



ANNUAL REPORT 2021



St. James' Episcopal Church
knowing and serving God by serving others

3768 Germantown Pike, Collegeville, PA 19426
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FROM THE RECTOR

Rector's Annual Report 2021

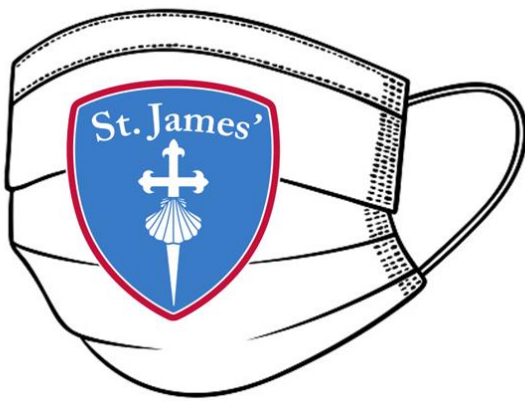
Who would have believed that the world-wide COVID-19 pandemic would have lasted as long as it has? Because of the exceptional leadership of the Vestry and staff at St. James', we have more than weathered the storm. We spent the first half of the year in mostly a virtual mode where the majority of you attended services via our YouTube channel. In July 2021, as infection rates began to wane, we transitioned to a hybrid mode where attendance was 50/50 split between online and in person. As the year progressed, we saw more and more people finding their way back to in person worship and we found that our attendance stayed pretty much the same as it did in 2020. In the parochial report for 2020, the attendance was only taken from the beginning of January until March 16th when we all locked down. I was afraid that the attendance average of 186 would be too high knowing that we still had the traditional slow summer months to come. I am proud to report that our attendance average for 2021 was 181 which is not that far from the 2020 reported average. In addition to maintaining our average, we grew significantly during 2021 with 35 new members and we only lost two to transfer. So far in 2022 we are continuing that trend of growth where we have added 14 people since the 1st of the year.

"As the year progressed, we saw more and more people finding their way back to in person worship..."

I want to thank the staff and volunteers who have worked tirelessly in meeting the changing situations that we have found ourselves in due to the 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 extraordinary efforts have allowed us to continue with our Christian Education Program and to provide the materials that have allowed our students to continue Church School learning at home. Our music program is second to none and I have been impressed with the selection of soloist and anthems that enhanced our worship experience this year. Thank you so much Lauren for all that you have done. Our Director of Parish Operations and Communications, Mrs. Lisa Reinhardt continues to do amazing things here at St. James'.

Lisa's organizational skills are incredible, and she continues to implement procedures and protocols that help ensure the smooth conduct of operations here at the church. Lisa does an extraordinary job in coordinating all the different ministries and functions here at St. James'. As the Director of Communications, she has worked miracles in ensuring the timely flow of communications through the use of the "Happening" emails, and as our Facebook page administrator. Thank you, Lisa! I do not know what I would do 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 as 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 Mrs. Patty Earhart who has served us well being a liaison

for the Outreach activities of the Church. We have been blessed by the efforts of all the members of the Vestry for their can-do attitudes and commitment to the financial health of the church during this difficult time.

As I stated last year, the need for the ministry of our Outreach House has never been more apparent than in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The flexibility and commitment 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 excellent! To our Outreach House Director, Mrs. Carole Exley, and to all the volunteers who work in this ministry, I say a heartfelt "Thank You" and I know that the community thanks you as well. The Outreach House is truly a place where we feed the hungry and clothe the naked and a place where Christ is glorified!



“The flexibility and commitment 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 excellent!”

As I stated the last two years, we are strong! We are flexible! We are resilient! I know that we will continue to meet the contingencies and challenges of the future, We will continue to meet our financial commitments and will continue to provide for those in need in our community. All this happens because of the faithfulness and generosity of all of you. Again, thank you for being you! As I said last year, it is an honor to be called you Rector! 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



RAISE YOUR GLASS
**IT'S
THEOLOGY
ON TAP!**

Please join Deacon Lou and Fr. Mike for a virtual Adult Christian education experience on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM. Grab your favorite beverage (alcoholic or non) and let's discuss theology! Everyone is welcome!



Annual Meeting Agenda

3 April 2022

- I. Opening Prayer
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Vestry and Delegate Introductions - Thanks to Patty Earhart and Ned Travis
Elections: Re-elect Sarah Deacle and Marilyn Hastings
Elect new slate: Francois Springuel and Barbara Bateman

Vestry:

Class of 2022

Sarah Deacle*

Patty Earhart*

Marilyn Hastings*

Ned Travis*~

Class of 2023

Bill Kilgour**

Drew Beck**

Josh Ilgen**

Maeve Vogan*

Class of 2024

Iva Ferrell*

Chuck Rogers*

Marc Wezner*

Peggy Spinozzi**

*Eligible for a 2nd Term

^Decided not to run

**Cycling Off

*~ Resigned

Deanery and Diocesan Representatives: Jon Yenney and Phil Tatem

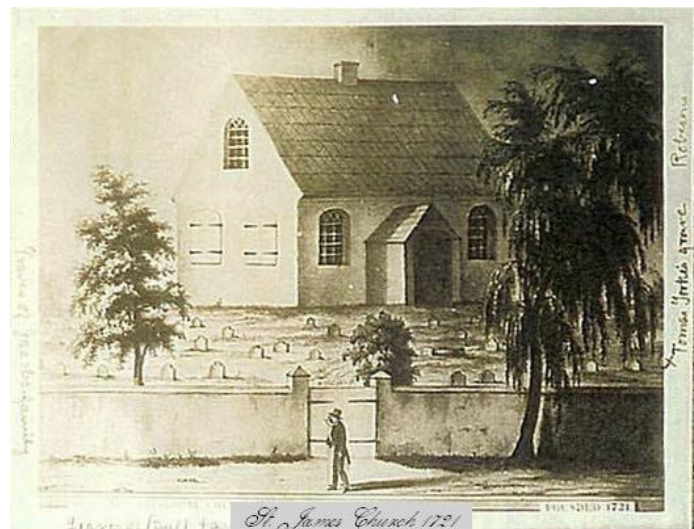
- IV Recognition of Servants of St. James' award the 2022 class

- V. State of the Parish Reports

- VI. Questions/Comments

- VII. Rector's Summary

- VIII. Closing Prayer & Adjournment



Deacon's Annual

Submitted by Rev. Deacon Louis Steffenhagen

Greetings to all. 2021 was no exception when it came to making changes and adapting as we continued to live through the Covid Pandemic. But we did amazing things as a Church.

We did a jean drive that was an absolute success, where together the church collected 970 pairs of jeans. These were distributed to Project Home and St. Marks in Frankford. St. James' collected the most out of all the other parishes.

Project Warmth was also started and we estimated that again we collected well over 900 items of socks, hats, gloves, sweaters, hoodies and scarves. These went to The Veterans that meet at Manatawny Park once per month, Clare's project, St Marks Frankford and Project Home.

- Continued Compline with Lauren Exley's help. There were 46 evenings with an average of 23-25 people signing on.
- Preached a minimum of once per month.
- Did healing prayers at the services I attended.
- Continued to take the Eucharist to folks that needed it.
- Was the Bishop's Deacon 2 times
- Performed 2 last Rites at Phoenixville Hospital
- Assisted at 2 funerals and performed 1 gravesite service.

I am the Spiritual presence at the Outreach House on Tuesdays and some Saturday's assisting Carol Exley. Working alongside the volunteers and interacting with our friends and praying with them when needed or requested.

Assist Father Mike with Theology on Tap on Thursday evenings.



Rector's Warden Annual Report

Submitted by Drew Beck, Rector's Warden

Resilience. Resolution. Reaffirmation.

Although 2021 did not turn out to be the year that the world emerged from the pandemic and settled into a semblance of pre-pandemic 'normalcy' as we had hoped would be the case at our last Annual Meeting, it did represent a year in which the community of St. James' continued to demonstrate a tremendous resilience despite the ongoing challenges posed by the ever-evolving COVID-19 variants.

We continued to adjust to the pandemic inspired ways of living our daily lives. It's easy to reflect back on 2021 with a thankfulness that it also is now over and look to 2022, dare I say it out loud, as the year when we will truly emerge from the pandemic and return to some sense of 'normalcy'. Yet, despite the continued challenges and spectrum of emotions we all experienced throughout these past two years, the St. James' community demonstrated tremendous resilience. As mentioned during last year's Rector Warden's Annual Report, indeed, it is truly during the most challenging of situations or experiences in which we see God's work in motion more clearly than ever.

“... it is truly during the most challenging of situations or experiences in which we see God's work in motion more clearly than ever.”

We successfully continued our online premieres and on-demand access of Sunday worship services and Compline with Deacon Lou on YouTube and we eventually evolved to a live streaming of our 10 AM worship service. Lauren, our extremely talented Music and Christian Education Director, and our church school teachers continued a virtually enabled education curriculum. And our choir was able to continue to lend their musical talent in both our socially distanced virtual service to eventually a masked, in-person experience. And our post-premier, socially distanced communion hour eventually evolved to a much-missed, in-person bread-only sacrament. The St. James' community remained resolute in ensuring we were spiritually connected through the sacraments, interactions with Father Mike or Deacon Lou, and shared in our collective fellowship, whether it was through virtual or in-person means.

The past two years of the pandemic have clearly reinforced how God does work in mysterious ways. We have been continuously reminded 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, the St. James' congregation has shown tremendous resolution in living our church mission as we continued to dedicate our time, talents, and treasure to our various commissions. For example, donations to our Outreach House grew again in 2021, both in terms of food and household goods provided throughout the year. We were blessed with monetary gifts of over \$60,000 which included 2 grants for amounts of \$10,000 and \$15,000. And the generosity and commitment of this parish continued to reflect God's work as well, as we received a total of \$260,473 in pledges which was 10% above what was expected for the year. Our St. James' family again experienced *growth* during 2021 as well as we had 32 new members join St. James' and we continued to reach new households virtually across the nation as well as abroad.

For the second year in a row, I have witnessed firsthand what this parish is capable of achieving under the most challenging of situations. And it is because of this, I find myself more confident than ever that 2022 will be a year of reaffirmation as we further our mission of *knowing and serving God by serving others* each day.



Knowing and serving God by serving others.

2020 Annual Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Peggy Schiavo Spinozzi, Vestry Secretary

4/18/2021 VIA ZOOM

1. Fr. Mike Sowards opened meeting by noting that the meeting is being recorded for later viewing by those who are unable to attend in real time. Drew Beck acknowledged that because of an oversight related to a staff illness we were unable to advertise this meeting 2 weeks in advance as stated in our bylaws. The Vestry approved a one-time allowance to forgo the 2 week notice so that we could have the meeting as scheduled.
2. Drew commented on the many extraordinary challenges of 2020 due to the pandemic that we faced but were able to creatively find solutions for by having online worship services as well as church school, choir and compline.
3. Fr. Mike opened the meeting with a prayer.
4. The agenda was presented and approved.
5. Drew reported said that despite the many challenges of the pandemic St. James' added 19 new members, some from far away through the online feature, donations to the Outreach House were substantially increased, in addition to several large grants. The parish continued with generous giving in pledges and Capital pledges.
6. Drew introduced members of the Vestry, Diocesan Representatives and Deanery Representatives. Special thanks from Fr. Mike were extended to Gene Goff, Steve Jackson and Jon Yenney whose terms on the Vestry are ending.
7. The second Class of Servants of St. James' was presented for Exceptional Service to St James'. We celebrated the contributions of Mrs. Barbara Bateman for her work as Rector's Warden, Mrs. Carole Exley for her service at the Outreach House, and Mr. Dale Pennapacker for his longtime work as Church Treasurer. Their names will be on a plaque in the church.
8. Vestry Elections/Appointments: To fill the 3 open spots on the Vestry, Iva Ferrell, Chuck Rogers and Marc Wezner were introduced and approved as new vestry members. It was moved and approved to have Peggy Spinozzi serve a second term on the Vestry. It was noted that Faith Parshall will be cycling off as Delegate to convention, but Jon Yenney and Phil Tatem will continue in that role. A vote approved these representatives.
9. Fr. Mike: State of the Parish Report- Church Membership has grown from 501 in 2016 to 614 in 2020, Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) from 168 to 206. Despite the pandemic there was a net Increase of 17 people in 2020.
10. Phil Tatem, Treasurer, discussed that giving has done very well in spite of the pandemic with only a slight dip. Eighteen percent of our revenue goes to outside entities such as the diocese, Outreach House and Rector's

Discretionary Fund. Most of our money is spent on property and payroll; other expenditures discussed. Most income from parishioners but some from our endowment funds. We did receive PPP money (loan which was forgiven). Assets are very stable even though we built the Outreach House which cost almost 1 million dollars. He emphasized how important bequests are from will's and encouraged planned giving.

11. Fr. Mike said we are serving the community in many ways by hosting AA, Veterans Groups, Scouts and they in turn help us monetarily and in other ways. We have Community Garden plots. The Vestry created a \$10,000 Covid 19 fund for Fr. Mike to help the needy pay bills during the pandemic. Many things such as online Compline that were created during the pandemic will continue afterwards.

Committee Reports:

12. *Outreach House* Response during the pandemic was dramatic with more donations and volunteer hours in keeping with our mission. We served many more clients. 200 kids received Christmas gifts through the mitten tree, we continued giving backpacks and Pattypacks for 42 children needing meals at home, and turkeys at Thanksgiving.
13. Fr. Mike acknowledge the talents and efforts of Lauren Exley as Director of *Christian Education* in coordinating 9 teachers who work virtually. The focus was Baptism this year. The Christmas Pageant was a creative use of technology. *Adult Education* continues with virtual Christ and Coffee and Theology on Tap.
14. *Parish Life* and *Member Ministry* were most severely affected due to restrictions of the pandemic. Maeve Vogan noted that with summer coming up there may some opportunity for outdoor fellowship. Inform her of any ideas.
15. *Communications*- Drew thanked Lisa for establishing our protocols which are now being used as the gold standard for all parishes in the diocese. Our YouTube viewership, social media, and Happenings communications continue to do well. Lisa said there is help available for anyone who needs help getting connected to view our online offering. Please reach out for help if needed.
16. *Buildings and Grounds*- Much work has been done in the past year; church office was renovated, some windows replaced, Bell Tower repaired, tree pruning done and the Outreach House walkway is in progress. The 3 Year Capital Campaign has reached its final year; \$404, 685 was received which is \$33,005 over our original pledged amount. Projects that were funded are the new Outreach House, new HVAC system, and upgraded electrical system. Long term needs in the future are the re-paving the church parking lot and painting. We will set up a strategic plan for future projects.
17. The meeting was opened for Questions and Comments, but there being none, Fr. Mike closed the meeting with a prayer at 2:58 pm.

NB: There were 37 viewers actively watching the meeting. It was recorded and made available on Happenings communication sent out to parishioners to view later.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Submitted by Phil Tatem, Treasurer

Our finances remain steady. Our operating budget remains challenging, but through generous pledge commitments and bequests, we have maintained close to a balanced budget while maintaining our endowment.

Our cash position is sound. We have funds from the capital campaign and we received a generous bequest from the estate of Alatha Sherrod. This allowed us to come close to balancing the budget for 2021.

Pledging units decreased from 139 to 123, likely due to continued COVID worship restrictions. Pledge income was down commensurately. Overall income was down as most capital campaign pledges ended in 2020 and we did not receive a PPP loan as we did in 2020.

Detailed financial information is on the following pages.

Other Notes on Finance

We have installed a new accounting system, QuickBooks Online. It will give us greater insight into our finances and help streamline our processes.

We began returning to our pre-COVID procedures in 2021. The counters are back on Sunday helping with the weekly counting and deposit. They are a key part of our efforts to be good stewards of your financial commitments and we greatly appreciate their help.

We had an unfortunate experience with parishioner's checks being stolen over a period of several months. We believe they were taken from our USPS mailbox. We have installed a locking mailbox and taken procedural steps to ensure that cash and checks are always secured. We are cooperating with the Lower Providence Police department in this ongoing investigation, which has not been limited to our parish.

Vanco, our electronic payment provider, is available to anyone who wishes to donate electronically. It is quick, easy, and safe. Links to the service can be found on the St. James' web site.


“Vanco, our electronic payment provider, is available to anyone who wishes to donate electronically. It is quick, easy, and safe.”

Closing Thoughts


St. James' parishioners continue to be faithful in their financial commitment to the church. Even during the pandemic, we have achieved or exceeded 100% of pledged commitments. Thank you!


We have also been blessed with continued community support. Local businesses and individuals made Outreach House donations exceeding \$45,000. We received a second grant from Montgomery County for \$15,000. These donations have been crucial in allowing us to maintain our mission to feed the hungry in our community.

Spotlight
SEPTEMBER 2021



Did you know you can turn unusable clothing/linens/towels/shoes into money to support the Outreach House? Simply drop off your items at the Outreach House and mark them "recycling" and Keystone Recycling will turn your trash into dollars to purchase food and other necessary items for our clients. To date we have made \$1,458.52 this year alone!

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 **thank**
Y.O.U.

to our volunteers and to those that have donated at the St. James' Outreach House

Spotlight
JULY 2021



St. James' has been blessed by Globus Medical who has donated multiple gifts to aid in assisting community members affected by Covid-19. These gifts have aided in rental bills, utility bills, car repairs, groceries and so much more! Please join us in thanking Globus Medical for partnering with St. James' and our Lower Providence Community to provide a helping hand to individuals in need!

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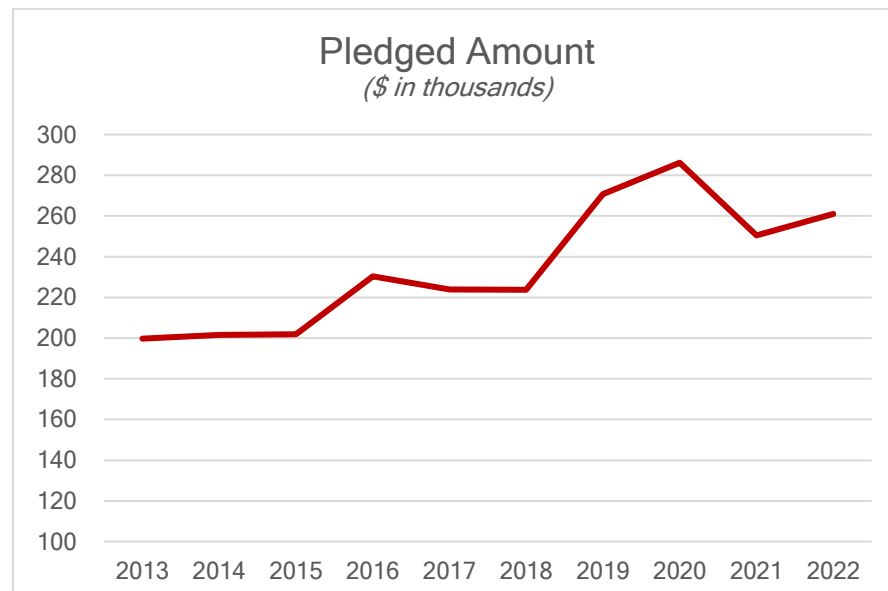
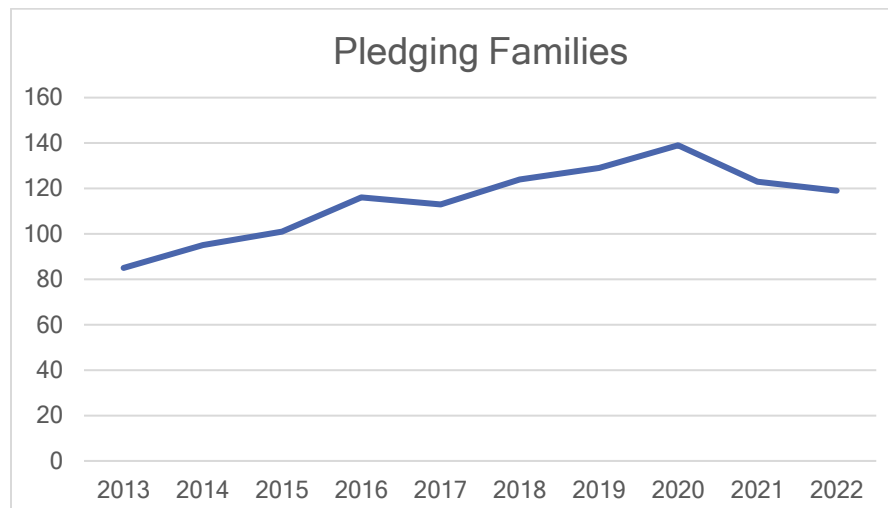
 **thank**
Y.O.U.

Globus Medical
2560 General Armistead Avenue, Audubon, PA 19403
www.globusmedical.com

PLEDGING

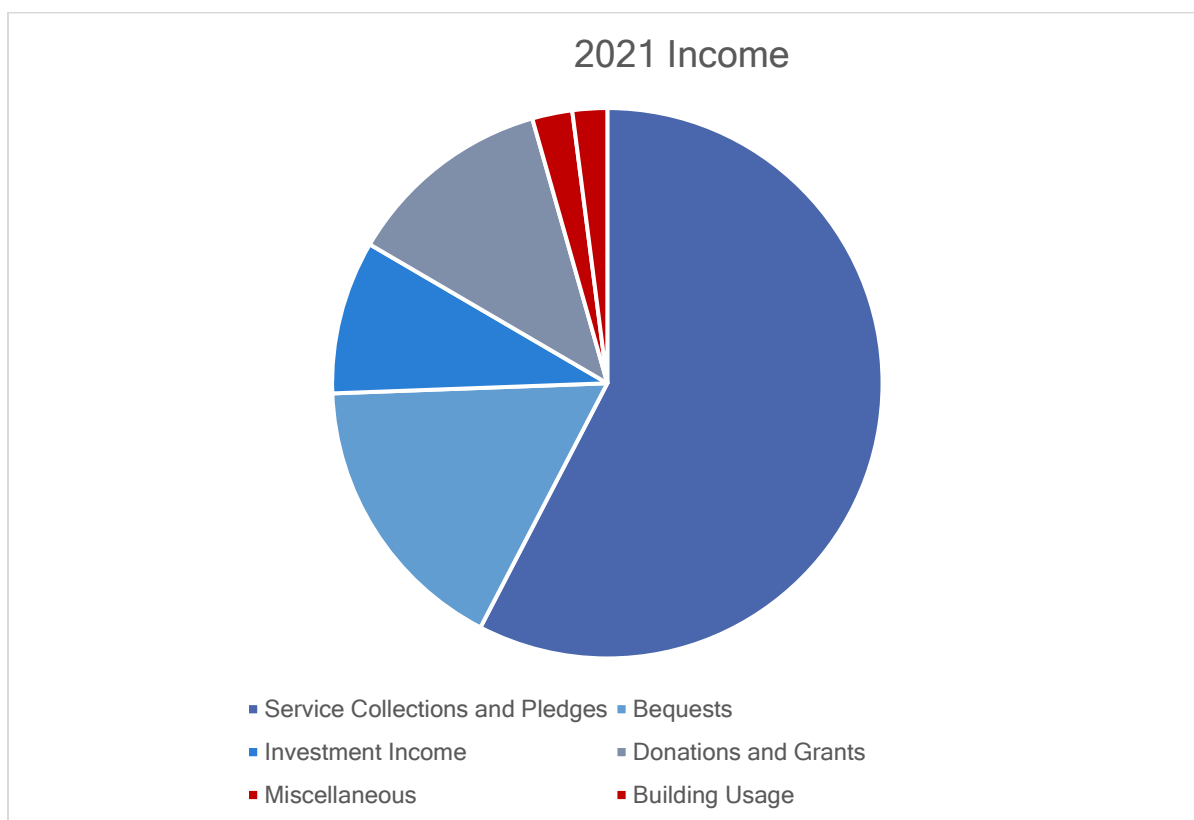
Pledges

Year	Pledging Families	Pledged 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	123	250,470



INCOME OVERVIEW

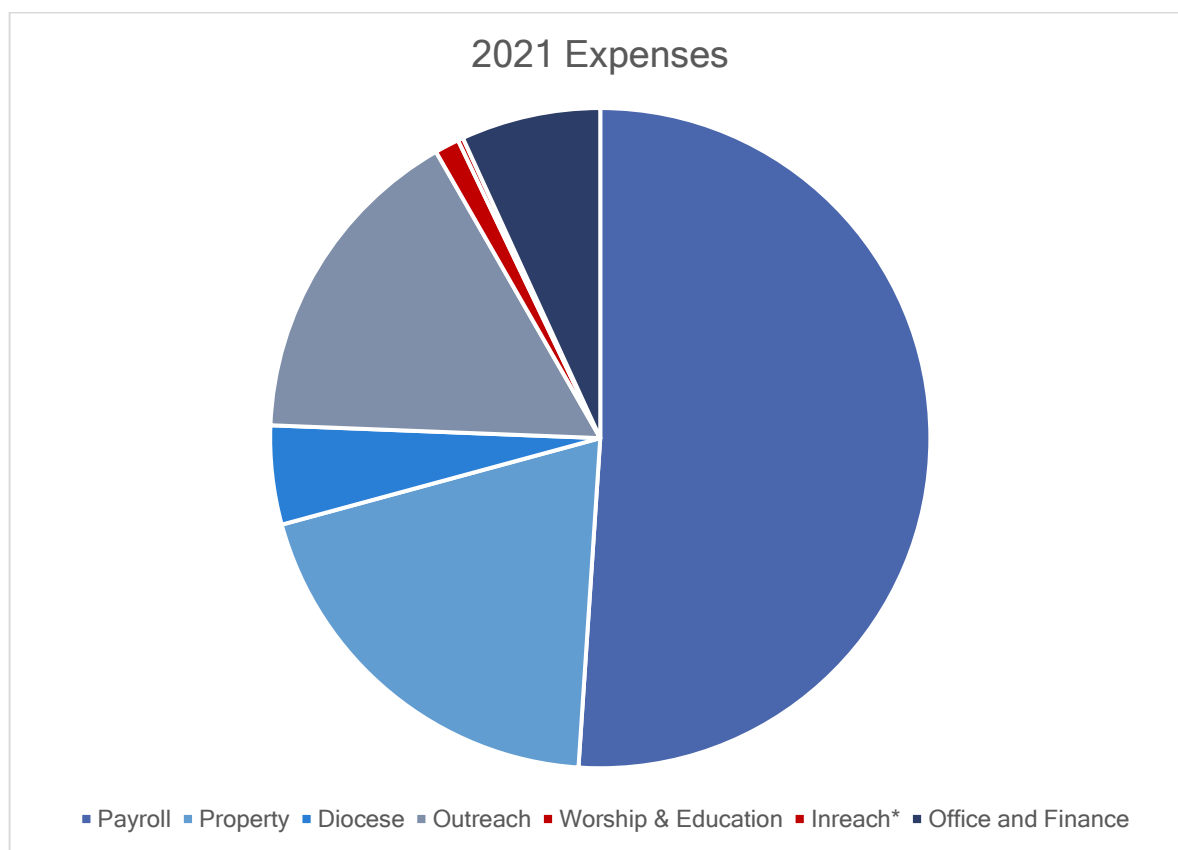
Our 2021 income totaled \$523,216. Shortfalls in loose plate collections and building usage were offset by a large bequest and residual capital campaign funds.



2021 Income	
Service Collections and Pledges	301,518
Bequests	87,816
Investment Income	47,123
Donations and Grants	63,757
Miscellaneous	12,332
Building Usage	10,670
Total:	523,216

EXPENSE OVERVIEW

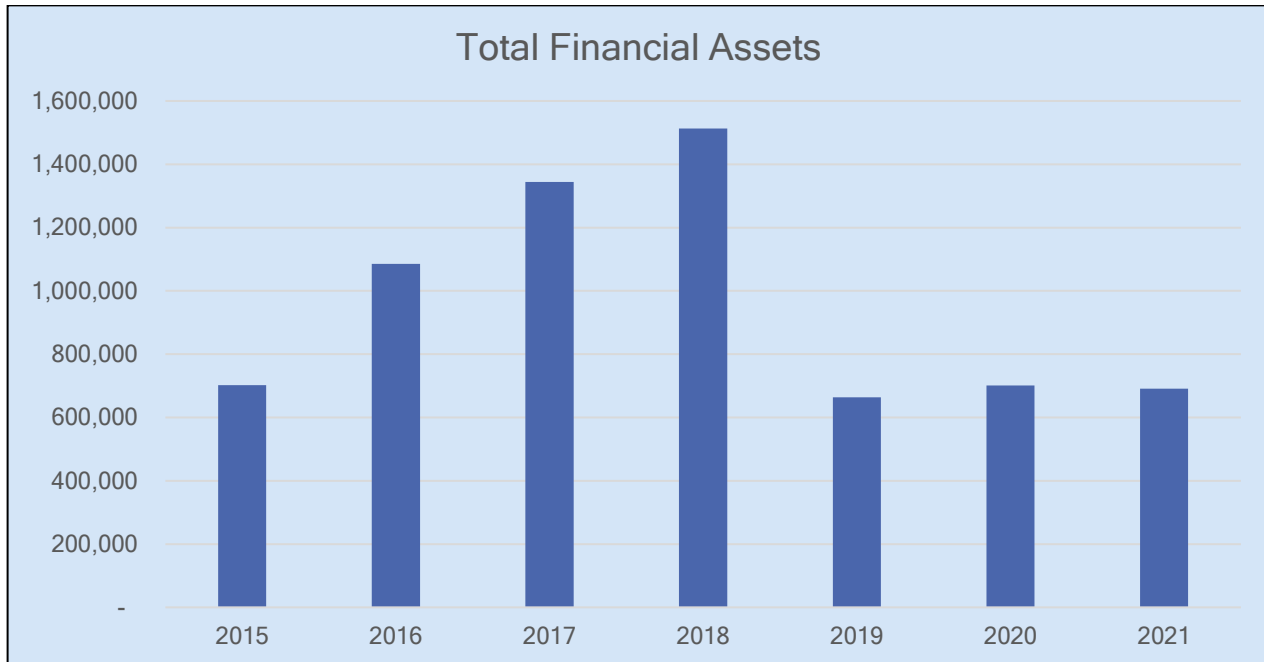
Our expenses dropped in 2021 as we completed the Outreach House construction. Expenses were otherwise stable in 2021.



2021 Expenses	
Payroll	281,337
Property	108,710
Diocese	26,681
Outreach	88,664
Worship & Education	6,613
Inreach*	1,421
Office and Finance	37,649
Total	551,075

FINANCIAL ASSETS OVERVIEW

The Endowment funds were stable in 2021. The total endowment value increased by 5.4%. The parish's total assets decreased by 1.45%.



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Current Assets	67,810	557,189	739,330	833,132	192,210	202,425	215,730
Other Assets	634,264	528,543	604,845	680,000	471,367	499,055	475,360
Total Assets	702,074	1,085,732	1,344,176	1,513,133	663,577	701,480	691,090

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Building and Grounds

Submitted by Maeve Vogan, Committee Lead

Here are the highlights that I have noted for 2021:

- Increase of the Sexton's hours from 10 to 12 per week. James has provided a list of projects he found over the past year, prioritized and completed. This has been a huge help to the Building and Grounds by reducing our responsibilities during the week.
- New Committee formed who will review and bid out contractor projects such as Oil purchases, snow removal, lawn maintenance, etc. The committee is made up of Dale Pennapacker, Bob Bateman and Owen Murphy.
- New Landscaping and Snow Removal company was select this year - Greene Scene.
- Gleb House - maintenance and repairs on the heater and chimney,
- Outreach House Sidewalk project was completed in June 2021.
- Electrical Panel replacement in upstairs of church.
- Extensive Tree work was done on the church property, Gleb House and cemetery
- Signage was purchased for the Outreach House and Playground to deter loitering / vandalism and people from dumping furniture and unwanted items.
- History Center the old oil tank was removed since the heating system was switched to natural gas a few years ago.
- Parking Lot Lighting Issues - this was corrected by adjusting the timers and updating the lights to LED
- Parapet needed repairs due to age and water penetration.

Upcoming Projects over next several years -

- Master Plan for Landscaping work
- New Parking Lot will be needed. This will need to be a capital campaign as the work will be extensive and costly.

Call for Volunteers

- We are looking for someone who is a Master Gardener or passionate about gardening to work with us on developing a Master Plan for Landscaping.



Communications and Parish Operations

Submitted by Lisa Reinhardt, Director of Parish Operations and Communications

The first half of 2021 St. James' remained virtual and visitors to the campuses remained sparse. During this time, the St. James' brochure was updated, and new information packets were assembled for visitors that included the St. James' brochure, the history of St. James' and the history of the cemetery.

June 6, 2021, was the date given to us by the Bishop to fully re-open again. Yard signs were made to announce our re-opening of all three worship services as well as advertising on Facebook, our website and in *Happenings*. We had the bulletin boards updated and ready for parishioners.

Our sexton, James Downam, set-up Platts Hall with tables and chairs. Other preparations completed included:

1. Pews wiped down and restocked with cards
2. Pledge cards, time and talent cards, pledge instructions, brochures and cards have been updated in the vestibule area.
3. An Usher area with instructions and supplies was created.
4. All the yellow tape has been removed from walkways and the sanctuary.
5. The visitor sign in book has changed from the office front door to being a group sign in book located in Platts Hall. It is asked that each group sign in (i.e, Scouts) instead of individual attendees.

As we began our return to fully opened plans were made for the fall. Our "Welcome Back Weekend" offered a picnic on Sunday immediately following the 10am service and parishioner, Amy Fabel, graciously offered to take family photos all weekend for our church directory. The event was well attended and started our program year off with fellowship and worship!





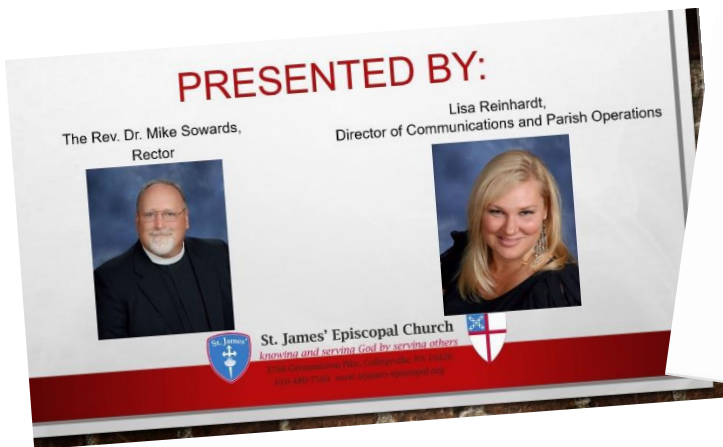
St. James' brought back the Ministry Fair to encourage our families to get involved. Our theme for 2022 is "A Path Reimagined"- How can you get involved to help St. James' move forward? This theme, coupled with the Ministry Fair, highlighted how important getting involved can be. It was a fantastic kick-off to our Stewardship campaign.

Baptisms

were in high demand throughout the entire fall. We had 7 Baptisms in 2021! We also had an amazing visit from the Bishop for Confirmation/Reception. In total there were 18 Confirmations and 4 Receptions. The church was bursting with joy to return to a pre-pandemic feel for this important sacrament.



Additionally, Fr. Mike and I offered a Servium Institute seminar on Process Audits for the diocese. This seminar, along with the Power Point slides, are available on the Diocese website. This seminar is intended to help fellow churches review their current processes and procedures and find areas that need improvement and offers help on how to implement changes once identified.



Process Audits: Maximizing Efficiency and Cost



One area that was identified through process audits for St. James', was a need for specific procedures in regard to contractors. The office is working closely with the Buildings and Grounds liaisons to establish preferred contractors, a bid process, and to identify issues/needs on our campuses. We ask that a Request for Repair form be filled out if a parishioner sees an issue (light bulb out, drawer broken, etc.). The office then determines whether it can be fixed in house, if a preferred contractor should be called because it is a timely issue, or if it should be brought to B&G to discuss at Vestry meetings. This process is still being refined but seems to work well.



"St. James' is always striving to offer worship and fellowship in all we do."

St. James' is always striving to offer worship and fellowship in all we do. If you haven't already, take a look at all of our ministries, and join one today! Together we can make St. James' stronger as we begin to come out of this pandemic. "... This is your time to reimagine what might be." – The Rt. Rev. Daniel G. P. Gutiérrez.

If you are not receiving *Happenings*, our weekly email with upcoming events and links to the service via YouTube, please contact the office at office@stjames-episcopal.org.



A Word from our Sexton

Submitted by James Downam, Sexton

I joined St. James' as our sexton in November. In addition to weekly maintenance of the buildings (trash, bathrooms, sign, flooring, etc.) larger projects were tackled.

Thank you to the parishioners who have noticed the various projects that were completed. The overall look of the campuses is cleaner and more polished.

When I took on the position several areas needed repair and/or updating. Some of my larger projects included scrapping and painting the bilco doors, the light posts and the sign. Many plaster walls were scrapped, treated, sealed and painted in the classroom areas. Bookshelves and hooks in the sanctuary were repaired and/or replaced. Cemetery stones were treated to reduce the amount of moss. This is an ongoing project. And small repairs are completed on a weekly basis. All the storerooms have been cleaned, reorganized, and labeled for the various ministries. The daycare and main entrance have been cleaned up, doors painted, gardens tended to, making the first impression clean and inviting.

Looking towards the next year some larger projects will include repairing and painting the walls in the sacristy and cleaning up the campus debris/sticks/trash.

Spotlight

SEPTEMBER 2021 -PT. 2



Have you noticed St. James' looks a little more polished? Maybe you noticed something seems different, but you're not sure what. Our sexton, Mr. James Downam, has been working tirelessly around the St. James' campus painting, cleaning, repairing and just generally taking care of our beautiful church and grounds. Areas that have been a little neglected are getting the care they deserve. Thanks James for putting that little extra love and attention towards our Parish Home.



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thank
·Y·O·U·

to our sexton, Mr. James Downam

History Center

Submitted by Barbara Bateman, Committee Lead

Activity for the History Center was again in 2021 as in 2020 limited due to Co-Vid 19 restrictions. In May, due to lessening of the more stringent restrictions, we hosted an outdoor gathering of members of the Casselberry family. Approximately 28 family members from 3 states gathered for lunch in the grove followed by a tour of the cemetery where numerous early Casselberry's are interred.

Help was given via telephone and electronically to 3 additional families searching for information on ancestors who were, in years gone, by associated with St. James.'

In the fall a group of parishioners interested in reenergizing the History Committee met in the parish hall to discuss long range plans for the Community History Center.

Through the efforts of parishioner, Maeve Vogan, St. James' again participated in National Wreaths Across America Day. Veterans who served our country from the Revolutionary through Vietnam Wars are buried at

St. James.' A wreath commemorating their service was placed at each grave.



The History Center Committee continues to encourage everyone to take an interest in St. James' history. The pamphlets, "*Today and Yesterday: The Story of St. James' Episcopal Church*" and "*St. James' Cemetery*," are available from the display table outside the church office.

History Center is once again able to offer tours by appointment, for more information contact Barbara Bateman 610-489-9712 or bebateman@verizon.net.

Member Ministry

Submitted by Sarah Deacle, Committee Lead

New Member Ministry continued to be limited by covid throughout 2021 but much less so than the year before! Many of the events we would use to introduce ourselves and meet in person outside services were cancelled, but we were able to host a New Member Breakfast in November and invite any new folks who had joined in the last year. In discussion with them, we hear that our outreach mission work is the most commonly cited factor in their choosing St. James'. We also are seeing new members coming to us after the covid-induced break from 'normal' that are looking for something new in their lives. We have been able to reach out with phone calls when in-person is scarce, and smaller numbers attending church have made it easier to identify and introduce ourselves after services. If you are a new member looking at how to connect with St. James' - please let us know!



Music Programs

Submitted by Lauren Exley, Director of Christian Education and Music

Throughout the difficulties of the pandemic, the choir remained a strong and central part of worship. The Adult Choir's willingness to attend tapings, sing at a distance and with masks, and try new ways of making music was admirable. Through all the changes, they remained committed to the choir and to the worship service. Even when it was impossible for the congregation to meet in-person, the choir still came and took the risk so they could provide quality music for worship. My deepest and sincerest thanks go to the choir for their unwavering commitment.

Adult Choir

The Adult Choir rehearses regularly (Thursday nights, 7:30 – 9pm), preparing for Sunday anthems and other special events. They present a yearly Advent Cantata and participate in the Collegeville-Trappe Ministerium's Lenten Series. Towards the end of 2021, we began the process of purchasing new cassocks and cottas for the choir, replacing the long worn-out blue robes. If YOU are interested in joining the choir, please talk to Lauren, email music@stjames-episcopal.org, or simply stop by a rehearsal on Thursday at 7:30. We'd be happy to have you! Our current choir consists of:

Soprano: Val Coughlin, Betsy Springuel, Joanne Tatem, Janice Tabbut

Alto: Raelyn Campli, Carole Exley, Nadine Folk, Barbara Gilroy, Janet Newman

Tenor: Brian Gilroy, Mary Martin, Chuck Rogers

Bass: Ron Davis, Bob Gannon, Bob Lang

The choir mourns the passing of longtime choir member and friend, Bob Lang. Renowned for his stories of WWII, love of a particular gray chair in the choir room, and appreciation of fun jokes, the loss of Bob has been great and deeply felt. Well into his nineties, Bob continued to make Thursday night choir rehearsal a priority. He enjoyed the music, but it was the choir he loved. The pandemic did not allow us to celebrate his 40-year ministry to the choir as we should have done. His commitment to St. James' and to the choir is worthy of our thanks and praise.

All Parish Choir

The All Parish Choir functions in a one-rehearsal/one-performance format. The choir meets an average of 1x per month and is open to all who might be interested in singing. No advance sign-ups are needed and you do not need to attend every month to be involved...come when you can! Music is highly accessible (seriously, we learn it in 30 minutes!) and the goal is to joyfully come together in song. The All Parish Choir began to meet again in Fall 2021. I hope to see it grow throughout 2022!

Junior Choir

The Junior Choir is open to all Pre-K - 8th grade singers who would like an experience of singing for church. Typically, we present anthems an average of 4 times per year (including Christmas Eve and Easter Sunday) and rehearse for a set period of time before each performance. Music is always accessible to both readers and non-readers, giving all a chance to participate. In 2021, the Junior Choir gathered for a few rehearsals before Christmas Eve. Though it was a short rehearsal process, it was wonderful to have the youth come together and sing!

Christmas Pageant

The 2021 Christmas Pageant was titled "The First Christmas". It was rehearsed at lightening speed with only 2 after service rehearsals and 1 Saturday dress rehearsal. We presented the pageant on December 19th (Advent 4) at the 10am service. Our older cast took on the role of narrators while the younger cast acted out the parts of Mary, Joseph, Wise Men, shepherds, angels, and the animals. The pageant was followed by a church party, where (rumor has it) Deacon Lou got into character as the guy dressed in red. It was such a special moment to have the youth back together for the pageant. Thank you to the cast and parents for a fabulous day!



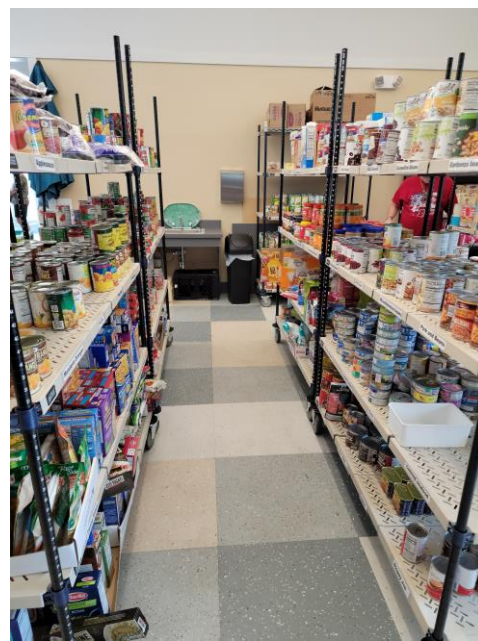
Outreach House

Submitted by Carole Exley, Director

Our greatest challenge this past year: The pandemic. We had to navigate how to keep everyone safe; volunteers and clients. We also needed to increase our distribution from once per month to weekly. So many people were without jobs and needed the services we provide. Our operation changed from in person shopping like a grocery store to taking orders from an email, packing their groceries and putting them in their car (like Giant Direct Pick-up).

Ups and downs: We were averaging 85-100 families per month and peaked at 150 every week. We are now open for shopping twice per month. The first Tuesday and Saturday of each month and the third Tuesday and Saturday of each month.

Volunteers are not always available for Tuesday mornings. It is getting better. We never have a problem getting volunteers on Saturday mornings.

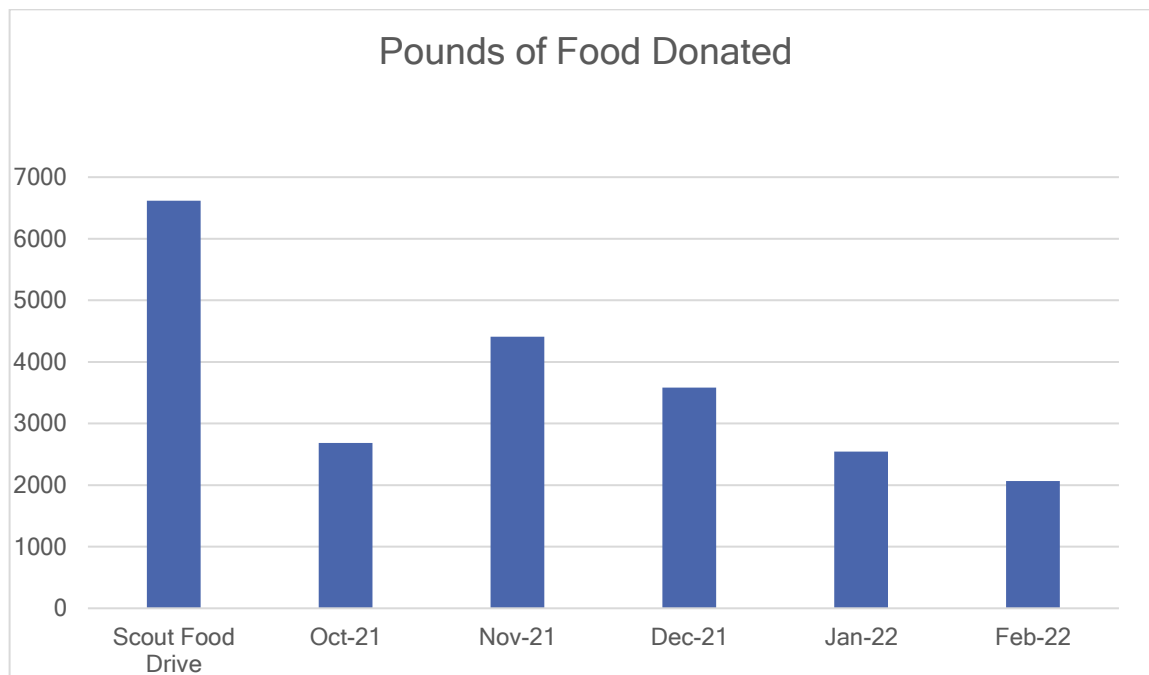


Our monetary donations increased significantly during the height of the pandemic which has allowed us to keep food on our shelves. Montco Anti-Hunger Network was a very important part of our ability to access additional funding.



Extra special events: In the summer we collect backpacks and school supplies for all the students in our client families. In the fall we collect gift cards and turkeys for Thanksgiving meals. Before Christmas we do a Mitten Tree to collect wrapped gifts for the children to help make their holidays brighter.

Food donations in pounds:



The Scout food drive (held in November) - 6,620 lbs. of food donated!!!

Community and St James -

October 2021 - 2683.9 lbs.

November 2021 - 4408.3 lbs.

December 2021 - 3585.0 lbs.

January 2022 - 2544.8 lbs.

February 2022 - 2065.8 lbs.

Parish Life Report

Submitted by Iva J. Ferrell, Vestry Liaison

Parish Life is an overarching umbrella for groups and parish-wide events and activities that foster fellowship within the St James' Episcopal Church community. Episcopal Church Women and The Good Book Club and are groups that fall under Parish Life. Parish Life also coordinates Sunday Coffee Hour, Foyer Gatherings, the annual Chicken Barbeque in the spring, and the Ham & Oyster dinner in the fall. The COVID-19 global pandemic again made it impossible to do many of our traditional activities in 2021. We are hopeful that 2022 will mark the return to normalcy for our parish and we are already seeing signs of that with Coffee Hour. All members of St James' are invited and encouraged to participate in Parish Life events!

Following is a brief report:

The Episcopal Church Women, chaired by Diane Sartori, raised money through a soup sale.



The Good Book Club remained active in 2021. The club met via Zoom on the second Mondays in February, April, June, October, and December at 1:30. This year's titles were: "The Splendid and the Vile"; "The Four Winds"; "Eternal"; "A Long Petal of the Sea"; and

"The Warmth of Other Suns."

Each month, after the book club's discussion of that month's reading, the group selects a book for the next gathering. All are welcome!



Welcome Back Picnic - Parish Life hosted a Welcome Back Picnic on September 21, 2021. It was wonderful to see the smiles and hear the laughter of the members of the St James' community. Members of the Vestry served pizza, salads, and desserts while parishioners enjoyed games on the lawn and reconnecting.

Coffee Hour – Held after the 10 a.m. service each Sunday in the Parish Hall, coffee hour provides a time for parishioners to gather in fellowship over light refreshments. It is also enables us to connect with newcomers and visitors. Coffee Hour was unavailable to us for nearly all of 2021; it was missed as much by the adults as the children. Many thanks to the families who have volunteered. Special thanks to the Timinski family who has agreed to coordinate the weekly sign-ups. As a reminder, Sunday Hosts provide light refreshments.¹ The church provides the ground coffee, tea bags, sugar, creamer, cups and napkins. The Host is responsible for: brewing the coffee; heating the water; putting out the snacks in the Parish Hall; and cleaning up when coffee hour ends. If desired, Hosts can be reimbursed for up to \$50. Receipts must be submitted to a Parish Life coordinator. There are 52 Sundays in the year, so new volunteers are always welcomed!



¹ Pre-Covid this number suggested number was ~75 people during the church school year and ~20 people over the summer months.

Youth Education Report

Submitted by Lauren Exley, Director of Christian Education and Music

St. James' Church School in 2021 continued to adapt and evolve with the pandemic. While safety remained the immediate priority, it was also important to continue the work of Christian Education for our youth and adults. Building on the model we began in Fall 2020, at-home learning was the focus of early 2021. Through digital resources and bags of lessons and craft materials, students were able to engage in learning while at home. Our usual curriculum for Shell Year was adapted for at-home use, ensuring that students were exposed to important concepts surrounding baptism. Monthly gatherings over Zoom helped form a classroom community and provided an opportunity for teachers to work directly with students.

“Though Covid protocols remained in place, students and teachers alike were overjoyed to be back in the classroom.”

We returned to in-person learning in Fall 2021. We delayed the start of the church school year until October 10th and had a full unit of lessons from October 10 – December 12. Though Covid protocols remained in place, students and teachers alike were overjoyed to be back in the classroom. While attendance had not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, it was encouraging to see engagement with worship and the church school program.

Thank you to our teachers for 2021 – 2022!

Primary (PreK – 1st): Karen Charpentier, Serena Gaskin, and Cat McElroy

Elementary (2nd – 5th): Jeannine Pinaula and Wendy Wezner

Middle School (6th – 8th): Sarah Deacle and Iva Ferrell

High School (9th – 12th): Michael Burke, Kathy Hutchinson, and Rev. Terri Ofori

Substitutes: Carole Konert, Karen Miscavage and Katie Skonier

Youth Group Leaders: Maggie Brownlee and Lauren Exley

A Friday “Education Update and Resources” email has continued to be an important branch of our program. This email provides weekly event updates and a wide variety of resources for faith formation. Families and individuals of all ages can turn to this email for quick

activities, prayers, devotional inspirations, conversation starters, and more. The goal is to make faith formation a part of regular life, even if you are not able to attend class. When church school is in session, a weekly snapshot of topics for each class is provided. Our curriculum is carefully designed, and lessons build on one another. While it is possible to enter in and out of class, students will benefit from staying up to date and prepared.

Attendance has, of course, been affected by the pandemic. We currently have 30 students registered in Pre-K – 12th grade for the 2021- 2022 school year. (Compared to 57 students in 2019 – 2020.) Though hard work is ahead to rebuild the program and re-engage families, please be reassured that our program continues to be one of the most attended church school programs in the Diocese. Please do not overly focus on the numbers. Let us instead focus on the joy of the classroom, the lessons being shared, and the foundations being laid for a lifetime of faith formation.



On October 24th, we celebrated several of our students as they made their confirmation and became adults in the Episcopal Church. Many congratulations to Caitie Beck, Lauren Charpentier, Ryan Charpentier, Andrew Miscavage, Jack Miscavage, Becca Wezner, Miranda Wezner, Raelyn Campli, Aedan Licwinko, Ian Ferrell, Ian Johnson, and Brenna Reinhardt.

Like every church program around the globe, we felt the effects of the pandemic. However, we were able to adapt and thrive throughout 2021. Learning took place digitally and in-person, with families at home and with teachers in the classroom. As we enter 2022, we will remember the lessons of the past year. Our program will remain adaptable, ready to serve, and open for learning.

Youth Fellowship Groups and Events

Submitted by Lauren Exley, Director of Christian Education and Music

Our fellowship groups and events adapted throughout 2021. Some events were postponed, and others were modified. Through it all, we remained a community and enjoyed our occasions of fellowship!

“Lent At Home” Boxes and Stations at Home

Typically, we host our “Good Friday Youth Event” which includes a youth Stations of the Cross, crafts, activities, and prayer stations. In 2021, “Lent At Home” boxes were created and delivered to all our families. A prepared guide led families through weekly readings and reflections while the corresponding items in the box were used to decorate an at-home altar. Families were provided with their own version of Stations of the Cross and were encouraged to participate at-home, at their own pace at the church, or virtually.

Easter Take Home Bags

In lieu of an Easter Egg Hunt, families were invited to collect an Easter goody bag at the church. Containing some candy, an activity, and a craft or two, these goody bags reminded students they were loved and cared for.

Car Wash

The youth held their annual car wash fundraiser in September 2021. As with all their fundraisers, the money they raised directly benefited the Pilgrimage Fund. The youth had a great time working and being together!



Trunk or Treat

When our inaugural Trunk or Treat was held October 2020, it was immediately determined that we would repeat the event in 2021! Already designed as an outdoor event, it was the perfect fellowship activity for a pandemic. The parking lot was filled with creative cars and families wandering through. We paused the festivities for the All Hallows Eve service and ended the night with naming the winners of our trunk decorating contest! While it was determined that next year's event should be 2 hours instead of 3, it was a wonderful success! Thank you to all who volunteered and attended!



Youth Group (6th - 12th grade)

Our youth group met on and off throughout 2021, as the guidelines allowed. In early 2021, we had a few virtual gatherings for games and conversation. We had several fun outdoor gatherings in the summer, culminating with a pizza night and a few rousing games of bocce ball! We hosted the first attempt to return to Dinner Church in November. While it was not well attended by the Diocese, we had 12 of our youth enjoy a delicious meal and conversation. Unfortunately, the pandemic affected Diocesan events throughout all of 2021. Several events were planned and subsequently cancelled. My hope is that events become regularly scheduled and attended throughout 2022. Many thanks to Maggie Brownlee who agreed to help with youth group!



WORSHIP COMMITTEE REPORTS

Altar Guild

Submitted by Marilyn Hastings. Committee Member

It is the job of the Altar Guild to prepare the altar for weekly services. After last year when we closed in mid-March we were looking forward to a full opening in 2021. However, as we now know, that was not to happen. Throughout this last year we had fully open periods only to have to scale back again. During all of this we still had services on YouTube, for which the altar still had to be prepared, and flowers had to be provided. We were able to have the usual celebration at Easter with lilies and other spring flowers. During the Christmas season the sanctuary was decorated with poinsettias, wreaths and candles. At last, it appeared that things were improving and that a full opening was imminent only to have to scale back again at the beginning of January.

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. There were baptisms and funerals which had to be prepared for.



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 are fortunate to have three new Altar Guild members who have volunteered but we need more 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.

Worship Leaders

Submitted by Janice Tabbut, Committee Lead

Our small group of dedicated worship leaders is back in action after a break during the pandemic quarantine lockdown.

Our veterans

- Drew Beck
- Harry Cornog
- Bill Kilgour
- Jackie Dahlen
- Mark Ellison

We lost a few members.

Said goodbye

- Vicki McMenamin
- James Thompson
- Chris Biddle

But we also picked up new members.

Our new members

- Ron Davis
- Maggie Brownlee
- Bob Gannon



When we first came back to our ministry work, we did double duty as ushers. Our procedures have changed a few times from new diocese policies. Worship leaders and acolytes are joining together and crossing over their responsibilities and helping each other more.

We would love to have you join our ranks. We can schedule your days and services around your schedule and desires. Let us know. We are very accommodating. If you are interested, please let Fr. Mike know or email me at janicetabbut@comcast.net or text me at 610-745-7867.

Thank you to everyone!



St. James' Episcopal Church

knowing and serving God by serving others

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