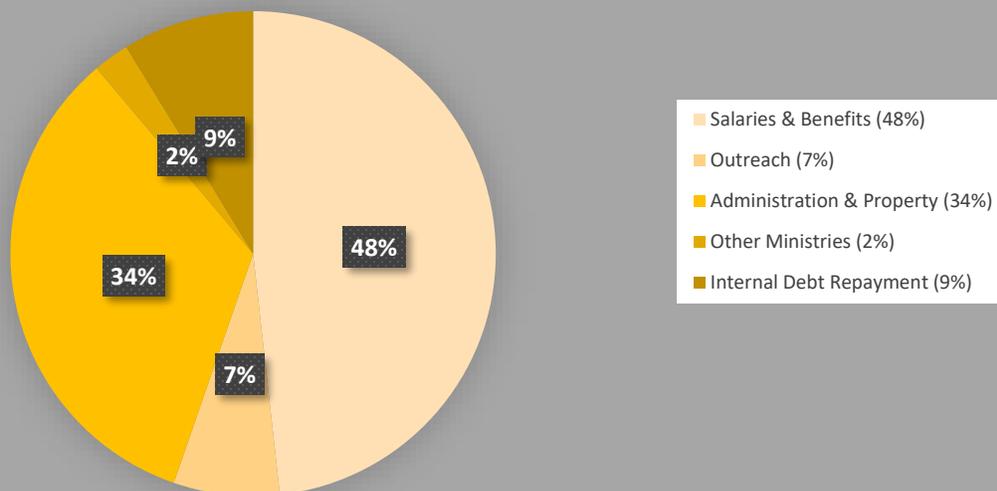
- Despite the challenges of the pandemic, St. James' financial situation at the end of 2021 was remarkably strong. You, our parishioners, demonstrated your faithful support of our mission by exceeding our budgeted pledge income by nearly \$93,000. In addition, non-pledge giving exceeded our budgeted amount by more than \$59,000.
- Our financial health was also sustained by COVID-related assistance in the form of a federal Paycheck Protection Program Loan in the amount of \$151,644 and a federal Employee Retention Credit in the amount of \$128,157. These funds supported general parish operations, including the preschool. We have already received 100% forgiveness from the SBA for the PPP Loan.

## 2021 Income Items



- Your generosity also enabled support for the community’s critical needs during the pandemic through our COVID Relief Fund and the ongoing Monthly Mission Partner outreach program.
- We were able to complete several critical renovations and physical plant projects during the year through the use of capital funds held by the Trustees of the Funds of The Diocese of Virginia. We are thankful to the farsighted donors of these investment funds, which had been given to St. James’ (in some cases, many years ago) for needed capital improvements and maintenance. Please join me in honoring the memory and generosity of Katherine “Kitty” Boyd, Anne and Frank Myers, A.V. Symington, and others whose love of St. James’ lives on.

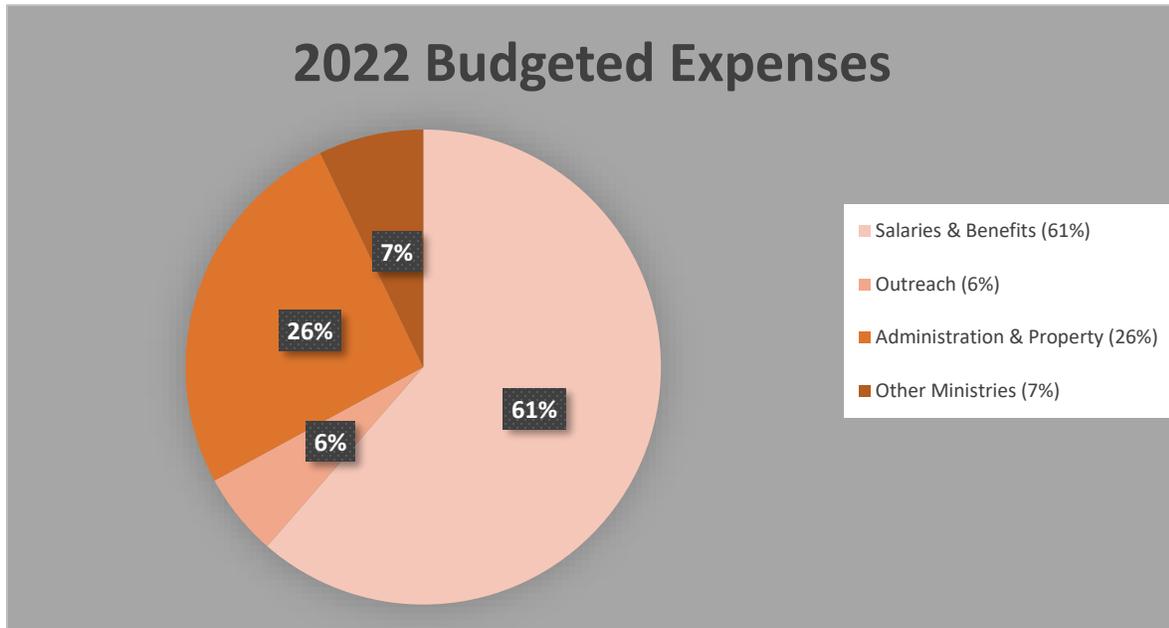
## 2021 Expense Items



- We ended 2021 with total operating expenses (including preschool operations) of \$901,663 and total operating income of \$1,066,112, resulting in a surplus of \$164,418.

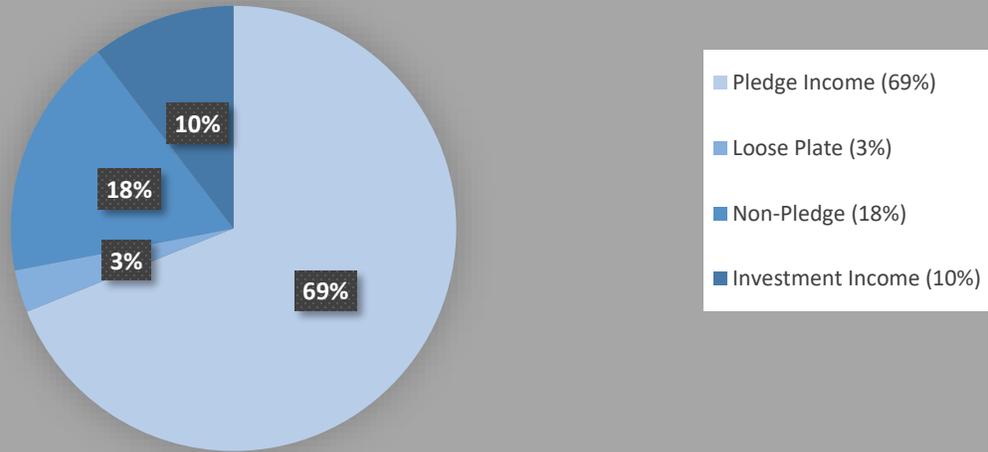
An overview of the budget for the current year (2022):

Thanks to your steadfast financial support of your church, we have entered 2022 with a balanced budget.



- The 2022 budget includes salaries for additional staff to meet needs and opportunities identified by our new Rector and Vestry.
- St. James' Operating Budget for 2022 (including preschool) is \$1,039,724. The parish will meet that budget through a combination of unrestricted contributions (such as pledge payments, loose plate giving, and non-pledge giving) as well as preschool operating income, rental income from the North Street garages, and released funds from the Transition and Renewal Fund and cash reserves that resulted from the 2021 budget surplus.
- In addition, needed maintenance and repairs will be completed; these projects will be funded by a \$272,000 release of capital funds held by the Trustees of the Funds.

## 2022 Budgeted Income Items



### Registrar's Report by Jane Roth

The Registrar took minutes at 16 Vestry meetings, the Annual Parish Meeting in April of 2021, and a special Congregational Meeting in October of 2021. The approved minutes and documents particular to each meeting were shared with the Director of Administration and Communications for permanent retention at the church office.

In addition, the Registrar:

- Collaborated with the staff of the Thomas Balch Library to transition church documents appropriate for retention at the library due to their historical significance.
- Participated as a member of the Re-Gathering Committee.
- Served as point of contact for insurance renewals, including (1) ensuring adequate coverage for the Columbarium and surrounding area, and (2) researching/updating the stained glass window insured market values.
- Tracked potential amendments to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and ensuring Vestry approved amendments were incorporated into the SOPs and posted on the Vestry page of the church website.
- Served on the Accessibility Taskforce
- Drafted updated scholarship application for the Preschool.

## **Evangelism**

### **Vestry Report by Steve Mayo**

As Vestry Liaison of Evangelism, I have consulted with Carol Chapman, ministry leader of the Foyer Groups. She and I agreed that since this primarily was sharing dinners in private homes, that we would continue to hold off on restarting the Foyer Groups until the COVID issue improved. Also, we conversed about Carol's replacement and thought about possible candidates. We also discussed problems with getting names and addresses for invitations from Realm.

### **Foyer Groups – Carol Chapman**

Foyer Groups are small groups of parishioners (8-10) who gather together in six month intervals for simple meals and conversation. Sadly, due to COVID, we have not been able to meet since March of 2020.

Although I have received some requests from Foyer “regulars” to start forming groups again, I have been reluctant to do so since we continue to have COVID outbreaks. While many of the “regulars” might feel comfortable dining together in each other's homes, one of the goals of this ministry is to encourage participation of new members so that we all can meet other parishioners who may be of a different age group or family status or who might typically attend a different service, I have not been certain until recently that new members would be as comfortable.

During our last session in Fall of 2018, we had grown the number of participants to 90, and while I wouldn't necessarily expect that level of participation right away, and several participants have moved away, I also know there are a number of new parishioners, who I hope we can encourage to join.

I am looking forward to working with Fr. Chad and the new Vestry members to begin reaching out to form new groups in the next few weeks/months.

If you are interested in joining the Foyer Groups when they start back up, please contact the office at (703)777-1124 or [ebullock@stjamesleesburg.org](mailto:ebullock@stjamesleesburg.org) to be put on the list. Thanks!

### **Greeting & Engaging – Jim Ferry**

There has been little activity under Greeting & Engaging. I have spoken to Ruth Blakeslee a few times about her need for staffing her ministry of providing welcoming gift bags to new members. I have spoken to Elizabeth about getting Realm set up to the point where we can track new members. This will be helpful for both identifying who should receive welcoming gift bags and who are good candidates to recruit for Greeting & Engaging and other ministries. My understanding is that the first priority is to get ministry heads to make the leap to using Realm. I intend to make the Greeting & Engaging ministry a test case for Realm, but have not made the move to switch over to our communications yet.

## Missions

### **Vestry Report by Mary Lou Leipheimer**

As the liaison for Mission, I connect to three ministries. First is Monthly Mission Partners led by Andy Durot. In December, Andy presented to the Vestry an annual schedule of proposals for the coming year. The Vestry accepted the suggestions for the first quarter—January: Loudoun Cares; February: Mobile Hope; March: A Farm Less Ordinary. The remainder of the year was left for further research and discussion. Future leadership for this mission remains a question.

Second is Mission Trips led by Ken Getty. As explained in my August report, the group has evolved into doing local projects. The last project was the ramp built in August. The pandemic has served as a barrier since then.

Third is the Paxton Board of Visitors. The status quo reported in August remains.

### **Monthly Mission Partners – Andy Durot**

As part of our Outreach Ministry, St. James' Monthly Mission Partners (MMP) program continues to recognize and financially support a variety of non-profit organizations addressing a diverse set of humanitarian needs in our community, nation, and around the world. Through the generosity of our parishioners, St. James' has contributed over \$20,000 annually to support our MMPs and the causes they serve, including but not limited to:

- Food
  - Backpack Buddies
  - Grace to Go
  - Loudoun Hunger Relief
- Shelter
  - Loudoun Homeless Services Center
  - Mobile Hope
- Disability/Veterans
  - A Farm Less Ordinary
  - Tunnel to Towers
- Healthcare
  - Friends of Loudoun Mental Health
  - Loudoun Cares
- Other
  - Friends of St. Marc (Haiti)
  - Ukraine Crisis Relief Fund

Thank you to everyone supporting our Monthly Mission Partner program and the causes they serve!

## **Mobile Hope – Rob Guerra**

The Mobile Hope mantra is to “clothe, feed, shelter, love, and empower” young people and their families throughout our areas of reach. With this as our core belief and mission, our activities fall into three main categories: Homeless Youth, Listen for the Honk, and Christmas Gift Giveaway.

St. James’ has been actively invested in Mobile Hope’s ministries. The St. James’ Youth have learned about teenage homelessness and helped deliver goods to those in need on the Mobile Hope Bus. At Christmastime, the congregation donated toys, money, and time to wrap the gifts at the Christmas Gift Giveaway. Most recently, St. James’ has opened their kitchen doors to Mobile Hope as a space to teach teens and young adults cooking lessons.

Mobile Hope is always looking for volunteers. If you have any interest in volunteering you can reach Mobile Hope at [www.mobile-hope.org](http://www.mobile-hope.org) or at (703)771-1400

## **Stewardship**

### **Stewardship Ministry – Mary Lou Leipheimer**

The Stewardship ministry garners resources—human and financial—to undergird all the other ministries of St. James’. After the “harvest,” the stewardship ministry thanked everyone individually and collectively throughout the year. The reports from those other ministries contained herein reflect a talented and devoted cadre of leaders who joyously give of their time and expertise to do God’s work.

The financial portion of our mission expects an annual campaign to raise the funds for the next year’s budget. After several lean years, but in full anticipation of the “call” of a new Rector, we renamed our pledge efforts the “Genesis Campaign.” With a \$15,000 challenge for new and increased gifts, which evolved to \$17,000, with programs focused on the Saints who had preceded us upon whose shoulders we stand, with statements and testimonials from parishioners from the pulpit and from the pews, our Genesis became more than rhetoric: 140 pledge units gave \$562,684! Yes, the challenge was crushed in less than two weeks and increased giving totaled \$131,137, with the average pledge increasing \$431, and for the first time in over five years, there were no decreased pledges.

The Vestry made “thank you” calls to all who pledged, and will continue to receive further messages in the near future.

And the cycle goes on...Thanks be to God!

## Relieving Hunger

### **Vestry Report by Chris Cuellar**

The Community Garden, Ministry Head: Wayne Newell

Wayne first wishes to thank the Dennis' (Rene & Sherri) for continuing to provide this opportunity. Next, in his words, the garden is currently "in a state of limbo" and that there is "much to do before planting again." The season yielded 1,225 pounds of vegetables which was much less than the previous year, which produced 3,500 pounds. Lack of rain, weed control, and limited personnel help explain the decreased yield.

Wayne acknowledged several hard working volunteers, besides himself and Fred Williams as facilitators: Ken Getty, Steve Page, Troy Harry, and newcomer, John Jennings.

Wayne will be "out of action" for several months and suggests a meeting of those with a "legacy" in the project to discuss a number of issues: water management, weeding and tilling options, use of trellis', plant rotation, etc. The biggest need is additional help. Several youth groups have raised their hand, but they need someone from our end to provide leadership to coordinate their efforts and maintain a sense of commitment. All the expenses (seeds, plants, limestone, fuel) have been out of pocket and Wayne requested a "buy in" from St. James', and acting on his request, the Vestry has recently budgeted funds to help offset garden costs.

The parish thanks Wayne for his wonderfully capable, committed leadership. We have two new energized leaders, John Jennings and Troy Harry, who are moving forward with gusto with a few new helpers.

Grace to Go, Ministry Head: Rob Guerra

There have been several changes to the Grace to Go ministry since our last update in August. Most notably, the change in leadership. Tim Schott and Missy Jennings are taking over for Rob as coordinators and team leads for the program. Rob will be stepping down soon.

Also, St. David's is withdrawing from the program and therefore, the remaining participants will have to pick up the slack. St. James' will now cook and distribute 6 times a year vs. the previous 4. The schedule is set through the first quarter of 2022 and looks promising for solidifying commitments for the rest of the year.

Deli South will continue to support the Grace to Go mission and, in Rob's words: "Grace to Go is around as long as St. James' keeps it as a ministry with support from other churches."

Backpack Buddies, Ministry Head: Raymond Jones

Raymond stated that there isn't much to report since August. He has been stocking the purple bag trees and people have been taking them, but not many have been returned. He feels it's an Omicron thing and hope that things will pick up in the spring time. In his words, "Backpack Buddies is informally dormant."

He still would like to find someone to replace his role as ministry head.

## **Community Garden – John Jennings**

The St. James' Garden began in April of 2020 with a conversation between Rene Dennis and Fred Williams. Fred and Wayne Newell then began the effort with much enthusiasm. Rene and Sherri Dennis, owners of Sage Hill Farm, provided a quarter acre garden plot on Earth Day 2020 and subsequently, Father Earl went out and led a blessing for the garden.

Rene and Sherri have provided this piece of their beautiful garden within a deer fence that surrounds the property and an unlimited supply of composted leaf mulch to support the project. They have given their time and energy to mow, till, and work the garden with their own equipment. We are so blessed to have this as our garden spot!

Numerous parishioners have helped work a schedule for cultivating, weeding, harvesting, replanting, and frequent delivering of hundreds of pounds of fresh produce to Loudoun Hunger Relief ([loudounhunger.org](http://loudounhunger.org)). We have grown and donated over five thousand pounds of fresh vegetables over the last two years.

This is a great ministry! Volunteers form close relationships while working together to help feed the hungry of our community. Fred and Wayne have recently passed the leadership of the Community Garden to Troy Harry (571-442-2126) and John Jennings (804-677-5963). Please contact us if you'd like to get involved. You'll be glad you did! 2022 is our most important year to date due to inflated food prices. Interested in helping? The more people we have, the more food we can donate.

## **Grace to Go – Missy Jennings & Tim Schott**

Grace to Go is a vibrant ministry of St. James' that was started over 13 years ago by Rev. Mary Davila. Grace to Go has been under the leadership of several individuals through the years, the most recent leader being Rob Guerra, who kept the program going full force during the midst of the COVID pandemic. Rob has recently turned over the leadership reigns to Tim Schott and Missy Jennings. Together they co-lead numerous teams of generous volunteers who give their Sunday afternoons over to cooking approximately 120 meals of roasted chicken, potatoes, and mixed vegetables, which are then distributed on Monday evenings to anywhere from 15 to 30 families.

Chris Scharrer, the owner of Deli South and Smokin' Willie's has graciously provided us the use of his Deli South commercial kitchen for the meal preparation, cooking, packaging, and storing. We are so blessed by Chris' generosity and by Andy Hallum's (Operations Manager of Deli South) wonderful assistance each week with this ministry.

The teams of volunteers not only represent St. James', but several other churches and civic groups from the Leesburg community as well. This outreach ministry truly involves the people of Leesburg helping the people of Leesburg. Over the next year, we would like to increase our outreach to other faith-based and community organizations here in our growing town and county to see if we can form one or two more Sunday teams and increase awareness about our program to those who are food-insecure. We have some Sundays still available for volunteers and we would love to help you get involved. Call or text Tim (703)314-4343 or Missy (804)677-5963 and we will get you connected.

## Hospitality

### **Coffee Hour Liaison Report by Rebecca Page**

During this time of COVID, our traditional Coffee Hour has been put on hold. Prior to COVID they were headed and organized by Sheila Brooks, Susan Moffett, and Carol Chapman. Even though we are back to in-person worship, COVID protocols have currently suspended coffee hours. In place of Coffee Hour, Susan Moffett has been graciously donating “COVID safe” individually wrapped snacks, such as cheese, snack bars, Danish, fruit cups, etc. during the Adult Forum and Children’s Formation classes. This has been gratefully received. It is anticipated that when COVID protocols allow, coffee hours will commence as they had before.

Challenges in the past have mainly been the lack of volunteers to spread out the task of hosting our coffee hours. As with other ministries, it appears that few are carrying more than their share of time and treasure. It has been well organized with a list available for volunteers to use for shopping suggestions and quantities. The cost has been minimal, but perhaps we need to reimburse volunteers. It has been estimated that providing refreshments has been in the thirty to forty dollar range. A clipboard sign-up sheet was placed by the table for people to volunteer. It was also mentioned that perhaps a kids table should be provided as often the younger members of the parish arrived at the table with large appetites!

Another suggestion was to have a Vestry Member take a Sunday or two during the year. This may have been done in the past. In closing, I would say this ministry is healthy in that it is currently on hold, but can be resumed at such time as the pandemic allows. This would be a wonderful opportunity for those who may be wishing to reach out and meet others and have a task while they do so.

### **Parish Breakfasts Liaison Report by Rebecca Page**

Parish Breakfasts have been a great success, very popular and have been missed during this time of COVID protocols. The leaders of the ministry are currently Sarah Bauer and Stacy Cleveland. Deb McGee has since relocated. Sarah and Stacy have expressed interest in continuing on with this ministry when restrictions are lifted and it is safe to do so.

Parish Breakfasts were held once a month and volunteers were needed to shop, set-up, cook, serve, and clean up. Our various ministries—Teaching, Men’s Ministry, YOUP, etc.—each took a Sunday to host, led by one of the members of the Parish Breakfast Committee. Volunteers were organized via online Signup Genius. All of the food was purchased by volunteers and they were reimbursed for the amount spent. There was money budgeted for this expense, and a list was provided for the volunteers for shopping.

Suggestions from the leaders of the group are that when this is resumed, a master calendar for all events of the year be set up. Parish Breakfasts had been set for a certain Sunday a month, but this sometimes conflicted with other events, be it the Ministry Fair, Gift Fair, Oktoberfest, etc. Using regular dishes and utensils when possible greatly reduced waste as well as gave a more elegant and festive atmosphere. There are also plans to purchase reusable, stain resistant tablecloths as well.

## **Seasoned Saints Liaison Report by Rebecca Page**

Seasoned Saints has been a ministry that was a joy and brought connection to many of the older “seasoned” parishioners. Lunches were held on a regular basis in the Parish Hall of St. James’. A presentation or short film might have been watched. Occasionally, there may have been outside excursions to a museum or historical site.

The various leaders of this ministry have all relocated. I have reached out to a few people, but not identified a leader. Most people enjoyed it and would like to see it resurrected if leaders can be found. I feel this is worth pursuing further for the future as it may be a vital connection for those on their own at this time in their lives.

## **Pastoral Care**

### **Vestry Report by Sherri Dennis**

The Pastoral Care Ministries cluster consists of the following ministries:

- Eucharistic Visitors & Pastoral Associates – Trudy Gross has stepped in as the head of this ministry, following Judy Perso.
- Card Ministry – Sandy Garlick is the head of this ministry.
- Intercessory Prayer – Janice King Coe is the head of this ministry.
- Healing Ministry – Chris Hatch will be stepping down as the head of this ministry and is looking for a replacement.

COVID still impacts and limits the Healing Ministry, Eucharistic Visitors, and Pastoral Associates. As before, Pastoral Associates continue to be a dedicated group of volunteers that has been coordinating and facilitating congregational needs in collaboration with Father Earl.

### **Pastoral Associates – Trudy Gross**

The Pastoral Associates includes three areas of ministry. The first is the Card Ministry. Cards are sent for special occasions such as sympathy, get well, thinking of you, as well as holiday cards for our homebound. The second part is funeral reception, and the third is Eucharistic Visitors who call, visit, and take communion to our homebound.

Our committee is very active and is starting to return to some of the things we did before COVID. Our card ministry has remained active during the last two years and will continue. A major change has been in the funeral receptions and has been discontinued during the time of COVID. We look forward to returning to this ministry in some form and will be looking at changes we need to make. We have been checking on our homebound by telephone and are beginning to once again visit them and take communion.

It is my hope that we can return to monthly visits/communion to our homebound. Some are not comfortable with visitors yet and we will continue to reach out to them by telephone. We continue to train and license new Eucharistic Visitors and increase our numbers to be sure all of our homebound are served.

## **Card Ministry – Sandy Garlick**

*“Being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.”*

--2 Corinthians 3:3

The card ministry at St. James’ has three branches. The first branch focuses on needs of parishioners who are home-bound, people with long-term or chronic health concerns, patients in long-term care facilities and the like. A detailed list is maintained for people in this branch who receive special cards at Easter, Christmas, Thanksgiving, Valentine’s Day, and one in mid-summer.

The second branch is the Birthday Card branch. Parishioners who are 80 years old, or older are sent a birthday card. Each year, the list is updated to make sure that people who turn 80 during the current year are included.

The third branch of our ministry focuses on immediate needs. Sending a card to a bereaved person or family is an example of this. Injuries, hospitalization, surgery, births of children are also events that warrant a card being sent. Timely information about the specific need is critical in this regard.

Communication and information are the most important concerns for the success of our ministry. Historically, this has not been as efficient as it has become. When Fr. Earl became our interim Rector, he linked our ministry with the Pastoral Care Team. This has had a very positive impact on our ability to be kept up-to-date. We meet monthly with the Pastoral Care Team in person. We discuss specific individuals who need to be added or removed from the lists we maintain. We also communicate weekly with the leader of the Pastoral Care Team to further enhance these lines of communication.

The most frustrating part of our ministry is having cards returned to St. James’ by the U.S. Postal Service. It has been our experience that parishioners move from the address we have on file and neglected to alert the church to this change. Tags on the returned cards usually indicate that there is no forwarding address, or the time has run out to have the USPS forward it to the recipient. We then consult with the internet to find current addresses, or sadly seek to find an obituary. This effort is not always successful.

Moving forward, timely delivery of information is most valuable. When a request for a card is made, we need to know the specific type of card we need to send. The address of the recipient is also an important detail to include.

## Teaching

### **Vestry Report by Kath Bucklin**

During the Fall of 2021 period of in-person attendance at St. James', a small cadre of people have been creating a Christian Formation environment for our children. Our primary need is more people to assist and more attendance of children. We have between 2 and 8 children and five families that attend formation regularly. Two volunteers are with the children for safety and the one time I was the single volunteer, the parents agreed that their children could stay.

Kara Laughlin, Rebecca Page, Rachel Newell and myself are actively involved, but are all beginning to have other commitments tug at our time. We truly need to build a reservoir of people. No one responded to requests for help that were published in the E-pistle and bulletin. Phone calls have been made, but many former participants are overwhelmed with other commitments, or have children that have aged out of the group. The classes are structured and easy to follow for the volunteers, but our problem is still commitment and consistency. We have a backlog of materials and only need to make small purchases of consumables to continue. We have adequate storage for our materials and Bibles, and we share a classroom with the Preschool without incident and are careful of COVID protocols.

The Children's Chapel has been very popular with many children who have not been to Formation before church and are receiving lessons, music, and participation opportunities. We have a few steady volunteers, but we need to develop a firm list of alternatives. It is important to note that most volunteers do not want to miss all sermons, so having a steady rotation with lots of volunteers would decrease the number of sermons missed per volunteer.

We started the Fall with a program and teacher for grades 6-12, but there was no attendance besides the teacher and her children. The effort to hold classes has been suspended for the time being. Older children are especially stressed and their needs are addressed by YOUP that meets twice a month.

Children's Nursery is checked on often. During the 10 AM service, there are two trained attendees, however, it is rarely used. The ability to provide seems so inviting, but it should be used.

### **Children's Chapel – Rachel Newell**

As we began regathering in church, St. James' began a Children's Chapel ministry in September of 2021. Since the pandemic had basically shut down the possibility of continuing our Children's Choir at St. James' (singing was considered a problem during COVID), I felt it would be a great opportunity for our parish children to keep singing songs with masks on and making music together on a weekly basis. Since the past fall, each Sunday Father Earl provides a short children's sermon after which the children leave the service during the adult sermon, returning to their parents at the passing of the peace.

This ministry is open to younger children (ages 3 – 4<sup>th</sup> grade). Upon the conclusion of Father Earl's children sermon, a crucifer leads an adult volunteer and a willing parent assistant to the Parish Hall

where we sing, read scripture, pray, play games, do a craft or worksheet, and have fun for about 20 to 30 minutes. We have an adult volunteer each week (Betha Dowling, Kara Laughlin, Rebecca Page, Kath Bucklin, and myself) who is assisted by another adult in order to comply with current requirements. The average attendance has been from 2 to 18 children. Because of this ministry, the children who participate in Children's Chapel have been able to learn songs for our annual Children's Pageant on Christmas Eve and for Easter Sunday! This has brought me so much joy because we actually have a Children's Choir after all!

In order for this ministry to continue, we are looking for a coordinator to head up this ministry and need at least 4 other volunteers who can assist the coordinator. This wonderful offering is easy to lead and a schedule can be worked out so that parent volunteers only have duties occasionally! If you are interested in helping out with this vital ministry that has helped young families participate more fully in our St. James' services and has brought new people to our parish, please notify me ASAP by phone (703-727-0548) or by email (wnewell42@gmail.com).

Additional help will allow me to direct my efforts to integrate the focus on children's choir music more fully with the other musical offerings of St. James'. Under the new leadership of Father Chad, we expect exciting times as he brings his children and additional musical experience to our team.

## **Children's Christian Formation – Kath Bucklin**

The Children's Christian Formation has continued with two volunteers teaching the children from 9 AM to 9:45 AM on Sunday mornings on the third floor of the Janney House. We usually have children whose parents are attending the Adult Forums at 9 AM in the Parish Hall.

We are using the WHIRL children's program and have ample materials for each season of the Liturgical calendar. This is a rich and adaptable program which we have used for over 6 years. Our materials provide short, popular videos and we show the preschool through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and the 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade editions. Each video elaborates on the weekly theme. The common lesson format is liturgical based for that Sunday. The Bible is read together and we actively relate to the theme through discussion, videos, and games.

The abiding need for Children's Formation is more volunteers, so that the few are not exhausted and overtaxed. We need more volunteers to assist, teach, and own this program. We are asking parents to assist every third Sunday. Attendance during the winter and spring has been between 2 and 6 children, representing 3 families. The ages range from 3 to 9 years old. There is no cost to Kids' Formation, however, we expect to need to spend money for the consumables, as the leftovers from pre-pandemic are being used now.

## **Adult Discussion Groups**

### **Book Club Liaison Report by Mike Scott**

The Book Club Ministry has not met since March 2020 due to COVID. The Club members decided against meeting virtually and so it is currently dormant. Mary Pellicano has led this ministry for the last 20 years, conducting meetings once a month from September to July. She and her husband have moved and there are currently no plans to start the Book Club back up.

The idea of creating a co-leadership for this ministry was floated around, and may be the solution. However, we need volunteers to lead it. Although small, the Book Club ministry has been a constant at St. James' and has actually attracted new church members who saw that we offered this ministry. It has value and is worth pursuing again if we are able to find someone to lead the club.

### **Women's Spiritual Discussion Group Liaison Report by Mike Scott**

The Women's Spiritual Discussion Group has been defunct, presumably due to COVID and the loss of church members who were previously engaged in this ministry. There is no further information available at this time.

### **Men's Service Ministry – Mike Scott**

The Men's Service Ministry (MSM) continues to enjoy a small but well-engaged group of approximately a dozen of St. James' men. The MSM completed various service projects in support of St. James', including helping the offices and preschool move locations, sanding and repainting the parish house ramp, etc. The MSM also hosted a very successful Oktoberfest celebration to coincide with the St. James' Homecoming weekend in September. The MSM also supports the Grace to Go ministry 6-8 times per year, working on food prep Sundays at Deli South.

Starting in March of 2022, the MSM moved back to in-person meetings due to the decreased levels of COVID in Loudoun County. We also moved our meeting days to Mondays to accommodate maximum attendance. We watched "The Chosen" series as a group in person and are currently delving into the Beatitudes/Sermon on the Mount as our latest discussion topic. We welcome all St. James' men interested in fellowship, spiritual enlightenment, and service to St. James'.

## Youth Programs

### **Vestry Report by Chris Hatch**

Since reopening the church after the pandemic, youth ministries at St. James' Church have slowly begun to recover, but there is room for improvement.

We have youth serving as ushers, acolytes, and lectors at Sunday services, but numbers are not back to their pre-pandemic levels.

In the fall, Michelle Jones stepped down from leading St. James' Youth Group (YOUP) to focus on the Parish Discernment Committee. Michelle served as youth group leader for five years and saw many changes and challenges in the Parish, and we are grateful for her service. Kara Laughlin took on Michelle's role at the beginning of the school year. Kara assembled a committee of volunteers to help with big projects and meetings (Patti Mullins, Kristen & Jon Coate, Sarah Lawrence, and many vestry members have been great about helping out as needed). YOUP meets twice a month throughout the school year, including a brief break in winter when COVID numbers moved meetings online. A highlight of the year was their Shrove Tuesday Drive-By Donut event.

Fifteen teens have participated with YOUP since reopening. Youth-led worship experiences like the Christmas pageant and Youth Sunday (coming up on May 8) have included over twenty teens. These numbers are solid, but more impressive when we consider that many parents are still taking a conservative approach to public gatherings.

Kara has indicated that she expects to be less available to St. James' when she begins attending seminary in August. She is looking for two to four adults who can volunteer for youth group in the fall. She expects to continue to attend meetings for a time to ensure a smooth transition and will serve in an advisory capacity as needed and able.

Other youth ministries that could be resurrected in the year ahead include Youth Mission Trips, Junior Acolytes, Youth Formation classes, and a youth-specific path to confirmation.

With the calling of Fr. Chad, there is a sense of optimism among parents of teens at St. James'. They look forward to the energy that a young family will bring to the church, and hope that he will hire staff to revitalize youth and children's ministries at St. James'.

## **YOUP – Kara Laughlin**

The St. James' Youth Group (YOUP) has been meeting in person since September. At the beginning of the year, we said goodbye to Michelle Jones, who led YOUP for five years. Michelle stuck with YOUP through several incarnations and several changes of the leadership team. It's a testament to her love for the young people of this parish that she kept YOUP going through the pandemic until we were able to safely meet again. She left when her work on the Parish Discernment Committee left her too little time to lead YOUP well. We are grateful for her years of faithful service.

We are a small but mighty group that meets twice a month. In the past year, we have had fifteen teens participate in youth group events, and nine adult volunteers. YOUP has delivered "boo bags" to houses surrounding St. James', met with the Director of Mobile Hope to learn about teen homelessness, volunteered on two different occasions with Mobile Hope, hosted our Shrove Tuesday Donut Drive-Thru, and our annual Easter Egg Hunt. We put on the Christmas pageant, had a scavenger hunt party at Christmas, and most recently, cooked for Grace to Go.

But more than what we do together, YOUP is about who we are together. We begin every meeting by checking in—sharing what's going well, what's not so great—and trying to name the places where God is being revealed in our lives.

On the outside, the years of middle school and high school can look like the times when young people are starting to walk away from church. Sports and school activities make scheduling a challenge, and the stories that keep children captivated in Christian education classes are no longer simple to believe. For teens, church can feel boring and irrelevant, like there's nothing there for them.

But on the inside, the teen years are one of the most important times for faith formation. Whether they are in church or not, teens are going through a massive spiritual transition. They can't be satisfied with believing something just because their parents and teachers tell them to believe. They spend their teen years making faith their own. This is some of the most important spiritual work any of us ever do, and it is an honor to make a space available where they can work these issues out within the St. James' community.

We would love to get more involved with opportunities at the diocesan level, go on a retreat, and season our service work with more opportunities for fellowship and fun.

While we are grateful to the many adults who have volunteered and helped on an as-needed basis with our work, youth ministry works best when there is a team of members from the congregation who are showing up regularly, building relationships, and getting to know the youth of St. James' Church over time. We hope St. James' will be able to hire a staff person in the next year to help energize our children and youth ministries, but that person can't do it without committed lay people. We are looking for about four adults (of any age) who can team up to advise and facilitate YOUP going forward.

## Worship

### **Vestry Report by Fiona Ahrweiler**

There have been no changes or updates to the Acolyte and Altar Guild ministries. Jeff Brannock, ministry head of Lectors & Eucharistic Ministers, has also commented that there haven't been any changes, but we have added 3 new readers to the 10 AM service and 1 to the 7:45 AM service. Mary Dunlop, ministry head of Ushers, has written an update for the Vestry (see below). Contemplative Prayer has been running smoothly and following COVID protocols as things shift.

The Audio/Visual Team is still looking to fill the position of a ministry head as live-streaming has become an integrated and essential piece of our services. However, the members of the audio/visual team have been working diligently and together to cover every service that is streamed.

The Music Ministry does not have any updates, but has a choir member, I can inform you that Wednesday rehearsals are back in-person. The number of choir members has increased after the decrease of COVID presence that spiked in January and February.

### **Acolytes – Dottie Brannock**

The word acolyte means “follower” or “one who helps.” The primary duty of the acolyte is to serve God and the Church. Acolytes perform a variety of duties that support the worship service and assist the clergy to celebrate the Eucharist. Children as young as 4<sup>th</sup> grade up to high school seniors are welcome to serve. In addition to Sunday services, acolytes support special services during Christmas, Lent, Holy Week, and Easter, as well as weddings and funerals.

This year, 7 dedicated acolytes contributed their time and talent to the 7:45 and 10 AM services to support parish worship. Two of our acolytes, Nic Macchiarolo and Emma Galvin are graduating this spring and have been acolytes for the past 9 years. Thank you to all the participants and parents who support this ministry.

Those that are interested in becoming an acolyte are invited to contact me at (703)777-1812 or at [dglvt@yahoo.com](mailto:dglvt@yahoo.com) to find out more about the ministry and to set up a training time. Acolyting is not just for the youth; if you are an adult and have a call to be an acolyte, do not hesitate to join the acolyte ministry.

### **Altar Guild – Margaret Akers**

This ministry was formed to assist the clergy in preparing for all services in the church, including weddings and funerals. The Guild consists of four teams of dedicated ladies that meet one Saturday each month to prepare the church for Sunday worship. Members of this ministry undertake the care of the altar, arrange flowers, and provide care of linens, sacred vessels, the sanctuary, chancel, and all other places or things entrusted to its care.

We always welcome new members and knowing how to arrange flowers is not a required skill. We are in the process of restoring the communion rail kneelers in the next month.

## **Choir – Dr. Steven Cooksey**

The choirs of St. James' church have seen major change in the last two years, not to mention surviving the pandemic. Dr. Stephan Knobloch, director of the Corner Chorale for many years, moved to Cleveland and effectively combined the 9 and 11:15 choirs.

During the worst of COVID, the choirs were able to produce two hymns and an anthem for each Sunday. This involved every choir member singing their own individual part into their phone. Bryan Welsh, and later, Walter Litzenger then assembled these individual parts into the music which was sent to Ara Bagdasarian who put together the entire service. We are talking hours and hours of preparation—and the choir and techies did it week after week. St. James' can be proud of all those taking part in this endeavor. It helped “online” church to feel like “real” church.

The second step on the road to a more normal Sunday morning was singing through singers masks and keeping social distances. After several months of that, we are now back to singing without masks.

The former two choirs are now functioning as a single choir, and are successfully providing music leadership for the 10 AM service. A wide variety of music is performed, and we often use orchestral instruments to enhance our work.

The choir rehearses an hour and a half on Wednesday evenings, and 45 minutes on Sunday mornings. The choir members are dedicated, hard working, and a talented band of singers. They make a significant contribution to the worship life of St. James' Church. We owe them, one and all, a great big “THANK YOU” for the wonderful work they do.

## **Contemplative Prayer – Jim Ferry**

I took over the Contemplative Prayer Ministry from Carrie Heiman in the fall of 2021. The group meets on Monday evenings from 7 to 8:30 PM in the Nave. There are 12-15 people who attend, 8 of which show up on any given evening. The purpose of the group is to facilitate the contemplative practices of the members—learning to live one's life with an abiding awareness of the presence of God in all things. We do this through the practice of Lectio Divina. This begins with 20 minutes of contemplative silence, followed by repeated readings of scripture (usually selected from next Sunday's lectionary). Most of the time is then spent discussing the passage. This group draws members from St. James' and other churches in the area (Methodist, Quaker, etc.) and thereby serves as a local hub for contemplative practice. I will be attending a Contemplative Prayer Leaders' Workshop in May to learn how to do what we're doing better, and what other things we could be doing. In particular, moving forward, I would like the group to host contemplative events during Advent and Lent. In general, however, this group seems to call to a rather small set of people—sitting in silence for 20 minutes does not have universal appeal—but the appeal and the community is very strong for those of us who share this bent.

## **Lay Eucharistic Ministers & Lay Readers – Jeff Brannock**

The following is an overview of the ministries:

Lay Readers – Through the Lay Reader, God’s living Word continues to be proclaimed to his people, to the young and old, the troubled, the hopeless, the happy, the content, to those in need of challenge and to those in need of comfort.

Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEMs) – LEMs administer the elements (the consecrated bread and wine) at any celebration of the Holy Eucharist in the absence of a sufficient number of Priests or Deacons assisting the celebrant.

Talent of the Ministry: There is no special qualification or prior experience that is required, only faith and interest in these exciting ministries. Lay Readers and Lay Eucharistic Ministers must be persons of wisdom in the faith and of good repute who have received the respect of the local congregation and also demonstrate spiritual maturity. In addition, Lay Eucharistic Ministers must be an adult (defined as age 16 or older) member in good standing of St. James’ Church.

Scheduling: Once trained, Lay Readers and Lay Eucharistic Ministers are scheduled once to twice a month at the service time of their choice to read the Word or assist in serving the elements. The schedule is published in quarterly schedules. Schedule changes are flexible and are coordinated between individual readers and LEMs.

2022 Highlights: During the year 2022, 38 devoted members have answered their personal call to serve the Lord as Lay Readers and/or Lay Eucharistic Ministers at the various services. Of those, seven are new participants since we resumed in person services in the spring of 2021. The Liturgical Ministries are especially fulfilling and humbling because they provide the opportunity to directly participate in the celebration of the Eucharist. New participants are always welcome!

## **Temple Tellers – Sheila Brooks**

Currently, the Temple Tellers are charged with diligently reconciling the intake of money from church services at St. James’ Episcopal Church. At this time, we have four volunteers, appointed by the Treasurer, who meet each week to reconcile the offering received. A minimum of two Temple Tellers must be present in order to perform their counting and tabulation procedures. Members of the Temple Teller ministry perform an important function in supporting the financial administration of St. James’ Episcopal Church.

## **Ushers – Mary Dunlop**

We currently have five ushers and one couple that is available for the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of 4 months in the calendar year. Two ushers cover for each other when one is out of town. The 7:45 AM service ushers operate independently and have for many years. We lost more than 50% of our 7:45 AM ushers after COVID hit, which requires scheduling only one usher per service per month.

The 10 AM service has a rotating roster of 4 assigned ushers per Sunday for a total of 16. Our ushers have expressed the desire to be assigned to one Sunday a month so they can count on a set schedule. We have 6 substitutes.

2 of our 4 ushers for the 10 AM service have been re-tasked with controlling the flow of the communicants to the High Altar, and two release the congregation from the floor. Prior to COVID, 2 ushers would release the congregation from the floor, and the other 2 would greet and assist communicants, as needed, down the steps on either side of the altar. To comply with a recent request to assign 2 ushers to assume these duties, we will need 8 more ushers every Sunday, for a total of 24 ushers a month or 8 more than our current permanent roster if we are to continue assisting those who need help down the stairs. Currently, we do not have the numbers to meet this request.

Morale is good in our ministry. I am blessed to have dedicated ushers, many who have been doing this for years and who are personable, dependable, responsible, and a joy to work with.

## **Healing Across Differences**

### **Vestry Report by Jim Ferry**

There are currently no active ministries under Healing Across Differences. In the past we have had Sacred Ground.

## **St. James' Preschool**

### **Vestry Report by Rebecca Page**

St. James' Preschool (SJP) reopened its doors as of September 2021 after being closed due to COVID since March 2020. Janet Stayrook continues to lead the Preschool as Director, with Laura Heyer as Administrative Assistant. They are supported by the Preschool Committee: Kath Bucklin, Jim Ferry, Rebecca Page, and Jane Roth. This ministry is different from our other ministries in that the staff and teachers are paid employees and, therefore, have a larger presence in the church budget. This ministry continues to serve the young children of the parish and greater community. Children are led and taught by example and through music, chapel, and stories about the basic tenets of God's love and light in their world. They are taught by a curriculum as age appropriate and learning is play based. The preschool will be entering its 50<sup>th</sup> year in September.

The preschool, under Janet's direction, has adapted to the requirements of the CDC and the Episcopal Diocese during this time. Overall, it has been going very well in that the children and teachers are keeping masks on and there is thorough, diligent cleaning that is attended to. SJP lost a few families this year who placed their children in other schools during the closure, or are continuing to keep them at home. However, the preschool did embrace many new families this year.

One of the major challenges of this ministry is the difficulty in predicting what enrollment will look like each year. It often remains fluid throughout the summer. Enrollment for the fall of each year is opened in February of the current year. The rate of re-enrollment of current families is usually high and the enrollment of younger siblings as they are ready. An advantage that SJP has is the existence of the 2 year-old program. Many preschools in our area do not have classes for children that young.

Interested families find SJP by word of mouth, neighbors, being new in the area, calling around, and process of elimination. As stated above, having the 2 year-old program is a plus. This year the preschool enrolled a few students from the Catholic Church Preschool, which did not reopen this year.

#### Challenges and Moving Forward:

SJP will need to continue to recruit new students, and as we expand back to “normal,” teachers will need to be recruited as well. Expansion and renovation of space to be useable and viable as a classroom will need to be addressed and completed.

With the help of our Parish Administrator and Director of Communications, it will be necessary to update and incorporate the preschool website under the St. James’ Church website. Social media presence, such as Facebook, Instagram, and possible Twitter would expand SJP’s reach to the community.

Long term intentions and goals are to expand SJP’s reach deeper into the community to the underserved and seek ways to provide scholarships to families who need them. The preschool is also looking for ways to expand the hours so to be more available to working parents. Space requirements and financial viability are areas to be addressed to accomplish this vision.

## **Preschool Update – Janet Stayrook**

#### WHERE WE HAVE BEEN:

We have faced challenges at St. James’ Preschool in the last couple of years due to the pandemic. However, we have been able to make things work with the help of our very dedicated staff!

As the COVID positive case numbers started to decline in Loudoun County, we made the decision to reopen the preschool for our 2021-2022 school year. This news was well received by our staff, those families in the community who have known us for a while, and those who prefer a Christian based learning experience for their children.

#### WHERE WE ARE NOW:

We are currently at 60 students with this school year and have 57 students registered for next school year (2022-2023). This is six more students than we had last year at this time and have been receiving calls and email messages from community members inquiring about our preschool program.

## FUTURE:

Exciting news, we will have a new 3.5s classroom in the Janney House (2<sup>nd</sup> floor) and a great teacher for this class by September! This class is currently combined with one of our 4s classes. Thank you to all who are working to make this happen.

My hope is that we continue to grow, which we usually do between now and the start of the school year in September. We will continue to work together to make this happen.

## Committees

### **Accessibility Taskforce – Steve Mayo**

The new handicap accessible bathroom on the first floor of the Parish House has been completed and is functioning. Also, we have completed the renovation of the utility/laundry room, as well as the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor restroom in the Parish House. These renovations were complicated by a lot of rotten floor joists, which could not be seen without removing the existing floor.

Our contractor is doing some renovations on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Janney House for the Preschool to split a classroom, and this work will be completed by Monday, April 25, 2022. They will start on the Janney House restroom renovation on the first floor of the Janney House on Tuesday, April 26, 2022. There will also be some drywall repair and painting of the Janney House hallway, ceiling, and walls. The Parish Hall renovations will follow the completion of the work in the Janney House. I estimate that the Accessibility Project will be totally completed by the end of July.

I would like to thank the Taskforce Committee of Ed Hatrick, Andy Durot, & Jane Roth for their hard work and support to make St. James' ADA compliant.

## Office Reports

### **Administration & Communications – Elizabeth Bullock**

Over the past year, the office has been through many changes. St. James' officers, Vestry, and Fr. Earl invited me to become one of your office staff in August 2021, and it has been a pleasure getting to know the congregation, the ministries that you all so passionately invest in, and the paths that you all see as we continue to move forward. However, it has also been an honor to invest myself into the administration and communications of St. James'.

Many of you know that in the past eight and a half months I have had my hands in many pots behind the scenes. I am:

- Creator of the weekly and special event bulletins
- Keeper of the calendar, the Parish Registers, and Realm
- Collaborator of ministries and events
- Editor of the website, e-Pistle, and other communications
- Administrator of paperwork and files
- Communicator for the St. James' community

This list does not completely summarize my job, as my position requires me to be flexible in helping with the needs of the church.

As many have said before me, there is a lot to look forward to in the coming year. I look forward to working with the new Rector, as well as continuing to work with Mary Frances Forcier and all the ministry heads to work on their administration and communication needs. I'm excited to bring St. James' into the future by optimizing our communications through the website and Realm, as well as bring forward a yearly calendar and event template that will prepare for the needs of upcoming events and the liturgical calendar.

It is essential that we continue to look into better communications because as we continue to connect with one another, we open up the possibilities of a stronger Church and community with more active ministries that affect greater change and success within St. James', our community, our nation, and our world. St. James' is actively making a difference and that constantly encourages me to create a more organized administration and communications workflow that can help.

If you have any questions about the church or any specific church or ministry needs, please feel free to reach out to me at (703)777-1124 or email me at [ebullock@stjamesleesburg.org](mailto:ebullock@stjamesleesburg.org).