

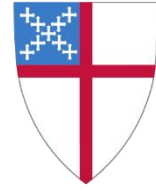


St. James' Episcopal Church

knowing and serving God by serving others

3768 Germantown Pike, Collegeville, PA 19426

610-489-7564 www.stjames-episcopal.org



The 2020 Annual Report

For
the Annual Meeting
of the Congregation

Sunday, April 18, 2021

2pm via Zoom

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ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA
for year 2020
18 April 2021

- I. Opening Prayer
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Vestry and Delegate Introductions - Thanks to Gene Goff, Jon Yenney and Steve Jackson for their service.

Elections: Re-elect Peggy Spinozzi

Elect new slate: Chuck Rogers, Marc Wezner and Iva Ferrell

Vestry:

<u>Class of 2021</u>	<u>Class of 2022</u>	<u>Class of 2023</u>
Peggy Spinozzi*	Sarah Deacle*	Bill Kilgour**
Gene Goff**	Patty Earhart*	Drew Beck**
Jon Yenney**	Marilyn Hastings*	Josh Ilgen**
Steve Jackson*^	Ned Travis*	Maeve Vogan*

*Eligible for a 2nd Term

**Cycling Off

^Decided not to run

Deanery and Diocesan Representatives: Jon Yenney and Phil Tatem

- IV Recognition of Servants of St. James' award the 2021 class
- V. State of the Parish Reports
- VI. Questions/Comments
- VII. Rector's Summary
- VIII. Closing Prayer & Adjournment

RECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020

2020 has been a year like no other! As I reflect on what has happened at St. James' in 2020, I am amazed at the resiliency and faithfulness of God's people who call St. James' their home! I want to thank the staff and volunteers who have worked miracles and have been so flexible in meeting the changing situations that we have found ourselves in due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I cannot commend to all of you more the heartfelt thanks I have for Ms. Lauren Exley, our Director of Music and Christian Education. Her herculean efforts have allowed us to continue with our Christian Education Program and to provide the technical expertise that have allowed us to provide an online service for those Sundays in which we were not allowed to worship together in person. Lauren took on the duties of editing and producing our videos and has spent an enormous amount of energy and time in doing so. Thank you so much Lauren for all that you have done. Our Director of Parish Operations and Communications, Mrs. Lisa Reinhardt has also done amazing things during this pandemic. She has implemented contact tracing procedures as well as protocols for how to interact with each other while in the building at St. James'. Her can-do attitude and her dedication to teamwork has kept the operations of the church afloat when other churches have just simply closed their doors. She continues to do a remarkable job in coordinating all the different ministries and functions that keep St. James' operational. She is an amazing administrator, and her understanding of processes has helped St. James' to handle the many challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic brought our way. Her use of the "Happening" emails, and our Facebook page allowed us to stay connected to each other and the Parish during this difficult period. Her procedures and protocol manual for St. James' was used by the diocese as a template on how to implement the Bishops directives for the whole diocese. Thank you, Lisa! I do not know what I would have done without you!

I need to also thank my Vestry and the Wardens of the Vestry, Mr. Drew Beck and Mrs. Marilyn Hastings for their leadership and support. Drew has been an outstanding Rector's Warden while Marilyn has served me and the Vestry as your People's Warden. Thank you both for your commitment to the ministry of St. James' and for your wise counsel. Many thanks to all those who have given of their efforts on our various committees such as Building and Grounds, Communications, New-Member Ministries and Parish Life. At this annual meeting, we will say goodbye to Mr. Gene Goff and to Mr. Steve Jackson who have served us well while being in charge of our Building and

Grounds activities. We will also be saying farewell to Mr. Jon Yenney who has served as our Vestry secretary for the last six years and has done an outstanding job. We have been blessed by the efforts of Maeve Vogen and Sarah Deacle who both began their service on the Vestry in the middle of such chaos and have both been outstanding new additions to your Vestry. The people of St. James' can be proud of the service of all our Vestry members in their can-do attitudes during this trying time.

The need for the ministry of our Outreach House has never been more apparent than in the midst of this pandemic. The flexibility and dedication of the Leadership and volunteers of the St. James' Outreach House to serve those within our community that are in need has been nothing short of outstanding! Our Outreach House Director, Mrs. Carole Exley has done a remarkable job in responding to the changing environment that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused. I say "Thank You" from the bottom of my heart for your leadership and dedication. The Outreach House is truly a place where the hungry are feed, the naked clothed and those in need are cared for and ministered to by the people of St. James'.

What a challenging year 2020 has turned out to be. Despite the fact that we lost more than half of the year of in-person worship we continued to add members to our rolls. During this past year, we had 19 new people who became members of our congregation with 2 people being removed from the rolls due to death. Our total membership increased from 597 members reported in 2019 to 614 members reported in the 2020 parochial report. We also had 4 baptisms in 2020 and we saw our average Sunday attendance (ASA) increase from 178 to 206. The National Church decided that we should only count our ASA from January 1, 2020 to March 1, 2020. As the number 206 indicates, we were on pace to significantly increase our attendance statistics although I am not sure the pattern would have continued in the summer months. St. James' continues to be one of the congregations in the Diocese of Pennsylvania experiencing growth and not contraction.

Last year I ended my report by stating "I can't imagine what God has instore for us in 2020 and beyond!" I could have never envisioned what COVID-19 would do to our communities and our society. We have been flexible! We have been strong! We have met the contingencies that the pandemic has forced upon us with grace and with hope. We have met our financial commitments and have continued to provide for those in need

in our community because of the faithfulness and generosity of all of you. Thank you for being you! It is an honor to be called you Rector! I am looking forward to all of us being together in worship again. I know the day will come. I am asking the Lord for strength until that day arrives. May God richly bless all of you and may you know the love God has for you and the love I have for all of you.

Faithfully,

Fr. Mike+

The Rev. Dr. Mike Sowards

Rector

DEACON'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Rev. Deacon Louis Steffenhagen

To say that 2020 was different, would be a huge understatement. But through it all we have persevered and grown. It has been an honor to serve as the Deacon here at St. James' for another year.

A. Chaplain at Bryn Mawr Rehab. I started Sunday worship at Bryn Mawr Rehab. (this was short lived due to Covid) Manny and Pat Soares were volunteers with me. They would go to the rooms and get patients so they could attend the service.

B. Assisted you in Theology on Tap.

C. Performed 3 funerals and 1 Service of remembrance (brother in law)

D. Did 4 Last Rites in person and 3 virtually with the family.

E. Started: (Compline with Deacon Lou), on Thursday nights. Total nights were 31. Average viewers per night was 41.

F. Filled in for Joe Dietz every other Saturday at St. Peters Pantry from March thru December. The seriousness of Covid kept Joe away due to health concerns.

G. Clergy presence at St. James' Outreach on Tuesday Evenings. I sign our friends in and talk with them at their cars. Have done several prayers with them and have helped where possible to be a voice and an ear for them.

H. Was the Chaplain at the Men's shelter until Covid restrictions came on.

Continued to talk on the phone with those that needed someone to talk to.

I. Chaplain at Phoenixville Hospital. Was allowed in only for folks actively dying. (3 last rites)

J. Started the Parish Call list with the help of Vestry and lay folks. Contacted as many folks as we could. Several pcs of information were not correct or updated. Some folks liked that we were contacting them, others had mixed feelings about it. I would estimate over a hundred calls made throughout the year between myself and the call list.

Goals for 2021

Restart Services at Bryn Mawr, began as Chaplain again at Bryn Mawr and Phoenixville Hospital. Continue to work at the Men's shelter and begin giving Bible study. Expand Compline to include a version in Spanish. Do classes and training for those folks who would like to become Eucharistic Ministers and go to those shut in.

RECTOR'S WARDEN'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020

Submitted by Drew Beck, Rector's Warden

WHAT. A. YEAR.

No one could have predicted what a year 2020 would represent in terms of unprecedented events. Fueled by a pandemic never before experienced by any generation of our time, 2020 was characterized by nothing less than universal change. We found ourselves abruptly thrust into new ways of living our daily lives – how we worked, educated our children, shopped, socialized with others, and worshipped -- literally overnight. WHAT. A. YEAR.

It's easy to reflect back on 2020 with a thankfulness that it's now over and look to 2021 with the hope that we will emerge from the pandemic and return to some sense of 'normalcy'. Yet, despite the challenges, heartbreak, and spectrum of emotions we all experienced throughout the year, the St. James' community demonstrated tremendous resilience. Indeed, it is sometimes during the most challenging of situations or experiences in which we see God's work in motion more clearly than ever.

Although we were unable to meet in person to worship, celebrate fellowship, and break bread together as we normally would for much of the year, we adjusted to enable continued access to worship and continued community albeit in new, different, and virtual ways. We successfully pivoted to online premieres and on-demand access of Sunday worship services and Compline with Deacon Lou on YouTube. Lauren, our extremely talented Music and Christian Education Director, and our church school teachers were able to adjust to a virtually enabled curriculum. Our choir learned how to continue to lend their musical talent in a socially distanced way enriching our virtual worship experience. And our post-premier, socially distanced communion hour provided a means to remain spiritually connected through the sacraments and an opportunity to interact with Father Mike or Deacon Lou.

Truly, God does work in mysterious ways, as 2020 helped us to realize and reinforce the fact that the community of St. James' and in extension, the broader community of God, is not bound by the four physical walls of a church. Rather, it is through our collective actions of outreach and daily realization of knowing and serving God by

serving others – whether virtually or in person – that transcend any impact a global pandemic may have on other aspects of our lives. And the actions of our parish clearly continued to inspire the acts of others throughout the pandemic.

In fact, St. James' experienced growth during 2020. We had 19 new members join St. James' and we learned we were virtually reaching new households as far away as Montana and Florida. Donations to our Outreach House grew exponentially, both in terms of food and household goods donations provided throughout the year. We were blessed with monetary gifts of over \$67,978 which included 2 grants for amounts of 20,000 and 19,000. And the generosity and commitment of this parish continued to reflect God's work as well, as we received a total of \$291,846 in pledges and \$94,267 in Capital Pledges.

Yes, indeed. WHAT. A. YEAR. Seeing firsthand what this parish is capable of achieving under the most challenging of situations, I find myself more confident than ever in the ability of this congregation to expand and magnify the impact we will have across our community as we continue to live our mission of knowing and serving God by serving others each day in the year to come.

2019 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES FOR ST. JAMES'

June 28, 2020

The St. James' Annual Meeting was held via Zoom beginning at 6:04 p.m. on June 28th, 2020. All Vestry were in attendance, except Steve Jackson and Gene Goff, as well as other parishioners

The meeting was kicked off by Drew Beck

1. Drew reflected on our blessed year of 2019 and reviewed the Agenda.
2. Drew made a motion to approve the Agenda as well as the 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes, which was approved by all.
3. Father Mike gave recognition and thanks for the service of Servants of St. James', including Art Tinner, Jean Beers, Gene Goff, and Steve Folk.
4. Drew reviewed the Vestry changes as well as Delegates to the Diocesan Convention and Deanery representatives.
 - a. Joanne Tatem is retiring from the Vestry
 - b. Maeve Vogan is joining the Vestry
5. State of the Parish
 - a. Father Mike reviewed our membership growth to 597 members by the end of 2019.
 - b. Individual pledges have grown from about \$200K in 2013 to \$286K in 2020.
 - c. Dale Pennapacker reviewed the growth in pledges as well as the growth budgeted Giving, as well as the growth in food donations for the Outreach House.
 - d. Where the money goes in our budget was reviewed.
 - e. Dale reviewed our audit of 2018. It was our 7th consecutive clean audit, and the parish is "fiscally sound".
 - f. The status of our Endowments was reviewed. \$667K as of the end of 2019.
- 6.. Committee Reports
 - a. Outreach - the programs continue to grow, and we moved into the new Outreach House in 2019.

- Over 300 hours per month Outreach House volunteer hours.
 - Community Garden
 - St. Mary's Soup Kitchen
- b. Education - in 2019 we had between 40-50 students each week in Church School.
- 11 regular and 3 substitute teachers
 - Junior choir growing
 - Adult education by Father Mike and Dean Lou Steffenhagen
 - It was noted that we are hoping we can have the kids back in Church School this fall.
- c. Parish Life - our fundraiser events and opportunities for fellowship were reviewed.
- Chicken BBQ and Ham & Oyster
- d. Many fellowship events continuing, including Coffee Hour, Foyer Gatherings, Good Book Club, Christmas Eve Dinner.
- e. Communications - we continued to grow and improve our online communications, utilizing our website, Facebook, as well as YouTube.
- St. James' featured recently in the December 2019 Lower Providence Living Magazine
 - It was noted that we are looking for a volunteer to help with our online activities going forward.
- f. New Member Ministry - we continued with our new member breakfasts, updating of the St. James' directory, as well as the casserole brigade.
- Working to connect with newcomers to the neighborhood.
- g. Buildings & Grounds - In 2019 we had substantial tree work across our campus, dealt with the sagging floors in the church.
- New front entry and handrails installed.
 - It was noted that plans for repaving the church parking lot are in the works.
- h. Capital Campaign - the success of our Capital Campaign was reviewed.
- Three key elements completed:
7. New Construction - Outreach House
8. HVAC Replacement
9. Upgraded electrical systems
- 54% of parish households have pledged.

- It is a three-year campaign, with \$385K received to date.
 - \$24K additional non-pledged donations have been received so far.
10. Father Mike wrapped up the meeting with some final thoughts and a Prayer.

Our Annual Congregational Meeting concluded at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Yenney

Jon Yenney, Secretary of the Vestry

July 20, 2020

TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Dale Pennapacker, Treasurer, and Phil Tatem, Assistant Treasurer

St. James' finished 2020 on a sound financial footing after a difficult year brought on by the pandemic. Both our pledges and Capital Campaign contributions exceeded our budgeted amounts. Together with assistance from local corporations, individuals from outside the parish, and the U.S. government PPP loan (forgiven), we balanced the budget for this year despite the substantial increase in our outreach expenses. We also remain committed to giving, with 18% of our parish receipts being spent on Diocesan commitments and Outreach.

Please see the following charts and graphs for a financial snapshot of 2020.

2020 Sources of Donations

Our parish was truly blessed with donations during the year 2020.

Service Collections:

A total of \$395,985 were received for all Service Collections. The major portions of the total were \$291,846 in pledges and \$94,267 in Capital pledges.

Miscellaneous Receipts:

A total of \$184,080 were received for miscellaneous receipts which were all Trust, Investment, Building Usage, Outreach Food Donations, PPP (Payroll Protection Program- \$44,798) and other miscellaneous receipts. A large portion was for Outreach Food. Outreach food donations in the amount of \$45,432.93 were received from parishioners, local businesses, and charitable individuals who were not members of our parish. A grant of \$20,000 was awarded to Outreach from the Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority for outreach. A donation of \$10,000 was received from Globus Medical Corporation for COVID Relief.

Methods of Donations:

Bill Pay - Many parishioners used the Bill Pay with their local bank. This is a **free service at all banks**. The bank will mail a check to the church weekly or monthly at no cost to the donor.

Vanco Service - Parishioners, charitable individuals, and corporations used the online service to make contributions.

VANCO - Donations Summary			Total
Donation Description	ACH Processing	Credit Card Processing	ACH + CC
Capital	3,440.00	2,500.00	5,940.00
Memorial	50.00	500.00	550.00
Outreach Food	2,050.00	6,005.00	8,055.00
Pledge	21,780.00	9,725.00	31,505.00
Rectors Discretionary	320.00	700.00	1,020.00
Donations towards covering costs		296.88	296.88
Total	27,640.00	19,726.88	47,366.88

Note:

1. Credit Card Processing:

- Donors gave a total of \$296.88 towards processing costs.
- Credit Card companies charge 2.75% and deduct the fee from the donation.

2. ACH Processing: (withdrawal directly from savings/checking account)

- Donor receives full credit for donations.

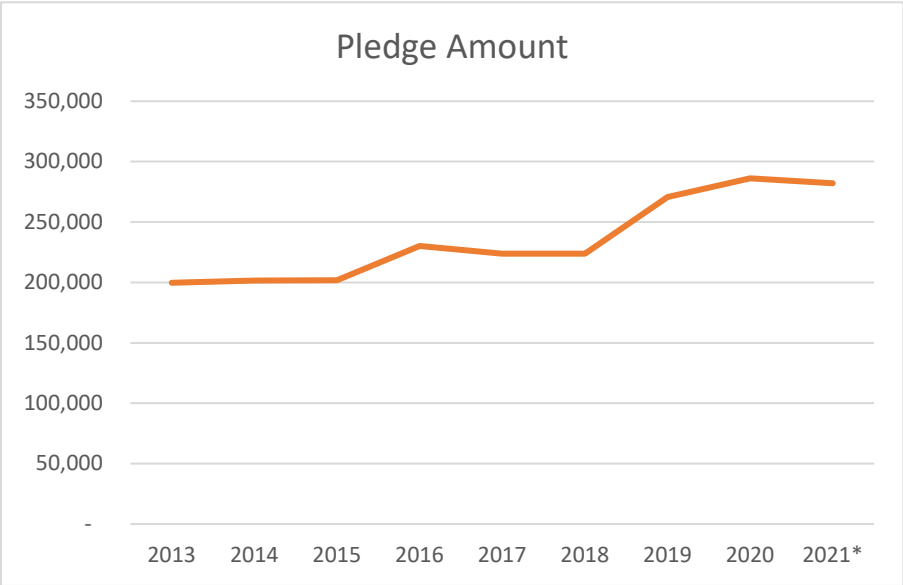
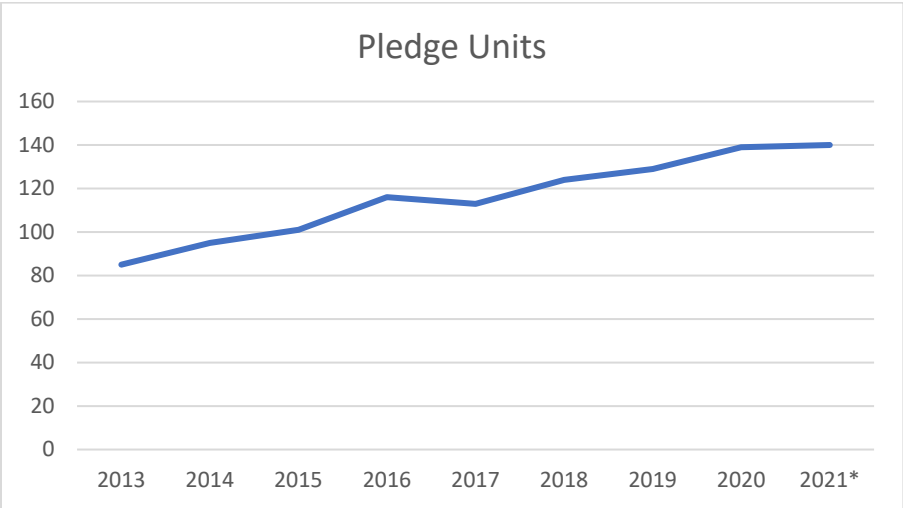
3. Vanco charges the church 45 cents for each transaction plus a \$10 monthly.

- A total of \$594.85 was paid to Vanco.

Pledging

Our parishioner's commitment to St. James throughout the pandemic has been a blessing. Our pledging units and their financial commitment have remained steady.

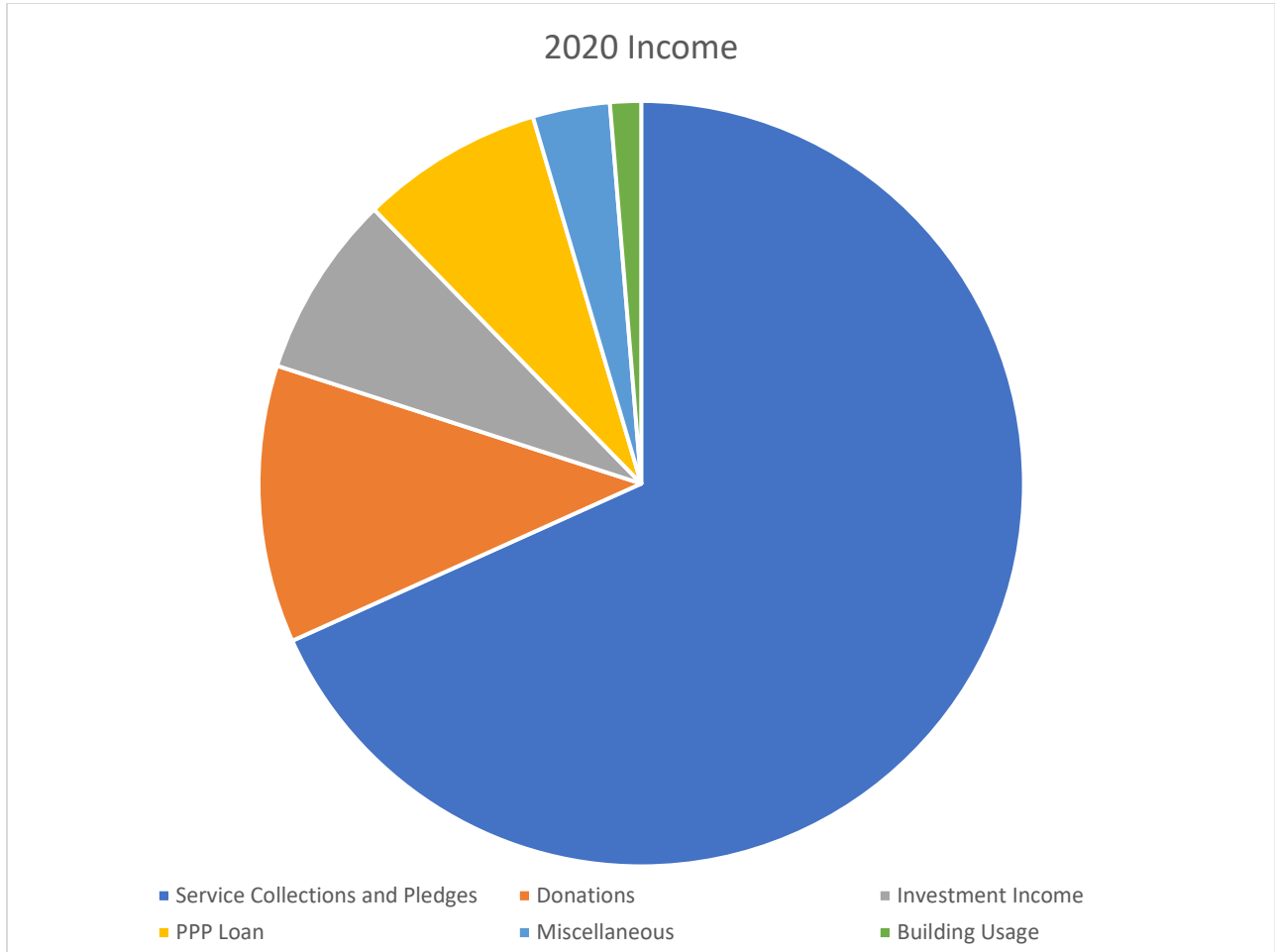
Year	Units	Amount
2013	85	199,746
2014	95	201,593
2015	101	201,905
2016	116	230,267
2017	113	223,934
2018	124	223,752
2019	129	270,725
2020	139	286,182
2021*	140	282,000



*2021 figures are projected

Income Overview

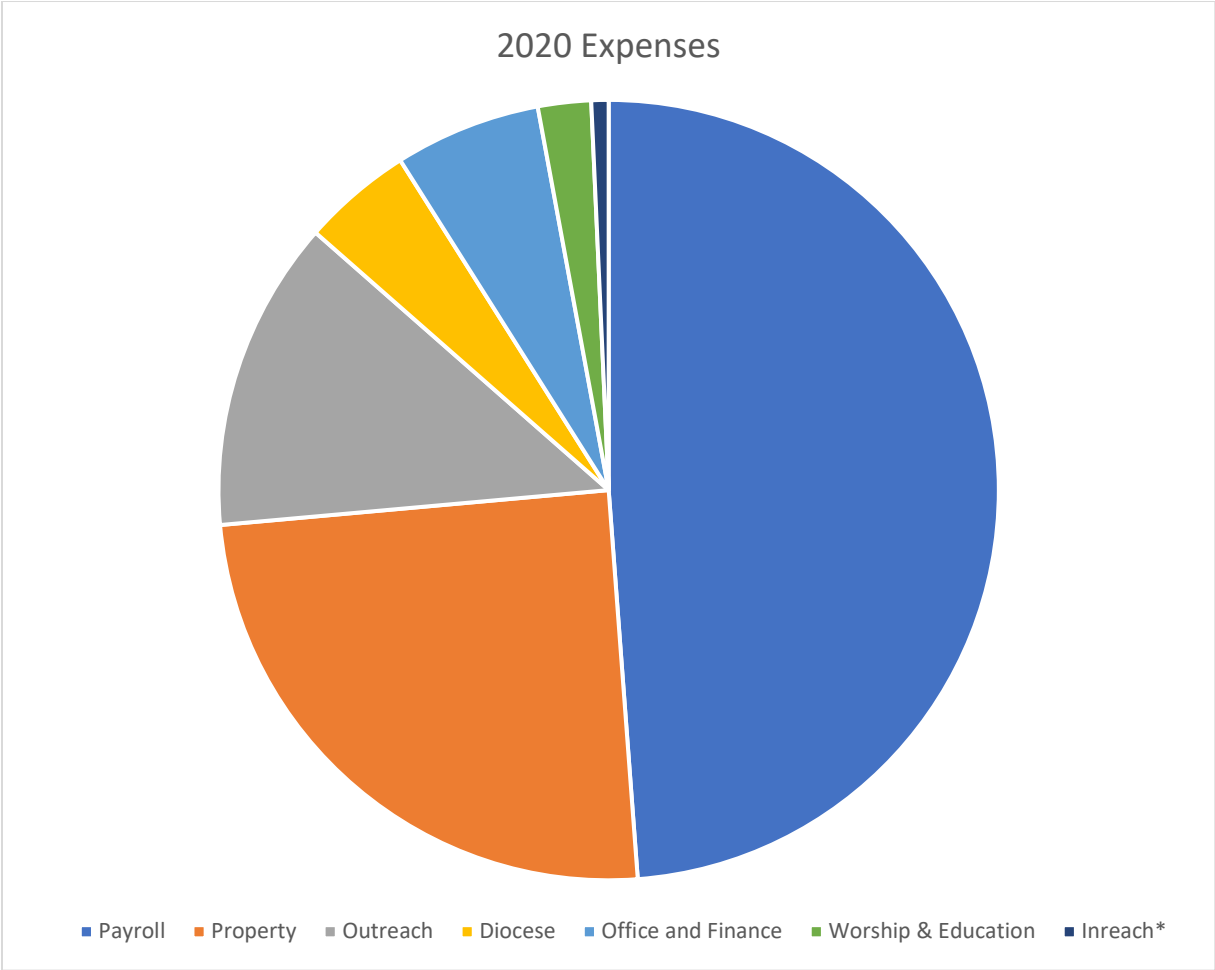
Our 2020 income totaled \$580,066, a 2% increase over 2019. Shortfalls in loose plate collections and building usage were offset by the PPP grant and large donations for the Outreach House, many from outside of the parish.



Service Collections and Pledges	395,986
Donations	67,978
Investment Income	44,797
PPP Loan	44,798
Miscellaneous	18,917
Building Usage	7,590
Total:	\$580,066

Expense Overview

Our Outreach expenses increased by 88% in 2020. These were partially offset by reductions in other areas as a result of limited in-service worship. After adjusting for the Outreach House construction costs, the expenses were otherwise stable in 2020.

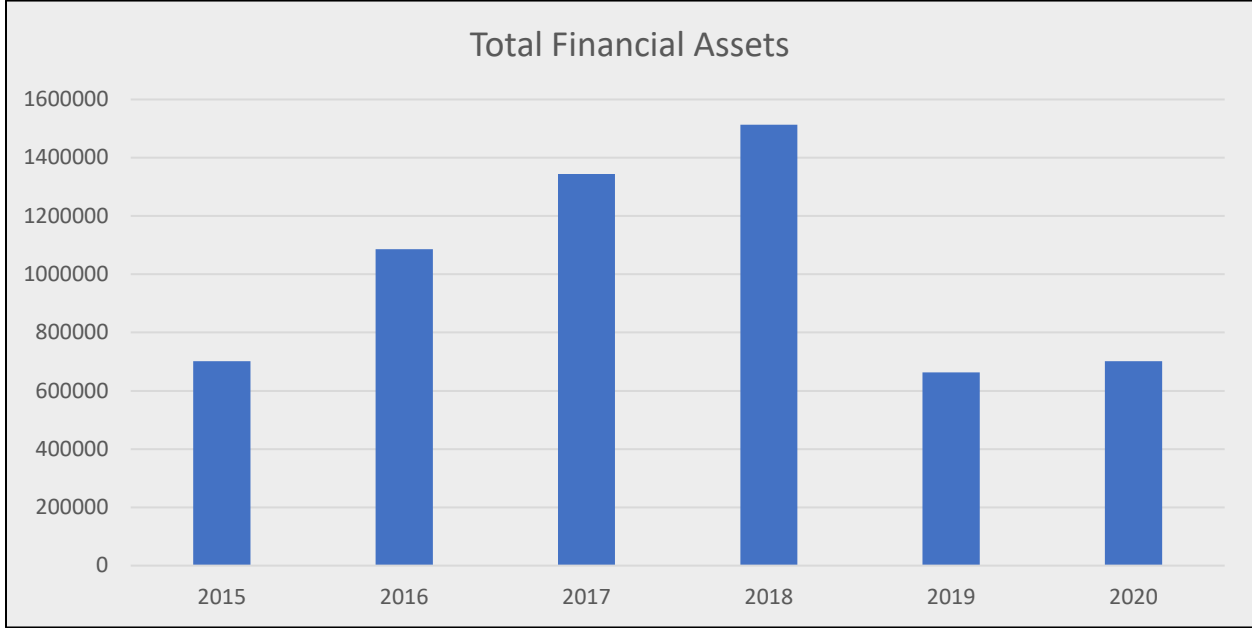


Payroll	281,361
Property	142,740
Outreach	74,351
Diocese	26,281
Office and Finance	34,908
Worship & Education	12,678
Inreach*	4,117
Total	\$576,436

* Inreach includes Communications, Parish Life, and Member Ministries

Financial Assets Overview

The Endowment funds remained largely untouched in 2020. The total value increased by 5.87%. The parish's total assets increased by just under 6% while providing \$15,000 for general parish purposes. Our long-term financial foundation is stable, with our financial assets in par with 2015, even after a year of pandemic and the construction of a \$1 million Outreach House.



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Current Assets	67,810	557,189	739,330	833,132	192,210	202,425
Other Assets	634,264	528,543	604,845	680,000	471,367	499,055
Total Assets	702,074	1,085,732	1,344,176	1,513,133	663,577	701,480

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Steve Jackson and Gene Goff.

Accomplishments

- The bell tower louver window frames and the bell supports and hinges were refurbished.
- The bell tower interior walls coated with water resistant mortar (parged) to forestall deterioration.
- HVAC upgrades were completed in the offices, choir room and the daycare area with drop down stairs installed for access to the attic above the daycare.
- The office was renovated which included new flooring, new windows, painting and reworking of the space.
- The window in the ministers office was replaced and it was painted.
- Temporary patching of the main parking lot is continuing as needed. An inquiry into a the best options for a more comprehensive repair of the parking lot is ongoing.
- Three dead ash trees were removed with more for removals slated for 2021 .
- Repair and removal of trees damaged during the shear wind storm in the Spring was completed.
- The water well tank controls in the Glebe House were repaired.
- The walk way around the Outreach House and the Glebe House was begone with completion set for early Spring 2021.
- The drawers were repaired in the sacristy.
- The community garden was a big success again this year with all the plots used.

Upcoming Initiatives

The committee completed an overview of future and ongoing projects which was presented to the Vestry.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PARISH OPERATIONS ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Lisa Reinhardt, Director of Parish Operations and Communications

January 2020 began with a Communications Committee meeting to discuss the annual budget and the proposal of goals for the year. These goals included:

- advertising with four new ads in the Lower Providence Living Magazine
- continuing to strengthen our social media presence.
- a recap of the 2020 Stewardship campaign (which netted a total of 137 pledges turned in by January 14, 2020)

Our next Communications Committee meeting had been scheduled for March 10th; however, it was discussed at the St. James' weekly staff meeting in February that a formal Communications Committee was no longer necessary as the members were all serving St. James' via staff (Drew Beck, Lauren Exley, Lisa Reinhardt and Phil Tatem). We formally asked Barbara Bateman to be available for consult as needed.

In March, the pandemic took hold of Montgomery County quickly, and we were asked to shut down our normal practices via the Bishop. This caused the role of the Director of Parish Operations and Communications to pivot a little and begin trying to find ways to communicate with as many of our parishioners as possible.

St. James' continues to offer a weekly email, Happenings, using our platform, Flocknote, in which we link the St. James' YouTube channel, the weekly bulletin and all the zoom links for the week.

St. James' continues to offer our electronic payment system, Vanco, which has proven to be extremely important during the pandemic. We have continued to receive donations from outside sources for our Outreach House, the Rector's Discretionary Fund, Memorial Donations, and general parish donations.

Throughout the entire shut-down for Covid-19 the office has remained open to continue to process mail, payments, answer emails, phone calls and prepare weekly bulletins and communications.

One specific form of communications, primarily maintained by Lauren Exley, is our YouTube channel. In 2020 we uploaded more than 2940 minutes of content. The site had 299 likes, 1,647 comments and 257 shared videos. We gained 161 subscribers and 11,671 new views in 2020. Viewers spent 181,780 minutes watching our videos.

Thanks to the efforts Lauren and staff have put forward, we now reach far beyond Lower Providence. This effort has produced donations for St. James' from places like Georgia and Texas.

Although in-person communication has been halted, St. James' does realize that there are individuals who do not have access to electronic devices. At the suggestion of Parish Life, the office has initiated sending an abbreviated version of Happenings via USPS monthly to help keep those individuals connected and part of our family. In March, the office prepared and disseminated Covid-19 Procedures and Protocols for the church including a map of the church for socially distanced Eucharist and a detailed list of appropriate procedures. The physical church space was prepared by marking 6 feet with yellow tape, numbering pews, marking off every other pew, providing hand-sanitizing stations, removing tables from Platts Hall, marking 6 feet between all chairs in Platts Hall and closing the nursery. All documents created are available on our website for review at www.stjames-episcopal.org .

We have been constantly pivoting based on the changing infection rates and the Bishop's directives. Because the situation is fluid and changes constantly, we are attempting to communicate these changes regularly and keep everyone as updated as possible.

St. James' also had all office doors and external doors re-keyed to help keep the occupancy low. To receive a new key, the Rules and Procedures document need to be read and signed in agreement with conditions. We are now keeping a detailed key log via the office.

We have also implemented a new sign-in procedure for all groups and visitors on all sites. This log helps us to be able to track exposure to the virus should the need arise. As St. James' heads into 2021, the need for communication will continue to be at the center of all decisions and we will adapt as the situation dictates.

If you are interested in receiving Happenings, please contact the office at office@stjames-episcopal.org or 610-489-7564 to be added to the list.

EDUCATION AND YOUTH FELLOWSHIP AND EVENTS ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Lauren Exley, Director of Education

Education Report

The second half of the 2019 - 2020 Church School year redefined Christian formation. Due to the pandemic, the school year ended with changed plans, virtual offerings, and a reimagining of the standard church school program. Throughout March, April, and May, classes were held on Zoom on a weekly basis. Lessons for K - 5th grade switched from our standard curriculum to being lectionary based, as our standard curriculum was not yet optimized for Zoom. 6th - 12th grade continued with their existing "Way of Love" curriculum, as it heavily relied on conversation and did not require extra materials. Youth group activities continued in a modified way, first weekly and then monthly throughout the summer. We celebrated the conclusion of the church school year with a video tribute. The video included pictures and video from many students and teachers and was played as a part of the virtual church service on May 17th, 2020. As the summer progressed, it became clear that we could not return to in-person classes. A lot of work was done in-house to turn our existing curriculum into a version that could be presented at home and over Zoom. Lessons were modified into an easy-to-understand, easy-to-present version that both parents and teachers could use. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, our curriculum remained intact. Due to the rotation of lessons over a 3-year period, it was important that all students had access to the planned lessons for the 2020-2021 school year. Materials for each unit were prepared ahead of time and available for families to pick-up prior to each unit. Zoom classes were reduced to an average of 1x per month to avoid Zoom fatigue while still providing an opportunity for community learning.

The 2020 - 2021 Church School year began in September with a fabulous staff of teachers. This year, teachers signed up knowing that they would be teaching virtually and providing asynchronous learning opportunities through lesson videos. This year we have on staff:

Primary: Maggie Brownlee, Karen Charpentier, and Cat McElroy

Elementary: Tammy Campli, Erica Ellison, and Jeannine Pinaula

Combined Middle School and High School: Sarah Deacle, Iva Ferrell, and Francois Springuel

Thank you to all of our teachers for being willing to keep teaching through the pandemic, ensuring that the youth of St. James' has access to quality Christian formation during these difficult times.

This year marks the return of Shell year, a year of lessons that has Baptism as the central focus. For students who have been in our program for at least 4 years, this is their 2nd time in Shell year. However, the information will now be presented in a deeper and more detailed way. For example, a student who was in Pre-K during the 2017-2018 school year and is now in 2nd grade is highlighting baptism for a second full year. Younger students are exposed to the manual actions and basic principles of baptism while older students explore the service in the Book of Common Prayer and devote ample time to the Baptismal Covenant.

As we entered the 2020-2021 school year, families were able to choose whether they wanted to formally participate in our at-home church school program. To bridge the gap for families who chose not to formally participate, a weekly email of resources provides formation learning opportunities. We currently have 41 students from 23 families registered in Pre-K - 12th grade.

Thank you to everyone who has participated in our Education program. If you are a parishioner who has supported a student or appreciated a teacher, thank you! If you are a student who has participated in our program, thank you! If you are a teacher who has given your time and talent to serve our students, thank you! Our program is strong and thriving because of people like YOU!

Youth Fellowship Groups and Events

Our Youth fellowship programs were put on hold throughout much of 2020. Unfortunately, events such as the "New Beginnings" retreat for Middle School, Dinner Church, and even the pilgrimage were put on hold or cancelled. Our in-house fellowship events for 6th - 12th grade continued throughout the spring and summer; however the fatigue of constant Zoom meetings was evident. The decision was made to place all youth group events on hold until the time came to return in-person. My hope and prayer is that 2021 brings many new opportunities to gather together!

ST. JAMES' COMMUNITY HISTORY CENTER ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Barbara Bateman, Chairperson

As with many parish organizations in 2020 History Center activity was limited by covid 19 restrictions. Although unable to personally meet as a committee or to provide family genealogy information to visitors the Center was able to assist several persons with family research through electronic means.

Thanks to the continued effort of parishioner, Maeve Vogan, and her family St. James' cemetery was again this year a local memorial site for National Wreaths Across American Day in December.

The History Center Committee continues to encourage everyone to take an interest in St. James' history. It is our hope that at a point in 2021 will be able to resume work as a committee and welcome visitors to the center. Tours, when it becomes appropriate, will be available by appointment through the church office or for more information contact Barbara Bateman 610-489-9712 or bebateman@verizon.net.

MEMBER MINISTRY COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Sarah Deacle, Commission Lead

New Member Ministry Commission focuses on welcoming new members and helping them integrate into the St James church community.

- Extend personal welcome to new members at joining (by phone or email if in-person not possible)
- Work to connect newcomers with church activities and communications.
- All new member breakfasts for 2020 postponed to 2021

MUSIC PROGRAMS – ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Lauren Exley, Director of Music

Choir

If the pandemic has taught me anything, it is that my soul needs music, and my heart needs the choir. I can play alone in the church and make music, but it is the presence of the choir that brings life to the sound.

For the first few months of the pandemic, only a handful of people were permitted to be in the church to record the services. Fr. Mike, Deacon Lou, Sonya, and Lauren provided the only in-person singing for a time. In order to keep singing, the choir took a leap of faith and formed a “virtual choir”. By recording themselves at home, the choir was able to compile a few anthems throughout Lent, Easter, and Pentecost.

Later in the summer, the choir was permitted to return and sing socially distanced throughout the sanctuary. The presence of the choir provided a much-needed boost to our recorded services. The choir’s rehearsal schedule was modified to reduce the risk and all precautions were taken. Thank you to the choir for being willing to sing during this difficult time. Thank you for dealing with scheduling changes, the addition of technology to the music making process, and the ever-changing situation that is the pandemic choir. St. James’ is so grateful to have you and your voices!

Christmas Pageant

The 2020 Christmas Pageant was creative, comical, and virtual! The show, titled “The Christmas News Broadcast”, presented a report of the greatest story ever told. Our lead anchors, Fr. Mike and Deacon Lou, led the way of reporters, townspeople, shepherds, and, of course, Joseph and Mary, in the telling of the Christmas story. All student parts were recorded virtually and compiled into a final presentation that aired on December 20th, 2020. Not only was the Pageant a success, it was a blessing for the entire St. James’ community. At a time when it has been difficult to see our church family, the ability to see the youth of our community was incredible. Thank you to everyone who was involved in making our fabulous 2020 Christmas Pageant!

THE OUTREACH COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Carole Exley, Director of the Outreach House

The Outreach House has had quite the journey this past year. We began January 2020 with excitement as we had just finished our very first Christmas Mitten Tree distribution in our new space. The building was less than 4 months old and we were in the “honeymoon phase”. Little did we know what was to come. February was a normal month with clients coming inside to shop for their groceries, clothing and household goods using our shopping carts. They would sit and chat in the waiting area for their name to be called. Steve Chawaga, a lawyer from Episcopal Legal Aid was available for free to those in need of council.

March 17th and 18th were the two scheduled shopping days for the month of March. We completed these days and then shut down for one week to create a plan. Volunteer and client safety is of the utmost importance. Masks, gloves and hand sanitizer were made available. Social distancing was strictly adhered. Beginning March 30th, we started distributing food via a curbside pick-up. Every week an email is sent to the clients with possible choices. They choose their items and send them back. Volunteers pack the orders ahead of time and then they are distributed on Mondays and Tuesdays. This has been the standard for the past year.

Our cupboards started to get quite low as the need increased. We were getting creative with the list of choices sent to the clients. Monetary donations began to come in but the supply chain was quite limited. We were having trouble getting basics like rice, beans, pasta, toilet paper and paper towel. Donations of clothing and household items greatly increased as our community began organizing their closets.

Community members, local organizations, church members and businesses would join us in our mission to serve our neighbors. Monetary donations and food began to come in when it was most needed. We have been greatly blessed with “enough”. Enough to feed anyone that comes to the door.

In May we began wheeling our clothing racks outside so that clients could get clothing for the warmer weather. Also, children were outgrowing their outfits and parents were thankful for these items.

August is normally when we prepare for the upcoming school year with a “store” for students to choose their own supplies. Instead, we gave out pre-packed bags which included headphones and wipe off boards for the virtual classroom.

There was brief time in the fall where we re-opened our doors for inside shopping. Clients would stay in their cars and we would call them in 3 at a time for social distance grocery shopping. When the COVID numbers began to increase we immediately reverted to curbside pick-up.

November brought the Scout Food drive which was a great blessing. Much needed items were collected from surrounding neighbors and brought to the parking lot. There they were sorted outside by only the Scouts and their parents before being brought inside.

In November and December, we were able to give out \$10 grocery gift cards for holiday meals. Large contributors were the ECW and Dan Miscavage & friends.

The Mitten Tree was also different this past year. Mittens were taped to the wall at Outreach House for anyone to choose. Gifts were dropped off using a curbside system at Platts Hall. We did not have any space at the OH because of the need for social distancing. When ready to be distributed, clients would use a curbside pick-up for the gifts. Well over 200 children had a merrier Christmas.

In no order here are supporters from this past year:

Our parishioners - filling the grocery cart and monetary donations

Trinity Lutheran Fairview Village has held a weekly food drive since April of last year.

Augustus Lutheran - monetary donation

Wentz UCC food drive and monetary donation

Large donations from Montgomery County, Coastal Sales and Globus Medical

Monetary donations from neighbors

Neighborhoods holding food drives

Valley Forge Casino food drive

Scout food drive

Giant cards from Dan Miscavage and friends

Giant cards from ECW

Diane Sartori and community held a toy drive before Christmas

Maeve Vogan and Scouts frozen entrees
Patty Earhart's community donating food
Candy mugs for Christmas from Lower Providence Presbyterian
Sweet treats food drive from members of Evansburg United Methodist
Local dojo holding food drives and then toy drives
Bill Pinkerton toy donations
Mitten Tree - Phoenixville Federal, Vets, congregation, local neighborhood took 20 mittens
Blue Comets many food donations and monetary gifts
Vets in recovery money donations
Montco Anti-Hunger Network - providing funds through the CARES ACT - \$30k
SHARE food program - weekly Farmers to Families boxes
Ryan & Kate Strong - monetary donations

If we have missed anyone, we are truly sorry. Please know that your donations are greatly appreciated.

Volunteers. They give of their time, their energy, their skills, their compassion and a love for serving others. We could not accomplish everything that needs to be done without them. We have approximately 40 different people coming in to help each week. Some are “overachievers” and I believe they deserve recognition for their countless hours devoted to the Outreach House:

Maggie Brownlee and Barbara Bateman - These two ladies have taken over the organization and distribution of all items in the clothing and household rooms. It is a herculean task that they have done with great dedication.

Patty Earhart - She is fearless in asking for donations, consistently brings in food donations from her neighbors and shops every week for needed supplies. She is a champion for those in need.

Kathy Hutchinson and Rev. Lou Steffenhagen - They have spent countless hours standing in the parking lot, no matter the temperature or weather, as they check in our clients. Week after week they are the first volunteers to greet our clients with a smile.

We look forward to reopening our doors this year as we continue to know and serve God by serving others.

Respectfully submitted,
Carole Exley

PATTY PACK PROGRAM – ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Patty Earhart, Commission Lead and Vestry Liaison

PATTY PACKS only served 42 Arrowhead and Woodland students from January through the second week in March of 2020. Due to the pandemic, the meals were furnished by the Methacton School Board for several months. I donated all the items I had in stock at the time to the school board. During the summer, the breakfast and lunch meals were provided through the government.

TABS- I continue to appreciate those of you who save beer, soda and soup TABS. These are donated to the Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia. They recycle the tabs and use the money to help pay the operating costs. This facility provides families with free or reduced housing and meals while their children are being treated at Children's Hospital. There is a basket above the coat rack where you can deposit your tabs.

ADVENT ADVENTURE was a new project introduced this year and it was quite well received. The Outreach benefitted with the boxes filled with 24 items each. Thank you to the families that participated. We received approximately 25 boxes. I would appreciate any feedback concerning this project (positive or negative) as I would like to do it again next year.

PARISH LIFE - 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Submitted by Vestry Commission Leads –Ned Travis and Maeve Vogan

Parish Life is an overarching umbrella for groups and parish-wide events and activities that foster fellowship within the St James' community. The Good Book Club and Episcopal Church Women are groups that fall under Parish Life. In addition, Sunday post 10 am service coffee hour, Foyer Gatherings, the annual Chicken Barbeque in the Spring and Ham & Oyster dinner in the fall are activities and events coordinated by Parish Life. All members of St James are invited and encouraged to participate in Parish Life events!

The Good Book Club (Ginny Tinner)

The Good Book Club meets five times a year, the second Mondays of October, December, February, April, and June at 1:30. Before COVID-19, we met at the church. Now we meet by zoom. Each month, after our discussion of that month's reading, we choose a book for our next meeting. All are welcome!

Episcopal Church Women (Diane Santori)

Had the soup sale in February bringing \$366.00 added to the ECW fund. No updates after shut-down on March 12, 2020.

Coffee Hour - after 10 am service every Sunday

Hosts provide light refreshments for ~75 people during the church school year and ~20 people over the summer months. The church provides the ground coffee, tea bags, sugar, creamer, cups and napkins. The hosts brew the coffee, heat the water and put out the snacks and clean up when it's over. You can be reimbursed for up to \$50 if receipts are submitted to a Parish Life coordinator. There are 52 Sundays in the year, so new volunteers are always welcomed!

Before the shut-down Parish Life is grateful to the 8 different families who hosted this important time of fellowship for children and adults January through the first weekend of March.

Parish Life hosted coffee hour on the first Lenten service (March 3, 2020).

Foyer Gatherings

This monthly social event is held the 3rd Saturday evening of the month (Oct to May) at the home of a parishioner.

In 2020 we were able to hold 2 Foyer Gatherings. We want to extend a huge “thank you” to our hosts for 2020 program year:

- Sarah Reid
- Fr. Mike & Sonya Sowards

Chicken Barbeque Fundraiser - CANCELLED

Ham & Oyster Dinner - CANCELLED

Trunk or Treat (run by Lauren Exley)

Parish Life participated in the event, winning the SCARY prize...

Christmas Eve Dinner - CANCELLED

Celebration for Reopening

Parish Life is planning a Celebration for Reopening once we have been given the all clear to return to “normal” Services at Saint James. Stay tuned for more information!

WORSHIP COMMITTEE REPORTS 2020

WORSHIP COMMITTEE REPORTS
ACOLYTES COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Gayle Eselby, Commission Lead

The main objective for our Acolyte Commission is to maintain a core group of young people to serve as acolytes. We strive to forge relationships, offer continual training and recruit new members.

Serving during worship is an honor. Serving alongside our Rector is one of the most important ways to be involved at church. If you are interested in learning how to serve, please let Fr. Mike know. You are even given a special reserved seat during services – so sign up today!

ALTAR GUILD ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Marilyn Hastings, Committee Member

It is the job of the Altar Guild to prepare the altar for weekly services. Unfortunately, in mid-March of this year we were faced with the pandemic and we could no longer have live services. However, the altar still had to be prepared for the weekly virtual services and flowers had to be provided. We were not able to have the usual celebration at Easter with lilies and other spring flowers that usually adorn the Church. We did have live services for a few months during the summer, but then had to revert to virtual services again in the fall. At Christmas the sanctuary was decorated with poinsettias, wreaths and candles but our celebration remained virtual.

The Altar Guild still had to function through all of this. The silver was polished monthly, linens were cleaned, candles were replaced, and wine was provided for the services. During the few summer months when live services took place we did have to prepare for a few baptisms.

In this new year we look forward to getting back together. St. James' Church is a beautiful and historic building. The Altar Guild takes pride in being one of the many groups in our Parish who work to maintain the gifts that we have been given. We need more Altar Guild members to accomplish all that needs to be done. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Sally Templeton at 610-489-2486.

Questions about flower donations should be directed to Marilyn Hastings at 610-322-2556 or Marilyn.hastings@verizon.net.

USHER COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Ginny Tinner, Commission Lead

The usher list remains the same as last year. Since the beginning of COVID-19, ushers have not been used. No new schedule has been created. Once regular services have started, we will have to discuss what responsibilities ushers will have. Will we still want to have ushers pass the collection plates? Will they pass out the service bulletins? No decisions have been made at this point.

WORSHIP LEADER ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Submitted by Janice Tabbut, Commission Lead

How would you like to be part of a great group of people? Would you also like to perform a valuable service to Fr. Mike and the church? Here is how you can do both at the same time. Become a Worship Leader!

Our Worship Leaders assist in the services on Saturday evening, at both Sunday morning services, and on special occasions. We would love to have you join us! We know you have commitments; we schedule around your schedule. At the beginning of each quarter we gather your schedule commitments and prepare a schedule allocating each worship leader based on their availability.

What is that you say? You don't know how to be a Worship Leader? Fear not! We will train you. It's a pretty extensive training program lasting most of a college semester. Just kidding! It will take about an hour. If we have mass multitudes sign up and they are not all available at the same time we will run multiple training sessions. We even have a book with tips about how to best read the scriptures. It doesn't get any easier! If you are interested in joining our ranks and performing this valuable service, please let Fr. Mike know or text Janice Tabbut at 610-745-7867. We look forward to hearing from you!