SAINT JAMES'
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Belonging to One Another as Companions & Stewards

"For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another." Romans 12:4-5

Dear Family of St. James', October 30, 2025

A couple of weeks ago I found myself in the sacristy talking with Mary Casas about her and Al's pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago. As you may know, this is a walking pilgrimage that can be taken many ways but commonly begins in France and ends at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Spain, a walk of over 400 miles. During our conversation, Mary was reflecting how, even though you can walk the Camino on your own, you cannot do it alone. Whether you are a single pilgrim, a pilgrim with another, or a pilgrim with a group, every person relies on the others for a safe and successful pilgrimage. Every pilgrim that crosses your path makes a difference in your walk, whether you journey with them for one mile or for many. The common thread that ties them all together is the journey.

The conversation reminded me of Paul's words to the church in Rome: that we are *one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.* Paul's image of the body tells us something profound about who we are as a community of faith. None of us exists in isolation. We belong to one another. Our joys and sorrows, our gifts and needs, our faith and our doubts, all of these are woven together by the Spirit into something larger than any one of us could be alone. Our common thread is our desire to follow Jesus Christ to the best of our abilities.

In a world that prizes independence and self-sufficiency, the Gospel calls us back to interdependence, to caring for one another as Christ cares for us. When one part of the body suffers, we all feel it; when one part rejoices, we all share in the joy. Stewardship, then, is not simply about maintaining a budget or funding programs. It is about nurturing the bonds of love and mutual care that make us a living, breathing body of Christ.

Your generosity makes that care possible. Through your giving, we visit the sick and the homebound, feed the hungry, teach our children, support our clergy and staff, and create a space where all can find belonging and grace. One major move towards increasing our presence as the Body of Christ was to hire a part-time associate rector. Already, Reverend Ingrid has made an impact on our parish and in our community. She is doing a fabulous job coordinating our outreach, providing pastoral care, and much more. In December, we will have the honor of hosting her ordination to the priesthood, a celebration for Ingrid, of course, but a celebration for the whole church! As of now, the position is funded until July 2027. It is our prayer and hope to raise enough funds to allow the position to extend beyond that time.

Every pledge, every act of service, every prayer offered strengthens the life we share and will shepherd it into the future.

As you prayerfully consider your pledge for the coming year, I invite you to reflect on what it means to be *"members one of another"* or *"belonging to one another"*. How has this community held you? How might you help hold others? Stewardship is our collective way of saying yes to

God's call to be a community where love is practiced, hope is nurtured, and Christ is made known.

Thank you for the many ways you already live out that call. Together, we are building something sacred: a church where each member matters, each gift is valued, and each act of care becomes an offering of love.

In Christ,

The Reverend Lori Walton
Rector

To assist in our budgeting, please return your pledge card on or before our Ingathering Service on November 23.

100% of your financial pledge goes directly to the operation of the church (utilities, insurance, fellowship, salaries, children's programs, education, janitorial, etc.). Donations towards flowers, candles, and outreach are in addition to your annual pledge. All tax-deductible donations will appear on your statement.

When determining how much of your household budget to give to the ministry of the Church, understanding the big picture is important. Each year, our expenses increase, requiring our income to increase as well. In addition to increases in our overhead, we took the much-needed step to hire an associate rector. We have the reserves to fund this position through mid-2027, but would love to see it as a permanent, not temporary, position. When discerning your giving for 2026, please consider asking yourself if you can increase the amount you donate to help cover the additional costs. If you have not made a financial pledge in the past, we invite you to do so.

The chart below shows what proportional giving looks like on a weekly basis. The biblical model is to give 10% of your household income to the work of the church. Where do you land on this chart? Are you able to increase your giving by 2%, 5%, 10%? St. James' does amazing work in reaching out to our community and caring for our own members to create a healthy and sustainable spiritual home. Your contribution makes this happen, and we are eternally grateful for whatever you can give, both in finance and in volunteerism.

Annual Income	Weekly Income	Beyond the Tithe		Tithe	Proportional Giving								
		15%	12%	10%	9%	8%	7%	6%	5%	4%	3%	2%	1%
$20,000	$385	$58	$46	$38	$35	$31	$27	$23	$19	$15	$12	$8	$4
$25,000	$481	$72	$58	$48	$43	$38	$34	$29	$24	$19	$14	$10	$5
$30,000	$577	$87	$69	$58	$52	$46	$40	$35	$29	$23	$17	$12	$6
$40,000	$769	$115	$92	$77	$69	$62	$54	$46	$38	$31	$23	$15	$8
$50,000	$962	$144	$115	$96	$87	$77	$67	$58	$48	$38	$29	$19	$10
$60,000	$1,154	$173	$138	$115	$104	$92	$81	$69	$58	$46	$35	$23	$12
$70,000	$1,346	$202	$162	$135	$121	$108	$94	$81	$67	$54	$40	$27	$13
$80,000	$1,538	$231	$185	$154	$138	$123	$108	$92	$77	$62	$46	$31	$15
$90,000	$1,731	$260	$208	$173	$156	$138	$121	$104	$87	$69	$52	$35	$17
$100,000	$1,923	$288	$231	$192	$173	$154	$135	$115	$96	$77	$58	$38	$19
$120,000	$2,308	$346	$277	$231	$208	$185	$162	$138	$115	$92	$69	$46	$23
$150,000	$2,885	$433	$346	$288	$260	$231	$202	$173	$144	$115	$87	$58	$29

I support St. James' because...

Testimonials:

... I find great joy that I can give of my time and talent being involved in the things I do for my church. I've learned to follow in Jesus' footsteps through the training as a Lay Eucharistic Visitor, where I'm able to bring the sacraments, the body and blood of Christ to those who can't attend church. St. James' is my spiritual family, a loving and accepting community where we all come together to worship and hear God's word. - Marilyn R.

... it is my spiritual home. I want St. James' to be a safe, welcoming place to all who are seeking God. To do that requires supporting St. James', (financially and through volunteering) both the clergy and staff, as well as the physical plant. - Elizabeth H.

... St. James' is a parish that takes Jesus' instruction to "love God and love your neighbors" very seriously, as evidenced by our many Christian formation opportunities and outreach programs. We extend genuine love and support to each other by embracing diverse individuals, and encouraging and nourishing each one on a unique spiritual journey. It is a privilege to be able to contribute both volunteer time and financial resources to this church family. - Bev M.

... I want to serve and love like Jesus. St. James' as a congregation is very conducive to my spiritual growth and is supportive of discovering new ways to be Christ's hands and feet in our wider communities. - Isaiah Z.

... of the programs offered, sermons keep us engaged, the clean campus shows we care, the fellowship brings us together and everyone is welcomed - Gregg F.

... the St. James' community has supported me and my family since 1983. I contribute my time and talent for the satisfaction it brings me when I am able to repair and improve issues with our old, beautiful buildings. I contribute so St. James' can continue to share Christ's love with the surrounding community and support everyone who walks through her doors. - Dave N.

... Jesus told us to "Love one another," and we see members of St. James' living out this commandment. Parishioners here truly care for each other and for the greater community, not only in word, but in deed. We contribute to St. James' because the people here have made us feel so welcome as a part of this wonderful parish. - Toni & Jay S.

... I love the diversity of our parish members and the presentations seem to be addressing ME and my concerns and needs. I love that Ron is always happy to greet me as well as others. The involvement of our parish youth is so commendable. - Stu L.

... I want to be a part of the St James' community. I have learned what they stand for and believe it is the true intention of God. - Lisa A.

WHERE DOES OUR MONEY GO?
In a word, everywhere!

Our giving supports the **day-to-day operations** of the church, which includes ensuring our finances are in good order, processing payments to our vendors, investing endowment and other funds for optimal return, and partnering with the wider church in expanding our ministry.

Our **staff** works hard at creating meaningful and inspired **worship**, providing **pastoral care** for those who are in need, coordinating **outreach** efforts, offering **formation** classes, designing events for **fellowship**, educating and developing the spirituality of **children**, gathering and supporting **youth**, and much more.

Our **buildings and grounds** are well cared for with the intentional effort to eliminate deferred maintenance. When something needs fixing, we fix it, with money, contractors, and volunteers. We recently repaired a significant **plumbing** issue in the parish hall bathrooms, **painted** the exterior of the buildings on campus, and eliminated the potential for small critters finding shelter under the Little Church. We are in the process of developing a small **St. Francis Garden** (on the side of the Little Church) and our Memorial Garden is now getting routine maintenance.

While we make a difference in the lives of our own parish, we also make a big impact in our community.

Our financial giving makes a difference in the world. St. James' has been a leader in supporting organizations that have a direct impact on helping those in need.

Over the last several years, we've donated to organizations combating domestic violence and homelessness such as **SAVE**, **Centerville Free Dining Room,** and **Abode Services.**

We've addressed childhood poverty by donating **gift cards, toiletries, school supplies and other essentials** to the **Union City Family Center**, **Abode Services, and local schools.**

We are in the process of collecting **shoes** and **socks** for **Tri-City Volunteers/City Serve Bay Area** and food for **Abode's Sunrise Village Shelter**.

We help rehome people previously unhoused with donated furniture and household goods through Abode Services **Home Warming** program.

Your donations to the Rector's and Associate Rector's **Discretionary Funds** allow us to offer support to those on the edge financially.

Other donations generously support our **Blessing Bags** ministry for the homeless, providing essential items and blankets for those in greatest need.

With Abode Services, we honor those who have died on the street with our **Candlelight Vigil** each winter. On **Good Friday** we make a financial donation to the **Episcopal Church in Jerusalem**. When disasters hit, we respond with direct donations or contributions to **Episcopal Relief and Development**.

By contributing to St. James' with your donations of time and money, you are bringing the **Love of God** to others and to the wider world. By being a part of our church, you are participating in the **Good News of Jesus Christ** in tangible and meaningful ways.

Learn all about our budget and how we manage your contributions at our annual budget meeting on January 11, 2026.