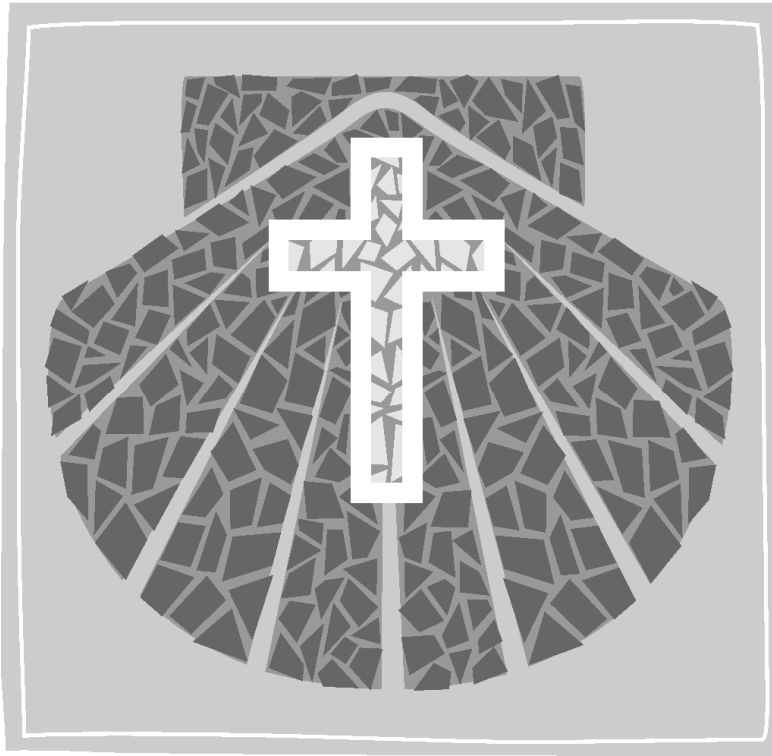


**St. James**



**Episcopal**

**2008**

**Book of Reports**

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## ASSOCIATE RECTOR'S REPORT

I received a new title in 2008—Associate Rector—which reflects the increased responsibility that came to me during the interim period. With Fr. Tom Davis spending only two days a week at St. James, much of the day-to-day administration of the parish fell to me. I worked closely with the Wardens and Treasurer to make sure St. James continued to run smoothly and I am especially grateful to Dena Veazey for her superb work in the office. I attended Finance Committee meetings as well as Vestry meetings and usually prepared the agendas for the latter.

One of my goals for the interim was to do everything in my power to enable our new rector to hit the ground running. To achieve that, I worked to bring various organizations and ministries into closer communication with parish administration. I pursued other projects toward that same end, such as encouraging members to prepare or update end-of-life information, wishes for burial services and the like.

Given my commitments at Furman (I am still teaching four classes there a year) and at St. James, I have little time for involvement in diocesan activities. I do serve on the “Formation Faculty” which oversees the academic preparation of people in the ordination process.

All of my responsibilities have made deep involvement in pastoral care difficult, and I am deeply grateful for Deacon Lee’s enthusiastic and gifted ministry to parishioners and outsiders who seek help. We have made a strong effort to ensure that parishioners who are hospitalized receive visits from St. James clergy. With the help of a dedicated team of Eucharistic Visitors, we provide communion to our homebound and others who are unable to attend church services.

I have also been Episcopal Campus Minister at Furman since the fall of 2007 and have supported and encouraged members of the Canterbury group. I celebrate Eucharist monthly with them at Furman and provide whatever help and support I can, including organizing the Canterbury lunches. It has been a great joy to see the group grow to over ten students attending regularly. One special event that Furman Canterbury offers the larger university community and local Episcopal congregations is our annual U2-charist. Last year, Bishop Stacy Sauls of the Diocese of Lexington, and a Furman alumnus, celebrated at that event.

My responsibilities also include oversight of Adult Christian education. In the last two years, I have occasionally taught a class during the Sunday School hour. Together, Fr. Tom and I taught confirmation classes in 2008 to a group of teens and adults, and I have also taught Newcomers’ Classes. Before the arrival of Tempest as our Youth and Children’s Minister, I also had oversight of Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and provided guidance to our EYC leaders. I’ve enjoyed getting to know Tempest and helped her begin her ministry at St. James.

I deeply appreciate the prayers and expressions of concern over the last year. I am grateful to all of those who have shared in the ministry at St. James. It has been an exciting time of growth for me and for the parish. With the arrival of Fr. Geoff in January, much of the administrative burden will now rest on his shoulders and I look forward to being able to dedicate more time to pastoral care, outreach, and getting to know newcomers. As we begin a new era in the life of St. James, it is my prayer that we challenge ourselves to live more deeply into our shared commitment to be the body of Christ in this place and that we show forth Christ’s love to the world.

The Rev’d Dr. D. Jonathan Grieser (244-6358, [jonathan@stjamesgreenville.org](mailto:jonathan@stjamesgreenville.org))

## SENIOR WARDEN

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

I want you to know how much I enjoyed being Senior Warden this past year. The experience has been one that I will fondly remember for the rest of my life. With Timothy's call to Arizona in late 2007, we were very fortunate to have Father Jonathan, Deacon Lee, and our backbone staff of Dena, Karen, Mike and Becky to see us through. Dena, thanks for your leadership and all the nudges you gave me, including the one to create this letter. This year brought us, thanks to the hard work of Lee Plumblee and his committee, the needed addition of our wonderful new Youth & Children's Minister, Tempest Brevard.

As for Father Tom, what can I say that you don't already know? What a blessing to have had him here with us once more, celebrating his 50<sup>th</sup> year of service to God and His church. From the jungles of Vietnam to Church Street, serving and serving again, Tom's grace, service and love for us is something I will always remember. With his guidance and friendship, my job was, frankly, relaxing and enjoyable.

I also want to thank my friend and past Senior Warden, Brooks Knobel, for all he does for our church. Brook's leadership and service continue today as he represents St. James in leadership roles within our Diocese and will be instrumental in the search for our next Bishop. His optimism is contagious and was much needed in a time of transition and as the leader of our hard-working Rector Search Committee. You can't be around Brooks long without feeling a little more upbeat and charged for the future. In short, Fantastic!

I want to thank all of the Vestry for the hard work and the big decisions made this past year, as well as the friendship, fellowship and Lynn's cheese balls we shared. I also was not concerned last year as in the past about losing air conditioning or heat, as our Junior Warden Bill Wells made sure we were in the pink in a hurry, and that we could also park our cars between the lines.

There are so many folks in our church family that have enriched and blessed my life and that of my family that I cannot possibly name all of you, and can only hope that you know who you are. I also would like to encourage any of you who may be giving St. James a trial run, so to speak, or just have your toes in the water at this point, to jump into something within our community of God and service that might be of interest to you. It is through your involvement and commitment that we will continue our good works. From the music of Karen and the choir to Al's garden, from serving on our Vestry to pulling weeds with Nancy and Lydia, as well as the many activities from the ECW to St. Joseph's Society and the many Pastoral Care activities in our church, there are many avenues to choose. There are many rewarding and fun ways to be involved in our community of worship, so just take your pick and have fun.

Finally, I cannot tell you how excited I am to have Father Geoff accept the call to St. James. I once read that when Winston Churchill met Franklin Roosevelt for the first time, he said it was like opening your first bottle of champagne, a bubbly spirit and a new beginning. I have also really enjoyed meeting the girls in his life: Judy, Megan and Colleen. At our first meeting in Columbia I soon discovered and identified with Geoff that along with God, his family was his rock and foundation. They are also the ones that will remind him that that last joke wasn't really that funny. Geoff, I too face the challenge of that tough audience every day and can only wish you the best.

As far as Geoffrey and our St. James family, I am sure we are in for some wonderful surprises in our journey and worship of Christ. I have faith that God put Geoff with us for a purpose and that we may soon be traveling some uncharted waters on our journey on God's great earth. I also have faith that in these uncertain times, that we will support and help each other and others outside our family that are in need. Our family already has a great legacy of doing just that, loving our neighbors as ourselves. I am so much looking forward to riding with all of you on this journey.

Love to all,

Cam Walters (233-5185, cam@acitelecom.com)

## **DEACON / PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE**

This has been a wonderful and rewarding year for me at St. James. In our transition between Rectors I feel that we all have enjoyed having Fr. Tom Davis as our Interim and Fr. Jonathan continuing as our Associate, and I have been blessed to have worked with both of them throughout the year.

Working with the Eucharistic Visitor/Pastoral Care Ministry is such a joy and is so rewarding. We take communion out to those of our parish who are ill and/or unable, for various reasons, to attend services in the church. I also try to visit everyone who is in the hospital. Training of the Eucharistic Ministers, who serve the chalice during our celebration of the Eucharist is another rewarding ministry for which I am blessed.

As part of Pastoral Care we have revived our Freezer Ministry which sees that there are casseroles in the freezer that can and will be taken to anyone in need such as those who are ill at home, a death in the family, or for any reason a warm meal will be welcomed.

Mission/Outreach continues to be among my interests as I have been involved in many outreach programs over the years. This committee at St. James has been functioning for sometime and I am so pleased and impressed with their operation and service to the community and the world. This ministry would love to have new members who would be interested in working with us in serving those in need.

In the Diocese I continue as a trainer for new Eucharistic Visitors and Worship Leaders as well as the continuing education for license renewal of both. I serve on the Deacon's Council, also called Matthew 25 Ministry, and also the Baptismal Covenant Committee. I continue on the Staff of the Community of Hope which was new to our Diocese last year and is a program in pastoral care ministry, preparing individuals as lay chaplains, commissioned to carry out a variety of pastoral ministries while deepening their foundation in spirituality and relationship with God. It is grounded in the Benedictine tradition. Those completing the training are commissioned as Lay Chaplains and are equipped to serve in their parishes, under the supervision of clergy, and in communities where there are pastoral needs. This year we commissioned four of our St. James Eucharistic Visitors as Lay Chaplains.

In the community I continue my volunteer work at Project Host Soup Kitchen every Friday.

I am very excited about working with our new Rector, Fr. Geoff Taylor. I feel so blessed to be serving as your Deacon at St. James, and thank you all for your love and support and look forward to continuing our various ministries, our continued growth and for all the wonderful plans that God has for us here at St. James.

Faithfully in Christ,

Deacon Lee Quinn (244-6358, ext. 304, lee@stjamesgreenville.org)

## **ASPIRANTS FOR HOLY ORDERS**

**JANET ATKINS:** When I began seeking ordination to the priesthood in 2005, I knew it would be a long process. At that time I had been a classroom teacher for twenty-five years, and it seemed pointless not to continue to full retirement at twenty-eight years. I will not reach that point until January of 2010, so presently, I see myself at least one year away from being able to take any significant step (i.e. go to seminary) toward doing the things necessary to complete the process. I have adopted the motto, "slow and steady wins the race" where the process is concerned. After meeting with a discernment committee and being approved by the Vestry of St. James, I had to complete a lengthy application and self-assessment. In the spring Fr. Jonathan and I met with Bishop Henderson who approved my continuing in the process. Because I was completing the MLitt degree from Middlebury College during the summer, I tabled work on the process except for taking a battery of psychological tests. Then in the fall I met with both Dr. Harold Morgan and Mr. Keith Barron, the psychiatrist and psychologist that the Diocese requires aspirants to see. I found the meetings both interesting and encouraging. It seems from the test results that I

am very suited for ordained ministry, and I was open and forthright with both professionals about my life history. I actually enjoyed the time I spent with them.

The only step I have left in the process before being invited to meet with the Commission on Ministry is to complete a medical report. I have that report completed except for two medical tests that I have waited to have due to their expensive nature. I will take care of that very soon and send in the required form to the Diocese. At that point, I expect to meet with the Commission at one of its quarterly sessions.

My understanding of what follows next is that I will be assigned two mentors, one lay and one clergy, who will work with me to further discern my call. At the end of that six months, I will return to the Commission on Ministry who will then decide the particulars of where I go from that point.

I am happy and satisfied that the process is allowing me the flexibility that I need as a person seeking ordination to begin a second career. I know that I have the gifts and talents to be an effective minister in a parish setting, and I am looking forward to further defining that call from both God and God's people.

**AL HIPPI:** After a significant period of discernment and completion of School for Ministry, as well as going through mentorship with Rev. Mike Schnatterley and meeting with the Bishop's Discernment Committee, I was admitted as a postulant for Holy Orders by Bishop Dorsey Henderson on November 12, 2008.

Postulancy is a time for continued discernment and exploration of my call to the diaconate. This exploration will be accomplished by various formational experiences known as Deacon School, that will be provided by The Rev. Deacon Timothy Ervolina and The Rev. Deacon Sue Von Rautenkranz over the next two years beginning January 28, 2009. In addition, I am interviewing this month for Clinical Pastoral Education at a few area hospitals, which will entail 400 hours of classwork and hands-on chaplain experiences. All of these diocesan requirements are designed to deepen my understanding of my calling and what it means to become ordained as a Deacon in the Episcopal Church.

I would like to thank all of you that have expressed support over the past three years and ask only that you keep me and my family in your prayers, as you will all remain in mine. Thank you and God bless you all.

**DAVID SIBLEY:** I have been blessed beyond measure to hear my call to ordination during my time at St. James. After work with a parish discernment committee, consisting of Gale Garner, Albert Blackwell, Margaret Oakes, Rick Veazey, Jack Pinckney, Victoria Allen, and Ellen Civiletto (of Christ Church, Greenville), it was recommended that I continue onward in the ordination process, which continues at present. In the meanwhile, Bishop Henderson granted permission for me to matriculate at the General Theological Seminary in New York, NY; thanks to many generous gifts by parishioners at St. James and at Grace Church, Camden, which were matched by a Congregational Fellowship of the Fund for Theological Education, I was able to move to New York in August, 2008 to begin the formal process of formation for ordained ministry. My first semester in seminary has been an exciting and challenging time, as I reorient myself to life in an intentional spiritual and academic community, adjust to life in New York City, and begin the work of formal academic preparation for ordination. Thankfully, I have found myself in exactly the environment I need to further live into my call to ordination. Daily worship and prayer forms the core of the formation experience, in addition to classes in Holy Scripture, Church Music, and New Testament Greek in my first semester; second semester will bring classes in the Philosophical Foundations of Theology, Patristics, and further studies in Scripture and Greek. In addition, this summer, I will have a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Residency as a chaplain at a Manhattan hospital.

I must offer my profound thanks to the people of St. James who have supported me throughout my journey, both with their prayers and their gifts towards the cost of my seminary education. I would further invite anyone visiting New York to come and visit at the gorgeous campus of General Seminary for a tour and worship in the Chapel of the Good Shepherd – it would be my delight to see anyone who might wish to visit.

## **CHRISTIAN FORMATION**

### **CENTERING PRAYER**

Centering Prayer, also known as contemplative prayer, or ‘listening prayer,’ has been part of Christian worship since the earliest centuries of the Church. It is a simple prayer, indeed the simplest prayer, since it consists only of sitting quietly with God. The practice of centering prayer is based on a daily discipline of taking time for this quiet prayer. The centering prayer group is a source of learning and support for those who want to make contemplative prayer a part of their daily spiritual practice. At St. James, the centering prayer support group meets for an hour once a week. During each meeting, we prayerfully read aloud the Gospel reading for the upcoming Sunday, and spend several minutes meditating, and sharing insights (*lectio divina*). The last twenty minutes is spent in quiet prayer, followed by the Lord’s Prayer spoken together. The centering prayer group members practice good small-group dynamics, including careful listening and confidentiality.

The centering prayer group is unlike a typical Christian education class since the sessions are ongoing; you do not sign up or join, nor do you feel guilty if you cannot come. Our purpose is solely to support you as you continue on your spiritual journey.

There is information on Centering Prayer on the literature rack, and I am available to answer any questions you may have. You may also learn about Centering Prayer at the Contemplative Outreach website ([www.centeringprayer.com](http://www.centeringprayer.com)). St. James is associated with the Greenville Chapter of Contemplative Outreach International. All centering prayer groups, including the one at St. James, are open to visitors from different churches: a listing of the Greenville-area centering prayer groups is available to anyone who is interested.

Submitted by Karen Eshelman, facilitator (244-6358; [karen@stjamesgreenville.org](mailto:karen@stjamesgreenville.org))

### **CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

The St. James Center for Spiritual Development began ministering to the people of St. James and the Diocese of Upper South Carolina four years ago. We provide opportunities for spiritual growth through retreats, quiet days, and spiritual direction.

The mission of The St. James Center for Spiritual Development is

- *to accompany pilgrims on their life's journey,*
- *to provide retreats and days of reflection that encourage spiritual growth,*
- *to build a spiritual center that feeds those who reach out to others in ministry.*

Because St. James is a mission-oriented parish, The St. James Center seeks to provide you, the missionaries, as well as others in the greater Greenville faith community with programs that promote a solid spiritual grounding from which to go forth in the name of Jesus Christ. To that end, our 2008-09 programs included four events. First, we had a *Dinner and a Movie* night where we viewed the documentary film, Constantine’s Sword. The film is directed by Oren Jacoby and stars James Carroll. It is the story of his personal journey of discovery concerning the Catholic Church’s treatment of the Jews throughout history. We gathered for a pizza and salad supper, followed by the film, then a discussion led by Martin Darby and Mary Margaret Richards. We had 30 in attendance. The second event was an Advent Quiet Day where we had a return visit from Thomas Portney. He led us in another workshop called “The Light’s On, but No One Is Home” where we learned skills to help us remain in the present moment. There were fifteen participants for this workshop. This month (January) twelve women will travel to Edisto Beach for a Women’s Mindfulness Retreat led by Victoria Chance. In June, I will lead a directed retreat to Mepkin Abbey. Pre-registration is strong for this event since I am limiting participation to six people.

To attend any of these events all one has to do is sign up on the sheets in the hallway, but you may also register by completing the forms on the Center’s website.

In addition to the special events that are scheduled throughout the year, we also provide three other opportunities for spiritual growth. Those include the Thursday morning Bible study led by Royce Ann Woody, the Friday mid-day Centering Prayer group led by Karen Eshelman, and the monthly dream group which meets on the fourth Thursday night at 7:00. Spiritual Direction is also available through The Center with either of the two of us who are trained spiritual directors, or we can help you find someone else to be a spiritual friend with you. One additional outgrowth of the Center is that two other members of St. James will begin training with The Haden Institute this spring. One will be involved with the Spiritual Direction Program and the other with the Dream Work Program.

In addition to facilitating the programs at St. James, I am also available to lead retreats and quiet days for other parishes or organizations. In June of this past summer (2008), I led the Daughters of the King retreat.

I am grateful for the opportunity to provide these events for people at St. James, and I hope that more of you will consider joining me at one of our programs.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janet Atkins, *Coordinator* (895-3434, [retreats@stjamesgreenville.org](mailto:retreats@stjamesgreenville.org))

#### **ST. JAMES DAY SCHOOL BOARD**

The St. James Day School continues to provide a quality educational experience for preschool-aged children in the Greenville community. Under the leadership of Beth Renninger, the school is operating at near full capacity and is in good financial shape.

The board met four times during the 2008 calendar year. Among the issues discussed at these meetings and later implemented by the school:

- Adding a 4<sup>th</sup> day of school for older students
- The inclusion of a 2s and 3s class and refurbishment of that classroom
- A new budget including teacher raises
- The remodel of playground area

The board applauded the work of outgoing members George Lipscomb (Chair) and Pete Tiffany (Treasurer) and welcomed two new members Becky Goepper, Carrie Russell and Chris Jennings.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Hardaway, *Board Chair 2008-2009*(233-1444, [khardaway@charter.net](mailto:khardaway@charter.net) )

For day school registration information, please contact Beth Renninger, *Director* (232-4877, [bethrenninger@charter.net](mailto:bethrenninger@charter.net)).

#### **2007-2008 Board**

George Lipscomb(chair)  
Pete Tiffany  
Bill Sauerbrey  
Kathryn Hardaway  
Sarah Britt  
Nancy Ehlers

#### **2008-2009 Board**

Kathryn Hardaway (chair)  
Bill Sauerbrey  
Carrie Russell  
Becky Goepper  
Nancy Ehlers  
Chris Jennings

## YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTER

My year starting in August 2008 began well. I was welcomed by many excited and helpful members of St. James Episcopal Church.

### Children's Program:

- Children's Church was down to one service during the summer months and started back to two services in September.
- A one service a month rotation for Children's Church with myself along with adult volunteers.
- A parent meeting for the younger children was held on August 17, 2008.
- Sunday School Teachers were recruited by Jonathan and Sunday School started on September 7.
- Day School Chapel on Thursday mornings at 9:10
- The children packed shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child and the Sr. EYC packed and wrapped them. There were 38 boxes in total delivered.
- Christmas Pageant was organized by Cherie Keese and went very well.
- The Children's program is ever evolving to create a safe, faithful and strong environment

### Jr. & Sr. EYC:

- The EYC youth kicked off the year at Furman during Project Adventure teambuilding games to get to know one another.
- The EYC programs started back on September 7, 2008.
- A parent meeting for the youth was held on August 17, 2008.
- The numbers have been averaging 4-8 for Jr. and 10-15 for Sr. EYC.
- We have participated in a range of programs from movie night, Olympics, games night, hiking, Advent worships, hayrides, etc.
- Service Projects: Random acts of kindness, Rake & Run, Operation Christmas Child, United Ministries Walk for the Homeless, etc.
- The Jr. High Retreat, September 26-28 at Gravatt, was attended by eight youth with the theme "God at work in Us."
- The Sr. Ski Trip will be attended by 17 youth at Appalachian Ski Mountain on January 19, 2009.
- Both groups have more activities lined up for the remainder of the year that will challenge and grow the youth in fun and fellowship.

Tempest Brevard (244-6358, ext. 303, [tempest@stjamesgreenville.org](mailto:tempest@stjamesgreenville.org))

## **CHURCH SERVICE SUPPORT**

### **ALTAR GUILD**

Each Sunday morning when St. James members and visitors come into the sanctuary, they see and enjoy the work of St. James Altar Guild. The Altar Guild has arranged the beautiful flower arrangements, set up the communion, put up hymn numbers, oiled the candles and cleaned the linens.

This year Altar Guild members decorated the church for Palm Sunday, Easter, Advent, and Christmas. They also prepared for a number of baptisms.

the Altar Guild has 38 dedicated members who are divided into teams which serve every seven weeks on a rotating basis. We lost 3 members this year on Altar Guild. A team works together each Saturday morning at 9 o'clock enjoying fellowship and delight in the serving of our God. If you would be interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact me.

Barbara Cartwright, *Chairman* (292-3782 or rcbbbc@cs.com)

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

In 2008 St. James Episcopal Church added 32 new members: eight by baptism, 16 by letter of transfer from other Episcopal churches, seven "on request" by registering their baptism date in the parish office and one by confirmation. A total of nine youth and adults were confirmed by Bishop Henderson on June 22. St. James lost 22 active members: five by death, four by transfer to other Episcopal churches, and 13 who moved and were changed to "inactive" status.

As of 12/31/2008 St. James Episcopal Church had 584 active members (128 of whom are under the age of 16) and 125 "permanent visitors" who are actively involved in the church but have never initiated membership. Average Sunday attendance in 2008 was approximately 241; attendance at Easter services totaled 487.

If you are interested in becoming a member of St. James Episcopal Church, please contact me in the parish office.

Dena Veazey, *Parish Administrator* (244-6358, admin@stjamesgreenville.org)

### **NEWSLETTER**

St. James is seeking a newsletter editor. If you have desktop publishing experience and are interested in helping with this ministry, please contact Fr. Geoff (244-6358 ext. 202, rector@stjamesgreenville.org).

## **FACILITIES**

### **Junior Warden's Report**

I have been asked to continue the duties of Junior Warden for another year. 2008 was a year of challenges with the replacement of the HVAC system in the sanctuary and the sealing and striping of the parking lot. Thanks to all who helped me with maintaining the facilities and grounds in 2008. I am looking forward to a great 2009!

Bill Wells (907-4000, wewii@bellsouth.net)

### **ORGAN COMMITTEE**

Our new pipe organ is now in its second year of enriching our worship with its luminous sounds, and the St. James Organ Project is approaching a heartwarming completion. The organ is paid for. Our year of celebratory concerts resonates in our memories. An endowment fund for the organ's perpetual maintenance is established.

All this results from astounding support by members and friends of St. James Church. More than 200 households have contributed to the Organ Project. Bronze plaques are currently in preparation that will list all donors and describe all memorial and honorary gifts. An archival volume of history, photographs and listings will soon be available in our church library.

More news concerning these final stages of the Organ Project is forthcoming. Meanwhile, and eternally, *Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

Albert Blackwell (233-3148, ablackwell@charter.net)

## FINANCIAL

ST JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH - Greenville, SC 29609-3035							
01/25/09		Treasurer's Report for January, 2008 through December, 2008 (Operating Fund)					Page 1
Account Number	Account Name	Current Month	Year to Date	2007 Year to Date	Budget Year to Date	% of Budget YTD	Annual Budget
<b><u>Income</u></b>							
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>\$68,165.80</u></b>	<b><u>\$429,169.03</u></b>	<b><u>\$462,430.83</u></b>	<b><u>\$439,356.00</u></b>	<b>96</b>	<b><u>\$439,356.00</u></b>
<b><u>Expense</u></b>							
	Parish Contributions	\$2,733.02	\$42,049.65*	\$42,508.29	\$41,500.00	101	\$41,500.00
	Personnel	\$18,338.97	\$216,877.78	\$215,136.60	\$252,451.00	84	\$252,451.00
	Building Capital	\$2,370.00	\$26,978.00	\$28,880.00	\$28,440.00	95	\$28,440.00
	Office Management	\$4,205.39	\$25,540.20	\$56,499.06	\$28,835.00	89	\$28,835.00
	Buildings & Grounds	\$5,952.78	\$80,114.66*	\$67,369.54	\$72,750.00	110	\$72,750.00
	Worship	\$524.29	\$10,099.96	\$10,385.64	\$13,135.00	77	\$13,135.00
	Christian Education	\$120.32	\$6,953.78	\$8,966.94	\$7,350.00	82	\$7,350.00
	PLC/ Youth Sports	\$1,202.00	\$2,173.16	\$134.54	\$3,000.00	72	\$3,000.00
	Miscellaneous Programs	\$1,668.50	\$8,412.97	\$3,433.56	\$11,750.00	33	\$11,750.00
	<b>Total Expense</b>	<b><u>\$37,115.27</u></b>	<b><u>\$419,200.16</u></b>	<b><u>\$433,314.17</u></b>	<b><u>\$459,211.00</u></b>	<b>89</b>	<b><u>\$459,211.00</u></b>
	<b>Difference</b>	<b><u>\$31,050.53</u></b>	<b><u>\$9,968.87</u></b>	<b><u>\$29,116.66</u></b>	<b><u>(\$19,855.00)</u></b>		<b><u>(\$19,855.00)</u></b>

\* Income/expense exceeds amount budgeted to date.

Joe Long, *Treasurer* (268-2759, josephofstjames@yahoo.com)

## HOSPITALITY & MEMBERSHIP

The Hospitality and Membership Committee is composed of church members who work to welcome and incorporate new members into the life of St. James Church. As we greet our friends, we try to be especially mindful of visitors and to welcome them. There are cards in the pews and in the narthex for visitors to sign. Through these sign-ups and greetings, we make contact with newcomers.

Our committee members send out a postcard to visitors asking them to come back again to get to know us better. We try to provide information and answer questions about St. James that the visitor might have. Newcomers classes were offered in the fall. The church office is very helpful when visitors wish to transfer their membership.

In April and October a special time was set aside in the services to introduce and welcome those who had recently joined St. James. We presented them with an Episcopal shield pin.

The Committee along with the ECW hosted the Easter Festival Dinner where our newest members were honored guests for the evening.

The members of the committee are Brooks Knobel, Al Hipp, Nancy King, Sue Nahm, Brenda Camden and Elaine Paine.

Elaine Paine (244-1829, sepaine@charter.net)

### **PARISH LIFE EVENTS:**

- Parish Family Weekend at Kanuga in April – about 20 people attended;
- Parish Picnic at Paris Mountain State Park in June – about 50 people attended;
- 2009 Parish Family Weekend is being planned in the Spring.

Ken Littlejohn (467-9580, alkenlj@charter.net)

### **YOUTH SPORTS**

During the 2007-2008 Basketball Season St. James fielded four team, a co-ed preschool team, a co-ed team for grades 1-3, a girls team for grades 4 & 5, and a senior high boys team. All total approximately 30 players participated on the teams, and the co-ed grade 1-3 team won the tournament championship.

Special thanks to coaches Barry Finkelstein, Brooks Knobel, Rob Webber, Cam Walters, and Ken Littlejohn for coaching last season.

For this season (2008-2009) St. James registered all of the same teams from last season, and one additional team for boys in grades 4 & 5. This season, 40 youth basketball players are representing St. James. Matt Ferebee joined the coaching ranks, and Lee Plumlee returned from “sabbatical” to coach the new boys team. We regret that Barry Finkelstein was forced to resign after relocating to Pittsburgh for business reasons. He will be missed.

Lee Plumlee (294-6697, lplumlee@eppeandplumlee.com)

### **MEMBERSHIP GROUPS**

#### **ECW**

Here at St. James we believe that all women of the parish are members of the ECW by virtue of its name “Episcopal Church Women.” Our ECW prayer says that we are to pray fervently, labor diligently and give liberally. And all of us are doing just that, whether it is teaching Sunday School, keeping the nursery, singing in the choir, serving as lay reader or in countless other areas.

Along with having two chapters, supporting the Altar Guild, and having a working board, the ECW is an organization that is seriously concerned about the needs of our Diocese and our own parish family as well as the needs of our community outside the church. Our main fundraiser this year was our annual attic sale which was held in June. We also raised funds through the Lenten soup suppers. A third fundraiser was a movie night with a wine and cheese reception. Of the money we raised, 60% left the church and was used in the community and in the Diocese. The other 40% was used for needs within St. James. A total of \$6,331.78 was distributed in 2008 from ECW funds.

Outside of St. James we supported 11 different areas in the Diocese – including three Missions (World, National and Diocesan). Our National Mission was the Disaster Response in the Diocese of Louisiana. Our Diocesan Mission monies went toward the chapel at the Bishop Gravatt Center. Equally important, we supported the Bena Dial Scholarship fund which helps our young graduates go to college.

In the community we supported nine organizations including Pendleton Place (a haven for abused and neglected children), Finlay House in Columbia (a place where low income seniors can be looked after as family), York Place, Operation Shoehorn, and several other agencies. We were able to donate \$600 to Operation Warmth from the showing of “The Dark Corner” on our movie night. A complete listing of our donations follows.

The ECW Board is always impressed with the response to a letter that goes out to all women asking for \$2 from each woman to meet our branch Diocesan pledge. We are happy to report that more than 60 women contributed generously and liberally and exceeded our pledge of \$500; we sent in \$559.

For a detailed list of our disbursements and income, please see our 2008 Contribution sheet and our ECW Annual Treasurer’s Report.

Nicki Dillon and Jodye Pfister, *Co-Presidents of ECW*

## ECW Contributions 2008

### Episcopal Diocesan Gifts

*From monies given by ECW members, Chapters and proceeds from the Attic Sale*

\$	200.00	World Mission – Galapagos ICE Organization
\$	250.00	National Mission – Disaster Response, Diocese of Louisiana
\$	150.00	Diocesan Mission – The Chapel at The Bishop Gravatt Center
\$	150.00	Bishop’s Discretionary Fund
\$	100.00	Church Periodical Club
\$	200.00	Bena Dial Scholarship Fund
\$	100.00	Seminarian Book Fund
\$	10.00	Altar Guild
\$	250.00	David Sibley
\$	300.00	Cameron Graham and Robert Vivanco
\$	<u>559.00</u>	Diocesan Pledge
\$	2,269.00	Total

### Gifts within St. James

*From proceeds collected from Christmas Card Sales, Attic and Bake Sale*

\$	500.00	Building Fund
\$	27.43	Boom box for EYC
\$	72.00	Prayer Books for Graduates
\$	<u>250.00</u>	Church Discretionary Fund
\$	849.43	Total

### Donations to the Community and Beyond

*From proceeds from the Attic Sale, Lenten suppers and “Dark Corner” movie*

\$	200.00	Operation Shoehorn
\$	200.00	Palmetto Boys Shelter
\$	400.00	United Ministries
\$	300.00	Pendleton Place
\$	200.00	York Place
\$	413.35	Triune Mercy Center
\$	500.00	Jesse Stevenson
\$	400.00	Finlay House, Columbia, SC
\$	<u>600.00</u>	Share – Operation Warmth
\$	3,213.35	Total

### Total 2008 Gifts

**\$ 6,331.78**

## ECW TREASURER'S REPORT

### ECW ACCOUNT

Beginning Balance	Income		Expenditures		Balance
CHAPTERS	150.00	Offerings	200.00	World Mission	
0.00	<u>600.00</u>	From	250.00	National Mission	
	750.00	60% fund	250.00	Diocesan Mission	
			<u>150.00</u>	Bp.'s Disc. Fund	0.00
			750.00		
CPC (Church Periodical Club)					
0.00	78.55	Offerings	100.00	Annual Gift	0.00
	<u>21.45</u>	From			
	100.00	60% fund			
BENA DIAL					
0.00	20.20	Offerings	200.00	Bena Dial Annual	0.00
	<u>179.80</u>	From		Scholar Fund Gift	
	200.00	60% fund			
UTO					
0.00	1,163.53		1,163.53		9.29
	946.00		<u>946.00</u>		
	<u>9.29</u>		2,109.53		
	2,118.82				
LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS					
0.00	413.55		413.55	Triune Mercy Center	0.00
EASTER FESTIVAL DINNER					
699.00	708.00	Tickets, wine	150.00	Speaker honorarium	530.42
		and food			
		resale	<u>726.67</u>	food, wine, etc.	
			876.67		
KITCHEN					
149.48					149.48
CHRISTMAS CARDS AND COOKBOOKS					
0.00	114.00	(50.00	45.60	Attic Fund 40%	0.00
		donation	<u>68.40</u>	Attic Fund 60%	
		from Amelia Croft	114.00		

<u>Beginning Balance</u>	<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Donations(Restricted)				
622.76			9.81 Bank Service Fee	585.52
			<u>27.43</u>	
			37.24	
ECW DUES				
26.00	559.00		559.00 Diocesan Pledge	61.00
	<u>35.00</u>			
	594.00			
ATTIC SALE 40%				
417.73	45.60	Cards&Cookbooks ECW 86 <sup>th</sup>	250.00 Church Disc. Fund	1,262.20
	50.00	Conv	575.00 Staff Xmas Gifts	
	25.00	Organ Recital donation	500.00 Building Fund	
	1,853.62	Income Attic Sale NW ECW	60.00 ECW 86 <sup>th</sup> Conv.	
	60.00	Sept Meeting	72.00 Graduate Prayer Books	
	800.00	Memorial Gift from Peggy Pielou	43.37 OrganRecital Reimbursement	
	601.58	Dark Corner Film	84.25 Postage ECW Letters and Attic Sale Ad	
	250.00	Transfer from 60% Fund	20.00 Reimbursement Fan	
	3685.80		100.00 Attic Sale Cleanup	
			150.00 Seed money cash box NW ECW	
			60.00 Sept.Mting	
			740.71 Flatware purchased with Memorial Gift	
			126.00 DVD Dark Corner Reimbursement	
			<u>60.00</u> Wine	
			2841.33	
ATTIC SALE 60%				
1180.29	68.40	Cards&Cookbooks	250.00 Transfer to 40% Fund	101.95
	902.37	Dark Corner Film		
	<u>2780.42</u>	Attic Sale Income	129.28 Attic Sale Storage Rental	
	3751.19		500.00 Jesse Stevenson	
			250.00 David Sibley	
			600.00 SHARE OpWarmth	
			189.00 DVD Reimbursement for Dark Corner Film	
			100.00 Diocesan SemBook Fund	
			10.00 Altar Guild Diocesan	
			801.25 Transferred to Chapters CPC&Bena Dial	

<u>Beginning Balance</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Balance</u>
		300.00 Roberto and Cameron(SAMS)	
		200.00 York Place	
		400.00 Finlay House	
		200.00 Operation Shoehorn	
		200.00 Palmetto Boys Shelter	
		400.00 United Ministries	
		<u>300.00</u> Pendleton Place	
		4829.53	
PARISH ER FUND			
475.10	5.35 Interest Earned		480.45

**TOTALS**

3570.45	12440.71	12830.85	3180.31
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**FUND RAISING SUMMARIES**

	Income	Expenditures	Proceeds
ATTIC SALE	4634.04	453.28	4180.76
DARK CORNER FILM	1503.95	375.00	1128.95

Karen Wolfe, *ECW Treasurer* (907-8546, canislopes@charter.net)

**ST. JOSEPH'S SOCIETY**

The goal of St. Joseph's is fellowship for all of the men of the church, in sharing meals, listening to speakers, and working together to raise money for our outreach programs.

In spring we smoked hams for Easter, which was followed by the 2008 Annual Captain's Choice Golf Tournament headed up by Ken Littlejohn which was very successful; all who participated had a great time.

This Thanksgiving was a record breaking year, selling fifty hams and seventy turkeys. 70% of our buyers were from outside the church, furthering our goal in taking our ministry out into the world. Christmas Turkeys and Hams also hit a new sales record of 40 hams and 35 turkeys, again selling to more people outside the church than in.

In total, St. Joseph's raised \$2,927 in 2008. Some of this money is earmarked to replace the wood ministries' trailer that was stolen from the church campus earlier this year.

Outreach:

- Firewood Ministry (Habitat for Heat) cut, split and distributed fire wood. Many thanks to Tracy Henry and Shaun Arness for heading up this project. We estimated that we would be able to heat five area families' homes for a normal Greenville winter. But because of the early cold snap and the frigid temps we will fall short of that goal. Tracy has been working hard to make up the

shortfall and even enlisting his neighbors in the effort. We continue to urge all men to participate in this ministry and encourage you to bring older sons along on deliveries.

- Provided an entire thanksgiving meal for a family of 15 who was identified by church as being in need.

Distribution of funds will be decided at the next St. Joseph's dinner set for February 16.

Al Hipp (449-6362, [thomashipp@charter.net](mailto:thomashipp@charter.net))

## **MISSIONS & OUTREACH**

### **MISSIONS AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE**

During 2008 our parish contributed time and money and materials to some two dozen projects sponsored by the committee. Members of the congregation supplemented the committee's budget of \$10,000 with an additional \$1,600 in collections in the narthex for special emergency-relief appeals.

A complete listing of projects is available on yellow sheets in the narthex. Thanks to all who have participated!

The committee encourages new members and welcomes all parishioners to attend meetings on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM in the church library.

Contact Albert Blackwell, 233-3148, [ablackwell@charter.net](mailto:ablackwell@charter.net).

### **ST. JAMES VEGETABLE GARDEN**

On May 20 the Vestry of St. James approved a proposal to use the vacant land to the right of the Parish Life Center as a Vegetable Garden for a parish outreach ministry. In the not too distant past this would have been nearly impossible to accomplish due to the kudzu and Mimosa trees that covered the area. With the help of Barney Posey and other men willing to brave the summer heat in 2007, about an acre of land was reclaimed.

The vegetable garden has become an excellent opportunity for lay ministries: good stewardship of the land, intergenerational fellowship, spiritual meditation through gardening and a chance to feed the hungry in our community. Also, because the garden can be seen from Piney Mountain Rd., we have become a witness to our neighbors by our example.

Although we had a late start this first year we were still able to grow and distribute 2,253 pounds of fresh produce to Father Robert Taylor at San Francisco (St. Francis Church). He in turn passed it on to those in his congregation that have been hit hard by the collapse in the housing market.

In 2009 we hope to increase our yield by 50%. We will be planting our first crop in March and should begin to harvest first fruits in late May. All are welcome to participate in this outstanding ministry.

Al Hipp (449-6362, [thomashipp@charter.net](mailto:thomashipp@charter.net))

### **COUPON MINISTRY**

*Editor's note:* Several months ago Sherry asked for St. James' help for this project to support North Greenville Food Crisis Ministry.

Here's a very basic description of how this works: I collect coupons, primarily from the Sunday newspaper, but also printed from the internet, clipped from magazines, located in grocery stores, etc. I keep each week's coupons (unclipped) in a dated folder. My most important resource in finding deals is [www.couponmom.com](http://www.couponmom.com), but there are a large number of websites available. The couponmom site tells me what products are on sale that week, which week I can find a coupon for the sale products, before-coupon and after-coupon prices, and percentage off. The site gives me details for Publix, CVS, Walgreens, and

Rite Aid. It also has a database which enables me to locate coupons for sale items at other groceries. There's a great deal more I could go into, so if you have questions, please feel free to ask.

Sherry Harrell (627-3697, rustyharrell@charter.net)

### **MISSION BOOKSTORE OF ST. JAMES**

Sales were good at the Annual Used Book Sale in August. We had a good turnout from the general public. The bookstore's new location really helped. The unsold books were donated to Fr. Robert Taylor at St. Francis Church for a fundraiser they are planning.

The bookstore was open additional days and extended hours through the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. Many day school parents visited the store during this time.

This has been a difficult year in the bookstore because of my family's health issues. I appreciate Nancy King's help this fall. I am trying to work out a schedule to keep the store open longer hours on a regular basis. If you are interested in helping with this ministry, please contact me.

Glenda Gallagher, *Bookstore Manager* (232-3935, coyote\_south@msn.com)

### **WORSHIP**

#### **MUSIC MINISTRIES**

*Choirs and Musicians at St. James*

#### **The congregation**

The largest and most important 'choir' at St. James is our congregation, which is known across the city for its enthusiastic and joy-filled singing of our hymns and service music. Our hymns (*hymn* refers to the text) give us poetry, ancient and new, that is filled with images and truths about the faith we profess. By singing, the many join as one in expressing our faith. But even those who hesitate to sing can pray the words passed to us by our Christian brothers and sisters, by opening their hymnals and reading along. By singing (or reading) the hymns, or by using them at other times as a source for prayer and meditation, we take on an active role in learning about our faith and in teaching the process of prayer and worship to our children.

#### **Music education for all ages**

St. James offers the *Voice For Life* music and choir education program of the Royal School of Church Music, with which St. James is affiliated, as part of the youth choir curriculum. The *Voice For Life* program, which involves a series of workbooks, is also available to adults who want to learn more about music and singing. Contact Karen Eshelman for more information.

#### **Youth choirs**

If your child enjoys singing at home, he/she will do well in any of the following groups. **Parents of boys are especially invited to get their sons involved.** In our music activities, we learn all kinds of things about music and about church, and we have fun doing it. Don't miss out!

- **The Music Club** (new!) is a 45-minute music activity time for boys and girls ages 4 – 7. Led by Karen Eshelman, age-appropriate activities include stories, circle games, singing, rhythm instruments and listening to music. There is no charge for this activity. Current membership is 3 girls and 3 boys. Parent participation is encouraged.
- **The Choristers Choir** is intended for boys and girls in elementary grades from 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> grade (beginning readers) up through the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Choristers meets Wednesdays 4:00-5:00 p.m., and sings for 9 a.m. church every 3 weeks or so. Current membership is 7 girls – boys may either join this group or parents may see Karen Eshelman about the separate Boy Choristers group (next listing).

- **Boy Choristers** (not currently meeting). Intended for boys who enjoy singing, but who may hesitate to sing in the established Choristers Choir. Will meet on Thursdays at 4 p.m. as interest dictates.
- The **Ascension Girls Choir**, for grades 6-9, meets for an hour on Wednesdays at 4:30, overlapping their rehearsal with the Choristers. This choir sings on its own and also, on occasion, with the Choristers. Current membership is 3. (This group was known for a short time as the 'Middle School Musicians'.)

### **Adult Choir**

The St. James Adult Choir is a group of devoted volunteers and friends that rehearses Wednesdays 7:30-9:00 p.m. and sings Sundays at the 11:00 a.m. service (Sept. – May), and also for special days during the church year. High school students who enjoy singing with school or community groups are invited to sing with the St. James Adult Choir. In addition, the choir is also pleased to sponsor (from its Choral Fund) a few Furman music students as Scholarship Singers.

New choir members are welcome to join at any time. Whether you have choir experience or not, please join the choir! Most of the choir members are not professionally trained, nor were they music majors: if you have always wanted to sing in a choir, you really should join us! Many of our current singers have even learned to read music by joining the choir – you can do it too!

### **Instrumentalists and Vocal Soloists**

Anyone who can play an instrument or sing is invited to offer a solo or duet as a prelude or musical offering, especially during the summer. Karen Eshelman can help you find a hymn or something special to play or sing.

### **2008 Events**

In addition to special music for the Lent-Easter and Advent-Christmas seasons, 2008 also included several special dedicatory events continuing the celebration of the new pipe organ. All official events were free and open to the public, with donations of nonperishable food for the hungry of Greenville being collected at each event. The official Organ Dedicatory Recitals were given by Karen Eshelman on January 25 and 27, complete with beautiful receptions given by Corrie Norman and Karen Hipp (January 25) and the St. James Episcopal Church Women (January 27). Our organ builder, Halbert Gober, and his wife were special guests for both recitals. Charles Tompkins played meditative organ music for a short service of scripture and organ reflections at 3 p.m. on Good Friday. An Eastertide Evensong featuring the Furman Chamber Choir was presented on April 6; and on April 27 a hymn festival 'In Celebration of the Trinity,' featured all the St. James choirs and guest organist and improviser Bruce Neswick, visiting from Atlanta, Georgia. In the fall, Mr. Gober returned to tune and do some adjustments on the organ just prior to Charles Tompkins' recital for the series on Sept. 28. Choir rehearsals for the *Requiem* by Fauré, which had begun over the summer, kicked into high gear in September and October with the addition of several special rehearsals led by Dr. Bill Thomas. Several St. James members who sing, but who are not able to commit on a weekly basis to the choir, joined in the preparations for the event. On Nov. 2, a festival choir, chamber orchestra, and the organ joined together to perform the Fauré as part of a service entitled "In Memory of Those We Love But See No Longer," thus creating a fitting ending to the dedicatory series. Heartfelt thanks to all musicians, clerical staff, cooks, photographers, recording staff, grant writers, and donors to the series and to the organ project. (Please refer to the 2007 Annual Report for further details about the Gober organ project.)

### A Collect for a New Pipe Organ

God, whose transcendent harmony speaks to us in the thunder of ocean waves, the jubilation of mountain cataracts, and the still small voice of calm: Grant that the manifold voices of this organ may likewise proclaim the beauty of your holiness, so enlivening us for your service, that we may increase in justice,

mercy, and humility, faith, hope, and love, in the spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

*(Prayer for the Dedication, by Albert Blackwell)*

Karen Eshelman (244-6358, ext. 204, karen@stjamesgreenville.org)

#### **LECTORS**

St. James had approximately 55 volunteer lectors at the end of 2008.

During the year several training courses were offered for new candidates. Parishioners desiring to become lectors should communicate with a clergy member, or with Ed Snape. (269-8808, or esnape@bellsouth.net)

#### **SCHEDULING**

St James has purchased a software program called Minister Scheduler Pro. With this program we are able to schedule all the various ministers for all three services every Sunday. We schedule for three months at a time. The process begins with an email to all ministers requesting any Sundays they are unavailable for the next three months. We plug that information into the program and are then able to schedule all the ministers for their available dates. We send an email, send a post card and post the schedule on the St. James web site, so that everyone is sure to get their schedule.

We are always looking for new volunteers. We have needs for Acolytes, Coffee Hour hosts, Eucharistic Ministers, Greeters, Lectors, Nursery workers, Rector's Aides and Ushers. If you are interested in participating in any of these ministries, please contact the parish office. Training is available to help you gain the necessary expertise.

Susan Preusse (servants@stjamesgreenville.org)

#### **SOUND TEAM**

St. James Sound Team has a great need for additional members to operate the sanctuary system during all Sunday services. Presently, only the 11:00 service has regular operators. If you enjoy working with sound and can regularly attend at 7:45, 9:00 or 11:00, please volunteer for this ministry.

Members of the sound team produced CDs of the Choral Evensong and Fauré *Requiem*. Lee Marr continues her ministry of encoding sermon recordings to MP3 format for posting on the internet. St. James sermons can be heard at [www.stjamesgreenville.org](http://www.stjamesgreenville.org). Each week approximately six CD recordings of the 11:00 AM service are duplicated and mailed or taken to confined St. James parishioners.

Ed Snape (269-8808, or esnape@bellsouth.net)

## RECTOR'S REPORT

Although the Annual Meeting, and especially the Annual Meeting Book, spends a great deal of time reflecting on the year that has passed, it is also a time to look toward the future. Given the strong foundation on which St. James Church has been built, the future, though it might seem daunting, is promising.

Given the financial challenges about which we have heard, some might say that this is a time for retrenchment, a time to draw inward, a time to hunker down and await the passing of the storm. While that has a certain wisdom to it, and while we may have to do that in some subtle administrative ways, retrenchment, drawing inward and hunkering down are precisely the opposite of what the Church is called to do in such times as these.

Economic forces beyond the control of most of us have had an impact on our lives in profound ways. People are in pain. People are suffering. People are afraid.

It is incumbent upon the Body of Christ to move forward, reach outward and rise up when God's people are in pain, suffering and afraid. As the Body of Christ, it is our call to reach out and give people hope, give people the certain knowledge of salvation from God through Christ. As the Body of Christ, it is our call to move forward and be present to those who are in pain. As the Body of Christ, it is our call to rise up and help the suffering.

I was called by this Church to undertake three specific tasks:

- To challenge this growing and energetic congregation to continue the progress you have made in developing your community
- To inspire this parish to further growth and spiritual commitment, and
- To lead you in your vision to "fulfill God's will by being a diverse, harmonious community in which each member is actively involved in worshiping God and serving all people through Christ."

None of those three goals lends itself to retrenchment, drawing inward or hunkering down.

I cannot simultaneously offer a challenge to continue the great progress you have made in developing your community and recommend a theology of retrenchment.

I cannot simultaneously inspire you to further growth and recommend a practice of drawing inward.

I cannot simultaneously lead you in your vision to fulfill God's will, serving all people through Christ and recommend that you hunker down and wait for the storm to pass.

In truth, I can meet none of those three challenges. In truth, all of us working together can meet none of those three challenges. Only through all of us working together with the help of God can we hope to meet those challenges.

With the help of God, with deep prayer and commitment we can meet those three challenges.

Some will ask, "What about the money?" And I tell you that all the money in the world could never advance us toward those three goals without the help of God. And I tell you that without another penny toward our budget, if we had the faith, the commitment and the desire to achieve those three goals, then with God's help we could achieve them.

I know of no better expression of this sentiment than a quote from the late Bishop Stephen F. Bayne, Jr. who wrote:

***As long as I live, I will never appeal for money for the mission of God in this world. This is a degradation of God and of ourselves, which has pauperized us in every way over the centuries. God has no need, and if the mission is God's, then we do not ask for help to give God a boost; therefore we do not appeal for funds. We allow people to take a share in God's work, and this is a very different thing.***

Some will say that this approach lacks common sense, and some will say it is simply a foolish “don’t worry, God will provide” theology. To the first group I would say that we should never mistake the power of God to work in our lives with the very human concept of “common sense.” To the second group I would say that this is exactly the opposite of a “God will provide” theology. It is, instead, a “we will work together with God” theology.

We will work together with God in providing what we truly need to reach the goals that have been set. We will work together with God in providing what we truly need to do the work God is calling us to do. We will work together with God in providing the solutions to the challenges that inevitably arise in any great mission done in the name of God.

But what we will provide to do all this may not be what we expect it to be. The plan to reach these goals may look considerably different now than the way it was envisioned before we faced a financial challenge. What we will provide may be something far different than what we planned.

That is good. That is exciting to me. That is where we become most like God – we are made in the image of God, the Creator, and challenges cause us to be at our most creative.

This is a good situation because it offers us a rare opportunity for spiritual growth. An opportunity that too often has to be forced has come to us in a natural way, albeit in a way bred in crisis.

We have the opportunity to move beyond our comfort zone. And in my experience, that is where spiritual growth takes place. When the vicissitudes of life shatter the idol of “because that’s the way we’ve always done things,” then we are forced outside of our comfort zone, forced to be creative, forced to function more in *imago dei* – in the image of God.

Outside of our comfort zones we find the spiritual muscles that have not been used. We feel them ache as we stretch them in new ways. We feel them grow stronger with each day that we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us in the wilderness of the unknown.

Fiscal responsibility is an absolute necessity for the health of a church. Without it, we live in a house built on sand, with the foundation slipping away beneath our feet.

But fiscal responsibility alone is a death knell for a growing church. Fiscal responsibility must be matched with the creative force of the Holy Spirit. Fiscal responsibility is the rock on which we build not just a house, but, with the help of the Holy Spirit, with the help our God-given creativity and imagination, with the help of the one God, we can build a splendid mansion of ministries that will carry this church far beyond what any goal set by mere mortals.

I am honored to be set amongst you. And I look forward with great joy and anticipation as we work together with God for the building up of the Kingdom in this world.

Faithfully submitted,  
Fr. Geoff+ (244-6358 ext. 202, rector@stjamesgreenville.org)