



# Annual Report for 2021

Submitted for the Annual Meeting Held  
January 23rd, 2022

The Rev. Lori Walton, Rector  
The Rev. Bill Hale, Assisting Priest

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*As of this writing, the Covid-19 Corona virus is still impacting common life. After the initial virus, two known variants have surfaced: the Delta variant and the Omicron variant. During 2021, vaccinations for the virus have been made widely available in stages, first to adult, then to children 12 and older, and then to children 5 and older. A vaccine for children under the age of 5 is not yet available. We returned to in-person worship in June of 2021, and while our service attendance has dropped, we continue to be the Body of Christ, made up of people in the pews and people at home, worshipping with us through our live-streamed services.*

## **Clergy & Staff Reports**

### ***Rector's Report – The Rev. Lori A. Walton***

#### **Worship and Liturgy**

In a time of disruption, we have been able to maintain the same staffing levels as we had pre-pandemic. The Rev. Bill Hale, Children & Teen Minister Jan Scrutton, Brian Cochran, seminarian Dan Carlson, and intern Ingrid Jacobson have lent their preaching voices, enhancing our worship. During Lent, we fed in a sermon from the Right Reverend Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, Bishop of Indiana. We invited Davey Gerhard, Development Officer from the Diocese as a guest speaker in November.

Our worship continued to transform over time in order to meet safety protocols set out by the County of Alameda and the Diocese of California. For the first half of 2021, we only provided at-home live streamed worship, using the Liturgy of the Presanctified. This is a service in which pre-consecrated hosts are consumed in the home. To coordinate this, we setup an online reservation system where parishioners reserve their communion for the month and either pick it up by driving by or have it delivered to them. A small worship team consisting of me, Jan and Mike Scrutton, and Meg and John Amouroux setup the sanctuary with cameras and lights in order to provide a quality online experience. On occasion, others joined us as preachers or as technical support. On May 30, we returned to a limited in-person worship with one service at 9:30. This first service was attended by the vestry and their families. We wanted to ensure it went smoothly before opening in-person worship for the whole parish. Pre-registration and masks were required and for the first time since March 2020, we were able to physically be together. At this time, we stopped offering at-home communion, though we continued to live-stream the service for those at home. On July 18, we dropped the need to pre-register and moved back to our regular schedule of 8:00 and 10:30 worship. The pandemic continued to be a concern, so with the availability of a vaccine, we moved to requiring proof of vaccination in order to enter any of our buildings, including the sanctuary. This requirement went into effect on August 29 and remains in place today.

Most of the services and events that fall outside of the regular church calendar were either canceled or re-formulated. The pandemic caused the Cub Scouts that we chartered to decline and fold, so we did not celebrate Scout Sunday at all in 2020. VBS, and therefore, VBS Sunday were both canceled. St. James' Day was celebrated, but without a large potluck with the Philippine Independent Congregations as we have done in year's past. We did celebrate the Feast of St. Francis and Animal Blessings in an outdoor service, and our Lessons and Carols service on December 26 was a joint effort of all six deanery churches with each taking one lesson/carol.

We were not able to observe Ash Wednesday or the Imposition of Ashes on Shrove Tuesday. However, we did provide ashes for folks at home to do the imposition of ashes on themselves or on their family members while worshipping with us online. For Holy Week, we provided a Lent@Home bag which included a Palm Cross folks could use on Palm Sunday. It also included crystal heart, a stone, a prayer card, Forward Day by Day, and a booklet for practicing Lent. The kids were given sand tray and an illustrated ministry booklet, and the youth received mugs and brownie mix as well. On Maundy Thursday we had a zoom gathering of “bring your own meal” where we enjoyed prayers, a reflection, and a video of the stripping of the altar. For Good Friday, we created an online meditation on the Stations of the Cross. The Easter Vigil was a combined deanery effort with each of the six churches offering a story and a song. Easter Sunday, while still virtual only, was filled with joy and gratitude for the Risen Christ.

As the Feast of Pentecost rolled around, we invited the parish to virtually attend Grace Cathedral, giving the worship team a much-needed break. By the time the summer hit, we were back to limited in-person worship and our services resumed as normally as possible.

On the Feast of All Saints’, we read the necrology of all who had died from the time of lockdown in March 2020 through October 2021. For Christmas Eve, we offered a 4:00 Family Service with story and limited costumes and a 7:00 Primary Service with a modified choir. Our 10:00 Christmas Day service was offered as usual, and on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas, December 26, we had a spoken Rite I service at 8:00, and a deanery Lessons & Carols service at 10:30 with each deanery church offering a lesson and a carol.

As we began to regather, we have regrouped our ministry teams. Many people either moved or have not returned to church, causing the need to recruit new volunteers. We welcomed several new lectors – Samir Kalitta, Amy Davis, Keith Westra, Marcus Pun. We also welcomed a new Eucharistic Minister – John Wagas. Of note, John Wagas also took over our bulletin design, creating a sophisticated look and adding theological commentary.

On November 21, we welcomed the Right Reverend Marc Andrus, Bishop of the Diocese of California, for his visitation. We held one service at 10:30 and baptized Ella Aisha Maina and confirmed John Wagas.

We caught up on some of the memorial services we were not able to hold since the pandemic hit. In 2021, we celebrated the lives of Pat Vlastelica, Dorothy Balderston, Frank Hoffman, Dwarka Sankar, Margaret Rainey, and Peter Norman. Memorial services are still pending for Joan Roberts, Bob Bell, and Ann Jamison. Interment services were held for Penny Trant and Bob Bell.

On November 29, we held our seventh annual candlelight vigil for those who died on the street. This service was held outdoors and included six spiritual leaders from the Muslim, Hindu, Christian, Unitarian, Buddhist, and Jewish faiths.

### **American Sign Language Service**

This group continues to meet on zoom and has grown during the pandemic, with participation from people throughout the country. They group averages 10-15 people per Sunday, gathering for a prayer service designed and led by Bev Mosier. Pre-pandemic, they met in the Education Room concurrent with our 10:30 service.

## **Staff, Administration and Finance**

Our staff remained the same with the exception of letting go our nursery care worker. Throughout the pandemic and beyond, we continued to employ Jan Scrutton (Children and Teen Minister), Jennifer Ravera (Music Director), Bill Hale (Assisting Priest), and Ron Cook (Parish Administrator). We also continued contracting with Fernando's Cleaning and Landscaping Company to keep our buildings clean and our campus kept up.

In February, we welcomed seminarian Dan Cook who was with us until his departure in June. While with us, Dan preached, taught classes, and engaged as much as possible in a virtual environment. In September, we welcomed intern Ingrid Jacobson. Ingrid has participated and led in the areas of bible study, vestry meetings, online fellowship, and preaching.

Our children's program remains strong, though we lost several families with children due to relocation out of state. Our youth group is doing well and has seen some new faces. Both are led by Jan Scrutton, our Children & Youth Minister. Jan continues to be creative and pro-active in offering gatherings and events to keep our children and youth engaged. Please see Jan's report for further details.

Our Assisting Priest has assisted with pastoral care and worship virtually. He has taken leadership with our Home Alone Group (a group of people who live by themselves), offering them a weekly zoom gathering to connect and stave off loneliness. He also led our Wednesday service each week and has assisted with some of our other one-off offerings. In 2021, we created a new grief group and a group where inquirers can ask questions, both facilitated by Bill. Please see Bill's report for further details.

Our Music Director, Jennifer Ravera, continues to offer quality music and has jumped in to help in other ways such as hosting zoom gatherings and assisting with the Lectio Divina group that meets between the services.

Our Parish Administrator, Ron Cook, has become instrumental in keeping the office running smoothly and advising us on financial matters. His skill with finance and communication have greatly benefited the parish.

The vestry continues to be responsible for the stewardship campaign for the parish. This year, the campaign consists of personal sharing and encouragement for all members to pledge through online and in-person video statements. The vestry also conducted an every-household reach through a mailing of a stewardship letter and pledge card. Pledges continue to be strong and the members of the parish have been generous in their giving. As of this writing, we received 6 new pledges and our pledge income has remained about the same as 2021. The average increase of returning pledges was 8.5%. Mike Scrutton, serving as the pledge secretary continues to be a great resource in painting a picture of our congregational giving.

The students from the School for the Blind began assisting us in setting up our Sunday worship materials in September.

In order to ensure we were following all of the regathering protocols set out by the County and the Diocese, we formulated a Regathering Task Force made up of Jan & Mike Scrutton, Jennifer Ravera, Sylvia Ma, Jim McConnell, and me. We've met on an as-needed basis throughout the year.

### **Welcoming and Integrating New People, Outreach**

Since reopening in late May, we've welcomed approximately 10 new people, some of whom have become members.

We continue to support schooling for Hope and Miriam, two children in Kenya. This effort is through the organization Maisha Bora. Hope and Miriam's were able to return to school this year after being on lockdown due to pandemic.

In order to stay connected to the parish, I emailed a weekly Wednesday Morning Check-In where I email the entire parish with a short reflection and word of hope and comfort. I continued this practice until we were able to return to in-person worship.

As part of the effort to keep the congregation connected, our Music Director, Jennifer Ravera, hosts two different zoom gatherings: a Wednesday evening choir gathering and a Thursday evening social hour. These continued until we resumed in-person worship.

### **Wider Church Involvement and Personal Formation**

I continue to serve on the Commission on Ministry. I am also involved in the Tri-City Interfaith Coalition.

### ***Assisting Priest Report – The Rev. Bill Hale***

#### **Worship and Liturgy 2021**

As the second calendar year of pandemic began, we were becoming increasingly expert at using Zoom to provide online streaming alternatives to in-person gatherings, including services, educational, and other parish activities. For my part, this included the regular week day Morning Prayer services, the Wednesday Ante-Communion service, and leading groups such as Home Alone, Grief Support, and assisting with both Watch Parties and Social Hour gatherings while we were still on lockdown. Zoom has also allowed me to interact with parishioners face-to-face in other pastoral situations.

Regarding services, during 2021, I preached and celebrated on 4 Sundays, preached 10 additional Sundays, and was celebrant for 8 others. Since September 2020, I have facilitated daily Morning Prayer on Zoom; the weekday total attendance for the year was 639, where the role officiant is shared among those attending. In addition, I lead the Wednesday morning Ante-Communion service—yearly attendance, 376 persons. Services which I led also included prayers for Racial Justice, Ash Wednesday, and one funeral.

#### **Educational and Pastoral Activities**

My other contributions for the past year include weekly Grief Support meetings (81 attendees) and Focus on Faith/Inquirers class (55 attendees). I have also assisted with the Sacred Ground and Social Justice taskforce and Home Alone for most of the year. When appropriate, by calls and other means, I help with pastoral care and educational planning.

### ***Children & Youth Minister's Report – Jan Scrutton***

So many of the regular markers of my ministry year were missing this year as we started without any in person gatherings. As the year moved along and we were able to gather a little more and plan in hope of in person meetings I have been grateful again and again for the structure and flow

of the church year, for the steadfast cycle of lessons and prayers and a community who is blessed to have occasions to miss. Sometimes I have noticed how much we have to offer when I realize we need to wait a while to do those familiar things but I know we will regather again, we will be able to eat and worship fully together again and we have a community to regather with. We continued our Faith at Home series of deliveries into Lent 2021 and in addition to the household bags additional deliveries were made to children and young people. In return those children and youth contributed with prayers, lessons and stories recorded for worship, including our Easter Vigil contribution for the deanery. I also sent Easter and back to school notes to stay in touch.

Sunday school continued with video lessons until the summer when we took a break. Unfortunately for a second summer we had to make the decision not to host a summer camp – although plans are in formation to hold our 10<sup>th</sup> Summer Day Camp in 2022. We celebrated our return to church with an Easter Egg Hunt in August and two family craft activities after church. In September after schools returned to in person teaching we restarted Sunday school with a short outside lesson being held each week during the middle of the 10:30am service. On average 6-8 young people have joined us each week for a short story and Sunday School lesson based on the Lectionary readings and we continue to use curriculum from Illustrated Ministry. When the weather got colder in November we started using the classroom with social distancing and open doors. 2021 saw at least one more Sunday school family relocate to outside California.

In Advent we were able to meet again for our Advent Evening and work on our new outdoor nativity set. I'm grateful to almost 40 volunteers who joined in in making, painting and setting up of this set for Christmas. Our Youth Group, Sunday school families and whole parish had opportunities to get involved. Special thanks to Samir who did the cutting and construction and Meg who planned the color palette. The set was displayed outside from Christmas Eve to Epiphany before being packed away for next year. The artwork was from Illustrated Ministry and they featured our completed set on their Facebook community page banner at Christmas. I had two significant opportunities for professional development this year. Firstly, I was able to attend the Forma Conference (Network for Christian Formation) in January. The conference took place on Zoom and my ticket was funded by the Diocese. The theme was 'Embodying Spiritual Practices' and the team did a great job of making the online format work. I also took a month-long course with Bexley Seabury Seminary from their Pathways series. Engaging God's Story was taught by Vicki Garvey and while it involved a lot of reading and work I think it was immensely worthwhile.

A proportion of my time has been spent in the year assisting with live streaming, planning for regathering for worship, preparing signage and helping ensure we remained COVID safe as we regathered. So many people have been part of the way we have handled a second unusual year and I am so grateful to have been able to work with you all. As we navigate regathering I look forward to returning to some of our familiar routines but hope to do so with new eyes, taking forward the connections we have made and lessons we have learned during this long season of physical distance.

### ***Music Ministry – Jennifer Carini, Music Director***

I celebrated my tenth year of working at St. James' at the beginning of September! I am very happy working with the wonderful people of St. James'. Thank you for being so welcoming to me and my family!

We started 2021 as we ended 2020... with virtual church services and recorded music.

For 2021, I went to church and made audio recordings of myself playing all of the hymns and service music needed for worship services. Then, using the GarageBand app, I recorded myself singing the melody and harmony parts of all of the songs. After completing the audio recordings of each hymn, I emailed them to Mike Scrutton, who then put the hymns and anthems together with slideshows, and then Marcus Pun was able to put subtitles with the hymns. It is a well-coordinated effort, and well worth it!

On June 6th, we returned to a 9:30am in-person worship. I played the Roland keyboard during these services. Hymns were still pre-recorded.

On July 18th, we returned to our normal two-Sunday worship schedule. I played the organ and keyboard at the services. We were allowed to sing, as long as we were wearing masks. I played all music live (not recorded) for the rest of 2021.

We were able to have special music for our 7pm Christmas Eve service. Verlene Schermer played the harp, and Kristine Berg, Mel Shuen-Mallory, and Joey Carini made up our vocal quartet. The music was a special part of Christmas Eve.

The Adult Choir is currently on hiatus, because of Covid restrictions. I look forward to when we can come together again and make a joyful noise!

## **Wardens' Reports**

### ***Senior Warden's Report – Sylvia Ma***

I am honored, again, to be your Senior Warden in 2021. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you. I am very fortunate to be able to work with a group of very talented and enthusiastic members of the Vestry to tackle a variety of issues. For outreach, we approved donations to ABODE Services to end homelessness; to the City of Fremont Afghan Refugee Assistance program, and to Maisha Bora, funding two young women, Hope and Miriam, in their high school educations. I am grateful that parishioners of St. James' are very generous in donating time and money to specific programs in our communities. The Vestry also made some difficult decisions. The Vestry deliberated and decided that we could not approve to let cars from condominium next door to park in our parking lot. We also decided that we are not currently able to participate in the City of Fremont Safe Parking program.

All Vestry members did a wonderful job writing articles for the Window titled Growing Faith in a Changing World. Some of us helped in the drive-through Congregation Appreciation Day; some helped in the in-person St. James' Day Special Coffee Hour; some helped with the Vestry lunch with Bishop Marc in November.

I am grateful for the forgiveness of our Personal Protection Plan (PPP) loan and I am grateful for the assessment and pension relieves we received from the Diocese of California in 2021. I am grateful for Lynn Locher for being our Treasurer for so many years; and for Bruce Roberts for agreeing to be our new Treasurer. Thank you to Lynn and Bruce. I am grateful for Alison Saichek being our bookkeeper, reconciling our monthly reports, for so many years, and to Janet Fischer who is help us currently. Thank you, Alison and Janet.

In September, the Vestry participated in a Mutual Ministry Review with the Rev Lori. The Review was led by The Rev. Phil Brochard. In 2022, the Vestry will follow up with the conversation we started in the Mutual Ministry Review of how to move our congregation forward with continuing and increasing use of technology to create a place of trust, belonging and intimacy.

I am elated that Jim McConnell will be our Senior Warden. I am confident that 2022 will be a year full of hope and light for St. James’.

### ***Junior Warden’s Report –Jim McConnell***

As Jr. Warden it has been an honor and privilege to service the St. James’ community. During this past year I attended Lead team meetings, discussing our upcoming vestry agenda, concerns from parishioners, and getting a preview of the budget. I took notes at vestry meetings for publishing in the Window. Performed the mundane but necessary task of helping get our bills paid. The Wardens, along with the rector, are responsible for overseeing the business of the church. We could not do it without the support of many hard-working volunteers. Many thanks especially to Lynn Locher, Bruce Roberts, Jan Brandt, and Janet Fischer for keeping accounting in order and to Ron Cook, our extraordinary Office Administrator.

This year we saw the repaving of the parking lot, repairs to the Little Church, new security lights around the campus, improved live streaming of the 10:30 services. The Regathering Task force, along with the Diocese, brought us back to in-person worship.

These past two years have been trying, but we as members of St. James’ Church have proved that faith, love, and concern for others has seen us through. I am blessed to be a part of this community.

## **Committee Reports**

**The following Committees, Ministries, and Events did not take place in 2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions (or were not able to submit a report):**

- Available For Lunch
- Cub Scout Pack
- Healing Ministry
- Hillside Senior Care Center
- Lay Eucharistic Visitors
- Library & Archives
- Senior Lunch
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
- St. James’ Cares

### ***Abode Dinners – Lynn Locher***

This year the St. James’ team did not start to provide dinners for Sunrise Village until August. Prior to August the residents were housed off site or the staff prepared the meals. The village is only housing 20 adults so we provided fewer meals than usual. Meals were provided in August, October and December on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month. The health department has placed a limit of 5 cooks in the kitchen. This limit has allowed us some flexibility in staffing the kitchen.

We anticipate continuing to provide meals in the even months of 2022. Anyone interested in serving in this ministry can contact Lynn Locher at [lelocher@comcast.net](mailto:lelocher@comcast.net).

### ***Abode Services Rapid Re-Housing Program – Gregg Feeney***

St James', along with 18 other faith-based churches and organizations, generally meet throughout the year to pool resources and ideas on getting families and veterans re-housed. The meetings have been postponed during the pandemic and will restart once the Covid-19 outbreaks subside.

Abode Services qualifies the candidates, many of whom come through their shelter at Sunrise Village. The member churches partner up and pool our monies and donations of gently used household items or new items to help a family get settled into their new home. We have our own storage unit which is used to store items donated by our church members or other folks within the faith-based community.

With the high cost of housing in the Tri-City area and beyond, Abode Services is building affordable housing units geared towards families and veterans. These housing units are in Fremont and a new development in Hayward will provide the needed housing.

St James' has fundraisers and part of the proceeds go to Abode Services. St James' commits to sponsor at least 2 families per year with our neighbor Harbor Light. With the rental rates so high, it takes usually 3-4 churches to pool our monies to help on down payment and security deposits. We know that we'll never eliminate homelessness in the Tri-City area or Alameda County but our church members and the vestry really come through when asked for donations and funding. St James' does make a difference and will continue to honor our commitment to Abode Services Rapid-Rehousing.

If you want more information, then visit their website [www.abodeservices.org](http://www.abodeservices.org) and reach out to me via email: [dgfeeney@comcast.net](mailto:dgfeeney@comcast.net) or call 510 506 2303.

### ***Advent Evening Celebration – Jan Scrutton***

While we were still unable to gather for our regular meal at the start of Advent we were able to share cookies, popcorn and hot chocolate as we marked the start of Advent on the afternoon of the first Sunday of Advent. Thirty six people attended the service. Each year we have tried to learn about a tradition for Advent or Christmas from somewhere in the world. This year we reflected on the nativity creche we may see in our homes or churches and its origins. Twelve nativity sets were loaned by members of the congregation and displayed in church for everyone to look at. After the service we started painting the new outdoor nativity set being made for display at Christmas.

### ***Altar Guild – Katie Cunningham***

St. James' Altar Guild is currently made up of 13 volunteers, who work in four teams. The Altar Guild had 22 volunteers in 2019. After the church reopened the doors in May 2021, many of the Altar Guild members did not return for various reasons. Altar Guild ministry prepares the sanctuaries for weekly services and cleans up afterward. We are currently holding in-person church services on Sundays at 8:00am in the Little Church and 10:30am in the Big Church. The Wednesday service is held via Zoom only.

The Altar Guild is responsible for keeping the Sanctus Candle replenished and lit 24/7. The Sanctus Candle is positioned over the church Ambry in the Big Church and houses consecrated wafers and wine. The Little Church has an electric Sanctus Candle over the Ambry that houses the consecrated wafers.

The Altar Guild is responsible for ordering and picking up the fresh flowers for the weekly church services. Sanctus Candles and fresh flowers are gifted to the church through donations made by our church community. These donations are acknowledged during Sunday announcements.

Thank you to Barbara Johnsen for the lovely fresh flowers that are placed in the Little Church Columbarium once a month “In Remembrance” of her late husband Phil Johnsen. Thank you to Ruth Poole for the donation of a beautiful silver chalice and silver paten to St. James’ “In Remembrance” of her late husband Bob Poole.

The Altar Guild purchased a new Advent Candelabra for the Little Church with funds approved by the Vestry. Thank you to Dave Nelsen for modifying storage space in the Little Church sacristy for the new Candelabra. Thank you to Bob and Lauren Doherty for donating the cost of this project.

Thank you Jan Scrutton for the new green lectern hanging and veil used in the Big Church during the green season.

Two Memorials were held this past year for long time St. James’ parishioners Pat Vlastelica and Dorothy Balderston. Pat was Captain of team #3 and Dorothy was Captain of team #4 in the Altar Guild.

St. James’ Altar Guild has not held its annual Christmas Brunch for the past two years because of the Pandemic. We hope we will be able to gather safely sometime next year. St. James’ Altar Guild is happy to welcome new member John Wagas. If you are interested in becoming part of the St. James’ Altar Guild, please contact Katie Cunningham or Ruth Poole. Thank you to all of the parishioners who make up our Altar Guild Ministry. Week after week they lovingly prepare the Churches for Sunday services and clean up after each service has ended.

### ***Blessing Bags – Janet Fischer***

We continue to fill and distribute blessing bags to the needy. We fill each reusable backpack bag with bottled water, a tin of meat with a fork and napkin, a pair of socks, a wash cloth, hand sanitizer, toiletries (tooth brush and paste, shampoo, soap, and lotion), and a face mask. Blessing bags are available for anyone to take and hand out to those in need. They are available in the office hallway.

### ***Coffee Hour Hosts – Elaine Vallecillo-Miller & Dave Nelsen***

Your hospitality host team members come to church early to set up coffee and hot water pots and put out cold drinks and snacks. Other team members stay late to clean the pots, wash surfaces and put things away. A few new tasks were added to their responsibilities when we began meeting again in May, like setting up tables and chairs in the courtyard and serving all beverages with gloved hands. It is an honor to serve our friends and guests in this way and a great way to meet people as well. A big thanks to an outstanding team: Lynn and Ralph Locher, Elaine and

Greg Miller, Jan Brandt, Byron Bader, Mary Frances Leopold, Marcus Pun, Vivienne and Charlie Paratore, Meg and John Amouroux, Patty Lacy, Robert Lacy and Dave Nelsen.

### ***Communications – Janet Fischer***

The parish has several ways to communicate with our members.

1. [parish@saintj.com](mailto:parish@saintj.com) is an email list for general information and prayer requests. To be added to this list, please contact Janet at [jfischer@saintj.com](mailto:jfischer@saintj.com)
2. The weekly email blast is a separate list for sending out special announcements and the weekly news in preparation for the upcoming Sunday services. To be added to this list, please contact our Office Administrator at [admin@saintj.com](mailto:admin@saintj.com) or go to <https://us20.campaign-archive.com/home/?u=537d825180d53456df3c7fad1&id=8f8609f4b0> to sign up and peruse previous emails.
3. Our monthly newsletter, The Window (see report below) is produced and posted online. A print copy is available by contacting the church office.
4. Our parish calendar is online at: <https://saintj.com/wp/about-us/events/>.
5. We have a [Facebook](#) page, [YouTube](#) channel, [Apple podcasts](#) for sermons, an [Instagram](#) feed, and our [Twitter](#) account. John Wagas and Mike Scrutton help keep these all up to date.

### ***Counters Report – Jan Brandt***

The Counters team count, document, and post to Church Windows and prepare quarterly statements of incoming funds such as Pledge, Unpledged, Endowment, Use of Church, Flowers etc. In non-Covid times they also help by acting as cashier at events such as the Pancake Supper etc.

Due to Covid, in 2021 the teams have been limited, but have managed to faithfully continue these tasks on a weekly basis. Many thanks to those who have recently stepped away/retired from counting and for the four who continue; both groups have done this with the utmost confidentiality and a commitment to accuracy.

Please be kind to your Counters. If you are NOT using pledge envelopes, please add your pledge # to your Bank BillPay, PayPalGiving, PayPal check or cash. Again, many thanks to all the counters.

### ***Deanery Report – Rev. Lori Walton***

The Southern Alameda County Deanery met three times over the course of the year, with the Rev. Jeff Dodge serving as President and parishioner Jim McConnell serving as Vice-President. Our Deanery Reps/Convention delegates for 2021 were Scott Whitaker, Jim McConnell, Ken Trant, Elaine Miller, and Greg Miller. Sally Morgan and Elaine Miller served as alternates.

### ***Disaster Preparedness Team – Elaine Vallecillo-Miller***

Despite the prolonged quarantine due to Covid19, your DPRT members met on a regular, monthly basis, even where there was a need, via Zoom. At the beginning of 2021, we set out the following goals which we accomplished:

- 1) Have a fundraising event to purchase an AED unit for the church.
- 2) Provide disaster-related informational material and Alert whistles and code cards to our congregational members and any residents of the Cabrillo townhouses at designated days.

3) Host CPR/AED classes for our members.

Because of generous donation of Anne Blalock, the DPRT was able to acquire an AED unit, now housed in the Parish Hall, where it is easily retrievable on the campus. Bud Pearson provided an additional donation whereby the 21 parochial attendees benefited from having a full or partial scholarship for the payment of CPR/AED class fee, one in September and the second in October. All attendees gave favorable comments about the class. In addition, we provided lunch before the class started on the two Sundays.

Every family member received their alert whistles and individual plastic bag to place a pair of shoes and flashlight by their bed, in case of an emergency or disaster, in our DPRT goody bags. They were well received.

The current DPRT members are Jill Buono, Josephine Amadi, Bob Bynum, Greg Miller, and Elaine Vallecillo-Miller. Bud Pearson stepped down during the summer. He has been on the team from its inception, 2014. Whenever you see him, please express your “thanks” to him for his involvement and devotion to this ministry.

On January 3, your Team has set out new goals for 2022: 1) send a survey to the parishioners about their interest of having CPR/AED classes on a Saturday; 2) install our purchased 2020 intercom system and conduct a test; 3) Conduct a practice drill with the Congregational Emergency Phone Tree sometime in 2022.

As always, if anyone is interested with this outreach, social action ministry, please contact Elaine Vallecillo-Miller, St. James’ Congregational Disaster Coordinator, at 510-793-5344 or via email: [evallecillomiller@yahoo.com](mailto:evallecillomiller@yahoo.com)

### ***Endowment Fund Report – Craig Gentner***

The St. James’ Endowment Fund was established in 2004 when parishioners indicated they had included St. James’ in their estate planning. In 2006, the Memorial Garden Endowment was established, followed by the Little Church Endowment in 2007. In addition to estate planning, gifts are given to the funds as celebrations, memorials, or to honor friends and those who serve at St. James’.

The funds are presently invested with the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF) and are overseen by the Endowment Board. Endowment Board currently includes Mary Casas, Jino Joseph, John Butterfield, Craig Gentner, Tom Blalock and St. James’ Treasurer Bruce Roberts, who is an ex officio member of the Board.

While protecting the principle, distributions are made annually and reflect the growth of the fund. The Principal Value is \$238,131 and the Market Value is \$313,779. The last meeting was in October. The Board has decided to not make distributions to the three funds (Vestry, LC, MG) at this time.

### ***Episcopal Youth Fremont – Jan & Mike Scrutton, Jill Buono***

Throughout the time we were unable to meet in person Episcopal Youth Fremont (EYF) continued to gather monthly on Zoom. An average of 10 -12 young people would join in each month. We concentrated on social time and playing games but during this time also completed confirmation preparation for 4 young people (3 from St. Anne’s and 1 from St. James’). On

Saturday June 26<sup>th</sup> they were confirmed by Bishop Marc in an Eco confirmation Service at Sycamore Grove in Livermore along with candidates from around our deanery. By September we were able to start gathering in person outside and enjoyed having that opportunity to be together again.

Lent at home bags were provided for the youth during our lockdown – these, along with Easter and back to school cards, were a continuation of the 2020 efforts to maintain contact while we were unable to meet in person. The most popular send home item appeared to be the mug with chocolate brownie mug cake mix!

Our November in person meeting was a chance to reflect on the impacts of COVID on our lives, to share the good and bad things we had experienced and concluded with a prayer service.

### ***Executive Council Report – Elaine Vallecillo-Miller***

During the December 2020's South Alameda Deanery meeting via Zoom, the past President made a call out to the deanery representatives of the six congregations who might be interested to fill the vacant post on the Executive Council. I voiced "yes" if there was no objection from anyone attending that meeting.

Indeed, 2021 has proven to be a year of appreciation and learning the workings of the Executive Council' business and role within our Episcopal Diocese of California. The biggest surprise for me is seeing that our Bishop Andrus really strives to hear and solicit opinions from each Executive Council member on various church issues that affect our congregations, its members, and the Diocese. I am humble to be a representative to the Executive Council for our South Alameda Deanery.

So, I am challenging everyone to consider being a representative of this Executive Council since there is a vacant spot for our Deanery. Make known to your rector so that they can place your name on the slate.

I made a promise to myself that I would relay the "Talking Points" of each monthly meeting to all six congregations so that the rectors and congregation would be informed about the business we dealt with in whatever means of communication that each individual rector choses. I am here, too, to bring forth any concerns or questions that a congregation might have. So, if you want more details, please do not hesitate to contact me.

### ***Facilities – Dave Nelsen***

Our buildings saw little use for the first 5 months of 2021. Furnaces and water heaters were turned off for the most part. We continued to contract out our janitorial and some landscaping work to Fernando Janitorial Service. Fernando cleans and vacuums our buildings and keeps up the grounds adjacent to the buildings.

In March a group considered security around the campus. It was agreed that we upgrade several existing motion detection lights and add two new lights, one facing the education building and one in the memorial garden.

In August the parking lot was re-surfaced and re-painted. This project was primarily coordinated by Bruce Roberts.

The long planned replacement of the back wall of the little church was finally completed. The difficulty has been finding a contractor willing to bid the job, not unusual considering the age of the building. Some surprises were found, but adjustments were made within the budget and we are pleased with the results. We have signed a contract to have the entire building painted, which will begin once the weather has cleared.

There have been no issues with appliances, heaters, yard maintenance equipment, etc. other than routine cleaning and adjustments periodically made.

The grounds have seen little change this year. Organized work parties were held in March, May and December when roofs and gutters were cleared, weeds brought under control, trees and shrubs were trimmed and two small trees which had died were removed.

Although there were few fixes needed or changes made to our facilities, it still requires many capable volunteers to complete the general maintenance our large campus demands. Many thanks to the people who give their time and talent to the maintenance of St. James'.

### ***Faith Formation – Rev. Lori Walton***

For our Lenten Series, I offered a noontime class examining the Passion Play of Oberammergau and its relationship to our own faith. Our seminarian, Dan Carlson, offered an evening class on exploring the wilderness. During Eastertide, Dan Carlson and parishioner Tim Fortescue offered a class on Sharing the Good News/Evangelism. Following the Sacred Ground coursework held in October of 2020, the parish engaged in another class to explore racism, called Dialogues on Race. This class spanned November through December and was experienced by an average of 20 people each week.

Two bible studies meet on a weekly basis. On Mondays, eight committed parishioners meet for an hour to check-in, read scripture, and discuss. For 2021, we've been working our way through the Acts of the Apostles using the book "A Journey through Acts". On Wednesdays, another nine parishioners meet to check-in, view a video, read scripture, and discuss. We use material from The Bible Project. Both gatherings have been prayerful and life-giving during this time of uncertainty.

### ***Finance Committee – Janet Fischer***

This new committee was formed in 2021 to oversee the finances of the parish and to advise on the annual budget. The committee has met twice – first in September to get organized and again in December to look over the proposed budget. The committee approved the proposed budget to submit to the vestry.

Members of the committee are: Jan Brandt (chair), Lori+, Craig Gentner, Janet Fischer, Mike Scrutton (Pledge Secretary) and Bruce Roberts (Treasurer).

### ***Flatlanders – Women's Retreat – Laura Winter***

Eleven of us spent a lovely four days at the shore of Monterey Bay for our annual Ladies Flatlanders weekend in September – what a delight to gather together again! We rent the same townhouse each year overlooking the water and just steps from the beach. After missing last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it truly felt like coming home as we arrived on Thursday evening.

Our weekend is all about wonderful fellowship and great food. Though we only saw a few hours of sunshine this year, we still enjoyed walks on the beach and dipping our toes in the water. When the sun did break through the clouds we were all outside to soak in the warmth. Inside, we spent time playing games, assembling a jigsaw puzzle, and sharing our stories. Our meals are fabulous, prepared by different ladies each time and enjoyed by all. Our menu usually consists of chicken and pasta Thursday evening, salmon with vegetables on Friday, and our Saturday dinner is tri-tip with potatoes and salad. Breakfasts are just as varied and delicious. All this is supplemented by the goodies each of us bring to share.

This year's participants were Nancy Castaneda, Mary Casas, Jan Pearson, Linda Nelsen, Sylvia Ma, Jackie Whitehouse, Cathy Knotts, Marilyn Rose, Letty Rodarte, Patty Lacy and Laura Winter. Our group consisted of women ranging from some who have been participating many, many years like Jan and Marilyn (40 years or so) through our first-year member Patty. We were delighted to have Jackie back with us, as she flew in to join us for the weekend. Mary brought with her a list of everyone who has attended in the past, and we read off each name. It was fun to hear so many names from the past, and a brief memory was shared about each. Some of the names were known by only a few. We felt a great connection with all who attended in previous years, and know we are in the middle of many to come in the future.

Sunday morning we share a worship service, this year led by Marilyn, and bless our bonds of sisterhood, nature and God. We plan to gather again September 15-18, 2022. If you are interested in learning more about the weekend, talk to one of the committee members - Nancy, Mary, Laura - or to anyone who participated. We are all happy to share the good times with more!

### ***Greeters – Dave Nelsen***

It is the task of the greeters ministry team to help visitors to St. James' feel welcome. This may involve directing them to the nursery or Sunday school rooms and introducing them to people currently staffing these areas. The greeter, standing with the rector, is often one of the first faces of St. James' a visitor encounters. They represent St. James' and serve the rector by being a host at a time the rector is far too busy to give a visitor the time or attention they may need. In May when we began meeting again in-person our focus shifted a bit. We helped ensure everyone had registered for the service and that safety protocols were followed. Thank you to Jan Pearson, Gregg Feeney, Craig Gentner, and Dave Nelsen for your welcoming presence.

### ***Hunger and Homelessness Vigil with Abode Services – Jan Scrutton***

For the eighth year we hosted the Abode Homelessness Vigil, returning to being in person at St. James' but being outside and masked. Prayers were offered by 6 members of the TriCity Interfaith Council (TCIC) in addition to Rev. Lori. A musical piece was offered by Joey Carini and Jennifer Ravera and the Kalitta family helped with the candle lighting. Almost 80 names were read out, a significant increase on previous year, perhaps influenced by the increased number of people Abode were in contact with due to the State response to COVID. Sixty one people attended the vigil with a further 35 views of the stream on YouTube happening within the first week.

## ***IT Report – Mike Scrutton***

During 2021, we updated Rev Lori's laptop. Our servers have continued to enable staff to access and update data remotely, enabling work-at-home. Zoom accounts have enabled us to continue to meet for fellowship, education and services from home.

## ***Lectors and Lay Eucharistic Ministers – George Siegmann***

Lectors and Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEMs) are dedicated parishioners who read the scripture lessons and assist in the liturgy and at the altar. They work hard to make each church service a worshipful experience for everyone, and have been very flexible as schedules change.

Because of the COVID pandemic, we did not congregate in the church for services from March, 2020 until May 30, 2021. During that time, we had one Communion Service that was either recorded in advance or live-streamed. No Lay Eucharistic Ministers were scheduled during that time.

From the beginning of 2021 until June, the following people served as Lectors reading the First and Second Lessons and leading in the congregational reading of the Psalm either in person or via recording: Bruce Roberts, Dan Carlson, George Siegmann, Greg Miller, Janet Fischer, Jim McConnell, John Amouroux, Ken Trant, Laura Winter, Lynn Locher, Mary Frances Leopold, Mike Scrutton, Monique Manjarrez, Vivienne Paratore, Marilyn Rose, Patty Lacy and Peter Maina. In March, we lost one of our 8:00 lectors, Joan Kimber. She will be greatly missed. During this time, a wide variety of parishioners recorded their reading of the Prayers of the People.

When we went to two live services on July 18, Laura Winter, Greg Miller and Janet Fischer served as both Lectors and LEMs. We added new Lectors Amy Davis, Keith Westra, Tessa Richardson (until she moved soon after), and an amazing 7<sup>th</sup> grader, Kaitlyn Evans-Bodenrader.

Lectors serving at the 8:00 a.m. service were Bob Doherty, Patty Lacy, Mary Frances Leopold, John Amouroux, Tom Blalock and Laura Winter. New Lector Marcus Pun began serving towards the end of the year.

Lectors serving at the 10:30 a.m. service were Amy Davis, Keith Westra, Bruce Roberts, Peter Maina, Jim McConnell, Samir Kalitta. Ken Trant, Kaitlyn Evans-Bodenrader and Mike Scrutton.

When we went to two live services, LEMs were scheduled at each service even though there was no wine served for Communion. The LEMs led the procession to the altar by carrying the Cross, lit the candles, read the Prayers of the People and assisted the Celebrant. Intern Ingrid Jacobson and John Wagas joined the LEM ministry.

LEMs serving at the 8:00 a.m. service were Vivienne Paratore, Meg Amouroux, our intern Ingrid Jacobson and Laura Winter. Brian Cochran served until he was gracious enough to offer his spot to Ingrid.

LEMs serving at the 10:30 a.m. service were Ingrid Jacobson, Janet Fischer, Bekka Murray, John Wagas, Marilyn Rose, Greg Miller and George Siegmann.

2021 was a difficult year but our Lectors, LEMs and other volunteers served as essential members of the worship team each week.

### ***Little Church Renovation Committee – Sylvia Ma***

The Little Church Renovation Committee was commissioned by the Vestry in 2012 to study and recommend repairs/maintenance/renovation of the Little Church. We have been meeting and submitting written reports to the Vestry on a regular basis. The Vestry reviews each repair/maintenance /renovation proposal and approves each funding. The Committee consists of The Rev. Lori Walton, Sylvia Ma (chair), Scott Kennedy (emeritus), Chris Perry (emeritus), Patty Lacy, Jim McConnell, Mary Casas, Tom Blalock, Jan Brandt, Bobbie Tomkinson, Laura Winter, Bruce Roberts, Jim Cunningham, Dave Nelsen, Mary Frances Leopold, and Marcus Pun. We are happy to report that, with the help of Jim Cunningham, Bruce Roberts and Dave Nelsen, we had contracted Vasona Construction (Fremont) and repaired the outside back wall of the Little Church. New insulation was put in, plywood was installed for seismic strengthening and new sidings were now in place. A rotted beam was also replaced at the bottom of the wall. The Vestry approved the expenditure of \$22,684 for this project.

Looking ahead, Dave Nelsen will lead volunteers to establish clearance around the base of the building from siding to ground to prevent water damage of the sidings. With the approval of the Vestry, we have contracted All Purpose Painting and Restoration (Newark) to paint the exterior and repairing window trims of the Little Church. We are waiting for the weather to break to schedule the window trim repair and the painting. The color scheme of the exterior will be the same as the current colors, except we will paint the front door red. We will also work on new kneeler pads and other small projects inside the Little Church, projects which we did not get to in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID lockdown.

The funds for the Little Church repair projects are from the Schader Trust Fund, from the generous donations from parishioners and from the yearly interest disbursements from the Little Church Endowment Fund. We are very grateful for all the support we received in 2021 and looking forward to your continuing support in 2022.

### ***Liturgical Design – The Rev. Lori Walton***

For the first half of the year, the sanctuary was modified to accommodate video-taping of our services by closing the curtains (hiding the big screen), and reducing our flowers to one arrangement instead of two. When we returned to in-person worship, we facilitated social distancing by reducing the number of pews, returned to two flower arrangements, and recorded attendance for contact tracing.

New lectern and pulpit hangings for the green season were designed and created by Jan Scrutton.

### ***Live Streaming Worship – Mike Scrutton***

2021 was “a game of two halves” (to use a soccer metaphor). From January through Pentecost in May, a small team of folks (Rev Lori, Mike, Jan & Beth Scrutton, and John and Meg Amouroux) met on campus every Sunday morning to live-stream worship to our 100% online congregation, watching by themselves or joining the watch parties led mostly by our Music Director Jennifer. Readings and Prayers of the People were pre-recorded by parishioners and inserted into the weekly services. Hymns were recorded by Jennifer, who expertly recorded herself playing the

organ and singing multiple parts. Marcus Pun added captions to the hymns so folks at home could join in.

With joy, we were able to regather as a community from Trinity Sunday – tentatively at first with a congregation joining together in the Big Church, with no live singing and pre-recorded Hymns and Prayers with folks in the Big Church experiencing worship ‘in the room’ rather than from home.

In time for the Feast of St. James’ in late July, the lifting of local restrictions meant we could move to two services and a more familiar service pattern, removing the need for pre-recorded elements. We still share the Prayer of Spiritual Communion with those at home during the distribution of communion.

Even though we’re able to meet in person, we continue to live-stream the weekly 10:30am service and plan to do so in the future. The vestry approved funding for a remote-controlled camera, which enables the livestream to be produced by a single technical director. Duties are shared by Mike Scrutton and John Amouroux with Greg Miller joining the team in the late fall. In addition to the weekly services, we have recorded and streamed memorial services, including those held outside. In November we recorded the Candlelit Vigil, before editing and posting online.

Our weekly worship services were joined on [saintj.com](http://saintj.com) and YouTube by weekly online Sunday School videos, featuring our Children and Youth Minister Jan Scrutton, and edited by Beth Scrutton. These were posted from the start of the year through the start of the school term in the Fall, since when the Sunday School has been able to gather in-person. A special Sunday School video was shared for Christmas.

Our [YouTube channel](#) has 125 subscribers at December 28<sup>th</sup> 2021. Sunday services are streamed on average 17 times on the first day. Our visit from the Bishop, with Baptism and Confirmation was streamed 52 times. Our Christmas Eve Family service was streamed 27 times, and our traditional Christmas Eve Holy Communion was streamed 27 times. It is difficult to estimate an accurate number of viewers – one stream can be watched by an individual or a family worshipping together.

### ***McCutcheon Concert Fundraiser – Sylvia Ma***

St. James’ sponsored a live-stream concert by John McCutcheon on January 16, 2021. We received a special link for ticket sales and got a portion of the ticket proceeds. The Vestry approved the McCutcheon Team’s request to donate part of the proceeds to ABODE Services working to end homelessness. For the live-stream concert, we sent out notices of the concert to parishioners and to previous non-parishioner concert attendees. We also posted the concert on Facebook and on Fremont Patch. After the concert, John McCutcheon’s manager informed us that our share of the proceeds of the concert was \$850. We also received donations for the concert totaled \$165. The Vestry approved a donation of \$1000 to ABODE Services.

### ***Men’s Trip – Gregg Feeney***

For the past 14 years the Men's Group has made their trek to the Blue Springs district of Arnold located in Calaveras County, and to Twain Harte in Tuolumne County. Our trip is usually in the 3rd week of August, Thursday – Sunday, and we average about 12 guys ranging in age from 21-80+. This year our group was down to 7 guys due to scheduling conflicts, Covid-19

concerns and the smoky conditions. With the growing fire concerns there is talk to move the trip up to June or July in hopes of avoiding the fires.

The trips include a wide variety of activities such as hiking, golfing, kayaking, reading, napping, swimming, beer & wine tasting, visiting parks and exploring the wonders of Calaveras County/Tuolumne County and Stanislaus National Forest. In 2019 we decided to rotate between Arnold and Twain Harte. In 2021 we returned to Calaveras County and ended up staying in a large house in Camp Connell.

If you are new to St James' and to California, it's a good time to take in the beauty of the mountains. These trips have been a good time to reflect on our church and hash out ideas. Usually, every year we have a new member join us or even a long-term member finally comes to see what we're all about. It's really about fellowship and a chance to unwind. At a cost of \$195.00, meals included, it's hard to pass up. A friendly reminder and save the date notice will go out in our monthly newsletter as well as weekly email notices and the St James' email group

### ***Memorial Garden/Columbarium – Ruth Poole***

Saint James' Memorial Garden is managed by a Committee composed of Saint James' parishioners.

#### **Garden Internments and Purchases**

The Memorial Garden had three people interred in 2021–Penny Trant, Margaret Rainey, and Frank Hoffman. Ann Jamison's ashes have not been scheduled by her family to be interred into the garden at this time. We sold one plot in the garden for Anita Rollins. No in-memory stones were sold.

#### **Columbarium**

We had no internments in the Columbarium. All niches in the Columbarium have been sold.

#### **2021 Memorial Garden Goals**

The garden is maintained on an “as needed” basis. We had a professional landscaper come and do a thorough cleanup of the garden in June 2021.

The Saint Fiacre statue was installed also in the garden in June replacing the damaged birdbath. (St. Fiacre is the patron of growers of vegetables and medicinal plants, and gardeners in general.)

The annual Memorial Day Coffee Hour was not hosted this year, but U.S.A. flags were displayed throughout the garden.

Two Christmas trees were bought, decorated with lights and placed in front of the Little Church during Christmas week.

#### **2022 Garden Goals**

Fresh mulch to be placed throughout the Memorial Garden and outer garden area. Replace the garden's dying Hawaiian Hapu'u fern. Implement a “user-friendly” watering system that accommodates both weekly watering and water department expectations.

Special thanks to Byron Bader and Bob Doherty for internment plot preparation again this year.

Special thanks to John Kimber, Bob Doherty, Samir Kalitta and Dave Nelsen for working on the garden watering system through 2021 and other garden and columbium needs.

We are always in need of new members. Please contact or email Ruth Poole if you are interested in joining our committee.

### ***Newsletter – The Window – Janet Fischer***

In 2021 we refreshed the “look and feel” of the Window with some new images and logos created by parishioner John Wagas as well as creating a newer page design. The Window is posted on our website each month, and archived issues are available back to 2007. A few copies are printed each month and mailed to those who have requested a paper copy and for handouts at the office and in the narthex. The online newsletter page was visited an average of 120 times a month in 2021, double the visits from 2020.

There are presently two people involved in creating the Window: Janet Fischer compiles and edits each issue and Laura Winter is the Editor-in-Chief and proofs each issue before publication. If you are interested in joining the editorial team, please talk to either of us! Thank you.

### ***Outreach – Jan Scrutton***

Our school supplies drive was very well supported this year, both with donated supplies and cash donations. We spoke to Abode Services and Union City Family Center to make sure we were donating the things they needed the most – index cards, child sized masks and calculators were among the things requested by them. Many children were returning to in person school for the first time in 18 months.

We continued to deliver grocery bags to Tri City Volunteers although as grocery stores have enabled the use of reusable bags again the numbers we deliver have slowed down.

During November we collected food for Abode Services which was delivered after the Homelessness Vigil. The two collecting barrels were filled and additional boxes needed to carry the stuff off for delivery.

### ***Park Development Task Force – Meg Amouroux***

The Park Task Force is a new group started in 2021, created in response to a vestry request to make better use of or refresh the area of our campus between Thornton Avenue and the parking lot, known by many as “the Park.” Our first meeting as a group was held on June 23, 2021. The group is fortunate to be made up of volunteers with varying degrees of experience but with energy and vision, as well as some having helpful gardening, landscaping, and grant-writing experience.

At the first meeting in June 2021, sketches and ideas from brainstorming session(s) from earlier (pre-2021) vestry discussions were reviewed. A fund for this project had been established via donations, with the goal to update the area.

We recognized the lack of sacred spaces and quieter places for contemplation in Fremont, and we agreed that we can use this space as a place where we can create that sacred space. With that, we hold this as our task force’s mission: “*The creation of a sacred space for rest, contemplation, and fellowship.*” This mission statement, along with a preliminary sequence of what we might

accomplish, will help guide our conversations and decisions, and keep us on track to complete the task.

Breaking down the project into phases allows us to remove options that don't appear viable, as well as organizing the steps needed to complete the project. The following phases reflect our preliminary approach to transformation of the Park area, though we realize that the phases will likely change over time and require updating:

- **Phase 1:** Labyrinth replacement and new associated instructional signage. Benches/seating may be part of this phase. Seating may include benches, a low stone wall, collections of seating options for small groups.
- **Phase 2:** Clearing Park of unwanted elements, placement of benches and peace path. Perhaps add an accessible green belt from Memorial Garden to Park.
- **Phase 3:** Outdoor Columbarium for the Homeless and memorial wall or garden. Perhaps get financial assistance from Memorial Garden Committee.
- **Phase 4+:** Earthen mounds or berms to help with Thornton Ave. traffic noise reduction. Addition of native and drought-resistant plants. Street and property signage.

Over the course of the fall, we met at the labyrinth site with a locally-based labyrinth designer, and discussed various options for the location, size, materials, and possible costs of an updated labyrinth. Once we researched other area labyrinths, taking into account our budget, the labor likely required, and our mission, we agreed that a more organic-style labyrinth (hard-pack footpaths, similar to Mercy Center in Burlingame) would be the best fit. We looked at aerial renderings of the area, and considered where new trees and other elements might work, and also came in contact with a local "urban forest" group, who could possibly donate free oak trees. We have received estimates for some elements in the initial 4 phases.

This park revitalization does not have a hard timeline, but we will be moving forward. Early in 2022 we will be reviewing the phases we originally drew up and will likely look to the labyrinth replacement as our first task. Progress updates will continue to be shared with the vestry, and with the parish via The Window newsletter. We're happy to receive suggestions both for ideas, donations for the project, and for anyone wishing to join the Task Force! Our group email is [park@saintj.com](mailto:park@saintj.com)

### ***Road Crew – Bruce Roberts***

From our origin as assistants to our Music Director Jennifer Ravera, to our current iteration as assistants to our tech leader, Mike Scrutton, the accomplishments of the group in 2021 are as follows:

- In April we assisted Mike in running HDMI cable for the projector in the Big Church, used for projecting high quality pictures on the screen.
- In September we assisted by helping Jim Swihart while he repaired the organ and speakers in the Little Church.
- In September we assisted Mike and Jan Scrutton setting up camera and sound for Dorothy Balderston's Memorial service outside on the front lawn.
- Again, we helped set up sight and sound for the Blessing of the Animals in October.

Road Crew members: Bud Pearson, Greg Miller, Bruce Roberts, Laura Winter, Dave Nelsen.

## ***Social Justice Task Force – Mary Frances Leopold***

Members: Jill Buono, Bob Bynum, MF Leopold , Sally Morgan, Diane Morninglight, Bruce Roberts, Lori Walton

The Social Justice Task Force was formed in February 2021 as a response the Sacred Ground seminars of fall 2020. The Task Force's mission is to educate and extol the congregation of St. James' to recognize the need for social justice for all our brothers and sisters and to work toward a world where all experience God's love and bounty equally. The team meets twice a month to discuss recent current events, share articles and videos, and plan outreach to the parish.

The team is small but determined to make a difference. It took a while to reach its stride but by the end of the summer we were able to put some ideas into practice. In September 2021, the Task Force hosted a documentary on childhood hunger in America at the church, as well as a zoom prayer service of thanksgiving to honor the autumn equinox. The Task Force also requested that the Vestry donate \$500 and books to Cabrillo Elementary School. The Task Force then sponsored the Dialogues on Race series with the Faith Formation team in November-December.

## ***Stewardship – Sylvia Ma***

Stewardship ministry is a year-round effort. I would like to thank Jan Brandt for keeping track of all the pledges and giving us quarterly summaries. I would like to thank Mike Scrutton for being our Stewardship Secretary, for analyzing our pledge tendencies and explaining to the Vestry so we could make informed decisions on our budget. Jan and Mike were instrumental in sending out pledge reminders for the 2021 as well as for our 2022 pledge drives. The Vestry wrote thank you notes to all pledging units in the beginning of 2021. Thank you.

During the 2021 Fall Stewardship period, members of the Vestry again shared with the parish what pledging at St. James' means to them. Two testimonies were delivered in person at the 8am Sunday services. Four testimonies were recorded and played at the 1030am Sunday services. Great job, Vestry members!

A beautifully prepared Stewardship brochure, with information on money coming in and on various programs at St. James' in a Narrative Budget format, was put together by Janet Fischer, Mike Scrutton, and the Rev Lori. The brochures were mailed to all members of the Parish, thanks to our Administrator, Ron Cook. All returned pledge cards were blessed on November 28, our In-gathering Sunday.

In 2021, we received 94 pledges for \$355,290. We are again striving for a balanced budget for 2022 and we are not there yet. As of January 3, 2022, we have received 82 pledges for \$368,780. There is a 5.1% average increase of amount pledged for 2022. If you have sent in your 2022 pledge card, thank you. If you are still thinking about it, please do send it in. If you need a pledge card, please email [admin@saintj.com](mailto:admin@saintj.com) or pledge online at <https://www.saintj.com/giving>. To help us with our budgeting effort, we need to receive a pledge card from you each year, even if it is the same amount as previous years. We really appreciated your support of St. James'.

## ***Tai Chi Class – Sylvia Ma***

Chair Exercise/Tai Chi classes, a ministry of St. James', are being held on Zoom every Tuesday from 10:00-11:00am. All are welcome to join and there is no fee for the class. We gather to do stretching and warm-up exercises, to learn the relaxing breathing/meditation exercises of QiGong, to learn some Tai Chi movements, and to do self message. The exercises are not strenuous, and we do them sitting down. No prior experience is necessary.

In 2021, we had 45 classes with an average of 15 participants per class. Participants include St. James' parishioners and non-parishioners.

In 2022, we will continue to have the Tuesday morning Chair Exercise/Tai Chi classes on Zoom. If you or your family members or friends are interested, please join us. Contact Sylvia Ma by phone 510-552-6549 or by email [hsiehtingsueh@yahoo.com](mailto:hsiehtingsueh@yahoo.com). A class reminder with Zoom link is sent out every Monday. The Zoom link could also be found on the St. James' website on the Parish Events Calendar page for Tuesdays.

## ***Website – Mike Scrutton***

During the year, the website has been updated weekly to be the primary location for finding our services and livestreams. Website traffic in 2021 is up by around 3 times, with approximately 23,000 visits this year. John Wagas has joined the team updating our Facebook and Instagram posts, sharing both beautiful and topical messages.

## ***Zoom Fellowship – Jennifer Ravera***

As January commenced, we were still in lockdown at St. James' because of Covid. Therefore, we had a lot of meetings and fellowship using Zoom!

I hosted the following fellowship groups:

- Wednesdays at 7pm: Adult Choir Social Hour
- Thursdays at 7pm: Social Hour
- Sundays after our YouTube Watch Parties: Coffee Hour

As the need for these groups became less necessary, because of being together in person, these Zoom fellowship meetings have stopped meeting.

It was a wonderful experience hosting these Zoom meetings with all of the parishioners at St. James'! I am really proud of everyone for getting the "hang" of Zoom! I really got to know a lot of our members much better than I ever knew you before Covid!