



SAINT JAMES EPISCOPAL



**116TH ANNUAL MEETING
JANUARY 24, 2021**

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ST. JAMES VESTRY 2020

Alice Littlejohn, *Sr. Warden*

Tom Bergin, *Jr. Warden*

Jim Ghrist, *Clerk*

Moira Allen

Gigi Blackwell

Leesa Brotherton

Monte Hudson

Ron Kelley

Sam Lyons

Marian Strobel

Hunter West

Jeremy Williams

ST. JAMES MINISTRY STAFF



The Rt. Rev. W. Andrew Waldo, Bishop,
Episcopal Diocese of Upper South Carolina



The Rev. Stephen J. Rhoades, Rector



Ms. Tina Boyd, Youth and Children's Minister



Dr. Karen A. Eshelman, Director of Music and Organist



Mrs. Katie Allen, Day School Director

ST. JAMES OFFICE STAFF



Mrs. Dena Veazey, Parish Administrator

Ms. Carol Clark, Office Assistant (Feb. 2010-April 2020)

AGENDA FOR THE 116TH ANNUAL MEETING OF ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1. Call to Order: The Rev. Stephen J. Rhoades, Rector
2. Opening Prayer
3. Certification of Quorum & Adoption of Special Rules
4. Review and Approval of Minutes of 115th Annual Meeting
5. Nominations of Vestry Members
6. Nominations of Diocesan Convention Delegates
7. Voting
8. Reports of St. James Commissions and Ministries
9. Parish Administrator's Report
10. Final 2020 Treasurer's Report
11. Presentation of the 2021 Budget
12. Rector's Report
13. Recognition of Retiring Vestry Members
14. Old Business
15. New Business
16. Closing Prayer
17. 117th Annual Meeting date: January 23, 2022
18. Adjournment

MINUTES OF THE 115TH ANNUAL MEETING OF ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

JANUARY 26, 2020

Call to Order – During a catered lunch provided through the Hospitality budget, Father Stephen Rhoades called the meeting to order and opened the meeting with prayer.

Certification of Quorum & Appointment of Tellers – A total of 125 persons, including 90 voting members, were in attendance. A quorum was reached. Fr. Stephen appointed Dena Veazey, the Senior and Junior Wardens, and the retiring vestry class as tellers for voting.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting – Katie Allen moved that the minutes of the 114th Annual Meeting held on January 27, 2019 be approved as printed. Ileana Shaner seconded. Passed.

Nominations of Vestry Members – A slate of four candidates was needed to serve three-year terms. Leesa Brotherton volunteered to serve. Claudia Hart moved to open nominations from the floor. Clay Allen seconded. Passed. Pauline Kelley nominated Ron Kelley. Allyson Bergin nominated Tom Bergin. Emily West nominated Hunter West. Gigi Blackwell moved that nominations be closed. Richard Wright seconded. Passed.

Nominations of Diocesan Convention Delegates – Catherine Talley moved to open nominations. Reb Mitchell seconded. Passed. Gail Burch, Boyd Cater, John Kaup and Heather Kanipe volunteered to fill the four positions for 2020 Diocesan Convention Delegates. Katie Allen moved that nominations be closed. Sandra Hope seconded. Passed.

Voting – The four candidates for Vestry were elected by acclamation with no opposition. The four candidates for as delegates to Diocesan Convention in 2020 were elected by acclamation with no opposition.

Reports of St. James Commissions and Ministries – Complete reports from the Staff, Wardens, Commission Chairs and other leaders of St. James' ministries are printed in the Book of Reports which is available on the website and by request.

Parish Administrator's Report – Dena Veazey reported that at the end of 2019 St. James had 572 active members and 81 other active persons. Average Sunday Attendance was 183. More details are available in the report book. The staff began the transition to a new Church Management Software called Realm. The parish will be invited to become a part of the online Realm community where they will be able to manage their own personal profile. She encouraged everyone to participate. She expressed her appreciation to the staff, wardens and office volunteers for their continued support.

2019 Treasurer's Report – Fr. Stephen expressed appreciation to the Finance Committee. Their careful stewardship over the past year, along with that of the Vestry and Staff, allowed us to finish the year with a surplus of \$62,595.85. The cash on hand for operations at the end of 2019 was \$198,548. He thanked the parish for their generous and faithful giving.

Presentation of the 2020 Budget – The Finance Committee and Vestry have carefully scrutinized the 2020 Budget which appears in the Financial Appendix. The Operating Fund Pledge income line is the same as last year. Pledges are approaching that amount. We applied part of the 2019 surplus to

the budgeted income in order to bring it into balance. Fr. Stephen is proud that this budget includes 100% of the asking to the Diocese.

Rector's Report – Fr. Stephen reported that our stable attendance is notable and was pleased that so many people have chosen to journey with us. Several improvements were made to the properties in 2019 including a new brick sign with lighting and two new air conditioning units for the nave. Changes are being implemented to make our facilities more secure while we attempt to strike a balance between being safe and being open. Safety is priority one at the Day School. It is a welcoming and safe place where students learn to love learning. The school is an important ministry which brings families into the church. In 2020 Fr. Stephen and Tina Boyd will serve as Clergy Affiliates and have opportunities to work with Episcopal students at Furman University. He will also serve as President of the Diocesan Standing Committee with all the responsibilities which that brings. St. James is the sixth largest parish in the diocese, and this give us a voice in diocesan matters. It is rewarding to work with the bishop and others. Fr. Stephen recognized and thanked each member of the staff for sharing their various talents.

In Memoriam - Fr. Stephen presented a video slideshow remembering and honoring the ten parishioners who passed away in 2019.

New Member Welcome - Fr. Stephen presented a video slideshow introducing parishioners who had joined St. James in 2019: 13 by baptism and 14 by letter of transfer or by registering their baptism.

Report of Elections was completed earlier.

Recognition of Retiring Vestry Members – Fr. Stephen thanked the outgoing vestry members—Clay Allen, Neal Kanipe, Reb Mitchell and Ileana Shaner—for their faithful leadership and service. A gift will be made in their honor to Episcopal Relief and Development. Senior Warden Clay Allen expressed appreciation for being chosen to serve. The parish joined him in thanking Fr. Stephen for his gifts in ministry, making it look easy as he guides, teaches and leads.

Old Business – There was none.

New Business

- St. Francis Liaison Update: Ileana Shaner reported that the relationship between the St. Francis and St. James congregations continued to grow with the 3rd annual International Latin American dinner and Las Posadas in December. The two congregations also worship together on Maundy Thursday at the Agape meal and washing of feet. St. James shares school supplies and Christmas gifts for the children of St. Francis out of our abundance. She encouraged the parish to continue to get to know one another better.
- Fr. Stephen asked everyone to sign up for Realm when invited and get connected. He added that emails asking for gift card purchases are not from him.
- Easter Sunday falls on April 12, 2020. On that day we will return to three services at 7:45, 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

Closing – Fr. Stephen closed the meeting with prayer and the singing of the Doxology.

Meeting Date for 116th Annual Meeting will be January 24, 2021.

Adjournment – Rick Hope moved that the meeting be adjourned. Pauline Kelley seconded. Passed.

Respectfully submitted by Dena Veazey, Parish Administrator

RECTOR'S REPORT

This is the eighth Rector's report I have written for the annual meeting of St. James parish. In all my years of writing a Rector's report, I have never been more aware that someone might want to read what I am writing now in future years. This is because 2020 was a year of profound challenges and change for our world, for our nation, and for our Church. In 2020 we saw the advent of a world-wide pandemic, the precipitous rise of national estrangement and the normalizing of political violence, and as I am writing this, a new President of the United States is being sworn into office. This has been a year that has tested our resilience as human beings, as a nation, and as a people of faith.

From my perspective, St. James has met each challenge that has come our way with grace, fortitude, and creativity. During the political turmoil of the past year, in a time where division, hatred, rancor and violence have become commonplace and where social media has served as the bellows for our political furnace, St. James has remained steadfast as a place of love, understanding, mercy, and forgiveness. St. James is a community that takes seriously Christ's call to love our neighbors as ourselves, without exception. A place where people from all walks of life and all persuasions can feel at home and be a part of one family, one body in Christ. Where our unity in Christ and our love for one another make reconciliation and healing possible. And this is what we can offer our city, our state, and our nation at this critical time: an example of unity, healing, justice and mutual respect, founded on first seeing each other as beloved children of God.

While the spirit of St. James remains strong and secure, the challenges of ministering in the midst of a pandemic has meant that I have had to make difficult decisions about gathering in person for worship and fellowship. On a recent diocesan clergy call, the clergy discussed the tension we all feel between keeping our parishioners safe and the desire to meet in person to continue in the apostle's teaching, in the breaking of bread and in the prayers while in the midst of a pandemic. However, we learned that the questions of what is advisable, what is responsible, what is constitutional, and what is appropriate, have been asked and answered before, and that history could be our teacher in the present moment. During our discussion, an interesting fact came to light. While each church maintains a register of services that records each public and private service of the Church, for many churches in the diocese, there is simply no record of any public services in 1918 when the "Spanish Flu" pandemic gripped the country and led to widespread infection and death; those pages are blank. In addition, the news clippings of the day revealed that many municipalities and states ordered the suspension of in-person gatherings during the worst of the pandemic, including public worship services. After that call, I went to look in the St. James archives to find our old service books that cover that time period. What I discovered was telling: I couldn't find a single entry or any service book that included a list of any public services in 1918. St. James has been here before, but this time, we had new tools at our disposal.

St. James has made full use of the technology we have and also expanded our technological capabilities in 2020. A number of years ago, St. James was blessed with an excellent sound, microphone and video recording system, assembled and managed by Ed Snape and others. In 2018, St. James first learned to livestream and established our YouTube channel due to the need to simulcast a rather large funeral service to the gym. Since then, we have periodically livestreamed our services, especially on holy days, and have kept a recording of the services on our YouTube channel.

When the Bishop first ordered the suspension of in-person worship in March of 2020, St. James was able to switch to livestreaming immediately, having the technology to do so ready at hand. As time went on, we increased our capabilities and started to incorporate choir anthems and hymns that had been recorded in previous livestreams, keeping alive St. James' great history of strong hymn singing. All of Holy Week and Easter was livestreamed and we livestreamed exclusively through the end of September, when St. James reopened for limited public worship on October 4th. We remained open for public worship, following diocesan guidelines, until December 12, when I made the difficult decision to once again suspend public worship due to the astronomical rise in infections in Greenville County and upon the advice of professional medical personnel. However, while we have not met much in person in 2020, our online attendance at worship services has been extraordinary and we are reaching people throughout the country who login to participate in our livestreamed services every Sunday.

None of the successes of the past year would be possible without the incredibly talented and dedicated staff that serve St. James. Each staff member has stepped up to meet the challenges before us by learning new and innovative ways of serving so that we can continue to minister effectively as a staff. Whether it is Dena's careful stewardship of our online presence, Karen's creative audio editing so we can enjoy choir anthems and instrumental pieces in our livestreamed services, Tina's development of drive-through curriculum for children and youth and assembling one of the cutest recorded Christmas pageants we have ever seen, or Katie Allen's inspiring leadership of our Day School, each member of your staff is doing their best to be ministers of the Gospel, serving the people of St. James and our community in Christ's name, and on your behalf. They each have my profound thanks and deserve your thanks for a job very well done.

So, as we say goodbye to a profoundly challenging 2020, let us look forward to 2021 with faith, hope, and love. In these times of pandemic, discord and division, let us be ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, showing the world that love is the more excellent way. And as we go out into the world to meet the world as we are able, let the words attributed to St. Francis of Assisi be our guide:

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Stephen+ (rector@stjamesgreenville.org)

PARISH LEADERSHIP REPORTS

SENIOR WARDEN'S ANNUAL REPORT

In February of 2020, my vision for the vestry might have included a vestry retreat for fellowship, team building, and planning. My vision was to follow in the footsteps of past senior wardens I had served under who led with order and grace. One month later, in March of 2020, we held our first zoom vestry meeting, and each month since has been a learn-as-you-go experience.

The need for physical distance affected our worship, outreach, fellowship, and growth. Yet in spite of COVID-19, St. James remains “above all a welcoming, caring community.” Worship was held on every occasion possible, and the gospel was preached whenever two or three, or a virtual audience, were gathered in His name.

The vestry’s role in 2020 was to support our priest in the many decisions that needed to be made, often changing from month to month or week to week. Father Stephen has been a tremendous leader and listener. He thought through every decision carefully and communicated clearly with the vestry and the congregation. All diocesan protocols and DHEC guidelines were followed completely. I would like to thank the vestry members for being thoughtful and present as we discussed each issue that related to how we could adapt or change to move forward safely and spiritually. I would also like to thank the entire church staff who adapted their roles to continue the ministries of St. James during a pandemic.

In October, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to return to in-person worship once a month and welcomed the opportunity to address the congregation regarding the stewardship campaign. My stewardship letter expressed my relationship to St. James and my ongoing support for a secure financial future. While my role as Senior Warden comes to a close, my role as a contributing member of St. James resumes. I continue to keep the faith in our current and future vestry, and faith that God will see us through these uncertain times.

I would like to close with the words of Saint Paul to the Romans, “For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.” *Romans 12:4-6*

Alice Littlejohn (alicelittlejohn6@gmail.com)

JUNIOR WARDEN'S ANNUAL REPORT

As the facilities of St. James age, we are presented with challenges to keep them functioning well and efficiently.

Here is a list of some of the projects which presented themselves in 2020 and our accomplishments.

- Nave:
 - Refinished and painted side doors;
 - Installed panic/crash bars to side doors;
 - Removed Hymnals, BCP, Bibles for storage during pandemic;
 - Painted walls and refinished wooden casements around windows;
 - Added protective wrapping of organ during sanding;
 - Replaced old electrical receptacles;
 - Installed fresh air intakes on HVAC system;
 - Installed UVC lights on HVAC system to sterilize the air coming through the system.
- Office Area
 - Painted office walls and trim;
 - Replaced worn out office carpet;
 - Installed wooden baseboards in upstairs hallway.
- Other
 - Repaired aging HVAC systems as needed;
 - Changed cleaning service company.
- Grounds
 - Mowed down kudzu along boundary beyond Parish Life Center;
 - Pruned crepe myrtles away from church building.

Many thanks to the Mike Klepfer, Jeremy Williams, and John Kaup who helped the Junior Warden move furniture and boxes in and out of the offices during the renovation project!

It has been an honor and privilege serving on the St. James Vestry over the past year. The dedication of this body is reassuring and comforting, knowing they are focused on improving life at St. James.

Due to current demands of my employer, I will not be continuing as Junior Warden for 2021. I will however, assume the position in an 'acting' role until a replacement is found and appointed.

Tom Bergen (thom0570@yahoo.com)

ST. JAMES STAFF REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION

Attendance: St. James began 2020 with an average Sunday attendance of 187. In mid-March St. James suspended in-person attendance and began live-streaming all our services. Since that time, we have averaged 295 views of our Sunday services on YouTube. Our three Easter services have been viewed at least 1,015 times, and our Christmas Eve services 568 times.

Membership:

- **Increases:** Before in-person worship attendance was suspended, St. James added three new members by baptism and four others by transfer from other churches. Since that time, several visitors to our live-streamed services have expressed interest in St. James.
- **Decreases:** During the past year, there were seven deaths in the parish, four from the active parish registers and three from inactive.

Administration: As happened everywhere, St. James parish office experienced drastic changes in the running of day-to-day activities as demonstrated in the number of copies made each month. In the first three months of 2020, we averaged nearly 20,000 prints and copies as we printed bulletins and other documents for services, meetings, and correspondence. During the remainder of the year, we made fewer than 4,000 copies per month. In August we replaced the aging copier with a newer, more efficient model and negotiated a lower maintenance rate through the end of the year.

2021 Pledges: Thanks to everyone for their faithful giving in 2020 and for making it possible to continue the ministries and mission of St. James throughout this unusual year. Thanks also to everyone who has submitted a pledge of financial support to St. James for 2021. As of January 20, 2021, St. James had received 131 pledges for 2021 totaling \$435,762. This is an average pledge of \$3,326. Nine new households have submitted pledges for 2021; 38 households who pledged last year had not yet responded to the pledge campaign at that time. It's not too late to submit your pledge. Pledges may be submitted online either on the St. James webpage or through Realm.

Realm: Early in 2020 St. James introduced *Realm* church community software to the parish as an effective method to connect members and staff of our parish. We now use *Realm* to share news and events vital to small groups, such as the Vestry, the Choir, and Christian Education classes, as well as to our entire community. We create registration events for the parish such as we did for this annual meeting and for in-person worship attendance. Parishioners can set the level of security with which they are comfortable and can easily connect with other parishioners through phone and email. This has been especially important during this year of isolation. Parishioners can monitor their giving on their personal profile and make online donations through *Realm*. As Parish Administrator, I also use *Realm* to record membership changes, create birthday and anniversary lists, keep up with volunteers, pledges, and giving, in addition to paying bills and generating financial reports. I would like to encourage all parishioner to create a login and check out all the interesting facets of *Realm*. If you need assistance or have questions, please feel free to contact me.

Dena Veazey, Parish Administrator (admin@stjamesgreenville.org, 864-244-6358, ext. 203)

MUSIC MINISTRY

1. General Overview – The importance of hymns

With the church being closed for public worship most of the past year, the ministry of music has had to find new paths while maintaining prior goals. We are deeply missing the presence of our full congregation and the singing of hymns, but we have sought to include hymns in our online and in-person worship in different ways. We began by adding hymn and choir recordings from our 2019 Palm Sunday and Easter services for our 2020 on-line Palm Sunday and Easter. Rick and Dena Veazey volunteered as soloists for those services and continued in that role for several weeks. During that time, Karen Eshelman began recording, during the week, the organ preludes and postludes that were added to the online Sunday services.

On July 5 we held our Sunday services outside, for our first in-person services since early March. The 10:30 service featured edited recordings of hymns from previous years and newly recorded organ music. In the fall, when the church was open for services with limited attendance, Karen began playing organ music live. For All Saints Day we were able to have a guest vocalist, Professor Lisa Barksdale from Furman University, who sang hymns for All Saints, and the song “Unto the Lord I Shall Sing,” by Daniel Gawthrop. Beginning with that service, the organ prelude was changed to a Hymn Prelude – a recording of a hymn sung by the congregation in a previous year, with the words of the hymn shown on the screen so that parishioners at home may sing along.

As we progressed through November, it became apparent that in-person services might again be suspended, and that became a fact on Dec. 12. With all Christmas celebrations going online, the members of the congregation were offered the opportunity to help create a video of a virtual congregation singing Silent Night. To do this, each singer had to make their own video, singing Silent Night on their own while watching the video of me at the organ. (It was an educational process, because most people had not realized that the popular virtual choir videos seen online were created by editing together numerous solo videos.) The final Silent Night video, in which 20 St. James parishioners participated, was used at the end of all 3 Christmas Eve services, and is available in the January 2021 Music Update at <https://www.stjamesgreenville.org/from-the-music-director--organist.html>.

Christmas Eve also featured a thirty-minute virtual prelude that included virtual string quartet performances by the Amici Quartet, whose players this year are in widely dispersed locations – Gregory Tompkins (New Haven, CT), Kevin Tompkins (Omaha, NE), Julie Anne Russell (Columbia, SC), and Seth Russell (Vacaville, CA). For our video prelude we also welcomed back former St. James parishioners Jody Blackwell, who sang “Some Children See Him,” and David Shelley, who performed “Jesus Christ, the Apple Tree” on the hammered dulcimer. The prelude also featured recordings of congregational carols from previous years, as well as a new virtual choir version of the Sussex Carol.

Since the beginning of our sudden shut-down, the St. James Choir has worked to stay in touch. We began simply, staying in touch by phone, and we used Realm to share examples of choral music. In September we began meeting via Zoom during our regular rehearsal time. Over Zoom we continue many aspects of a regular choir rehearsal, including fellowship and learning about our faith through music and sacred texts. We have fun singing hymn requests and reviewing some of our favorite anthems, and we have watched and listened to YouTube recordings of choirs in several cathedrals

and concert halls. Rehearsing via Zoom is not ideal since we are not able to sing together online in real time due to latency (internet time lag); each singer only hears me and the piano and their own voice, and I only hear myself and the piano. However, we think it is worth it, because working on music together, in whatever form, is uplifting. Our rehearsals are preparing us for a time when we will be able to sing in the nave, either to make a recording or (later on) to sing hymns for a service. We have already acquired singers' masks in anticipation!

Any high school and adult singers are welcome to join our Zoom rehearsals - contact Karen Eshelman to find out how! (More details about how a Zoom rehearsal works can be found at the Music Update for October 2020 at <https://www.stjamesgreenville.org/from-the-music-director--organist.html>.)

In closing, let's remember why, even during this time when we are not able to sing together, hymns and hymn-singing are so important. Singing is a way to pray; by singing together in church we help create and celebrate the liturgy. The poetry of the hymns fills us with images and truths about the faith we profess. Even non-singers may participate by praying and meditating on words both ancient and new, texts that have been written by our Christian brothers and sisters across the ages. The hymnal, whether for congregational singing or for prayer and meditation, helps us take on an active role in learning about our faith, and aids in teaching the process of prayer and worship to our children. I encourage you to join in the Hymn Prelude at the beginning of the next livestream service! Do it as practice, to prepare, to remember what it was like, singing with all those voices around you. Sing a little bit each week, then when it is time, you'll be ready!

Special thanks for their work on adding music and video to the online services go to Ed Snape, Father Stephen Rhoades, Charles Tompkins, and Tina Boyd; with special thanks to Gregory Tompkins for contributing the video editing of Silent Night and the Christmas Eve prelude. Every week I have learned something new from one or the other of each of these folks, and I am so grateful.

2. The Gober Pipe Organ

The Gober pipe organ continues to perform well; it is just over 13 years old and has required little repair work and maintenance. In August, Foothills Pipe Organ was hired to completely cover the organ with protective plastic tarps during the repair work in the nave. Ongoing preventative care includes occasional touch-up tunings and ongoing monitoring of the humidity in the nave. The reed stops are tuned before major feasts of the church year, and there is a humidifier system that works with the nave's HVAC system. (The added humidity is provided for the benefit of people as well as the organ.) About every three years, a major tune-up and repair week is scheduled with the organ builder, Hal Gober, who works on the instrument in person.

3. St. James Choral Scholars (currently suspended)

We are looking forward to the time we can reinstate the St. James Choral Scholars, a program connecting Furman music students with St. James that was established in 2002. This student opportunity adds greatly to St. James' connection with Furman University. Students who receive this scholarship rehearse and sing in the St. James Choir, and their award includes opportunities for solo singing and conducting. They earn a small stipend to put towards music lessons and musical scores. The Vestry has authorized that as many as four scholarship singers may be funded. Scholarships are awarded upon an audition and on the basis of talent, teacher recommendation, dependability, and

attitude. Benefits for the music student include observing the teaching of music and singing to non-professionals in a smaller choir; these experiences will serve them well in future church employment.

4. Status of Music Activities and Volunteer Opportunities

Music programs ongoing in preparation for Easter and other services:

- List of Instrumentalists (email to sign up and learn more)
- St. James Choir Zoom rehearsals (high school, college, adult)

Music programs that have currently been suspended due to COVID-19:

- Youth Choir, Children's Choir, Choral Scholars.

Volunteer help needed, current: experienced video editor

Volunteer help needed, future: music library assistant.

Karen Eshelman, Director of Music and Organist (music@stjamesgreenville.org)

YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Youth, Children, and Family Ministry Pre-COVID: In a mental exercise I did this past year, I decided to calculate how long I've been working or volunteering with young people. The number I came up with for 2020 was 10 years. I knew it had been a while but didn't realize a whole decade had gone by. Several of the "kids" I've had the privilege of working with over my career are now married or getting married, one individual's face is now featured on a billboard in Nashville and is closing in on half a million monthly listeners on Spotify, others have even ushered new life into this world—making me feel like something of a Youth Ministry Grandma.

Ten years of working with youth and families has left me with quite a resume of stories I can tell and experiences I've learned from. That, coupled with a Master's Degree in Youth Ministry, had me rolling into 2020 ready to put the car in cruise control and roll along.

And, at least at first, things did seem to go fairly smoothly. Programs resumed with great volunteers, we had a highly-attended Epiphany bonfire, EYC was moving along well. We had done a few weeks of learning, service, and prayer stations. Children's Christian Education had all been set up and was essentially running itself thanks to an excellent team of Grade-A+ volunteers. We had a great January "First Thursday" where several families all gathered at The Commons to dine and connect with each other. First Thursday was a recurring monthly event that had launched in the fall of 2019 and by January of 2020 had reached "full-bloom". I had made it to the ministry promised land. It felt quite lovely.

Youth, Children, & Family Ministry in a Pandemic: Obviously, things changed once it became clear that we were situated in the middle of a global pandemic. It turns out that no amount of job experience or education or proactive therapy could have fully prepared me for this moment personally or professionally. I, like many of you, sat in so many Zoom calls and Zoom roundtables and Zoom webinars that I started calling it the end of the work day when I could no longer control my eye twitches.

In terms of the tech and social media side of things, I was actually well prepared thanks to my time as a Seminary Graduate Resident. I knew the ropes around video conferencing, online group communication, social media apps, layman's graphic design software, even video production software such as iMovie and ProPresenter. I counted my lucky stars to not have to onboard to all new tech. What I was not prepared for was the impact of the stay-at-home orders on me as a single person living alone. My whole world shrunk to 615 square feet and a black lab who, while thrilled, looked legitimately worried about me. I will admit that as someone who generally identifies as a strong "Type-A" personality, I struggled mightily with having all my routines, schedules, and calendars upended in both my ministry and personal worlds. Eventually I made the calculated risk to return to running with a cohort of my running group (unofficially). They are my community, and also my pod. They turned things around for me and got me back on track!

Episcopal Youth Community (EYC): When it became apparent that it was time for us to switch to all virtual meetings the first time, EYC switched over to meeting on Sundays on Zoom. I found it very difficult to find a good time to gather everybody together to meet since they were now getting dinner at their homes instead of us being all gathered around tables together, plus sports and other extra curriculums began taking up time and space in our sweet spot of 5:00-7:00 on Sunday evenings. I tried shifting times around a few times: earlier and later. We played Jackbox games, I hosted Netflix watch parties, and made other attempts at virtual entertainment and lessons. It felt so strange. Later, when I asked for honest feedback about these meetings from a youth, the individual told me that "meeting in person felt good because we get to be out of the house, but when we were logging on from home it felt more like a chore." The Zoom fatigue hit hard and fast. I know I can hardly sit still for more than an hour—how could I in good faith set this expectation for others? Somewhere between Easter and the end of the academic year, I made the decision to let our Zoom meetings fallow until we could return to some sort of in-person gatherings, with me doing personal outreach to parents and students in the meantime. That time came in October. We primarily met in the Parish Life Center, which has many exits and a ventilation fan that could be used. These meetings went from 4:30 to 6:00. We were able to focus on burning steam through various forms of recreational play. We incorporated "walking check-ins" where we walked the property giving each person a lap to focus on sharing and the others to focus on listening. We'd finish our time with prayer, following the daily office.

Graduate Bible Distribution: It was an absolute no brainer that we would be doing Youth Sunday differently. Rather than doing a formal presentation of Bibles to high school graduates within the church walls, I had the honor of delivering Bibles to these graduates at their homes on behalf of the Episcopal Church Women. Members of the ECW, thank you for your commitment to equipping young people with tools so that they might continue to feast on the word as they enter into the world on their own. As I delivered Bibles, I was able to capture pics and video clips of each of the graduates and I was also able to do quite a bit of front porch sittin' (as the country songs call it), or front porch standing in other cases, to catch up with folks I hadn't seen in quite some time.

Senior Video: Thanks to seamless and user-friendly Apple software, the pictures I was able to capture of our fine graduates made their way into a video we were able to share with the parish though dropping it into our Live Stream (a skill which, once learned, has continued to be of great help to us). Additionally, Dr. Karen Eshelman was able to locate and edit a recording of the youth choir from the year before to drop into that day's livestream as well.

Contact Work: In his work on mission and the church, contemporary theologian Darrell Guder outlines a model of missional existence for Christ followers wherein we exist as sent senders—meaning that disciples of Jesus are all first sent to be witnesses, who then send others out to do the same. When the physical building of the church was able to be the center from which people were sent, ministers and ministry leaders primarily focused on being senders. Once in-person worship was suspended, or very limited, there came a shift. I can't speak for everyone, but as someone who counted herself among the typical senders, it was disorienting to have to shift from an emphasis on being a sender, to remembering my first nature, which is someone who was sent. Contact work was the way we were able to live into our sent nature: phone calls, texts, emails, Facebook messages, Instagram Messages, etc. were among the electronic means through which we were sent. Letters, notes, and cards were among the non-electronic means through which we were sent. This included a special mailer that went out in lieu of our traditional *Blessing of the Backpacks*, with cards blessed by Father Stephen that could be used as key chains.

Another non-electronic way I personally was able to keep up with people was through walking my dog, of all things. I live around several families of the parish and found joy in getting to see them out and about as well. Sometimes briefly, other times not, it continues to be helpful to walk around the neighborhood and check in with folks as they walk or run or ride by.

Children's Christian Education: As someone who strives to lead out of transparent leadership, I confess that conducting children's ministry gatherings via Zoom turned out to be a massive challenge. Meetings devolved quickly, and “classroom management” was not possible. As Lent, Holy Week, and Easter rolled around, we shifted gears over to a Ministry-to-go/Home Formation approach. What this looked like was me curating content, resources, and supplies into kits or bags or buckets or boxes that could be picked up at the church, or that I'd deliver to people's homes. These items could then be used for the family to learn and grow in faith together. Not only was this a positive shift for this particular season—I think this is a shift that has been needing to happen in faith formation for some time. Those who read my emails have heard this in exhaustion: research from as early as 2001 (National Study of Youth and Religion) to as recently as 2014-2016 (The Confirmation Project) all indicate that the number one key influence in a young person's spiritual development is *their parents*. So, a shift in Job Description from “the person who is in charge of forming young people,” to “the person who equips households to practice and grow in faith together,” is a shift that likely would have happened over the next couple decades anyways. However, out of necessity we took the Instapot approach instead—condensing 25+ years of ministry transition into something like three weeks.

Vacation Bible School: After spending hours scouring the websites of every curriculum publishing company I knew of that was copacetic with the Episcopal tradition, and consulting various other Facebook groups, good friends, and Zoom roundtables, a friend of mine from seminary and I were catching up on the phone and she reminded me of one of the curriculums I had definitely looked at and then my “Covid Brain” forgot. Its name was BOLT!—A three day Backyard Vacation Bible School program. I had never used anything by Go!Curriculum (publishing company) before. My fear initially was that this curriculum was so drastically different from anything we had done before. Then I remembered how well all of the various formation bags I'd made had gone over, and God told me to breathe and that this was going to be just fine. I pitched the idea to Christine Faust and Nikki Thompson—who are both parents to various ages of children, and who both have been on

my VBS Leadership Team for that last few years. They provided invaluable feedback and agreed to move forward with a take-home VBS. They made lists, they managed social media, they volunteered their families as test subjects to vet the activities, they decorated, crafted, they worked their tails off, and because of their hard work, VBS was a huge success. Buckets were the mechanism of delivery for *everything** a family needed to make VBS happen (*except cool whip and grapes). Buckets were dispersed in a hybrid drive-through pick-up/ home delivery approach, and families were able to choose whether they wanted to do it all in-house, or pair up with fellow pod-members and complete the activities that way. VBS has traditionally provided a space to empower parishioners to be evangelistic by means of inviting their friends and neighbors to participate as well. This year was no exception, and we were able to make (socially-distanced) contact with a number of families who are not members of St. James. We also had a few Grandmothers request supply buckets to take with them as they traveled to see their grandchildren—keeping the intergenerational piece of our program alive as well. Thank you Christine Faust and Nikki Thompson.

Advent: This report would certainly not be complete without mentioning Advent and Christmas. Usually, one of our St. James traditions is to have an Advent Wreath Workshop at the church, including a copy of the newest edition of the Advent Devotional that I edit and adapt each year. By December it was a no-brainer that this event would be adapted to a take-home model as well. This time my containers of choice were bins. Orders were taken, supplies and content were packed together, and then those bins were put out in front of the church for families to be able to take home.

Christmas: In the first staff meeting that we really started honing in on how we wanted to go about doing a virtual Christmas, we brainstormed together the things that really made Christmas, Christmas—both personally and as the congregation of St. James. The pageant was mentioned right up front, so I knew the task before me: making a Christmas pageant movie production. Phone calls, texts, and emails were made. Children (and one special black lab) were bribed and instructed in various tones to say their lines to various recording devices—the resulting videos of which were eventually texted, emailed, and Google Drive linked to me. Those clips came together with beginning and ending slides designed by Father Stephen, and recordings of the carols that had to be trimmed out of the audio of the entire 4:30 service from 2018, which had to first be separated out from the video of the entire 4:30 service in 2018 (major thanks to Father Stephen for figuring out the latter of those tasks). Dr. Karen Eshelman came through as well. When one of the carols had too much noise interference, she went through old CD recordings and found an alternative recording to use instead. By God’s grace and some very long days and nights—everything came together.

Onward: As we move into this year of 2021—there is still much that is unknown. What is certain is that we will continue to move forward, leaning into our ministry strengths to form and equip households of faith, in prayerful expectation that there will be a day where we can gather as a community of faith and fellowship again.

Tina Boyd, Youth and Children’s Minister (youthminister@stjamesgreenville.org)

DAY SCHOOL MINISTRY

The St James Day School serves almost sixty children ages 1, 2, 3 and 4 years. With emphasis on instruction through active play in a loving environment, we offer care Monday through Thursday from 9:00 to 1:00. Students enjoy hands-on lessons from the core basics of reading, math and science. Curriculum is rounded out with weekly chapel, music and French as well. This program has a legacy of more than forty years at St James and many current teachers have more than ten years of service to the school. The Day School is committed to a holistic approach to learning; challenging and guiding the entire child – intellectually, spiritually and emotionally. We are proud to serve little ones year after year in a family-centered, healthy and challenging environment.

Katie Allen, Day School Director (school@stjamesgreenville.org)

LAY MINISTRY REPORTS

ACOLYTES

As COVID restrictions have temporarily halted our gathering in worship, the words below describe the role of Acolyte to this point in St. James' history. We anxiously await conditions that support our reuniting around Jesus' table as a church family, in person, and in safety.

Acolytes are children, youth and adults who assist the clergy in weekly worship and special services. Acolytes include crucifers (carrier of the cross), torch bearers and thurifers (incense bearer). Parishioners nine years and older are invited to participate in this ministry. An acolyte is generally assigned to one service per month, arranged by our Ministry Scheduler Pro software. Subs and swaps are easy to request via this software, should you be scheduled on a day when you are unable to serve. If you are interested in becoming an acolyte or an acolyte trainer, please contact Ileana Shaner (ileana.shaner@gmail.com, 864-325-8358) to arrange a training session.

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Adult Christian Education has had many well-attended offerings this past year.

This past year, Fr. Stephen led a Monday night bible study of The Revelation to John that was well attended and resulted in lively discussions about how different Christian denominations read and interpret The Revelation to John. In addition, Fr. Stephen also relaunched his Sunday morning Faith Seeking Understanding course, covering a survey of the Hebrew Bible and the background of the New Testament. This class stopped meeting in November to make way for special: My Neighbor's Voice" Advent series at St. James led by St. James' own Victoria Chance. My Neighbor's Voice is a program developed by Victoria Change and her friend Mary Ann Inglis which encourages the reestablishment of a civil political dialogue. This series was well attended and well received by those who participated.

This spring will see continued offerings in Adult Christian Education.

Fr. Stephen will resume his Faith Seeking Understanding course on Sunday mornings, picking up where the class left off studying the Gospel of Mark then working through the other Gospels. In addition, Fr. Stephen will offer a Lenten series on Monday nights.

A new adult education series for the fall of 2021 will be announced over the summer.

ALTAR GUILD

The St. James Altar Guild began 2020 like any other year, and then adjusted graciously to the unusual circumstances resulting from COVID-19 and the cancellation of in-person services. Many thanks to the Altar Guild members who helped with special projects, including cleaning all the pews, as well as those dedicated members who have continued to polish brass and silver, hang altar hangings, clean up and setup for services, clean and press linens, and anything else that has been required—all while maintaining social distancing guidelines and wearing masks!

Our teams serve on a rotating basis. We are looking for new members in several of our teams; training is provided. If you are interested in learning more about this vital ministry of service behind the scenes, please contact Fr. Stephen (rector@stjamesgreenville.org or 864-244-6358, ext. 202).

AV TEAM

At the start of the year, the A/V Team functioned normally, operating sound system and recording services, until the Covid shutdown.

With the beginning of streamed services, Fr. Stephen was the amazing A/V team, executing sound and picture delivery and allowing the rest of us to attend services via YouTube from just about anywhere in the world. Fr. Stephen was joined by Karen Eshelman, Gregory and Vivian Tompkins, Tina Boyd, Jodie Blackwell, David Shelley and congregation members in producing streaming Christmas week services enriched by artistic graphics, archival St. James music recordings, new solo contributions, synchronized choir/congregation carol singing, and synchronized string quartet playing. Exceptional musical and technical skills and efforts accomplished synchronization and blending of pipe organ, multiple voices, and strings

We look forward to resuming our normal duties and to contributing to the streaming effort. It is our goal to add an additional camera providing more varied and closer video coverage of our services.

Ed Snape (esnape@bellsouth.net)

CHURCH LEAGUE BASKETBALL FOR YOUTH (CLBBY)

Because of the pandemic, St James did not participate in the current CLBBY basketball season. In previous years we have formed teams of youth, ranging in age from four through high school, and even an adult men's team. All of this, of course, depended on the number and ages of interested players. In past seasons, St. James also provided our Parish Life Center as a game venue, hosting games on Monday and Thursday evenings as well as on Saturdays. If this ministry is to continue at St. James, we will need to enlist leadership which includes a parish CLBBY director, coaches for each team, scorekeepers and game hosts. If interested, please contact the parish office.

COFFEE HOUR

Coffee Hour ministry has been dormant for most of 2020, but we look forward to a time when we can enjoy Coffee Hour together again.

Sarah Britt (sarahsbritt@aol.com, 864-370-2341).

DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

The Daughters of the King is an order of prayer, service and evangelism in the Episcopal Church. Our current members are Moira Allen, Boyd Cater, Sherrie Foster, Frances Funderburk, Kimberly Hudson, Carolyn Jones, Alice Littlejohn, Elaine Paine, Dianne Posey, Pam Snape, Luanne Thayer, JoAnne Thom, and Laura Thompson. All women in the Episcopal Church are invited to join. We have a 12-week study course and then we then take vows to live by the Rule of Life which is a self-imposed spiritual discipline to be faithful at prayer, service and evangelism. We pray daily for the

church, the clergy, those on the prayer list and those who wish their prayers confidential. We have a box and cards in the Narthex where prayer requests can be placed. We meet the 3rd Sunday of every month after the 10:30 service. Our projects include sending grief books to a member of the parish who has lost a loved one and providing Baptismal towels as keepsakes for babies and small children being baptized, chaplets for confirmands, and prayer necklaces for expectant parents. We read and discuss books that deepen our knowledge of the church, our faith and how to serve God and our community more faithfully. We do not do fundraisers, but we contribute to the different funds of the order: Self-denial, Masters, Alpha and Endowment.

In the past we have prepared bagged lunches for the homeless when there was a fifth Saturday of the month. While we truly enjoyed this project, times have changed and the facility that we helped has closed. We look forward to a time when we can gather again and engage in a new project to help the homeless and hungry.

We invite any woman who is interested in this ministry to speak to one of our members for more information. A new study group can be started at any time.

Sherrie Foster (smfoster1956@yahoo.com, 864-386-0085)

EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

The Episcopal Church Women (ECW) consists of all women of the church who are 18 years or older. The ECW at St. James has always been an active ministry with the board members meeting the first Wednesday of each month.

This year the ministry has been affected by the COVID restrictions and we have been unable to have our monthly meetings, with our last meeting being in March 2020. Our Dues Letter was mailed in March and we have been blessed to have received \$1,526. This money goes towards our Diocesan dues and supporting our World, National, and Diocesan Missions as well as several Diocesan projects. The World Mission was Education Equals Hope; the National mission was Gravatt Christmas Retreat for Military Families; and the Diocesan Mission was the Jack Fleischer Memorial Fund.

We were not able to have our usual Attic Sale which is held in June. The proceeds from the sale go toward supporting local agencies and needs within our church. We will hopefully be able to have it this year, so please keep the event in mind when “Spring cleaning”! We were also unable to host our usual Fall Social.

Because our funds were reduced this year, our support of the various local agencies was limited. We did contribute \$1,530 for several agencies and the Vivanco ministry in addition to our Diocesan support. Each year we give Bibles to our high school graduates and in 2020 there were 12.

I would like to invite anyone, who wants to get more involved in the ECW and its activities, to contact me. We are always looking for new ways to serve the Women of the Church, so if you have an idea, please reach out to me at: Sherry Sponseller (sherrysponseller3@gmail.com)

St. Mary Elizabeth Chapter

This chapter of the Episcopal Church Women normally meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Church Library. There were no meetings after March of last year. The Chapter supports the Sunshine Fund, Memorials and the Bena/Dial scholarship program.

EDUCATION INITIATIVE

While the Education Initiative Commission has been inactive during the past ten months, we have continued to provide support to Lakeview Middle School for this school year. After consultation with Lakeview, St. James used the resources raised in our collection of school supplies to purchase outer winter garments for students in need of such garments. The school has informed me that the garments will be returned to the school at the end of the school year for future students to use. As Chair of the Education Initiative Commission, I would like to express special thanks to Mrs. Sherrie Foster for purchasing the outer garments and to Mr. Ed Winkler for all the support that he provides personally and the support offered by his foundation.

Sam Lyons (864-993-4360, samdjl@yahoo.com)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Your Finance Committee has worked closely with the staff and vestry of St. James to oversee the finances of the church, administer the 2020 budget, and fashion a budget for 2021. Due to the unique challenges of 2020 which resulted in changes in office needs, Fr. Stephen made the difficult decision to end the employment of Carol Clark, St. James' longtime office assistant in April. In spite of all the challenges of not having in-person worship for much of 2020, including an absence of Easter and Christmas plate offerings which are often substantial, St. James was able to realize a substantial budget surplus of \$65,346.82 in the 2020 fiscal year due to close monitoring of our income and expenses and thanks to some generous gifts in 2020.

At the end of fiscal 2020, we had \$266,809.88 in cash available for operations and total deposits of \$622,513.89. St. James is completely debt-free with a comfortable cushion for operations.

The preliminary budget for the 2021 church fiscal year is approximately \$653,617.72. This represents an increase of approximately 2.4% over the 2020 budget. We are grateful to the people of St. James who continue to pledge generously and give faithfully. With a sincere hope that the pandemic restrictions will be eased if not lifted in 2021, we decided to keep the same estimate of plate and pledge income from 2020 for the 2021 budget. On the expense side, St. James anticipates several large expenditures in the next few years, including work on the parking lots and eventually replacing several HVAC systems which are approaching the end of their projected life span. We have banked \$95,610.64 in our strategic reserve fund for these purposes. We are also maintaining our diocesan contribution at 100% of the asking for this year.

We thank the members for their diligent work throughout the year: Rick Hope (chair), Monte Hudson, Bill Nicholls-Wozniczka (now retired), Linda Satterfield, Jennifer Sharp, and Stephen Sperling. Your Finance Committee will continue to oversee and scrutinize the finances of St. James with the goal of being good stewards of pledges and offerings given to God for his work at St. James Episcopal Church. We covet your prayers and solicit your input concerning budgetary items for St. James in the upcoming year.

FLOWER GUILD

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who serves on the St. James Flower Guild: Sherrie Foster, Christi Jones-McNeill, Reb Mitchell, Lavinia Plumblee, and Hope Winkler. Our busiest times are Christmas and Easter. At those times, we need extra hands to help, especially from a few men. If you would be interested in serving—training is provided—please contact Kaye Greene (864-908-1270, justweddings@bellsouth.net).

GREETERS

When we come together in person, St. James Greeters welcome members and newcomers alike to services on Sunday mornings and at special services. They help familiarize visitors with the facility and take time to get to know them before and after the service. St. James Greeters also introduce newcomers to the Rector and others so that newcomers feel warmly welcomed. You may join this ministry at any time. We would be delighted for you to become a Greeter. If interested, please contact me. – Alice Littlejohn (864-906-4150, alicelittlejohn6@gmail.com)

HOSPITALITY COMMISSION

How does one practice hospitality when meeting in person is discouraged? During this past year, we have grown weary of isolation and the restrictions that have kept us from meeting face to face. The regular fellowship events that bring the community together have been curtailed and we have had to adjust to practicing hospitality by inviting others to join us “online” rather than in person. We now look forward with great anticipation to the day when we can gather as a parish once again for times of fellowship. When that day comes, St. James will reestablish our Hospitality Commission in a new way with those of you who enjoy organizing receptions and events. We don’t know yet what hospitality will look like in a post-COVID world, but if you are interested in helping reimagine this ministry, please contact Dena Veazey (864-244-6358, ext. 203, admin@stjamesgreenville.org).

OUTREACH COMMISSION

Established in 2015, the current members of the commission include: John Kaup (currently serving as chair), Janet Atkins, Marie Hovland, George Lafaye, Alice Littlejohn, Kent Satterfield and Hunter West (vestry liaison). Our meetings enable us to assess the health and effectiveness of our current outreach efforts, providing updates on the outreach ministries with which each of us are involved and considering additional outreach opportunities. In 2020, we continued to provide oversight for the variety of mission and outreach activities, provide direct reporting to the vestry about the state of our missions and outreach activities and work toward raising up members of the congregation to lead both current and proposed outreach activities. If you would like to serve or lead this commission, please contact John Kaup (864-607-2985, john.kaup@furman.edu).

Many of the ministries planned for 2020 were not able to be delivered due to COVID restrictions. As such, a significant portion of the outreach budget was reallocated to local and diocesan ministries including the following: Triune Mercy Center; Palmetto/Miracle Hill Boys Shelter; Greer Community Ministry; Greenville Free Clinic; Education Equals Hope; Finlay House, Columbia;

Jasmine Road; Episcopal Relief and Development; Frazee Center; FAVOR; Greenville Homeless Alliance (GHA) and SAMS.

Mission Statement

The mission of the St. James Outreach Commission is to plan and provide for opportunities for local and international outreach by the St James community. Among its tasks are to raise up members of the community to serve in outreach ministry, assess the needs and effectiveness of existing outreach programs at St James and make recommendations and changes as necessary, make decisions as to which outreach ministries to support financially using the funds allocated to the Commission by the Vestry, and work cooperatively with the St James clergy, staff and vestry to support an active and vital outreach ministry.

Feed Thy Neighbor

Feed Thy Neighbor is an outreach ministry that is helping feed the hungry in the Greenville area. It is a cooperative ministry with three other local Episcopal churches and is centered at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. Feed Thy Neighbor provides a hot, nourishing breakfast every Saturday morning for the homeless and destitute, who otherwise may have nothing to eat. COVID has significantly impacted this ministry and the current approach is to provide a bagged breakfast with up to 40 clients participating each week (a significant decrease from the 70+ before COVID). St. James continues to prepare the breakfast on one Saturday every month and the Men's Group continues to support St. James' portion of the costs for Feed Thy Neighbor. While only a small number of volunteers have been needed over the past 6+ months, we anticipate this ministry will resume more normal service in the summer/fall and additional volunteers will be needed. Butch Scott is leading this ministry and he would welcome additional volunteers to this ministry. Want to volunteer or need more information, contact Butch at (864) 230-0096 or bj.scott@charter.net.

KAIROS

The mission of the Kairos Prison Ministry is to share the transforming love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ to impact the hearts and lives of incarcerated men, women and youth, as well as their families, to become loving and productive citizens of their communities. There are many opportunities to serve in Kairos Prison Ministry. All that is required is that you have a willing heart and a spirit of obedience and you can play a crucial role in God's ministry of Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives and Impacting the World. Janet Atkins (janetatkins@charter.net, 864-497-0162). While COVID significantly impacted our engagement in 2020, we anticipate again supporting this ministry in 2021.

Meal Packaging Event

As a congregation, we have hosted over 10 meal packaging events through October 2019 and have packed well over 250,000 meals. COVID restrictions prevented us from delivering this popular event in 2020 but we do anticipate hosting this event in Fall 2021 if conditions allow. Typically, nearly \$10,000 in outreach funds provides the funding to deliver this annual event. John Kaup has helped lead this effort over the past several years. Feel free to contact him (john.kaup@furman.edu) if you would like to contribute toward the leadership of this ministry.

St. James Angel Tree

Every November/December the St. James community reaches out in love and caring for the less fortunate in the Greenville area by ensuring that needy families are able to celebrate Christmas with dignity and joy. We connect local families in need with the generous parishioners of St. James. This year we shifted to receiving online contributions through our “Jingle Bills” collection and were able to contribute nearly \$2,500 to Mental Health America of Greenville County, the children of the St. Francis congregation and the Salvation Army. Thanks to Beate Kindervater for leading this ministry for the past several years and many thanks to everyone who shared the love of the Christ child with those in need.

OYSTER ROAST

Typically held the Saturday before Ash Wednesday, the Oyster Roast is a relaxed, hands-on, fellowship opportunity for St. James members and the wider Greenville community. This event requires 30 volunteers with responsibilities including set-up, ticket takers, chili servers, roasting pit hands, bucket runners and clean up. Help is also needed cooking chili and other behind the scenes efforts. Proceeds from the St. James Oyster Roast support Triune Mercy Center, Rise Against Hunger, and the Vivanco Family, missionaries in Ecuador. Although we are currently unable to gather due to the COVID pandemic, we welcome your interest and your help! We look forward to scheduling the next Oyster Roast as soon as conditions are safe for this memorable St. James tradition. Want to help? Contact Christina Harrell (ctharrell96@gmail.com, 864.420.3137) or Ileana Shaner (Ileana.shaner@gmail.com, 864.325.8358).

PASTORAL CARE COMMISSION

Eucharistic and Pastoral Care Visitors: Eucharistic visitors share communion with homebound, hospitalized, and nursing home residents at scheduled frequencies and times convenient for the recipients. This year, due to the pandemic and vulnerability of both visitors and recipients, most visitations were cancelled. Nursing homes did not permit any visitation. One of our homebound couples desired the continuation of our visits which we carefully honored throughout the year. In addition to these regular visitations, our Visitors faithfully called, sent cards, and communicated the status of our homebound through emails. This past year Janet Atkins, Janis Bandelin, Martin Darby, Frances Funderburk, Rick Hope, Anne Shelley, and Pam Snape were Eucharistic Visitors, and Marjorie Davenport was a Pastoral Care Visitor, whose service is to accompany the Eucharistic visitor and offer service or follow up contact to the recipient.

Goals for 2021: We look forward to the time when we can again meet and minister to our St James family in person. Please consider the crucial role you may take in helping our shut-ins. We continue to encourage volunteers for transportation to church and other important places, short respite visits, as well as communication by phone calls and cards to those on the prayer list and recently hospitalized. We also welcome new Eucharistic Visitors and Pastoral Care Visitors.

Please contact the office or persons below if you or friend or family would like our services.

- Respite Care and Transportation Coordinator- Pam Snape (864-360-5620)
- Communication (by phone or cards) Coordinator- Frances Funderburk (864-608-5308)

Pam Snape (864-360-5620 or pamsnape@bellsouth.net)

PRAYER AND SPIRITUALITY COMMISSION

COVID-19 is doing more than threatening our physical health. For many it is affecting their mental and emotional health as well. The greater part of 2020 has been full of disappointment, sacrifice, and mourning.

We are presented with new challenges every day. We, as a congregation, have been physically separated from one another, unable to come together for fellowship and worship. I am grateful that we live in a time with technology that allows us to stay connected, yet I know many of our members still feel isolated and alone.

THE BEST THING WE CAN DO RIGHT NOW IS PRAY! As followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, we can look to the months ahead and anticipate joy, personal growth, and new opportunities to live out our faith.

Pray for the isolated, for the infected, for those who have lost their jobs, for healthcare and frontline workers, for those who live in fear, and for those asking, "God Are You There?"

There are so many people to pray for during this time, so many needs. God hears all the prayers, He sees all the needs, and he provides. As we face these uncertain times, it is our opportunity to grow in faith, through prayer.

The Prayer and Spirituality webpage is accessible at <https://www.stjamesgreenville.org/prayer-and-spirituality.html>. There you will find a link, at the top of the page, to submit your prayer requests. All prayer requests remain confidential.

The prayer chain group is open to men, women, and mature youth, who desire to pray on the behalf of others. The structure and guidelines for participating in this group are outlined on the webpage. You may submit your request to be a part of this prayer chain by clicking on the image of the chain on the website (at the top of the webpage).

You are encouraged to contact me with your ideas and/or suggestions in furthering this ministry within our congregation.

Claudia Hart (cloudhart@gmail.com, 864-616-5963)

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

The year 2020 is one most of us would rather forget. Covid-19 kept us from worshiping and gathering in closed spaces. During this time, the Prayer Shawl Ministry met outside in the garden area near the picnic tables to keep our ministry alive and its members safe from the virus. And thrive it did! We praise the Lord for the many blessings He has bestowed on the Prayer Shawl Team.

In its third year of existence, the Prayer Shawl Ministry did not diminish its enthusiasm due to Covid-19. We continued to provide prayer shawls for those in need of comfort from the Holy Spirit. Eleven members, including two new members, made 90 prayer shawls which were donated to parish members or to hospice for patients receiving hospice care. In addition, 67 hats were donated to Bon Secours Cancer Center for chemo treated cancer patients.

Prayer shawls are not necessarily given to those who are approaching end of life circumstances. They can be given for illness (temporary or long term), death of a loved one, emotional stress, loss of a job, etc. If you know someone who may benefit from the special comfort, warmth and peace of a prayer shawl, or if you would be interested in becoming a member of the prayer shawl team, please contact Nancy Gammons (njgammons44@gmail.com, 864-834-1940).

ST. FRANCIS LIAISON MINISTRY

St. Francis, or known to its congregants as San Francisco, is St. James' sister parish whose worship space is housed in the Parish Life Center. Led by Father Robert Taylor, St. Francis ministers to Spanish-speaking members of the Greenville community. In 2016, St. James formally joined the St. Francis parish to celebrate the first night of Las Posadas. This joint service and International Latin American dinner, prepared and served by members of both parishes, is a wonderful opportunity to personally connect with members of San Francisco. Traditionally, the two parishes also worship together in the St. James sanctuary on Maundy Thursday (following an Agape Meal) and the Feast of Pentecost. St. James and St. Francis further combine their efforts to provide school supplies and Christmas gifts for the children of St. Francis. Want to get involved with the St. Francis Ministry? Please contact Ileana Shaner (ileana.shaner@gmail.com, 864-325-8358).

ST. JAMES MEN'S GROUP (SJMG)

All men, by virtue of being a part of St. James, are welcome to have a voice in St. James Men's Group meetings and to present potential projects or programs. The St. James Men's Group is looking to fund charities and causes that are led by faith, are known by love, and are helping others succeed. The St. James Men's Group is not a membership club and there are no dues or fees to participate. You only need a Christian spirit and passion to serve. Among the activities of the St. James Men's Group is the sale of smoked turkeys, hams and salmon for Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas, church maintenance projects, prayer meetings, social activities and various dinners throughout the year. Typical years include a St. James Men's Retreat at Kanuga Conference Center each spring. Contact richardaaronwright@gmail.com if you wish to receive periodic updates regarding these activities, or like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mensgroupstjames/>.

SMALL GROUPS COMMISSION

The Small Groups Commission forms FEAST (Friends Eating And Sharing Together) groups to strengthen fellowship within our church community. A FEAST group is usually a collection of 8-12 people who gather frequently (monthly or bi-monthly) at the convenience of the members to share a meal and fellowship and respond to the spiritual needs of the members. The gatherings may revolve around a meal or cocktails at a member's home or a favorite restaurant. This past year has unfortunately kept the groups apart. One group has volunteered to help in getting rice and beans to United Ministries. Currently there are six FEAST groups at St. James with a total of 71 members. The Small Group Commission's focus is on maintaining existing and adding new FEAST groups. On a longer-term basis, additional small groups may be formed for study, prayer, service, spiritual growth and fellowship. For more information or help, contact Gigi Blackwell (gigiblck@reagan.com, 864-907-1614)

USHERS

The group of parishioners—youth and adults, male and female—who serve as Ushers have discovered that serving as an Usher is an easy and fun way to meet, greet and seat members and visitors who have come to worship at St. James. They also help to facilitate a smooth worship service. When in-person attendance resumes, please consider becoming a part of this important ministry of hospitality by contacting Luke Mitchell (864-421-5797 or luke.mitchell@jacobs.com).

WELCOMING COMMISSION

The Welcoming Commission has continued to welcome newcomers to our parish through 2020, even with the challenges of COVID. We started to use the online platform *Realm* to facilitate the tracking of visitors and new members. This allowed us more easily complete and track the different steps in the process, including sending newcomers a welcome packet and note. We will resume Newcomer Receptions whenever it is safe to do so. If you would like to become involved in this commission, please contact Amanda Davis (404-449-5441, amanda.sloan79@gmail.com).

ST. JAMES COMMISSION LEADERSHIP 2020

Commission	Chair	Phone	Vestry Liaison	Phone
Adult Formation	Fr. Stephen	864-907-6565	Marian Strobel	864-414-4696
Buildings & Grounds	Tom Bergin	864-2475695	Jim Ghrist	864-420-3985
Columbarium	Ed Winkler	864-238-7050	Gigi Blackwell	864-907-1614
Communications	Dena Veazey	864-244-6358	Neal Kanipe	864-430-6569
Day School	Jeremy Williams	404-956-7406	Jeremy Williams	404-956-7406
Education Initiative	Sam Lyons	864-993-4360	Sam Lyons	864-993-4360
Finance	Rick Hope	843-200-3155	Monte Hudson	864-784-7559
Grief Group	Fr. Stephen	864-907-6565	Moira Allen	214-546-1732
Hospitality	Leesa Brotherton	864-325-0769	Ron Kelley	864-236-7046
Newcomer / Welcome	Amanda Davis	404-449-5441	Alice Littlejohn	864-906-4150
Outreach	John Kaup	864-607-2985	Hunter West	704-787-5737
Pastoral Care	Pam Snape	864-360-5620	Fr. Stephen	864-907-6565
Prayer & Spirituality	Claudia Hart	864-616-5963	Moira Allen	214-546-1732
Small Groups	Gigi Blackwell	864-907-1614	Gigi Blackwell	864-907-1614
St. Francis	Fr. Stephen	864-907-6565	Ileana Shaner	864-325-8358
Youth & Children's	Tina Boyd	770-361-8469	Jeremy Williams	404-956-7406



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