



SAINT JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

CALLED TO SERVE, IN NEW & LOVING WAYS



Annual Report for 2022

Submitted for the Annual Meeting Held
January 22rd, 2023

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

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Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
CLERGY & STAFF REPORTS	4
RECTOR’S REPORT – THE REV. LORI A. WALTON	4
ASSISTING PRIEST REPORT – THE REV. WILLIAM C. (BILL) HALE.....	6
CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTER’S REPORT – JAN SCRUTTON	7
MUSIC MINISTRY – JENNIFER CARINI, MUSIC DIRECTOR.....	9
TREASURER & WARDENS’ REPORTS	10
TREASURER’S REPORT – BRUCE ROBERTS	10
SENIOR WARDEN’S REPORT – JIM MCCONNELL	10
JUNIOR WARDEN’S REPORT – MEG AMOUROUX.....	11
COMMITTEE REPORTS	12
ABODE DINNERS – LYNN LOCHER.....	12
ABODE SERVICES RAPID RE-HOUSING PROGRAM – GREGG FEENEY	12
ADVENT EVENING CELEBRATION – JAN SCRUTTON.....	13
ALTAR GUILD – KATIE CUNNINGHAM	13
AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE SERVICE: ST. JAMES’ ASL (DEAF MINISTRY) – BEV MOSIER	14
BISHOP’S SEARCH COMMITTEE – MIKE SCRUTTON	14
BLESSING BAGS – MARY FRANCES LEOPOLD	15
COMMUNICATIONS – MIKE SCRUTTON.....	15
COUNTERS REPORT – JAN BRANDT	16
DEANERY REPORT – JIM MCCONNELL	16
DISASTER PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE TEAM FOR ST. JAMES’ & ST. ANNE’S – ELAINE VALLECILLO-MILLER	17
ENDOWMENT FUND REPORT – CRAIG GENTNER	17
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPORT – ELAINE VALLECILLO-MILLER	18
FACILITIES – DAVE NELSEN	18
FAITH FORMATION – REV. LORI WALTON	19
FINANCE COMMITTEE – JAN BRANDT	19
FLATLANDERS – WOMEN’S RETREAT – LAURA WINTER	20
GREETERS – DAVE NELSEN	20
HOSPITALITY / COFFEE HOUR HOSTS – ELAINE VALLECILLO-MILLER & DAVE NELSEN	20
HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS VIGIL WITH ABODE SERVICES & TRI CITY INTERFAITH COUNCIL – JAN SCRUTTON	21
IT REPORT – MIKE SCRUTTON.....	21
LAY EUCHARISTIC VISITORS – REV. LORI WALTON	21
LECTORS AND LAY EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS – GEORGE SIEGMANN	22
LITTLE CHURCH RENOVATION COMMITTEE – SYLVIA MA	23
LITURGICAL DESIGN – ELAINE VALLECILLO-MILLER.....	23
LIVE STREAMING / ONLINE PRESENCE WORSHIP – MIKE SCRUTTON	23
MCCUTCHEON CONCERT FUNDRAISER – SYLVIA MA.....	24
MEN’S TRIP – GREGG FEENEY	25
MEMORIAL GARDEN AND COLUMBARIUM – RUTH POOLE	25
NEWSLETTER – THE WINDOW – JANET FISCHER.....	26
OUTREACH – JAN SCRUTTON	27
PARK DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE – MEG AMOUROUX	27
ROAD CREW – BRUCE ROBERTS.....	28
SOCIAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE – MARY FRANCES LEOPOLD.....	28
SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE – JOHN WAGAS, JAN SCRUTTON, MIKE SCRUTTON	29
STEWARDSHIP – JIM MCCONNELL	30

TAI CHI CLASS / CHAIR EXERCISE – SYLVIA MA.....	31
VITAL & THRIVING – VIVIENNE PARATORE.....	31
WEBSITE – MIKE SCRUTTON	31

Clergy & Staff Reports

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

Covid-19 Impact

While we have come a long way since March 2020, the inception of the Covid-19 virus, the pandemic continues to impact the common life and worship of St. James'. We returned to in-person worship in June 2021. As of this writing, our in-person attendance continues to be lower than pre-pandemic levels by approximately 40%. For much of 2022, we required proof of vaccination and masking to enter any of our indoor spaces, including the sanctuaries. In November 2022, we dropped the mandates and moved to a position of strongly recommending vaccinations and masks. This decision was made considering the wide availability of vaccinations and the increased knowledge of how the virus spreads. We continue to be cautious and are thankful that, while many of our congregants have contracted the virus, we have not experienced any hospitalizations and deaths in 2022 due to the virus.

Worship and Liturgy

Our worship for 2022 returned to its normal rhythm and make up. We restarted our acolyte program with new and returning children. We resumed passing the plate, processing the oblations forward, and having the choir return to lead us in sacred song. We continue to live-stream our 10:30 service, making it possible for those who are homebound or out of town to worship with us.

Our preachers were varied for 2022 with the Rev. Bill Hale, Jan Scrutton, Brian Cochran, and intern Ingrid Jacobson sharing the pulpit with me. We also invited guest preachers Caren Miles and Amy Cook from the Diocese of California, Ron Cook, our parish administrator, and Stephen Siproth, candidate for Holy Orders to share the Good News. In November, six vestry members (Vivienne Paratore, Jim McConnell, Samir Kalitta, Bev Mosier, Meg Amouroux and Mary Frances Leopold) shared their perspectives of abundance with the congregation.

We returned to some of our routine worship services that fall outside of the regular Sunday worship model. In March, we held two Ash Wednesday services and the Imposition of Ashes. Maundy Thursday returned in modified format with a bring-your-own meal followed by foot washing, Holy Communion, and ritual altar stripping. Good Friday brought a traditional 12:00pm service followed by a slide show of the Stations of the Cross. The Easter Vigil was held using the liturgy from the Book of Common Prayer, and Easter Sunday was held with one service at 10:30. We celebrated Pentecost Sunday as is our normal practice, inviting parishioners to share their gift of language during the Eucharistic Prayer.

On the Feast of All Saints', we read the necrology of all who had died during the year and of those names submitted by parishioners. We also baptized one adult. For Christmas Eve, we offered a 4:00 Family Service with a children's pageant and a 7:00 Primary Service with a full choir. Because Christmas Day fell on a Sunday, we held one service at 10:30, our regular worship time. 1st Sunday of Christmas, January 1 (2023), we had a Lessons & Carols service at both the 8:00 and 10:30 services.

For the Season of Advent, we replaced the Revised Common Lectionary with A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church. The lessons chosen were from a woman's perspective,

highlighting the stories of Mary and various women from the Hebrew Scripture such as Hannah, Sarah, and Hagar. Of note, St. James' was profiled in an article in the Episcopal News Service for our use of this new worship resource.

We continue to rebuild many of our ministry teams. In 2022, we welcomed back our acolytes (see Jan Scrutton's report). With Ingrid Jacobson's departure in September, Brian Cochran stepped in to her Eucharistic Minister spot for the 8:00 service. At the 10:30 service, we've moved to one Eucharistic Minister for most Sundays due to past Ems moving. We lost one 10:30 lector due to relocation, and welcomed Jasmine Reynolds as a new lector.

In 2022, we held 10 memorial/funeral services. We celebrated the lives of Melvin Johnson, Jason Kinser, Joan Kimber, Bob Bell, Dwarka Sankar (a one-year anniversary service), Kem David, Ann Jamison (committal only), Jim Cunningham, Robert Yother (committal only), and Elizabeth Tanner.

On November 29, we held our eighth 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.

Staff, Administration and Finance

Our staff remained the same as the prior year. We continued to employ Jan Scrutton (Children and Youth 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.

Our Intern, Ingrid Jacobson, served with us until September, rounding out a full year of ministry. Ingrid was instrumental in our worship and adult education, preaching, leading bible studies and fellowship hours, and attending vestry meetings.

Our children's program remains strong. We've welcomed a handful of new children. Our youth group is also doing well. 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.

Though our Assisting Priest, Bill Hale, became disabled in July, he continued to assist with weekly zoom gatherings – a Home Alone group, the Wednesday Ante-Communion service, daily Morning Prayer, a grief group, and an inquirer's hour. Bill returned to in-person worship in December. Please see Bill's report for further details.

Our Music Director, Jennifer Ravera, continues to offer quality music and has regathered the choir, including the recruitment of new members. Please see Jennifer's report for further details.

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. In order to accommodate financial functions made vacant by the relocation of longtime parishioner Janet Fischer, Ron took over the bank reconciliations and financial report generation. Parishioner Marilyn Rose stepped in to cover our Accounts Payables. Jan Brandt continues to cover our Account Receivables. Bruce Roberts took over Treasurer duties from Lynn Locher.

The vestry continues to be responsible for the stewardship campaign for the parish. This year, the campaign consisted of a vestry sermon and encouragement for all members to pledge through a direct mailing and verbal announcements. Because of the generosity of our members, we anticipate ending 2022 in the black. A look at our potential 2023 pledges show a slowing down in giving with our income struggling to rise to the 2022 level. We are hopeful that we will be able to pass a 2023 budget with a minimal deficit.

The students from the School for the Blind continue to assist us in setting up our Sunday worship materials.

The Regathering Task Force met throughout the year in order to respond to County and Diocesan regathering guidelines and suggestions. The team is made up of Jan & Mike Scrutton, Jennifer Ravera, Sylvia Ma, Jim McConnell, and me

Welcoming and Integrating New People, Outreach

In 2022, we have been blessed to welcome approximately 24 new people, many of whom have become members. In January, 2023, we will reinstate the Annual Epiphany Party for people new to the church.

We continue to support schooling for Hope and Miriam, two children in Kenya. This effort is through the organization Maisha Bora. Hope and Miriam graduated the Kenyan equivalent of High School this year and have entered University.

We continue to reach out to the community with our blessing bags (bags containing toiletries, food, socks) for those living on the street. We donated money towards the Corazon Build Program, assisting in the building of a house in Mexico. We collected school supplies for underserved children and raised funds for an African American Choir in Oakland.

Wider Church Involvement and Personal Formation

I continue to serve on the Commission on Ministry. I was fortunate to attend the Leading Women's Conference in Virginia in November. I was also blessed to be able to take a four-month sabbatical per my Letter of Agreement from February through May. I and the parish owe a big thank you to Rev. Bill Hale for covering in my absence.

Assisting Priest Report – The Rev. William C. (Bill) Hale

Worship and Liturgy

St. James' is a large enough parish to require an additional priest to assist our rector with the liturgical, pastoral, educational, and other demands which such an active and vital community would expect. To that end, in my own limited capacity, I gladly serve to provide additional help and support to our parish, as I have for the past 3 years.

Sabbatical Coverage

Since Rev. Lori had planned a 4-month sabbatical during 2022, I had offered to cover for pastoral and liturgical needs during her time away. From February through the eve of Pentecost, including Ash Wednesday, Lent, Holy Week, Easter Vigil and Easter Day, I served as celebrant and primary preacher, in addition to the normal online activities listed below. During her sabbatical, I officiated at 4 funerals and memorial services and provided the usual attention to

pastor care needs as they arose. Unfortunately, a series of health issues and the period of recovery forced me to be absent from Sunday services for over 5 months right after Rev. Lori returned from her sabbatical.

Recurring Programs: Home Alone, Grief Group, Wednesday Ante-Communion, Focus on Faith, Morning Prayer

Continuing our online presence using Zoom as we had in the past 2 years, I continued to offer a number of recurring programs to our parish members. These include the regular weekday Morning Prayer services (total 2022 attendance = 746), the Wednesday Ante-Communion service (total 2022 attendance = 387), and leading weekly groups such as Home Alone, Grief Support, and Focus on Faith (held Saturday mornings) for adult formation. Zoom has also allowed me to interact with parishioners face-to-face in other pastoral situations.

Advent Series

In addition, I lead a 4-week Advent (Zoom) series exploring the “Year W” lectionary St. James’ used throughout Advent.

Children & Youth Minister’s Report – Jan Scrutton

2022 was a year of returning to, almost, normal but hopefully carrying with us some of the positive things we gained from our experiences since spring 2020. The weather allowed us to spend much of our time in children and youth programs until October outside enjoying the opportunity to do in person programs together.

I started my year attending the Forma (Episcopal Educators) conference virtually. We made the best of online programming and even managed our DioCal gathering via zoom as well. The conference, “The Church for Today and Tomorrow”, featured speakers who encouraged us to reflect on things we had learnt recently while looking forward to regathering and rebuilding in person community. I was fortunate to have my conference ticket funded by the diocese.

In March 38 people (34 from St. James’) took advantage of a local in person Safe Church training led by Caren Miles. This important training can be done on line but should be completed regularly by everyone serving in some capacity in church, especially with children or elders. We were grateful to St. Anne’s who provided a location for this training when an event next door made the vicinity of St. James’ a little crowded!

With Rev. Lori on sabbatical in the spring I was pleased to work with the other staff, and our intern Ingrid Jacobson, to keep the rhythms of the parish running smoothly. Having a complete team and active Vestry during this time, along with the preparation that was done by Rev. Lori before she went, meant the time ran smoothly and we were ready to welcome her back on her return.

In addition to Sunday school, youth group, summer camp and relaunching the acolyte program (reports below) I have been responsible for helping coordinate the Abode Vigil, the school supplies drive and our Advent Evening (mentioned elsewhere in this report). I have also continued to serve on our Regathering Team, helping to provide continuity as we move through the changing restrictions and concerns of covid time. I’ve also taken a more regular slot in our preaching schedule (4 times this year, plus a homily for the Advent Evening). I enjoy taking a

supportive role with Altar Guild, which included this year helping to empty, sort and reset the altar covers and linens in the sacristy cupboard and repairing some of our older hangings.

As 2022 comes to an end I am midway through relocating my desk to the youth space which will now double as a small group meeting space, prep space and office while the larger Sunday School room will be shared by EYF and Sunday School. Certainly for the foreseeable future having space to spread out in meetings is preferable and the Sunday School room lends itself nicely to creating different areas for each group while maintaining the larger space.

I want to thank everyone who has contributed, either in leadership or through prayer or financial support to our work this year. The work of making St. James' welcoming to families, children and young people is the work of the whole church and I am fortunate to work somewhere where so many people take that to heart.

Sunday School takes place weekly (during the school year) during the 10:30am service and we have children from 3 years old to 7th grade attending. We draw from a regular pool of a dozen attendees but regularly have 6-8 children in a week. Our teachers are Jan Scrutton, Esther & Peter Maina. We have been using curriculum from Illustrated Ministry which provides a choice of lectionary-based programs so the learning in Sunday School mirrors the lessons heard in church each week.

In addition to weekly Sunday School and special Sunday activities – like the Easter egg hunt (with wooden eggs this year, a move to a more environmentally friendly program) - Sunday School also held a camp-out in September on campus. Early rain meant three tents were pitched inside the Parish Hall and one on the patio (under the canopy) but good fun was had by all – dinner cooked over hot coals and a yummy breakfast (thanks to Samir Kalitta), games, campfire and stories all made for a great opportunity for the group to get to know each other and have fun.

Episcopal Youth Fremont is a youth group, based at St. James', that welcomes young people (6th grade and up) and from St. James' and St. Annes for monthly meetings and activities and is led by Jan & Mike Scrutton and Jill Buono. The group had returned to meeting in person at the end of 2021 although gathered outside. During 2022 we continued this practice until the weather turned cooler and we now meet in the (larger) Sunday School room. Work is in progress to make this room multipurpose and provide a 'youth friendly' area within the bigger room.

The group includes a regular core of 11 students with an average attendance each month of 6. In October we took a day trip to Monterey with 4 of our young people. This day included a trip to the aquarium, pizza and a short service on the beach. EYF members also helped out at Summer Camp, the Advent Evening and with the Christmas pageant this year.

Summer Day Camp gives us an opportunity each year to invite children, from our parish and the wider community to hear Bible stories, sing, play and do crafts together. In opening up our campus we want the children and their families to know that St. James' is a place that welcomes and cares for them.

After a two-year hiatus due to covid, summer day camp returned this year with our 10th **TOGETHER at St James'**. Tie dye t-shirts and multicolored decorations blended the previous nine years of color themes. Twenty students, 6 youth volunteers and 20 adult volunteers joined us of the week and campus was a hive of activity all week.

Jennifer had a slide show to accompany the music program while Tom and Jill had piles of cardboard boxes to add interest to the games. Bev taught the kids sign language as part of the daily teaching and Lauren and Bob provided daily snacks.

Many of the kids return to camp each summer, as do volunteers, and we'd welcome new faces if you'd like to join us next year – **You are Invited** will happen during the week of **24-28th July 2023**

Acolytes serve at the 10:30am service by processing with the cross and the Gospel and assisting the priest in setting the table. Our team welcomes members in 2nd grade and above. This year our acolyte team reformed with a training session with Rev. Lori and Tom in August. Gianna, Caiden, Ian, & Bethany returned to serving and have been joined by Gavin, Ollie, William, Danika & Eva. Serving as an acolyte gives young people the chance to participate in creating worship and to be 'up close' to see what happens during a service. We hope it gives them a sense of connection, responsibility, and greater sense of understanding.

Music Ministry – Jennifer Carini, Music Director

I celebrated my eleventh 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!

Music is provided at the 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Sunday services.

At the 8:00 a.m. service, the congregation sings three hymns, a sequence, and the doxology each week. There is instrumental music provided during the offertory and Taize music at communion.

We are excited to have our Adult Choir meeting again! We started singing again on All Saints' Sunday.

The 10:30 a.m. service has many hymns and songs for the congregation and choir. The Adult Choir meets to rehearse on Wednesdays from 7:00 to 8:00 pm. We sing at the 10:30 Eucharist on Sunday mornings, rehearsing prior to the service at 10:00am. The choir is open to all parishioners. There are nine current choir members: Reena Davis, Greg Miller, Jasmine Reynolds, Bruce Roberts, Don Rose, Ken Trant, Barbara Vacchieri, Bethany Vacchieri, and Elaine Vallecillo-Miller. The choir has a fun time rehearsing and being in community with one another each Wednesday and Sunday!

Come join us! For Easter and Christmas Eve, members of the congregation are invited to join the choir. We have also been blessed to have professional instrumentalists and vocalists join us on Easter Sunday and Christmas Eve.

We had a successful fundraising event supporting the Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir during Lent, by donating funds when we sang Negro Spirituals during our services. With the Vestry matching funds, we are able to donate almost \$2000 to the Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir's scholarship fund. Thank you to the generous parishioners at St. James'!

I was blessed to be a part of Summer Camp at St. James' again this year. It was fun teaching the children songs about God, bible stories, and love. The kids enjoyed the singing, and I hope that they will remember the fun they had singing for years to come.

The St. James' music program is an integral part of worship on Sundays and other services. All are welcome to be a part of it! Please see me or email me at music@saintj.com and we can figure out the best way for you to be involved.

Treasurer & Wardens' Reports

Treasurer's Report – Bruce Roberts

2022 has been a struggle from the standpoint getting donations in to equal the pledges made to support the Operating Fund.

Thanks to all who have managed to complete their pledge!

The vestry and each of the people or groups responsible for spending the Operating Fund's monies have managed to hold expenses down about 3%, even with increased utilities expenses. At the end of the year, although pledges fell almost 3% short of our 2022 Budget, Plate and Unpledged monies brought our income to nearly 4% above budgeted income.

For 2022, the vestry passed a \$13K negative budget, meaning that we expected to wind up with more expenses than income. Because expenses were held down, and income managed to end up above expectations, St. James' had slight surplus income of nearly \$12K for 2022.

2023 appears to be more challenging. Even though we have been as restrained as possible with expenses, pledges have materialized lower than expected. We expect a \$34K deficit budget, meaning that we expect our expenses for 2023 will exceed our expected income. St. James' does have reserve funds from the Future Staff, Covid relief, and other accounts to make up the difference if needed.

Senior Warden's Report – Jim McConnell

I am honored to be your Senior Warden in 2022. Thank you for the opportunity to serve St. James'.

As I began my tenure as your Sr. Warden, our beloved Rev. Lori embarked on a 4-month sabbatical, I am so grateful for the support of the vestry and the entire congregation during her absence, thank you. I am very fortunate to be able to work with a group of very talented and enthusiastic members of the vestry and staff to tackle a variety of issues.

For outreach, we approved donations to Abode Services to end homelessness; Ukrainian Relief, support for Deaf Children in Ukraine (thanks to Bev Mosier and the deaf ministries), and to Maisha Bora, which is the funding two young women in Kenya, Hope and Miriam, in their college educations. I am grateful that parishioners of St. James' are very generous in donating time and money to specific programs in our communities.

All vestry members did a wonderful job writing articles for the Window under the theme of “Expressions of Love at St. James”. In the summer of 2022, we were finally able to lift Covid mask requirements for indoor gatherings. Some of us helped in the Congregation Appreciation Day; some helped in the in-person St. James’ Day Special Coffee Hour. I am grateful for Bruce Roberts for being our Treasurer. Thank you to Marilyn Rose for agreeing to be our accounts payables clerk. I am elated that Meg Amouroux will be our next Senior Warden. I am confident that 2023 will be a year full of hope and light for St. James’.

Junior Warden’s Report – Meg Amouroux

The Junior Warden is a member of the vestry, elected to the position each year by the other current vestry members. The position has some set tasks throughout the year, as well as having some unique duties each year, based on the needs of the vestry and the parish. The Jr. Warden is part of the lead team (comprised of Rev. Lori, the Sr. Warden, Jr. Warden, and Treasurer). We meet each month to discuss topics of note and interest and help set the agenda for the upcoming vestry meeting. We are encouraged to bring forward messages from parishioners, as well as any topics we feel need to be addressed.

Early in 2022, I worked with Jim McConnell, our 2022 Sr. Warden, to oversee the running of the vestry and to provide leadership to the parish during Rev. Lori’s sabbatical in the spring. I am grateful to Jim for his steadiness and availability during those months, and I am also grateful to Rev. Lori for her confidence that we could do the work in her absence. During that time, and after, I became even more appreciative of the work it takes to manage all that makes St. James’ run, even in collaboration with others. Thank you to Rev. Bill Hale, Jennifer Ravera, Jan Scrutton, Ron Cook, and our former intern Ingrid Jacobson for their support during that time.

Throughout the year, there are some tasks I was assigned to handle:

- Monitor check reimbursement requests, and assist with signing and mailing checks each week.
- After each month’s vestry meeting, it was my responsibility to recap the meeting and provide an article to the Window newsletter. It was my honor to provide this information and transparency to the parish. And based on conversations which often happened after the articles were published, I’m happy to know the articles are being read and appreciated. I grew to appreciate people coming up to me with a marked-up printout of the article, because it was always positive feedback.
- In the rare absence of both the rector and the Sr. Warden, the Jr. Warden may be asked to chair the monthly vestry meeting, and this was the case for me once this past year. Thank you to the vestry and vestry secretary Elizabeth Hart, for their patience and support as I did the best I could to keep the ship on course!

This was the second year of my vestry term. One of my favorite parts of being a veteran vestry member is welcoming new vestry members to the crew. I love seeing how we are able to teach and guide them along the way, taking the mystery out of it, seeing them grow with confidence and knowledge and energy.

One thing that is very important to me is to be a good example to others. I have tried this past year to remain accessible and agreeable, and to share the load—never thinking I had to do anything without help. By working with the vestry, and with so many in the parish, you all teach

me the power of collaboration, growing our faith, and what it means to be in a community. We really can do so much more together than we can do on our own. I encourage anyone who's asked to join, or is considering joining, the vestry, to please do so! It's a terrific way to help, and you get to build and grow friendships at the same time.

I have been honored to serve this past year as Junior Warden. It's incredibly rewarding to work on behalf of my friends and neighbors, helping to make St. James' a place where all can grow and serve others in Christ. I'm grateful for the guidance and direction from Rev. Lori., and the support and teamwork from Jim as our Sr. Warden and my fellow vestry members: Bob Bynum, Nancy Castaneda, Samir Kalitta, Mary Frances Leopold, Peter Maina, Greg Miller, Sally Morgan, Bev Mosier, and Vivienne Paratore.

Committee Reports

The following Committees, Ministries, and Events did not take place in 2022 due to COVID-19 restrictions (or were unable to submit a report):

- Available For Lunch
- Cub Scout Pack
- Healing Ministry
- Hillside Senior Care Center
- Library & Archives
- Reception Committee
- Senior Lunch
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
- St. James' Cares

Abode Dinners – Lynn Locher

This year, the St James' team was able to provide dinners on the 3rd Saturday of the even months. The facility, Sunrise Village, is only housing 20 adults and just a few families, so we provided fewer meals than usual. 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 2023. Our team members are Jill Buono, Marlene Benedict, Charisma Pangilinan, Jasmine Reynolds, Bruce Roberts, Byron Bader, Vivienne Paratore, Ralph and Lynn Locher. Anyone interested in serving in this ministry can contact Lynn Locher at 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. We had one meeting during 2022 just to get an update. The meetings have been postponed during the pandemic and will restart once the Covid-19 outbreaks subside. Abode Services qualifies the candidates, some of whom come through their shelter at Sunrise Village and others through the various support agencies that Abode offers in mainly the counties of Alameda and Santa Clara. During 2022, Abode Rapid ReHousing placed 15 families and individuals. St. James' assisted with 2 of them.

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 and reach out to me via email: dgfeeney@comcast.net or call 510-506-2303.

Advent Evening Celebration – Jan Scrutton

Celebrating the start of Advent with an evening service, activity and meal has been a long-held tradition at St. James'. While the early tradition was for a Las Posadas celebration, we have broadened our approach to prepare for Christmas and mark Advent together in a number of different ways over the last few years. This year we thought about who was invited to be part of the Christmas story and how (Mary and Joseph by the Angel Gabriel, the shepherds by the heavenly host...). As part of our covid time home deliveries we had supplied each household with a simple Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus to display and during our Advent Evening we had chance to make the angels and shepherds to add to our home nativity scenes. We finished our evening with hot dogs, chili and soup in the Parish Hall. Thirty-one people joined the evening celebration.

Altar Guild – Katie Cunningham

The purpose of the Altar Guild is to prepare the sanctuaries of both churches for Sunday worship and other liturgical services. Altar Guild cleans up after the church services are over. This group cares for the altar, vestments, vessels and linens of the parish. They also supervise the purchasing and decorating of the churches with fresh flowers each week.

Altar Guild is currently made up of volunteers, who work in four teams. Each team serves one weekend a month. In addition, each team will serve one additional 5th Sunday a year. The Altar Guild had one new volunteer member this year, who unfortunately moved out of the area.

St. James' is 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 consecrated wine. The Little Church has an electric Sanctus Candle over the Ambry that houses the consecrated wafers.

Sanctus Candles and fresh Altar Flowers are gifted to the church through donations made by our church community. These donations are acknowledged during Sunday announcements by the clergy.

Thank you, 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, Nancy Castaneda, for the beautiful Red Burse, Veil and Altar Frontal that is being used in the Big Church. These were given in memory of Nancy’s mother, Dorothy Balderston, who served many years on St. James’ Altar Guild.

St. James’ Altar Guild is always looking for new members to join our ministry. 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.

American Sign Language Service: St. James’ ASL (Deaf Ministry) – Bev Mosier

St. James’ ASL offers a Zoom service conducted in American Sign Language (ASL) without English interpretation every Sunday 11:00am – 12:30pm. A social time, like a virtual coffee hour, precedes the service at 10:30. Participants are both local and out of the area, i.e., from several areas in California and five other states.

The service is Deaf-centered. Prayers, scripture passages, and songs/poetry are all translated into ASL ahead of time by a translation team whose goal is to make all parts of the service fully accessible to Deaf participants. Then, one member’s reflections on the readings are followed by discussion and a time to pray and support each other before dismissal.

This year, in August, we had our first retreat with 12 of us in attendance. The worship, teaching, and activities were all fabulous, but best of all was the in-person socializing which we hadn’t been able to do for two years during COVID. Rev. Lori joined the retreat that Saturday morning for communion and a discussion – another highlight! We had such a good time, we decided to have retreats annually from now on,

St. James’ ASL is run by a committee: Celia May Baldwin, Ruth Lummer, Bev Mosier, Ella Lentz, Judy Gough and Julie Reis.

Bishop’s Search Committee – Mike Scrutton

On July 22nd 2022, Bishop Marc Handley Andrus announced his retirement to the people of the Diocese of California. The process to elect a new bishop is the responsibility of the Diocese of California’s Standing Committee, which will culminate in an election on December 2, 2023 at a special convention of clergy and representatives of all churches in the diocese. To drive the

process, the Standing Committee named a Search and Transition Committee of 19 members, including St. James' Mike Scrutton. The 9th Bishop of California will be consecrated on May 4, 2024. The search process has a dedicated website which you can find at <https://diocalbishopsearch.org>.

There are several opportunities for members of St. James' to engage in the process. Listening sessions to receive input which be incorporated in our Diocesan Profile were held in November and December 2022, with several members of St. James' attending and speaking including the Rector, Lead Team members and staff, and parishioners. Once the final slate of nominees is announced in October 2023, there will be opportunities to meet the candidates at 'meet and greets' to be held across the diocese in November. Additional meetings will likely be held at St. James' to discuss the slate. Finally, delegates chosen at our Annual Meeting on January 22, 2023 will attend the Election Convention and cast votes for the candidates.

Most importantly, we invite your prayers and offer the following Prayer for Transition:

Almighty God, giver of every good gift, by your grace you have called us into one fellowship of faith: Look graciously on the people of the Diocese of California during this time of transition. May we be guided in heart and mind by your Holy Spirit to seek and welcome a faithful pastor who will care for your people and equip us to perform the work of the Church. Grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what you would have us do. Save us from all false choices, that in your light we may see light, and on your path may not stumble; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Blessing Bags – Mary Frances Leopold

The Blessings Bags Ministry is a long-standing service that provides essential hygiene and food items in a branded bag that parishioners can distribute to unhoused members of the local community. Bags are available at the back of the large church and outside the office in the parish hall. Approximately 90 bags have been packed and distributed this year.

Goals for 2023: discuss increasing the calorie count for the standard bag items and increase the number of bags distributed.

Parishioners wishing to contribute money to this ministry can donate to the Rector's Discretionary Fund.

If you are interested in helping with this worthy endeavor, please contact Marcus Pun at scrod2000@yahoo.com or 510-384-8085.

Communications – Mike Scrutton

There are multiple ways you can stay in touch with St. James':

1. We send two **weekly email newsletters** via our provider MailChimp. These emails let everyone know about upcoming services, events and parish-wide notices. The Thursday email is comprehensive and covers all activities at St. James' while the Saturday evening email focuses on what you need to know about worship on Sunday morning. Do check for the weekly emails – they enable you to keep in touch with goings on at St. James'

whether you're in church on Sunday or not, and they help keep announcements short! If you don't receive the weekly emails, complete the form at <https://saintj.com/wp/weekly-e-mail-archive/weekly-updates/> or contact our Office Administrator at admin@saintj.com.

2. parish@saintj.com is an **email list** for general information and prayer requests. Anyone can send an email to the list, simply by sending your email to parish@saintj.com. The list is moderated, which means each post is checked so that we don't get spam messages. To be added to this list, please contact admin@saintj.com or mikescrutton@saintj.com.
3. Our **website** saintj.com is the primary online destination for all information about St. James', whether you're a newcomer or long-time member. We also maintain a presence across the internet, including [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#) (our social media channels), [Twitter](#) (for links to our email newsletters), [YouTube](#) (for service live-streams and recordings), and our weekly sermons can be found wherever Podcasts are found, including [Apple Podcasts](#), [Google Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#) and [TuneIn](#) or ask your smart-speaker to "Play Sermons St. James' Episcopal Church".
4. Our **monthly newsletter**, The Window, is posted on our website saintj.com. A print copy is available by contacting the church office.
5. Our **parish calendar** is updated on our website, saintj.com. A summary can be seen on our homepage, and a detailed version of all events can be found by clicking the "View Full Calendar" link. The online calendar is also the place you can find links to any events hosted on Zoom.

Counters Report – Jan Brandt

The teams of Counters work to: count, post to Church Windows software, and prepare quarterly statements. This includes donations such as Pledge, Unpledged, Flowers, Endowment and Rector's Discretionary and many more. They may also act as cashier for events such as the Pancake Supper.

Heartfelt Thank You's to the five counters, ALL of whom volunteer on at least two other teams such as Altar Guild, Memorial Garden, Hospitality or Summer Day Camp.

Regardless of your method of payment, if you don't use Pledge Envelopes, PLEASE put your pledge # on your Check, Bank Bill Pay, PayPal or envelope with a donation.

Deanery Report – Jim McConnell

The Southern Alameda County Deanery met three times over the course of the year, with the Rev. Jeff Dodge (of St. Anne's in Fremont) serving as President and parishioner Jim McConnell serving as Vice-President. Our Deanery Reps/Convention delegates for 2022 were Scott Whitaker, Jim McConnell, Ken Trant, Elaine Miller, and Greg Miller. Sally Morgan and Elaine Miller served as alternates.

In June of 2022 we saw the return of the Corazon project, a deanery-sponsored house-build in Mexico. Thank you to all who helped in this effort.

Disaster Preparedness & Response Team for St. James' & St. Anne's – Elaine Vallecillo-Miller

The purpose of the St. James' and St. Anne's Disaster Preparedness & Response Team is to collaboratively plan for educational programs on emergency preparedness to both congregations and our neighbors and community.

2022 has proved to be an interesting for the life of this ministry. We began our efforts to provide educational classes on CPR/ AED. Our first push was to offer one in Springtime; however, with pre-scheduled memorials and other engagements, we needed to cancel them.

Because our present team, comprised of the following parishioners: Josephine Amadi, Jill Buono, Bob Bynum, Greg Miller, and Elaine Vallecillo-Miller, we felt the need to reach out to increase our team. The Rt. Rev. Dr. Marc Andrus, our Bishop, has emphasized during the Executive Council meetings about partnering with local congregations on a similar mission and combine our forces. With this thought, the team, with approval of both rectors -- Rev. Lori Walton (for St. James') and Rev. Jeff Dodge (for St. Anne's), hosted a Zoom meeting to discuss a collaborative team with St. Anne's whereby Terri Minnis, Senior and Stephanie Rouse, Junior Wardens became part of our team in July 2022. Thereafter, St. James' and St. Anne's planned a fall class offering on CPR/AED where 11 people attended from both congregations and others plus two teachers who saw the ad on Patch and Next Door.

In October, Elaine Vallecillo-Miller contacted the Northern Red Cross office inquiring about establishing a deeper relationship since St. James' is a Red Cross-managed small incident shelter. The entire team in addition to Jim McConnell (St. James' Senior Warden), and Meg Amouroux, (St. James' Junior Warden), viewed the Red Cross presentation by Cindy Leung, the Red Cross Disaster Services' Community Partnership contact.

The St. James'/St. Anne's Disaster Preparedness & Response Team will continue discussions with Red Cross in terms of training for our parishioners and an outreach effort to the Tri-City area.

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, 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 can be made annually and reflect the growth of the fund. The Principal Value is \$246,726 and the Market Value is \$276,719. This reflects a market decrease of \$37,060 for the year which is approximately 12%. The Board has not made any distributions to the three funds (Vestry, LC, MG) this year.

Executive Council Report – Elaine Vallecillo-Miller

As the sole representative for the South Alameda Deanery on the Executive Council (“EC”), I participated in the Budget and Finance Committee reviewing the 2023 budget, submitted by the Standing Committee (“SC”). We made recommendations before presenting the final version and approval before both the EC and SC and then to convention attendees.

I also represented our deanery on the Nomination Committee whereby we were tasked to seek EC nominees for the 2023 term as well as filling the second South Alameda Deanery representative position - vacant since the beginning of 2022. Unfortunately, our deanery still needs a second EC representative after a great deal of concerted effort by Rev. Jon Owens and me.

For 2022, the Executive Council accomplished in advocating a Human Resources staff person, by deciding to sell St. Cuthbert in Oakland and to seek a suitable partner for the Bluebird Village in Brentwood.

For this year, EC is seeking individuals within our Diocese for the various Committee as result from 2022 convention resolutions.

If anyone has questions or concerns about the Diocese or any aspect, please reach out to Elaine Vallecillo-Miller, your deanery representative who will strive to answer and/or forward to the appropriate Diocesan staff person.

Facilities – Dave Nelsen

Our old buildings and large outdoor area demand a lot of attention, care and maintenance. These are some of this year’s significant activities:

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.

Due to many years of drought, we lost several trees this year. The mayten tree at the back of the little church died and was removed in January. Two of the large redwoods in the park died and were removed in April.

In order to help the other three redwoods in the park survive we tapped into the water main and added an underground water valve allowing us to water these trees more often.

In August a squirrel found its way into the Little Church. Seeking refuge in the organ, it shorted itself across some electronics and died. It took some time to do this forensic work. Services and activities in the Little Church were suspended for a couple weeks, a new component was installed in the organ and after some time and a can of Febreze, services in the chapel were restored. Several holes were discovered in the process and sealed.

We have history of the sewer backing up at the parish hall restrooms. In September and October this occurred again. Charlie Paratore responded quickly each time to clear the issue but it was

determined we needed to clear the line all the way to the street. This was done in late October with a follow up visit in November.

The five furnaces which heat our four buildings have not been serviced for many years. When the parish hall furnace failed to work it was decided we should have them all serviced to ensure they're working correctly. Three of these are over 23 years old. This work was done in December and all function as expected. The parish hall furnace needed a new thermostat and an additional component.

Our grounds need periodic attention all year long. Six organized work parties were held over the year when roofs and gutters were cleared, weeds brought under control, trees and shrubs were trimmed and many yards of wood chips were dispersed over the park to control weed growth and retain moisture. Many people participate in the maintenance of our campus and their time and talent is appreciated very much.

Faith Formation – Rev. Lori Walton

For our Lenten Series, our intern, Ingrid Jacobson, offered a Lenten class that was comprised of readings, reflections, and discussion. This was held on zoom.

Rev. Bill Hale led our Advent series with a study of the Advent Gospels from the Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church. The zoom gatherings were well attended and allowed a space for rich and reflective conversation.

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 2022, we've been working our way through the Gospel of John using the book "A Journey through John". 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. In the fall, we held an in-person book study to read and reflect on Rachel Held Evan's book, "Inspired". The study was faithfully attended by seven people.

Finance Committee – Jan Brandt

The Finance Committee was not asked to meet this year. We did have some ad hoc discussions with the Treasurer and Senior Warden to investigate possible avenues to increase the return on interest bearing accounts, while keeping the church's funds secure.

We thank Janet Fischer for her participation with this committee prior to moving.

Members of the committee are: Jan Brandt (Chair), Lori+, Craig Gentner (Endowment Committee), Mike Scrutton (Pledge Chair), and Bruce Roberts (Treasurer).

Flatlanders – Women’s Retreat – Laura Winter

Ladies Flatlanders is an annual fellowship weekend at the beach for any and all women of St James’. Each year provides an opportunity for relaxation and rejuvenation and a chance to know each other better.

During 2022, we gathered again in September for a wonderful weekend at Pajaro Dunes. Eleven of us traveled down to Monterey Bay to spend four days together in joy and prayer and fellowship. We were delighted to have three new members join the group this weekend, and all had a good time. One person returned after her first trip last year, and there were a bunch who participate every year. Every year offers up the opportunity to deepen our friendships, and to form new relationships. This year’s participants were Nancy Castaneda, Mary Casas, Laura Winter, Linda Nelsen, Patty Lacy, Mary Frances Leopold, Cathy Knotts, Letty Rodarte, Karen Koonze, Linda Kinnaird, Lin Zuidema.

As we looked out from the balcony onto the water and beach, or while walking in the sand, we shared our time and our stories with each other. As we talked, we spent time collecting shells on the beach, played plenty of cards and dominoes, and assembled a jigsaw puzzle. Everyone pitched in to cook the delicious food and clean up afterward. Friday evening after watching the sun go down from our balcony we built a bonfire in the fire pit on the beach. We roasted marshmallows to build s’mores as we heard the waters roll in and out along the shore. We also stepped back to look up at the stars, and spotted the Milky Way as it spread across the night sky.

Saturday night we were blessed to hear the sound of rain on the roof. Sunday morning we gave thanks for that rain and for the presence of God we experienced in the natural setting and in each others’ words and stories during our service of Morning Prayer. After breakfast and cleanup, we headed home, assured we will gather again September 14-17, 2023.

As always, any women who would like to join in are welcome. If you have any questions or want to learn more, talk with anyone who attended this year or in the past.

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. The greeter represents St. James’ and serves 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. Thank you Jan Pearson, Gregg Feeney, Craig Gentner and Dave Nelsen for your welcoming presence.

Hospitality / 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. Additional tasks which were added to our responsibilities since regathering have been relaxed a bit. Guests are able to self-serve drinks and food and congregate in the parish hall again. Tables and chairs are still being set up in the courtyard, allowing us to

maintain a comfortable social distance. It is an honor to serve our friends and guests in this way and it's 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. We welcomed several new members to our team this year as well: Becky Grant, John Wagas and Peter Maina.

We can always use more help. If interested in being involved in our ministry, speak with any member listed above.

Hunger and Homelessness Vigil with Abode Services & Tri City Interfaith Council – Jan Scrutton

The ninth annual hunger and homelessness vigil with Abode Services was attended by approximately 60 people and also covered by local print and TV media – Rev. Lori appeared on a KTVU news item that evening and pictures were featured in the East Bay Times.

Prayers were offered by members of the Tri City Interfaith Council representing different faith groups in our community; Joy Barnitz, President of Tri-City Interfaith Council, The Rev. Barbara Meyers, Mission Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Shamsa Rafay, Muslim Community, Rakhi Israni, Hindu Community, The Rev. Jeff Spencer, Niles Discovery Church, Rabbi Zoe McCoon, Temple Beth Torah, Abbot Chao Khun Prasert, Wat Buddhansorn.

The names of 97 people who had died while unhoused or because of having lived unhoused were read by staff and members of the Abode Board, and Jennifer Ravera sang while the candles were lit. It is our understanding that the number of deaths (being the highest we have seen for the vigil) is a recognition of the increased reach and awareness of Abode Services, not a peak in the number of deaths.

IT Report – Mike Scrutton

St. James' Information Technology (IT) provides the necessary on-campus infrastructure to enable staff to conduct the electronic work of the parish. While no significant equipment purchases were made in 2022, software licenses were kept up to date for Office applications and Zoom. During the year, Mike Scrutton and Greg Miller installed a new larger screen in the Education Room, improving the experience when hosting Zoom meetings for on-campus and remote attendees.

Lay Eucharistic Visitors – Rev. Lori Walton

Our Lay Eucharistic Visitor program began again in the fall of 2022. Lynn Locher, Marilyn Rose, and Elaine Miller returned as LEVs. In order to manage the pastoral load of homebound parishioners, I recruited and trained four new Eucharistic Visitors: Missy Bontempo, George Siegmann, Vivienne Paratore, and Meg Amouroux.

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.

Lectors serving at the 8:00 a.m. Communion Service during 2022 were Bob Doherty, Sunita Joseph, Brian Cochran, Patty Lacy, Mary Frances Leopold, John Amouroux, Marcus Pun, Tom Blalock and Laura Winter. Brian Cochran replaced Sunita Joseph.

Lectors serving at the 10:30 a.m. Communion Service were Amy Davis, Keith Westra, Bruce Roberts, Peter Maina, Jim McConnell, Kaitlyn Evans-Bodenrader, Jasmine and Brigitte Reynolds, Samir Kalitta, Ken Trant, and Mike Scrutton. Jasmine and Brigitte Reynolds replaced Kaitlyn Evans-Bodenrader when she moved away. In order to provide training for Jasmine and Brigitte, George Siegmann prepared Lector Instructions and conducted a training session for Jasmine, Brigitte and other Lectors who chose to attend. The Lectors read their lessons from the bulletin and approach the lectern via the middle aisle at the 10:30 Communion Service so they will be seen on the live stream.

At the 8:00 a.m. Communion Service, LEMs lead the procession to the altar by carrying the Cross, lighting the candles, reading the Prayers of the People and assisting the Celebrant. When Communion Wine was offered by intinction starting November 6, the LEM also held the chalice of wine during Communion for the Priest to dip the host into to serve Communion to the congregation. LEMs serving at the 8:00 a.m. service during 2022 were Vivienne Paratore, Meg Amouroux, Ingrid Jacobson, Brian Cochran and Laura Winter. Brian Cochran replaced our intern Ingrid Jacobson when she left for her next assignment.

Until the Acolytes returned at the beginning of October, LEMs serving at the 10:30 a.m. Communion Service performed the same duties as those at the 8:00 service. When the Acolytes returned, the LEMs lit the candles and read the Prayers of the People. Beginning November 6, the LEM also held the chalice of wine during Communion for the Priest to dip the host into to serve Communion to the congregation.

LEMs serving at the 10:30 a.m. service were Lynn Locher, Ingrid Jacobson, Janet Fischer, Bekka Murray, John Wagas, Marilyn Rose, Greg Miller and George Siegmann. Bekka Murray, Janet Fisher and Ingrid Jacobson left St. James'. Most 10:30 Communion Services now have one LEM.

For the Easter Vigil Communion Service, it was very difficult to find the five Lectors required for the readings. Mike Scrutton volunteered to read. George Siegmann and Greg Miller served as both LEMs and Lectors. And special thanks go to our St. James' Administrator, Ron Cook, and Rev. Bill Hale's wife, Arlene, who read the other two readings.

2022 continued to be a difficult year. We appreciate that 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), Jim Cunningham (emeritus), Patty Lacy, Jim McConnell, Mary Casas, Tom Blalock, Jan Brandt, Bobbie Tomkinson, Laura Winter, Bruce Roberts, Dave Nelsen, Mary Frances Leopold, and Marcus Pun.

We are happy to report that in 2022, with the leadership of Dave Nelsen and with the help of Ron Larson, Peter Maina and Gerald Wanjiru, clearance has been established around the base of the Little Church building from siding to ground to prevent water damage to the sidings. With the approval of the Vestry, we contracted All Purpose Painting and Restoration (Newark) who painted the exterior and repaired window trims of the Little Church.

The fundings of the Little Church repair projects is from the Schader Trust Fund, from the generous donations from parishioners and from the interest disbursements from the Little Church Endowment Fund.

We are very grateful for all the support we received in 2022 and looking forward to your continuing support in 2023.

Liturgical Design – Elaine Vallecillo-Miller

The team resurrected the plain Big Church sanctuary with colorful array of sheers for Easter after two years of covid. When the autumn, Advent, and Christmas seasons arrived, the team and volunteers assisted with decorating.

The small team grew by having John Wagas. For the year of 2023, it will collaborate with Jan Scrutton for the Green season - the longest, most-needed liturgical decor. If anyone has ideas how to make our sanctuary a more holy and sacred space, please talk to Greg or Elaine Miller via email at themillerhome@yahoo.com, or Rev. Lori.

Live Streaming / Online Presence Worship – Mike Scrutton

The purpose of our live-streaming ministry is to enable those not physically present to see and join in with our worship. We share video from our Big Church sanctuary for those who are unable to be with us in-person due to health or physical distance and enable those seeking a church home to experience worship from St. James', with the ability to discover our style of worship, music and preaching.

Like many Episcopal Churches throughout the diocese and country, live streaming from St. James' is here to stay. We recognize the value it brings to our community, and we hear stories of how those looking for a church home are glad to be able to visit with us virtually before coming in-person. In the summer, we ran a survey of our viewers to get insights and feedback on our stream. Subsequently, we made tweaks to the colors of our slides to make them more comfortable for viewing online while visible in our sanctuary. St. James' is apparently quite rare

in providing words alongside our video feed, and our online worshipers appreciate the ability to join-in. Mike creates the templates for the PowerPoints for the season to match the bulletin, our office administrator Ron Cook adds the weekly Hymns and Psalm, and Elizabeth Hart advances the slides during the service. We also provide Closed Captions so that online worshipers can follow the sermon (simply press the CC button on the screen to turn them on or off).

For Palm Sunday and the Feast of Francis we added an outdoor camera to enable us to include outdoor worship in our service livestream. We also used an extra camera to extend our coverage of the choir and musicians for the Christmas Eve service.

Our regular livestream duties are shared by Mike Scrutton, John Amouroux and Greg Miller, with Jan Scrutton and Meg Amouroux assisting on occasion.

In addition to our regular services, we provided live streams for five memorial services during 2022. We also streamed the Annual Meeting and the Interfaith Candlelit Vigil with Abode Service (the latter held outside, requiring our out-door capabilities).

Our YouTube channel has 139 subscribers on December 29th 2022. In 2022, streams were watched live an average of 12 times. Sunday services were streamed on average 18 times on the first day (including those watching live), and 26 times in the first week. Our Easter Sunday service was streamed 38 times in the first week. Our Christmas Eve Family service was streamed 13 times, and our traditional Christmas Eve Holy Communion was streamed 15 times. Our Christmas Day Service was our most streamed of the year, streamed 48 times (as of December 28th). It is difficult to estimate an accurate number of viewers – one stream can be watched by an individual or a family worshipping together. Many churches use a multiplier of 1.5 to 1.7.

Our website and YouTube channel features an introductory “Welcome to St. James” video, which was watched 134 times in 2022.

McCutcheon Concert Fundraiser – Sylvia Ma

Our annual John McCutcheon Concert is a community outreach and fundraiser event for St. James’. John McCutcheon is a world renowned, Grammy nominated folk singer, storyteller, and song writer who also entertains us by playing multiple musical instruments.

In 2022, due to the COVID pandemic, our concert was rescheduled from January to June 13. Even with the pandemic concerns, the summer holiday time frame and the fifth game of the NBA Finals, we sold 149 adult tickets and 2 child tickets.

About 60% of ticket holders were non-parishioners, including 15 people who bought 19 tickets, who had never been to our concert before. Ticket sales totaled \$4500. The prize drawings, with 22 prizes donated by 15 generous parishioners and previous parishioners, generated a record \$1040. The cookies baked by our parishioners for the snack bar were delicious and brought in an additional \$125.

The total income was \$5839. Our expenses totaled \$5067.40. We netted \$771.60.

The McCutcheon Concert Team asked the Vestry and received approval for a donation of \$1000 to ABODE Services, with the money coming out of Special Interest Fundraisers Clearing account.

This event could not have happened without a lot of help. There were more than 50 people who contributed time, talent, and treasure not only on the night of the concert but in the months preceding the event. We had old-timers who helped every year as well as newer members of our congregation who helped this time.

Our heart-felt thanks to all who supported this event.

In 2023, our concert will be on Monday, January 16. We hope you will again support this fundraiser/outreach event. Please visit our concert web page: <http://www.saintj.com/mccutcheon>.

Men's Trip – Gregg Feeney

For the past 15 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 third week of August, Thursday – Sunday, and we average about 12 guys ranging in age from 21-80+. This year our trip was cancelled due to outbreaks of Covid 19 variants. With the growing fire concerns we moved the trip up to 3rd Thursday– Sunday in June, with the 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' parish-wide email.

Memorial Garden and Columbarium – Ruth Poole

The St. James' Memorial Garden and Columbarium are managed by a committee composed of St. James' parishioners.

Garden Interments And Stone Purchases

1. Four plots were purchased by the following family units in the Memorial Garden in 2022:

- Jim and Katie Cunningham
- Mel and Alice Johnson
- Nadine and Robert Yother

- Byron Bader
2. Four people were interred in the Garden in 2022:
 - Mel Johnson
 - Jim Cunningham
 - Ann Jamison
 - Robert Yother
 3. No “In Memory Only” stones were purchased in 2022.

Columbarium

All columbarium niches have been sold.

1. There were no interments in the Columbarium this year.
2. Ashes for Miles Archer and Yvonne Archer still pending (in family possession).

2022 Memorial Garden Activity

1. No “in person meetings” were held in 2022. We will hopefully resume meetings in 2023.
2. The garden is maintained on an “as needed basis”.
 - The Hawaiian tree fern in the center of the garden was replaced with an Australian tree fern.
 - Many thanks to Bob Doherty who maintained much of the garden landscape in 2022 as well as prepared interment sites.
3. We did not have the Memorial Day Coffee Hour event again this year. We are hoping this can occur in 2023.
4. When appropriate the USA flags were displayed this year throughout the garden and around the campus. (Memorial Day and Veterans Day).
5. Two artificial Christmas trees this year were purchased for outside the little church for the Christmas Season.

Committee Goals for 2023

1. Increase Committee Membership.
2. Seek out a professional landscape company for annual cleanup of garden.
3. Repainting of names on multiple gravestones.
4. Issue letter to parish regarding the garden by-laws for grave sites.

Newsletter – The Window – Janet Fischer

The Window is the newsletter created by and for the St. James’ community. It is available online at our website, and hard copies are often available at the church.

In 2022 we continued to use artwork and images created by parishioner John Wagas. His work gives the newsletter a very professional look. 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 72s times a month in 2022. Each issue contains reflections from Rev. Lori, Rev. Bill, vestry members, and others, sometimes poems, announcements of upcoming events, financial reports, prayer requests, and other important information.

For the past two years there have been two people involved in creating the Window: Janet Fischer has compiled and edited each issue and Laura Winter is the Editor-in-Chief, who

proofreads each issue before publication. In March, I (Janet) moved to Vancouver, Washington. I have continued to compile the issue each month for the remainder of 2022, but it is time for me to step away. It has been my pleasure and joy to work on the Window each month for the past four years, both with other editors and alone. But I did not *create* the Window; all of you do with your photos, articles, poems, and other things that you share. The Window has been a connection for many people both at St. James', remotely during COVID, and for those who have moved away (now, including me!).

Please consider lending a hand in getting out the monthly issues. The Window has a long history, of (I'm guessing) at least 40 years. (Oldsters, remember Pam Rice's "Perambulations?") If you are interested in joining the editorial team, please talk to Laura Winter or Rev. Lori. Thank you so much for having given me this opportunity.

Outreach – Jan Scrutton

St. James' has a long history of outreach to our local and wider community. Other reports will highlight the work of our dinner teams at Abode Services and our support of students overseas through Maisha Bora and the home building work of Corazon.

We continued our annual support of the back-to-school efforts of Abode Services and Union City Family Center. For Abode, we collect and purchase backpacks and school supplies to be distributed to children from kindergarten to college age who have families living in one of the Abode facilities around the greater Bay Area. Union City Family Center requests toiletries and school supplies to support families, and also for their high school students who may be without family support. In addition, donated items \$700 was donated to purchase the supplies in 2022. We stay in touch with both organizations throughout the year and respond to needs when we are able.

The food drive for Abode Services resulted in two filled barrels of food being taken to their pantry after the Hunger and Homelessness Vigil.

We were also able to use outreach funds to support two kindergarten children in the class of one of our (teacher) parishioners with backpacks and school supplies in December.

Park Development Task Force – Meg Amouroux

The Park Task Force was 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." Updates to the project had been shared via the parish newsletter, The Window, along the way.

However, due to costs calculated in 2022, the project has been placed on indefinite pause.

When first organized, we recognized the lack of sacred spaces and quieter places for contemplation in Fremont, and we agreed that we could use the space as a place where we could create that sacred space. With that, we held 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, helped guide our early conversations and decisions.

During 2022, we calculated in great detail the actual costs and considerations associated with a new labyrinth, from design and materials, to removal of the existing labyrinth slab, to volunteer efforts required, and more.

After studying and planning over the past year, the Park Task Force had come to the realization that the estimated expenses required for a new labyrinth were just too high to justify at this time. Therefore, the removal of the current labyrinth and installation of a new one has been put on pause. The funds in the Park's special interest account will remain there until future decisions are made for its renovation.

The labyrinth is but one part of the larger Park area. The team looked back at the wider project of the revitalization of the entire Park area, and not just the labyrinth. We agreed that the labyrinth at that cost was not the direction God was leading us. We generated a number of possible ideas for the Park as a whole, yet felt no strong and obvious solution. While can't see the solution yet, we trust that God will reveal it to us in time.

The team understands that in 2023, the parish is to start to engage in some deep congregational discernment and development through the Vital + Thriving program. Through that process, we may restart the Park conversation. Please pray for God's guidance and the movement of the Holy Spirit to show us what might be new for St. James' in the future.

Road Crew – Bruce Roberts

The Road Crew assists our Music Director Jennifer Ravera, and our Tech Leader Mike Scrutton, with setting up and moving equipment used for St. James' services and activities.

In 2022 the Crew set up for the June 13 John McCutcheon concert.

When the unfortunate squirrel (may it RIP) caused the Little Church organ to malfunction, the Crew discovered the squirrel and assisted Jim Swihart with the movement/repair of the organ.

The October Blessing of the Animals utilized the Crew for setup and teardown of the keyboard and sound for the service.

The Crew reconfigured the Choir area for the Return-from-Covid keyboard and pew setup.

The Crew assisted in the setup and teardown for the Abode Candlelight Vigil for remembrance of the homeless people who died on the streets in 2022.

Road Crew: 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, John Wagas, Lori Walton

The Social Justice Task Force was formed in February 2021 as a response to 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 and equity 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. These are completed activities by date for 2022:

Feb 15: Broken Treaties: an Oregon Experience documentary
Feb 23: Prayer Service to Honor Indigenous People
March 30: list of Ukraine charities sent to parish
April 30: Peace for Ukraine prayer board (remained in place until late November 2022)
May 7: Prayer Service for Peace
June 16: Email explaining Juneteenth
June 19: Make posters to support LGBT+ Tri-City Interfaith Council Rally on June 23
June 22: Prayer Service for Pride
Sept 25: handed out flyers for September 28th Prayer Service during "Welcome Back to St. James' Party"
Sept 28: Autumn Prayer Service on Zoom (Bill Hale served as clergy, the reflection by John Wagas)
Dec 25: completed donations of \$1000 total to charities supporting Ukrainian orphans

Some of the Team's Future Activities and Goals for 2023:

1. Land acknowledgement statement with approval from Vestry
2. Retool the Prayer Board into Icon board upon approval of Vestry
3. Create board in Parish Hall for multiple Social Justice ministries – already approved by Vestry
4. Show Netflix **Pray Away the Gay**
5. Continued topical Prayer meetings

If you are interested in joining the team, please talk to MF Leopold (mfleopold@yahoo.com or 510-384-5084)

Social Media Presence – John Wagas, Jan Scrutton, Mike Scrutton

The purpose of St. James' social media presence and activity is to increase our exposure by informing people within and outside our parish community of the events and offerings at our parish. This encompasses posts relating to upcoming and past events/services, parish resources including weekly emails, sermon podcasts, our newsletter The Window, and occasional posts concerning general Christian and Episcopal theology. Currently, we have three administrators: John Wagas managing the day-to-day content with Mike and Jan Scrutton serving as editors and backup.

Our social media presence is intended to connect St. James' with parishioners, friends, and seekers. For parishioners, our social media is a means of remaining updated on upcoming events while having the opportunity to share them with their friends. For friends of St. James', our social media is a way of engaging with them and reminding them of our presence in our

community. For seekers, our social media provides an opportunity to learn about our faith community's beliefs, activities, events, and history.

St. James' is present on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter—with regular posts/flyers appearing on Facebook and Instagram, service live streams and recordings of past services available on Facebook, and our Twitter providing links to our parish's weekly newsletter. The posts/flyers on our Facebook and Instagram pages are intended to be both beautiful and topical—beautiful in being deliberate in approaching aesthetics, design, and visual accessibility with care and intention, and topical in the sense that the identity and activities of St. James' are publicized and coupled with theological posts relating to general Christianity and our Episcopal/Anglican tradition.

This past year, our social media presence has greatly increased, with the style of our posts having evolved through the design work of John Wagas. The frequency of posts initially increased but has now stabilized, going from 4-5 posts each week earlier in the year to 3-4 posts weekly. When appropriate, Facebook events are created by Mike Scrutton for special events such as our annual Candlelight Vigil and services for St. Francis' feast, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve/Day, New Year, and John McCutcheon.

As of December 29th, our Facebook page has 541 followers with a “Facebook Page reach” in 2022 of 19,862 (the number of people who saw any content from or about our page). We posted to Facebook 177 times, in addition to regularly sharing links to service livestreams, weekly emails, and John McCutcheon ads. Our Instagram feed has 206 followers.

Stewardship – Jim McConnell

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 Pledge 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 2022 and 2023 pledge drives.

During the 2022 Fall Stewardship period, members of the vestry delivered sermons during a Sunday service, highlighting the stewardship messages from the day's lessons. Three testimonies were delivered in person at the 8am Sunday service, and three additional testimonies presented at the 10:30am Sunday service. 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 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 27, our In-gathering Sunday. As of January 3, 2023, we received 71 pledges for \$343,334. We are again striving for a balanced budget for 2023 and we are not there yet.

If you have sent in your 2023 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 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 appreciate your support of St. James'.

Tai Chi Class / Chair Exercise – 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-massage. The exercises are not strenuous, and we do them sitting down. No prior experience is necessary.

In 2022, we had 52 classes with an average of 12 participants per class. Participants include St. James' parishioners and non-parishioners.

In 2023, 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 hsiehtinghsueh@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 www.saintj.com on the Parish Events Calendar page for Tuesdays.

Vital & Thriving – Vivienne Paratore

In October of 2022, a small team from St. James' attended the kickoff day-long meeting for the Vital and Thriving Diocesan initiative. We are part of the second cohort for this project which has a three-year timeline. The first cohort had 13 congregations. The initiative will start in January for St. James' and we have a steering committee, which will meet for the first time in February 2023.

The whole initiative is designed to help congregations discern, through the Partnership for a Missional Church, where God is leading St. James'. It is not a process, but a journey which begins with our listening to the congregation and discerning our place in the greater, local community. We will collectively learn some spiritual practices along the way: listening, experimenting, and focusing. The listening and experimenting happen in the first 18 months and then the focusing happens in the last 18 months. There will be a team of St. James' folks who listen to the congregation, and then we will experiment with some of the ideas and finally commit to one and carry it through.

The cohort of congregations will support each other and share with each other. It is an amazing opportunity for us to rediscover and strengthen our relationship with God as a church community and bring His work into the world.

Website – Mike Scrutton

The purpose of the website, saintj.com, is to act as the portal to the online ministry of St. James'. It's target audience is seekers, newcomers, and established members of the parish. We are

deliberate in keeping the information it serves up-to-date, relevant, and fresh as it's a sign of the vibrancy of our church. It's the one-stop-shop to learn anything about St. James' and our ministry. We work to drive all online traffic to the website, whether visitors enter via social media, emails, YouTube or online searches since it's most effective to have a single location for events, Zoom links etc – avoiding the risk of contradiction or omission.

In summer 2022, the website underwent a redesign to make it more visually appealing, accessible and to allow flexibility in presentation. The homepage makes more use of images to capture attention, share important messages and offer 'calls to action'. At the same time, we studied analytics data and made our most sought-after pages more prominent on the homepage. You'll find links to services, welcome and information for newcomers, events (including links for Zoom meetings), invitations for families, and access to issues of The Window newsletter prominently featured.

There were 13,500 website 'visits' this year and 21,000 'unique page views'.