

St. James' Vestry Meeting Minutes
Thursday, December 12, 2013

In attendance: Rector Lori Walton, Treasurer Lynn Locher, Senior Warden Janet Fischer, Junior Warden Mike Scrutton, vestry members: Dave Nelsen, Jack Rux, Alison Saichek, Bev Mosier, Ralph Locher, Bob Bynum, Bud Spalding, Al Casas, and Donald Razzolini, and vestry clerk Elizabeth Hart
Guests: Sylvia Ma, Jim Cunningham, and Stephanie Green

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|------|---|------------------------------|
| I. | Meeting Called To Order
Opening Prayer | Lori+
Donald
Razzolini |
| II. | Approval of November Vestry Meeting Minutes | Lori+ |
| III. | Financial Report
Acceptance of Financial Reports for November | Lori+
Lynn Locher |
| IV. | New and Continuing Business | Lori+ |
| | a. Housing Allowance Resolution for Lori+ and Stephanie+ for 2014 | Vestry
Sylvia Ma |
| | b. Record email vote to approve expenditure of \$425 for Abode Homewarming. | Stephanie+ |
| | c. Update on the Little Church – next phase | |
| | d. Coffee Hour Refreshments - discussion | |
| | e. 2014 budget discussion | |
| | f. @ approx. 8pm: The Rev. Stephanie Green | |
| | g. Discussion: refurbishing EB3/4 | |
| | h. Update on Adult Faith Formation programs | |
| | i. Annual meeting Jan. 19: reports coming due; nominations for vestry | |
| | j. Vestry Holiday Party Dec. 14. | |
| | k. Vestry retreat Jan. 24-26, 2014 | |
| | l. Bishop's visit: Feb. 23, 2014 | |
| V. | Cluster Reports | Vestry |
| | a. Communications/Welcoming | |
| | b. Facilities | |
| | c. Faith Formation | |
| | d. Parish Life | |
| | e. Social Ministries/Congregational Care | |
| | f. Lead Team | |
| VI. | Rector's Report | Lori+ |

VII. Acceptance of Reports

Meeting Adjourned / Compline

Donald
Razzolini

Lori Walton called the meeting to order and Donald Razzolini led the opening prayer.

Announcements

- Bud Amouroux, Meg Amouroux's father-in-law, passed away. We hold Meg and her husband John in prayer.
- Marlene Benedict's brother, passed away. We hold Marlene in prayer.
- Joan Roberts is in the hospital. We hold Joan and Bruce in prayer.
- A member of our Sacred Space congregation, Joe White, died from exposure. We hold Joe and his family in prayer.

November Vestry Meeting Minutes

- Motion was made to accept the November 14, 2013 vestry meeting minutes as submitted. Moved by Bob Bynum, seconded by Donald Razzolini. Motion approved.

Financial Reports

- Operating cash: \$39,778.37; Building cash: \$36,929.15; Special interest accounts (not including Clergy Housing or Schader Fund): \$131,832.94; total Special Interest: \$185,827.89
- Pledges are behind budgeted by 5%, which is better than last month
- Our expenses exceeded income by \$1,020.73, which is better than last month and better than the budget
- We have had background checks done this year, but we are usually billed at the end of the year
- The \$100 under "Outreach all" has been categorized incorrectly. Lynn Locher will go back to see how that money should be categorized.
- The vestry needs to decide if they are going to spend the money that was allocated for the Viola Blythe Community Services.
- Faith Formation is over budget, but it should even out by the end of December
- The money for the 2013 vestry retreat came out of Special Interest rather than the operating budget
- The audit was a little over budget
- In Building & Grounds, the redwood pruning and new bark for the playground were not done. Equipment rental and inspections were over budget. The equipment rental was for the heavy equipment needed for trimming the trees in April.
- Pension is prepaid.
- Clergy auto expenses were up because of many trips to Stanford Hospital.
- The deacon has not put in any requests for reimbursement for continuing education/professional expenses
- We are still waiting for requests for reimbursement from Stephanie Green for continuing education/professional expenses. We did not budget for those expenses

- Our janitorial service is costing less than a sexton would at this point
- The money left in Endowment that was not spent on the parish retreat was transferred into Evangelism to cover some of the expenses for the retreat that Evangelism had covered.
- Motion was made to accept the financial reports as submitted. Moved by Bud Spalding, seconded by Dave Nelsen. Motion approved.

Housing Allowance for Lori Walton

- WHEREAS The Rev. Lori Ann Walton is employed as a minister of the Gospel by St. James' Episcopal Church, Fremont, California, which does not provide a residence for her; the Vestry of St. James' resolves that of the total annual compensation of \$75,627 to be paid to The Rev. Lori Ann Walton during the year 2014, \$28,000 is to designated a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the IRS Code of 1986.
- Motion was made to accept the resolution regarding the housing allowance for The Rev. Lori Walton. Moved by Donald Razzolini, seconded by Jack Rux. Motion approved.

Housing Allowance for Stephanie Green

- WHEREAS The Rev. Stephanie Green Tramel is employed as a minister of the Gospel by St. James' Episcopal Church, Fremont, California, which does not provide a residence for her; the Vestry of St. James' resolves that of the total annual compensation of \$26,000 to be paid to The Rev. Stephanie Green Tramel during the year 2014, \$22,000 is to designated a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the IRS Code of 1986.
- Motion was made to accept the resolution regarding the housing allowance for The Rev. Stephanie Green Tramel. Moved by Donald Razzolini, seconded by Bev Mosier. Motion approved.

E-mail Vote

- Let the record reflect that an e-mail vote to approve the expenditure of \$425 for Abode Homewarming, money to be taken out of the Homewarming Special Interest Fund, has passed.

Little Church Update

- Phase 2 renovation: crawl space seismic retrofit, which will tie the foundation and floor together in case of seismic activities
- The Little Church Committee called 14 contractors, and 5 responded. Those 5 contractors received a copy of the plans that were drawn up by ESI, and 4 gave bids.
- One of the contractors, Anderson-Niswander, noticed there were 3 cracks in the foundation, which he recommended be filled with epoxy. The cost for filling the foundation cracks is \$975
- All the contractors are licensed, have liability insurance and workers comp, and supplied references. All of the contractors do seismic work as a specialty.

- Summary of Bids for Little Church Renovation Phase 2, Crawlspace Seismic Retrofit, Dec. 11, 2013
 - Company Name: Anderson-Niswander Seismic Retrofit Inc., Hayward
 - Bid amount: \$14,750 +\$975 for filling foundation cracks
 - Little Church Renovation Committee recommendation: #1 choice
 - Funding request (including permit fee and possible cost overrun) up to: \$20,000
 - Company Name: Michael Lonsdale Construction, Oakland
 - Bid amount: \$15,510.00
 - Little Church Renovation Committee recommendation: #2 choice
 - Funding request (including permit fee and possible cost overrun) up to: \$20,000
 - Company Name: Klaus Kubler Construction, Pleasant Hill
 - Bid amount: \$33,559.00
 - Company Name: Sunstone Construction, Campbell
 - Bid amount: \$24,000.00
- According to Jim Cunningham, the contractor the committee preferred was Tim Anderson of Anderson-Niswander Seismic Retrofit. He seemed the most professional and knowledgeable. He arrived on time, went under the building and took pictures. He got the bid in on time with references.
- Jim Cunningham is a retired contractor, and he also worked up the bid. He would have bid the work at \$15,000. That figure provides a reasonable profit with reasonable aggravation, since it is dirty work.
- The city permit is approximately \$850
- The walls will be phase 3
- Motion was made to authorize the Little Church Committee to spend up to \$20,000, money to come from the Special Interest Little Church Fund, to be paid to the contractor recommended by the Little Church Committee for Phase 2 of the Little Church retrofit. Moved by Janet Fischer, seconded by Bud Spalding. Motion approved.

Coffee Hour Refreshments

- Sometimes we are able to get volunteers to sign up to bring refreshments for coffee hour and sometimes we can't
- Do we want to continue this practice? If yes, we someone needs to coordinate it – print out the schedule, assign groups/volunteers, etc. If no, what do we want to do, if anything?
- One suggestion is that we do a better job of recruiting volunteers.
- Another suggestion is to go more minimalist on a regular basis. Instead of having refreshments every Sunday, have food only on special occasions/celebrations, and maybe just coffee and juice most of the time. There are more important things for us to focus our energy on.
- Beginning January 5, 2014, coffee tea, and juice will be available after the services. Food will be an exception rather than the rule. There will still be a sign-up sheet

available for those people and groups who would like to bring refreshments, so there won't be duplication.

2014 Budget Discussion

- Right now we have 81 pledges for a total of \$230,006. There are 20 people who have yet to pledge who pledged last year.
- Our pledges are higher than last year. We have 8 new pledges, including 2 who started pledging in September and 5 who have been giving as unpledged.
- For budgeting purposes pledges are estimated to be \$252,574
- Plate, unpledged, use of church and interest are based on current receipts. Note that if we take all of our regularly scheduled groups the total for use of church is \$8,810. We hope to have some additional rentals.
- Altar flowers and candles income has traditionally matched expenses.
- Fundraisers – assumes a portion of the major fundraisers will go to Abode
- Note – in Special Interest Fundraisers Clearing there is \$500 on hold for Abode, and \$54.75 is from eScrips and interest.
- Under expenses – Diocesan assessment is lower than Lynn originally calculated. Next year our assessment may be even lower.
- Under outreach, we budgeted the same amount for AEMCH, and reduced the amount to Abode Children and Homewarming. However, there is also money under Special Interest Outreach Homewarming that could cover several placements. Viola Blythe Community Services was removed.
- Altar flowers – In 2013, we have received 61% of what was budgeted, and spent 66% of what was budgeted. The figures for altar flowers & candles needs to be reviewed
- Communion supplies – there is gap between what was budgeted versus what was used this year. Need to re-look at the figures for communion supplies as well. For the last few years the communion wine has been donated, which may account for some of the gap.
- Worship supplies – an example would be the crosses for Maundy Thursday. It was agreed to remove the line item.
- Parish Life and Faith Formation were reduced from last year.
- Faith Formation Children and VBS are less than Stephanie Green asked for. The VBS amount was cut out because we have \$2,689 in Special Interest Worship Ed Christian Education and traditionally VBS has paid for itself
- It was decided to discontinue the media license. Stephanie has requested permission directly from the distributor for the film being shown on Sunday, but it can take several hours of work to get everything sorted out.
- Stewardship – even though Stewardship did not use a lot of the money this year, they wanted to have the money available in case people did not donate as much next year.
- Mutual Ministry Review is every other year
- Vestry retreat for staff – includes Lori Walton, Stephanie Green, and Ken Parris

- Under operating – mailings has been reduced (reflecting current costs), copier & printing is per contract, and Mike Scrutton is working with David to try to further reduce our telephone & Internet costs.
- Lynn has not heard of any increased in insurance premiums or property taxes
- Janitorial and Yard Services has been moved out of Salaries and into Buildings & Grounds. We will need to pay more – they are not dusting or vacuuming seats.
- Would like to delay the redwood pruning for another year.
- Inspections will cost more next year.
- Lori's salary is determined by the Diocese. We are considered a Class C congregation, and Lori has 5+ years of experience. Her pension is 18% of her salary.
- Professional expenses should be reduced to \$1,000.
- \$7,000 has already been set aside (in special interest) for rector sabbatical. Lori's sabbatical should be some time after October 2015. For sabbatical coverage we will need more than just a supply priest for Sunday coverage. We need to determine if additional money will be needed to fund a part-time position for the sabbatical period (5 months).
- [Discussion regarding the salary of the administrative assistant.]
- [Discussion regarding the salary of the music director.]
- The cost of Stephanie's benefits is not accurate in the proposed budget and needs to be recalculated
- The proposed net income for 2014 would be -\$32,112.98 (a deficit budget). The assumed assessment reduction (when you create a new position that is meant for church growth the Diocese will give a reduction in the assessment) is approximately \$2,621. We also have \$13,000 from Special Interest for the CTF coordinator if needed. That would leave a net income of -\$16,491.98. After the benefit adjustment for Stephanie's salary the net income will be approximately -\$10,000.
- The deficit budget for 2013 was -\$13,712.11. We do not have as big a cushion of funds as we did last year.
- Lori would like to pass a balanced budget and increase our pledges by \$10,000. Over 30 pledges were increased this year.
- The final vote to approve the budget will take place at the January 2014 vestry meeting.

The Rev. Stephanie Green

- The children's activities have been about building community and getting to know the children. Stephanie has been staying in the children's room to allow the parents to have coffee/conversation before they pick up their kids.
- For the fall, the centerpiece has been developing the community of children.
- The structure that Stephanie has introduced into a Sunday school morning when she is teaching is loose, a sort of Godly Play model. It's not a straight Godly Play curriculum, but a sort of model that follows the architecture of an Episcopal liturgy.
 - It begins with gathering (running on the lawn).
 - After the gathering time, they gather in a circle and do some singing together and individual recognition.

- Then a sacred story is told – a Bible story, a story about a saint or Sacred Space, or a story that deals with liturgical signs. The story is sacred in that it is set apart and it taps into our Biblical, theological, and/or ecclesiastical tradition.
- Then the kids go to their work time – the children are free to do art or to work with the story sets
- After work time they re-gather, sometimes for liturgical preparation (for example, why we bring the bread and wine up or asking for volunteers.)
- The children come into the sanctuary to partake of the Eucharist
- Finally they go back to the room for their feast.
- Looking at training of companions and storytellers in the Godly Play method. We have received \$400 from the Diocese to put toward this in the coming year.
- The kids are doing very well with the current structure, and so Stephanie may keep the program as it is for now. It is perhaps more important to give people more of an opportunity to experience this in the classroom. She is considering having training later in the spring or early fall.
- Stephanie is planning to write 3 articles for the Window that will introduce major components of Godly Play.
- Stephanie would like to build the community of parents/grandparents. She is planning on having a monthly series (first Sunday of every month) on topics that will lift up certain aspects of our faith tradition and also integrate that with discussions about being parents, grandparent or other people involved in the lives of children. Stephanie feels the need to know the parents and grandparents by talking about things that really matter.
- Stephanie is also planning a series, based on a list generated by the youth group and directed conversation with Jan Scrutton, called Incarnational Christian Faith and Bodies of the World. The goal is for each of the youth to have an opportunity to present or be interviewed about a topic that they really care a lot about, and tie that to something that we proclaim in our baptismal covenant, a theological principal or a problem the Episcopal church has been struggling with
- Right now the Sunday School room is too small for the number of children we have. A proposal was presented to convert EB3 and EB4 into one big room in the same way EB1 was converted. Dave Nelsen prepared some estimates for cost of this conversion, but the cost of a room divider was not included. We still have \$39,000 of the Schader money in special interest that could be used for this purpose. We would want to do the conversion in the summer. EB1 is a good model for this project – there is probably a file about the EB1 conversion in the office.

Faith Formation Update

- Faith Formation will be changing in 2014. On Sunday mornings we are going to offer meditation between 9:30-10:00. It will include 10 minutes of instruction and 20 minutes of practice for different kinds of meditation taught and practiced in blocks (6-week blocks, etc.)

- Adult faith formation will be moved to Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:00. There will be seasonal blocks of teaching, with a sequence of classes each season. This will allow us to go more in depth on a particular topic.
- Stephanie will be developing a first Sunday of the month class between the services geared to parents and grandparents.

Important dates.

- The annual meeting is Sunday January 19, 2014. Reports are coming due and need to be sent to Janet Fischer. We also need ask people to serve on the vestry.
- The vestry party is Saturday, December 14 at Donald Razzolni's house.
- The vestry retreat is January 24-26, 2014.
- The Bishop's visit is February 23, 2014.

Viola Blythe Community Services

- At the beginning of 2013 we had budgeted \$750 to send a direct donation to the Viola Blythe Community Services. Do we still want to donate to them? The money could stay in outreach, or the money not be spent at all, since we are in a deficit.
- It was decided to hold off on a decision regarding Viola Blythe until we see how our receipts are, and then hold an email vote closer to the end of the year. It was also decided to hold off on a vote on the additional \$500 to Abode Services.

Fernando's Janitorial & Gardening Services

- Facilities was asked to get additional bid for them to come on a second night (Monday or Tuesday) to empty trash again, to dust, to vacuum the chairs, and wipe down the bathrooms.
- Motion was made to continue the current contract with Fernando's Janitorial & Gardening indefinitely into 2014. Moved by Bud Spalding, seconded by Ralph Locher. Motion approved.

CLUSTER REPORTS

Communication and Welcoming Cluster Report - Dec 12, 2013

The Window newsletter -

The December Window had a few problems, but the monthly newsletter team persevered, and the result was that a big, 16-page issue was published online on Tuesday, Dec 3

We missed our goal of having hard copies out on the first Sunday of the month, complicated by working around the Thanksgiving holiday weekend, and at the next Sunday, Dec. 8, there were only a handful of hard copies. We need to make sure more than enough copies are at the churches' entrances to be picked up by those attending services on the Sunday following publication. This coming Sunday, the 15th, we suggest the situation be rectified by having dozens of copies on hand. There will still be 17 days left in the month, and it will be several days' before the Christmas services.

Still, the publication continues to be newsier than ever. Many corrections are made each month, but at least this month they appeared to be minor style, grammar or punctuation things. Everybody who contributes to this effort monthly should be complimented and encouraged to continue their good work.

Welcoming -

A meeting of the greeters is planned for Sunday Dec 15 after the 10:30 service. Our agenda will include:

1. Congestion around entrance and in narthex - This continues to be an issue at times and can be awkward for a guest to maneuver through.
2. Two greeters present - We have tried to have two greeters present for some time. This often adds to the congestion issue and hasn't shown to be necessary in terms of aiding Lori or the other greeter.
3. Sensitivity to visitors' needs & expectations - Occasionally a visitor is overwhelmed by our enthusiasm for greeting a new guest.
4. Greeter name tags - Wearing a Greeter tag in addition to our name tags should help clarify what our purpose is as we stand at the Church entrance prior to the service.
5. Follow-up calls with visitors - Assign follow-up call responsibilities to one or two of the greeters as necessary to assist Lori.

Banners -

The McCutcheon banner was put up Sat, Dec 7.

The Christmas banner will go up on Sat, Dec 14.

The McCutcheon banner will go back up immediately following Christmas.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave and Jack

December Facilities Report
St. James Vestry

The activities and concerns of the Facilities Group in November/December have been:

TABLES - A St. James parishioner has presented a gift of **two** eight-foot fiberglass/plastic folding banquet tables to St. James. These are lighter and easier to handle than the older eight-foot tables. Four of the older (more than forty years) eight-foot tables have been stored in EB5 until they can be disposed of.

CHAIRS - Thanks to the efforts and assistance of Ralph Locher, three broken pew type chairs from EB1 were taken to a furniture repair shop and repaired for a nominal fee. These particular chairs, acquired from St Christopher's, are not as heavy, or heavy duty, as the pew chairs in the main Church. The breaks were all at the joint of the seat and the leg. It appears that they might be the result of the occupant leaning back or twisting into a sideways motion. We are exploring various corrective actions.

JANITORIAL/GARDENING – On November 16, a Work party of about eight or nine, cleaned, and trimmed the campus, and set sprinklers for a twice a week watering schedule. The work party all met with Fernando, the maintenance company, and clarified some matters of joint concern. (See Contract below)

PARISH HALL – The Floor Tiles are older and subject to breaking with use. During this past month we have replaced two or more broken tiles and can see the potential for more breakage and replacement.

THERMOSTATS – All thermostats have been set (and reset) to accommodate the multiple on and off times and temperature changes. This has been an ongoing problem, largely because of the extreme cold over the past few weeks.

HOMELESS SHELTER – The year long project of refurbishing the Storage Bin that is used to store furnishings and supplies for Abode, and housing the homeless, has been completed by sealing and painting the top of the bin. Thanks to Dave Nelson, Gregg Feeney and Scott Whitaker.

CONTRACT: The Contract(s) with Fernando were initially to the end of the year. A decision needs to be made to extend, rewrite/negotiate, or cancel. The most obvious problem with the current system is the possible need or desire for every day on site response capability for manual activity and trash cleanup.

Respectfully submitted.
Al and Bud

Through a misunderstanding, the reported completion of work on the storage shed has not yet been completed. Additional prep work and painting needs to be completed, possibly with a change in the weather and in the early Spring.
Bud Spalding

Faith Formation Report
December 12, 2013

The best way to give this month's report is by inserting Janet's excellent minutes from the last meeting. Thank you, Janet. Please be aware of the need to recruit new members for the Faith Formation Committee.

Attached is the tentative schedule for Spring 2014. The Sunday time between services will be focused on prayer/meditation practices. Tuesday evenings will be for more in-depth programming, such as we already do during Lent and other times.

See Stephanie's report for CTF Ministry.

Please note that Stephanie will be at the December 15th session after all.

St. James' Faith Formation Meeting
2 December 2013
Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm.

Present: Bruce Roberts, EJ Hilliard, Janet Fischer, The Rev. Lori Walton, Alison Saichek
EJ gave the opening prayer.

Review of Animate Faith series:

The series was ok, the attendance was poor. The final week on "Church" was the best attended with approx. 10 people. The program was a little too basic, like "talking to the choir." Not much new information. Newcomers liked it better.

December classes:

12/8: Vestry. EJ has the speakers, Janet will introduce them.

12/15: Film "Chain of Love." Janet will introduce the film with info obtained from Stephanie.

12/22: Discussion of film, led by Bruce Roberts (Janet if Bruce becomes unavailable).

1/5: The Rev. Stephanie Green to speak on "Epiphany vs. Theophany."

There is a perceived need to revitalize the faith formation classes and have more in-depth classes during the week. We will try moving in-depth faith formation classes to a weeknight so we have more time for topics and discussion, and have a meditation class on Sundays between the services.

Sunday mornings:

9:30-10am: Meditation class. Can be done in EB1, LC, and at the labyrinth, with 5-10 minutes of instruction, 20 minutes of practice. A variety of meditation practices will be introduced by practitioners at St. James', each type to go for 2-4 weeks at a time. A handout was distributed listing different types of meditation and possible leaders. Janet will follow up with this. To begin Feb. 2.

"First Sundays" – working title for a family class to be held in EB1 the first Sunday of each month. This would be a program for parents of young children with a separate program for the children.

Tuesday evenings:

We're looking at blocks of seasonal classes, each block focused on a topic in-depth. Ideas for topics can be based on Resolution I from the 2013 Diocesan Convention: Human Trafficking, Environment, Economic Justice, Immigration. We also want to address racism, and a class for potential confirmands.

Time: likely will be from 6:30-8pm. We can let people know they can bring a bag supper, or we might provide sandwich fixins'. The PH is in use every Tuesday evening which makes it difficult to use the kitchen.

Epiphany season:

Bishop's visit is Feb. 23. Lori is looking at potentially 7 people to be confirmed/received. Will hold a class on the EC with the possible title of "The Big Tent: Being an Episcopalian."

Will cover the history of the church, faith, Bible, etc., using a variety of sources. There will be 4 classes, and it will be mandatory for confirmation. Begins Jan. 28.

Lenten season:

Lenten Soup Suppers and a course on racism. EJ will seek additional resources from the Dio Commission on Racism and from The Thoughtful Christian. May also stream the film: "Fifty Years Later: The State of Racism in America." Lori does not want to be the only one presenting.

Lori will make verbal announcements regarding the changes to Faith Formation, and Lori and Bruce will write a blurb for the weekly email, and Bruce will write an article for January's Window. Janet will write a paragraph on the Meditation class on Sundays.

Other business:

We need new/more committee members. The size of the committee has dwindled. People that Bruce has approached have said no. We need to recruit members.

EJ will send an email with her racism resources.

Next meeting: Jan. 6.

The meeting closed at 6:43 pm with the Prayer of St. Francis.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Fischer

Children's, Teen and Family Ministries
Vestry Report for December 12, 2013
The Rev. Stephanie Green

Sunday School

a) We finished our Young and Called series in November with a focus on King David and have begun the Godly Play series for Advent, including the lighting of an Advent wreath. The Dohertys taught Sunday School on November 17; I taught Sunday School on November 24 and December 1; and the three of us co-taught on December 8, which also gave me an opportunity for classroom observation.

b) The Sunday School children collected socks, hats and gloves for Sacred Space on November 17 and 24 and December 1. The children invited the collection on November 10. Rev'd Lori blessed the collection and the future wearers from Sacred Space on the first Sunday of Advent and commissioned the Youth to take all items to Sacred Space that day. Rev'd Stephanie, Laura Winter, Janet Fischer and Beth Scrutton helped distribute the items after the service in Hayward on December 1.

c) The Sunday School children made a festive wreath for the Hillside ministers to take to the Hillside Senior Care Center on December 5 to give to the facility staff.

d) Our children's program/Sunday School schedule from Christ the King through the Christmas includes eleven lay people ministering with the children as Story Tellers,

Companions, program supervisors, and pageant assistants. I am grateful for and encouraged by the level of commitment and interest on the part of parents and other parishioners in contributing to the children's faith formation and integration into the larger life of the parish.

St. J Youth

- a) *Sunday Morning Faith Formation, November 24:* I met with the Youth to watch two videos on the San Francisco Night Ministry which are available on Youtube. We discussed the Night Ministers' ministry of presence and spiritual companionship with those who are working the night shift, living on the streets, living with mental illness and/or addiction, or otherwise involved in the "night life" of the Tenderloin district in San Francisco. (The Night Ministers and hotline attendants serve between the hours of 10 pm and 4 am seven days a week.) We discussed this form of spiritual companionship in relation to the ministry of the Rev. John Trubina and others involved with Sacred Space, Hayward. We also used our discussion to prepare ourselves to serve at Sacred Space on December 1.
- b) *Sacred Space, December 1:* Five of the Youth made sandwiches and prepared lunch bags for offering at Sacred Space, Hayward. Three Youth joined Youth Leaders, Mike and Jan Scrutton along with Rev'd Stephanie (and Janet Fischer and Laura Winter) for the Eucharist in the park alongside City Hall in Hayward. They participated in readings and in prayers. They also helped in the offering of lunches and warm items (which they had also transported!) following the service. Wonderful service all around!
- c) *Las Posadas, December 8:* St. J Youth led the procession and play-acted to offer the congregation and friends a wonderful experience of joining Mary and Joseph and their donkey (!) in looking for a place to stay—and for Jesus to be born—in Bethlehem. The younger children were fascinated and not a little star-struck at the awesomeness of this group on this night! The younger kids wanted to follow right behind Mary and Joseph on the way.... Many thanks to Jan Scrutton for organizing and orchestrating the Youth for this event—and to the Youth for their creative work. Their performance was compelling in so many ways--and it is hard for this CTF Minister to imagine how Las Posadas will happen at St. James' without this particular group when they are all away at college!

Intergenerational Activities

- a) *Advent Wreath Making, December 1:* All parishioners were invited to make Advent wreaths and take home a prayer sheets. (Two were provided.) About 20 wreaths total were made by people of all ages (including a second round on December 8).

Many thanks to Dave Nelsen for bringing Linda Nelsen's baskets and clippers and for a sunny afternoon of clipping, cutting, and setting forth supplies on November 30 in preparation for the event. (And many thanks to Linda for a wonderful stock of rosemary and so much behind-the-scene support.)

b) *Las Posadas, December 8*: Families enjoyed the Las Posadas celebration and dinner. Children were thrilled with the piñatas later in the evening. About 25 children had a swing! Following dinner, children and adults (about 10 total) made cards for St. André's School in Haiti, a request of Amelie's Angels, an outreach ministry of St. Mark's, Palo Alto.

c) *Faith Formation event, December 15*: Completed planning for the screening of *Chain of Love* in conjunction with International Migrant Workers' Day on December 18. Parents are especially invited to attend Faith Formation on this day. A separate program for children will be hosted by two parishioners and Nursery Staff. The children will continue to make cards for St. André's School in Haiti and personal Christmas ornaments to take home as well as have time for free play.

d) *The Christmas Eve Family Service* will include the Godly Play narrative of the Nativity. Children will help build a standard crèche with figures and, with the assistance of the Youth, a crèche of living figures—themselves! The service is designed for people of all ages to celebrate the Nativity of Christ. I will be rehearsing Sunday School children on the two Sundays prior to Christmas Eve and will coordinate with other ministers and volunteers for the service at which I will preside.

Budgets and Planning for 2014

- a) I created a 2014 budget for the Nursery, Sunday School, Youth (with recommendations from Jan Scrutton), and Family Ministry and provided detailed explanations to the Rector for some line items.
- b) I explored volunteer training possibilities for the Sunday School (using the Godly Play method). The Diocese will give St. James' \$400 toward Story Teller and Door Keeper (Companion) training for 2014.
- c) I created a proposal for a Sunday School room conversion/expansion with the assistance of Dave Nelsen who provided both a history of the renovation of EB1/6 and estimates for a renovation to EB3/4 in the Summer of 2014. Thank you, Dave, for bolstering the vision with some hard numbers!

Pastoral Care

Contact with three households.

Communications and Meetings

- a) Weekly meetings with the Rector.
- b) Composition and submission of announcements for weekly newsletter and bulletin.
- c) Submission of an article with an extended meditation on Advent for the December *Window*.

Cluster Report
Parish Life – December 2013
Submitted by: Bob Bynum, Ralph Locher

Goals for 2013

A. On-going

a. Continue support in the following area:

- Kitchen
- Congregational Outreach
- Congregational Activities...
 1. Receptions & Memorials
 2. Special Events – lead by outside sources

Past Month's Activities:

- Las Posadas had about 150 parishioners participate in the service, the walk, and the dinner in the parish hall. From what we observed the event was a great success with many people helping with set-up, decorations, service participation, preparing and obtaining food, and clean-up. Great team work by St. James!

Projects & Activities - Updates

- **Coffee hour:** Bob and Ralph will have to continue to encourage people to sign up for bringing in refreshments. We need to discuss further how coffee hour will be handled.

Upcoming Events

-

Social Ministries and Congregational Care: December, 2013

Submitted by Beverly Mosier

ABODE Kids had fun last month making holiday trees from cones, and snowmen from socks. This month they will be repeating some of the decorations made at VBS to hang on little trees made from sprayed silver branches that are currently in the Scruttons' garage! They are grateful to be able to do these crafts each month.

Abode Homewarming:

Stanley S was rehoused on Tuesday, December 10th, after a long period of homelessness. St. James and Harbor Light are his co-sponsors. Many of the items in storage, in addition to recently donated items from a list compiled by Gregg Feeney, are being given to Stanley's to make his transition successful and comfortable. Anyone who would still like to help should contact Gregg Feeney or Scott Whitaker. Target gift cards or a donation to the St James' Home Warming Program would also be greatly appreciated.

Comforter's Guild:

In November, 10 afghans were delivered to the local chapter of The Linus Project. St. James' Comforters made these afghans in sizes ranging from "preemie" to young adult and in a variety of colors. Our prayers go with these afghans for each recipient.

Deaf Ministry:

Margaret Christenberry, an elderly Deaf resident of San Francisco, who was active in the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf for many years, went to be with her Maker. We pray in thanksgiving for her remarkable life. The Rev. Dcn. Bill Mosier was able to take communion to her before she died.

Ministry at Fremont Oaks Gardens (FOG) continues to grow. Bill Mosier teaches painting there on Mondays and drawing every other Friday. Bev and Bill also hosted a game night in their home for FOG residents and family the day before Thanksgiving, and they went on a weekend retreat mid-November with members of several Deaf churches in the Bay Area and in Fresno. One of the retreat participants has joined the FOG group for art classes as a result of her conversations with Bill! An ecumenical Christmas Social at FOG drew more than 25 people, some residents and some Deaf visitors from the Community. The ties that bind are deepening and expanding.

Hillside Senior Care Center:

Giving trees were delivered to the residents at Hillside Senior Care Center on Wed., December 5th. St. James elves made the gift tags for the trees and also gave small individual gifts to each resident of the center to brighten their holiday season.

Sacred Space:

St. James parishioners provided lunch for Sacred Space on Dec. 1st. Our youth distributed the lunches and the many pairs of warm socks donated by the congregation. Sign-up sheets for Jan. – June 2014 are on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall.

Lead Team Report – December 2013

1. Preparations for the 2014 Budget, including review of submissions by cluster and preparation of draft budget by the Treasurer, plus a first pass review by the Lead Team.
2. Work on the 2013 Pledge Campaign:
 - a. Dinner and a musical featuring the original title, "St. James' First Thanksgiving" on November 16.
 - b. A Stewardship Sermon on November 17, given by Brian Cochran.
 - c. An ingathering of pledges on Christ the King Sunday, November 24.
3. Participated in the review of November Newsletter.
4. Kicked off Disaster Preparedness discussions, led by the Junior Warden.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Walton, Rector
Janet Fischer, Senior Warden
Mike Scrutton, Junior Warden
Lynn Locher, Treasurer

Rector's Report
Vestry Meeting, December 12, 2013

Because the Rector's report may contain information of a personal nature, it is no longer published on the web. Parish members may review the Rector's report in the church office.

Motion was made to accept the cluster reports, the lead team report, and the rector's report as submitted/amended. Moved by Mike Scrutton, seconded by Jack Rux. Motion approved.

Donald Razzolini led Compline.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Hart
Clerk of the Vestry