SAINT JAMES'
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

CALLED TO SERVE, IN NEW & LOVING WAYS

Annual Report for 2025

Submitted for the Annual Meeting held January 18, 2026

The Rev. Lori Walton, Rector
The Rev. Ingrid Jacobson, Associate Rector

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Clergy & Staff Reports

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

Worship and Liturgy

2025 showed us stronger worship attendance than in recent years. We are live-streaming our 10:30 service and have also live-streamed funeral services and an ordination service, allowing those not physically with us to participate. We welcomed new lectors (Tom, Katherine, and Matt) and altar guild members (Terri, Toni, and Paula).

Our preaching rotation included guest preachers Caren Miles (from the Diocese), and Beth Foote while serving as supply priest. Laurie Moyers also served as supply but did not preach. Our Children & Youth Minister, Jan Scrutton, preached three times, and John Wagas, postulant for holy orders preached twice. In October, vestry members Emily Dunn, John Amouroux, Bev Mosier, and Matt Hurley offered a sermon on stewardship. Our new Associate Rector, Ingrid Jacobson, preached six times from July through December.

For the Advent season, we used Wil Gafney's "A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church, A" lectionary in place of the Revised Common Lectionary.

Our regular rhythm of worship stayed consistent. In January, we offered hand anointing on the Feast of the Epiphany. In February, we held two Ash Wednesday services and the Imposition of Ashes. We also held an Imposition of Ashes service for children and families the evening before Ash Wednesday. For Maundy Thursday we shared a meal, experienced foot washing, Holy Communion, and ritual altar stripping. Good Friday brought a traditional 12:00pm service followed by a walking of the Stations of the Cross. For the evening of Good Friday, we held a service of Lessons, Spirituals, and cross veneration. In place of an Easter Vigil, we opted for a Holy Saturday, A Day of Preparation. This included brunch, a short service, and preparing our holy space for Easter. It was very well received and supported and will likely continue. 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. Our annual Thanksgiving Service was held as usual. For Christmas Eve, we offered a 4:00 Family Service with the children telling the Christmas story and a 7:00 Primary Service with a full choir. We had a 10:00 Christmas Day service, and on the 1st Sunday of Christmas, December 29, we had a Lessons & Carols service at both the 8:00 and 10:30 services including Holy Communion. We were caught off guard with no musician as our music director was on vacation and the supply organist fell ill. We soldiered on with recorded accompaniment at the 8:00 service and keyboard accompaniment by parishioner Nancy at the 10:30 service.

In 2025, we held seven memorial/funeral services. We celebrated the lives of Craig Gentner, Roberta Tomkinson, Karla Koon, Frankie McLeod, Rev. Beth Phillips, Gail Blalock and Catherine Adams (officiated by Brian Cochran). In addition to services, I administered last rites to five individuals. We had one adult baptism for Jo Lynch. I officiated one wedding for Koonze/Gonzalves and began pre-marital preparation for a 2026 wedding. We had five adults confirmed: Isaiah Z., Lilia G., Terri F., Katherine P., and Lisa A.

For liturgical design, Jan Scrutton has worked to expand the number of volunteers with the time and training to hang sheers and set up other embellishments. Having the pre-Easter Day of Preparation and the pre-Christmas Greening of the Church helps ensure the spaces are ready for our high holy days.

In August, I hosted a brunch for the Altar Guild to build fellowship, onramp new members, and answer any questions or concerns they may have.

On December 1, we held our annual candlelight vigil for those who died on the street. This service was held outdoors and included spiritual leaders from the Muslim, Buddhist, and Christian faiths. As part of her new position, Rev. Ingrid Jacobson coordinated this along with Jan Scrutton.

We continued sharing our Land Acknowledgment Statement monthly at the start of each service. The Statement, crafted by members of the Social Justice Task Force, was slightly modified by Bruce and Barbara (see below). In the fall, we opted to pause the reading until we could put some action behind our words with specialized financial donations towards an indigenous organization. The readings will start again in 2026.

St. James' Land Acknowledgment

We, the people of St. James' Episcopal Church in Fremont, remember and honor the Indigenous people of the world, especially the Muwekma Ohlone tribes, whose ancestral land we now occupy in the San Francisco Bay Area. These lands were once their home but were taken from them by coercion and force through colonization. Peoples of the Ohlone tribes still live in the Bay Area but have no tribal land and no federal recognition. We give thanks to them and to their ancestors for their stewardship of this land that is now our common community. Their culture continues to bear witness to a life that is both honorable and grounded.

Lord God, Creator of this land and of all peoples, may we always remember that the Earth does not belong to us, but we belong to the Earth, and that we are all relatives in this life. Help us to learn from our past mistakes and to be resolute in speaking the truth, that we may be instruments of justice for all people in today's world, particularly the original Indigenous peoples of this shared land. Amen.

Rev. 10/13/2025

Staff, Administration, and Finance

With one exception, our staff remained the same as the prior year. We continued to employ Jan Scrutton (Children and Youth Minister), Jennifer Ravera (Music Director), and Ron Cook (Parish Administrator). We also continued contracting with Fernando's Cleaning and Landscaping Company to keep our buildings clean and our campus kept up.

In July, we enthusiastically welcomed the Rev. Ingrid Jacobson as our Associate Rector (part-time). Ingrid's responsibilities will be Outreach, Pastoral Care, and Liturgy. She has already made a significant impact on our community and congregation. Please see Ingrid's report for further details.

Our children's program remains strong. Our youth group is also doing well. Both are led by Jan Scrutton, our Children & Youth Minister. Jan continues to be creative and proactive in offering gatherings and events to keep our children and youth engaged. Please see Jan's report for further details.

Our Music Director, Jennifer Ravera, continues to offer quality music. The choir rehearses every Sunday morning at 9:30 (except summers), allowing more people to participate. Please see Jennifer's report for further details.

Our Parish Administrator, Ron Cook, continues to be instrumental in keeping the office running smoothly and advising us on financial matters. His skill with finance and communication have greatly benefited the parish. Marilyn Rose continues to process our payables, Jan Brandt tracks our receivables, and Bruce Roberts serves as treasurer.

Welcoming and Integrating New People, Outreach & Fellowship

In 2025, we have been blessed to welcome several new people, with many joining the church.

On January 4, I hosted the annual Epiphany Party for new(er) people as a way of building fellowship and relationships. Over 40 people were in attendance.

In September, we held a volunteer appreciation/new member welcome Sunday with several people identifying as new members and volunteers/participants in the life of St. James'.

We supported schooling for Hope and Miriam, two young women in Kenya, throughout 2025. We will wrap up their support when they graduate in the spring of 2026. We identified a new ministry, Imara International, to support. Imara International is an organization that supports girls and their babies with housing, skill training, schooling, medical assistance and more. Our relationship with Imara International will formally begin in January 2026.

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, and had six parishioners helping with the physical build. We collected school supplies for underserved children and donated funds to

the City of Fremont for summer camp scholarships. We also collected shoes and socks for City Serve and non-perishable foods for Abode Services.

We continue working with the City of Fremont and their Safe Parking program. See Charisma Pangilinan's report for further details.

We completed our participating in the Vital + Thriving trainings and gatherings in 2025. The process gave us greater insight into our character and strengths. See Mike Scrutton's report for further detail.

Wider Church Involvement

We welcomed Bishop Austin Rios to St. James' on three occasions in 2025. In June, he joined us for a senior lunch. In September, he presided over the funeral for Rev. Beth Phillips. In December, he presided over the priestly ordination of Rev. Ingrid Jacobson. The funeral and the ordination brought people, both lay and clergy, from throughout the Diocese.

Early in 2025, we participated in the Diocesan Listening Sessions to assist with their Strategic Visioning Process.

Associate Rector's Report – The Rev. Ingrid Jacobson

Six months in, I am truly delighted to be a part of the St. James' staff team. I have felt very welcomed and supported by everyone, and continue to be inspired by the depth and breadth of mutual support I observe and experience here. My onboarding and re-orientation to the St. James' community has been supported by the "small but mighty" staff team, as well as the congregation. It has been wonderful to learn about the many ways in which St. James' already serves the local community and to begin to imagine ways we might extend and/or deepen that way of acting out our faith in the wider world, together.

As I reflect on my first 21 Sundays (a.k.a. six months) here, I realize that I served as your Deacon 16 Sundays, preached eight times, led Morning Prayer one Sunday when Lori was away, and since my ordination to the priesthood on Dec. 20th, served as a Priest and Presider twice, on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. What a whirlwind of opportunities and blessings!

I am grateful beyond words not only to have been ordained to the priesthood, but to have been able to do so here at St. James'. While it was a huge amount of work to plan, organize, and host the ordination locally, it made the day even more special than I could have imagined. With huge thanks to Rev. Lori, Jan, Jennifer, Ron, and so many members of the parish who volunteered time, energy, and care to provide hospitality, spruce up the grounds and spaces, produce the worship bulletin, etc. we actually did it! And it was a wonderful event, a wonderful day, and a wonderful start to my priestly ministry. Thank you all!

I am honored to have been welcomed back into Pastoral Care, making a few home visits, having quite a few phone calls, and learning what it feels like, spiritually and practically, to be on call for pastoral care emergencies when Rev. Lori has been away from time to time. In preparation to take on responsibility for the Lay Eucharistic Visitors (LEV) team in January, I met with Rev. Lori about this ministry, attended a new LEV training session in July, and have spoken informally with most of the team since then. The goal for the coming year is to convene the individual LEVs for fellowship and spiritual support early in the year, to offer opportunities for the team to share their experiences and hopes for this ministry with one another, and to discuss any questions, needs, or ideas in the year ahead.

Similarly, I have enjoyed being involved in adult faith formation here again, covering for Rev. Lori in a couple of Bible Study Zoom sessions and facilitating the first of the Advent Study sessions.

Last, but certainly not least, I have enjoyed the challenge of beginning to oversee the parish's outreach to the underserved in the community as well as building stronger connections with the surrounding community and organizations. With lots of support from Rev. Lori and Jan, I undertook the planning of this year's Hunger and Homelessness Candlelight Vigil, which we held here at St. James' on December 1st. (There is more on this in a separate report). It was a heavy lift for me, and I genuinely could not have done it without Rev. Lori and Jan's generosity, patience, and full collaboration.

St. James' is already so active in serving the community, and I look forward to bringing the many service teams we already have into stronger fellowship and mutual support. I also look forward to researching new opportunities for St. James' to serve the community around us, where it seems there is no end of need for Christ-like compassion, generosity, and *agape* love.

Children & Youth Minister's Report – Jan Scrutton

As 2025 comes to a close and I sit to write reports on activities for the year I see a pattern of change emerging in my work largely centered on the addition of an associate rector to our staff. I am grateful that St. James' has taken a step in faith to appoint someone to this role and was happy to be part of the interview process earlier in the year. The arrival of Rev. Ingrid is already having an impact on our community, and I notice myself how having another member of staff supports my work too.

While my work is centered around children and youth I enjoying serving this community in the ways that are needed and as part of a staff team. In April I taught two classes as part of the Inquirers Series for adults. I also supported the set up for the Immigration Series of speakers in the fall which was most interesting. We hosted a Whole and Healthy Church training with Caren Miles bringing 40 parishioners up to date on Safe church training.

A new event this year was a Holy Saturday breakfast (with help from Vivienne Paratore) which happened as part of cleaning and preparing the sanctuary for Easter. This was a lovely way to spend some time together and I hope we continue the practice in the future.

This year I preached three times and took a lead on the Advent Evening and Christmas Eve Family Service. In Advent I provided an A-Z take home sheet for people to think of Advent and Christmas words for the whole alphabet. Art projects in Sunday School, Youth Group, coffee hour and during the Advent Evening went together to support the Christmas pageant with an A-Z display – Z is for Zzz, for rest!

Sunday School & Sunday School Family Activities

The 2024-5 school year finished with a regular 14 students in Sunday School. As 2025 ends the number is looking closer to eight regular attendees. We are used to the flow of families arriving and leaving the Bay Area and I'm grateful that new children are always welcomed by the class but also into the wider community quickly. Events for children and families throughout the year give them ways to connect with church and each other – two kids' afternoons and two church family evenings (summer and Advent), the pancake supper and Ashes for Kids on Shrove Tuesday, the egg hunt and Halloween costumes to church.

We continue to base our program around the lectionary, with occasional detours! I was pleased to welcome Matt Poltarak and Barbara Vacchieri to teach this fall – and hopefully again in the future!

I was able to make one home visit this year that was slightly more unusual when I met Serafina and Verity Singh from school during my visit to England – proving even if you move away, we still remember you!

Episcopal Youth Fremont (EYF)

Episcopal Youth Fremont (EYF) serves young people from 6^{th} – 12^{th} grade attending St. James' and St. Anne's Episcopal Churches in Fremont. Our 2025 leadership team consists of Jan & Mike Scrutton and Jill Buono. Our regular attendance in the first semester was 5-6 and, due to graduations, that dropped to three in September.

This year one of our young people, Zoe from St. Anne's, was confirmed at Grace Cathedral in May. We remain connected to diocesan events but due to the heating failing in the cathedral we couldn't do a sleepover there this year (returning in 2026).

I am able to connect with diocesan youth leaders regularly and planning is underway for more shared events in 2026.

Summer Day Camp

Rev. Lori and I took the difficult decision to postpone summer camp this year, and conversations are ongoing about plans for 2027. We did add a kid's afternoon and continued the summer family night which was enjoyed by people of all ages.

Family Night

Our summer family night took place on June 22 when 46 people gathered for crafts, games, dinner and compline on the patio. This event is a sort of summer camp session for all ages with kids helping adults, and adults helping kids with a series of clay and paint activities and fun games. It is always good to see the smiles and hear the conversations happening during these events. Thanks to all who helped.

Acolytes

Our acolyte team had two high school seniors graduate this summer, Bethany and Caiden have moved on to college, but we welcome them back when they are home!

In 2025 Bethany, Caiden, Ian, Layla, Eva, Simran, Serafina, Logan, Jacob and Elvin have served on the acolyte team. They serve at the 10:30am service and young people must be in 2nd grade and above and attend annual training in order to serve.

Many thanks for all our acolytes and to those who support their ministry including their families and our Eucharistic Ministers. Also, to Bethany, Caiden and Ian who serve as peer mentors.

Music Ministry – Jennifer Ravera, Music Director

I celebrated my 14th 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 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Sunday services. At the 8:00 a.m. service, the congregation sings three or four hymns, a sequence, and the doxology each week.

We have an Adult Choir that sings at our 10:30am service, where we have a Choral Eucharist. We rehearse on Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 10:15 am. I send the music electronically to the choir members each week on Thursdays. We practice all music for the Sunday service plus anthems for the next 3 Sundays during our 45-minute practice.

The choir is open to all parishioners. Our current choir members are Nancy Catania, Reena Davis, Barbara Milligan, Bruce Roberts, Don Rose, Ken Trant, Barbara Vacchieri, and Isaiah Zachariah. We have also been blessed to welcome Kristine Berg to the choir as our staff singer.

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

For 2025 the St. James' Vestry passed a slightly negative budget, meaning that the Vestry expected that income would not cover expenses. However, the Church managed to end up in a positive position. Pledges paid were higher than budgeted, unpledged contributions were strong, and use of church produced more revenue than expected.

Thanks to all who have managed to complete their pledges and those who donated beyond their pledged amount.

The Vestry did not budget for an Associate Rector for 2025, so those funds came from a Special Interest account called Future Staff. Those funds are also available for 2026 and may be used as necessary.

At this writing, it appears that St. James' may need to pass a slightly negative budget for 2026. Pledges for 2026 have come in strongly with new pledges as well as some increased pledges, compared to 2025. Yes, expenses will increase in 2026, and those increases have been built into the budget where they can be anticipated.

Many thanks to those who are intimately involved with the money part of St. James' ministry: Jan Brandt and the counters, Marilyn Rose in accounts payable and Ron Cook, our Administrator who does the hard work of keeping our books and keeping me balanced.

Senior Warden's Report – Charisma Pangilinan

There's an adage about how the only thing good work gets you is more work. Sometimes I think that's true about St. James' and even more true about serving on Vestry. My year as Sr. Warden has enlightened me on many things on the inner workings of the church. Additionally, it's caused me to step up my level of responsibility and pride for a church I love.

Just a few months ago, John Amouroux and I attended a luncheon at Holy Cross Church in Castro Valley with approximately 30 other wardens from across the Diocese. Together, we shared ideas and successes and took time to reflect on the honor of serving as wardens for our respective parishes.

It was an honor to serve with my fellow Vestry members, Paula McKinney, Matt Hurley, Marcus Pun, Katie Porter, Kaethe Langs, Gregg Feeney, Emily Dunn, Burtin Hart, Bev Mosier, and Barbara Vacchieri. They, along with the lead team members, John Amouroux as Jr. Warden and Bruce Roberts as Treasurer, made thoughtful decisions to help protect and preserve the health of St. James'. Of course, we were held accountable by the thorough documentation provided by our dedicated clerk, Elizabeth Hart. I thank each of you for your commitment, your prayers, and especially for setting an example for service.

With our collective minds and hearts, we accomplished a great deal this year and hopefully laid the foundation for future projects and improvements. Among many things, the work for the Vestry this year included an abundant breakfast for Easter, a successful BBQ for St. James' Day and treats for Volunteer and New Member Appreciation Day. We each tapped into our inner creativity and storytelling to craft a monthly newsletter article centered on the theme of 'You Are the Light of the World.'

And then, of course, there's the business of the finances. While our monthly meetings often included votes on various expenditures, it was for larger expenses such as tree trimming, Memorial Garden maintenance, and repainting the big church and education building, where we could see the tangible outcomes of our decisions. It was this year, the sewer repairs behind the Parish Hall were finally completed.

We're looking forward to the new lighting element coming soon to the Little Church. Furthermore, the newly established subcommittee for the Land Development Team will continue to explore future revenue streams by utilizing our available land and property. But by far, what I am most proud of is helping bring to fruition the vision discussed all three years I've been on Vestry and that was the hiring of an associate rector. I think we can all agree that having Ingrid onboard has made St. James' stronger and even more of a welcoming community for the flood of new parishioners we have yet to embrace.

Sadly, this year we also had to endure the loss of three strong women for St. James' and the Episcopal church: Reverend Karla Koon, Reverend Beth Philips, and Gail Blalock. I regret not spending more time getting to know each of them better. Conversely, it was amazing to instead shed joyful tears at witnessing the Priestly Ordination of Reverend Ingrid, especially here in this very space.

I especially thank Reverend Lori for her trust and confidence in me. I only hope and pray that I fulfilled the role as required and stepped in as an advisor whenever she needed me to be.

Lori, you have added so much to the life of St. James. We've been so lucky to have your steady leadership, thoughtful preaching, and compassionate pastoral care. Your presence for the past 15 years has shaped our worship, strengthened our community, and nurtured our faith in lasting ways. I mean, I haven't been here that whole time, but I still believe that to be true. For your devotion to this parish, it's my honor to present this banner we have made for you that recognizes your anniversary of installation as our rector in January 2011, and it includes messages of gratitude from many of us. Along with the banner, we also have a gift made up from contributions from the congregation: a gift certificate to your favorite hotel in Mendocino … for when you need time away from us.

We'll have the banner set up in the parish hall for anyone who still wants to sign it. And please also see me if anyone has questions about the gift certificate.

To wrap up, St. James', you are my people. Even after my time on Vestry and as Sr. Warden is done, I am still in service to you. Thank you for your peace and prayers and the joy you bring to my life.

Junior Warden's Report – John Amouroux

As one who still feels "newish" to the Episcopal Church, being nominated to join the vestry for the first time in 2024, I pondered the Groucho Marx quote, paraphrased, "Why would I want to join a group that would have *me* as a member?" All jokes aside, I went in with an open mind and heart, settled in, and found the vestry work to be interesting, valuable to the St. James' community, and under Rev. Lori's excellent management, not a burden at all. Still, I was a bit surprised when I found myself running for Jr. Warden for 2025. As Jr. Warden, I am a full voting vestry member with the added responsibilities of:

- Attending lead team meetings each month with the Rector, Sr. Warden and Treasurer to consult on the monthly vestry meeting agenda
- Approving requests for reimbursement checks
- Signing and mailing reimbursement and expense checks
- Writing a short summary each month of the vestry meeting for The Window

Thanks to Rev. Lori's organizational excellence, the responsibilities of being Jr. Warden have been very manageable. In addition, each vestry member contributed to making the group run smoothly, and we quickly became a conscientious and diligent team. This past year it was my privilege to serve with fellow members Emily Dunn, Gregg Feeney, Burtin Hart, Matt Hurley, Kaethe Langs, Paula McKinney, Bev Mosier, Katie Porter, Marcus Pun, and Barbara Vacchieri, and especially Charisma Pangilinan our Sr. Warden, Bruce Roberts our Treasurer and Elizabeth Hart our Clerk. Speaking to my fellow vestry members, you are a wonderful, loving, fun group of people, and serving alongside you all was a pleasure. Each of you always made yourselves available to help and support any task. I am grateful for all your helping hands and efforts.

While Charisma's Sr. Warden report will likely list so many of the accomplishments of the 2025 vestry, there are a couple things I would like to shine a light on that are particularly meaningful to me. Firstly, I am very proud of this year's vestry for continuing the work of preceding vestries to hire an associate rector, finalizing this with the appointment of Rev. Ingrid Jacobson. And, I am also excitedly hopeful that the decision to support Imara International will bring many blessings to a community greatly in need.

I've learned so much during my time on the vestry, and with the added visibility I've gained this year into the inner workings of St. James', I've come to appreciate our leadership and community members in so many more ways than I thought possible. I am thankful to have been able to serve such a great community. I heartily recommend to anyone who feels the desire to serve St. James' to consider joining the vestry. I guarantee you will be welcomed, valued, and given opportunities to do so much good work as part of a terrific team.

Committee Reports

Abode Dinners – Jasmine Reynolds

For 2025, I had the privilege of serving as the lead volunteer for the St. James' dinner service at Abode Sunrise Village for the full year. The volunteers included Vivienne Paratore, Marlene Benedict, Bruce Roberts, Byron Bader, and Charisma Pangilinan.

Our teams cooked and served dinner six times throughout the year, gathering on the third Saturday of the even-numbered months. Each evening, we served an average of 40 plates to residents, focusing not only on providing a hot meal but also offering healthy nourishment and kindness. In addition to coordinating schedules and volunteers, I helped recruit two new cooks, Missy & Victor Bontempo, strengthening our ability to continue this ministry in the year ahead. They served a meal of their own with two of their friends and did a fantastic job. I look forward to them continuing to be part of the team in the coming year.

This ministry remains a meaningful expression of our church's commitment to hospitality and community partnership.

In 2026, I pray the Vestry will make thoughtful decisions about how to maintain funding for this ministry. This year we switched from volunteers funding the meals, which discouraged involvement, to having expenses reimbursed by the Special Interest General Outreach account.

Abode Services Rapid Re-Housing Program – Gregg Feeney

Abode Services' goal is to provide housing to adults and children and veterans that have come through Abode's Sunrise Village shelter or through referrals from various agencies that support Abode. St. James' as well as about 10 other local churches and organizations continue to pool our monies and donate new and gently used household items to re-house families and individuals. In 2025, we helped support over 15 families and individuals with bedding, some furniture, kitchen and bathroom supplies to help get them started in new homes.

Abode continues building affordable housing units throughout the SF Bay Area. St. James' will continue to support the program committing to support a minimum of two families per year and we appreciate your continued support. Our storage unit provides a good space to keep donated items for Abode's clients across different agencies such as Cal Works, Linkages, Sunrise Village and Rapid ReHousing.

Advent Afternoon & Advent Evening Celebration, Dec. 7 – Jan Scrutton

We continued our pattern of offering a kids' afternoon for Sunday School families prior to the Advent Evening. In addition to being a nice time for the children to spend together, doing

crafts, playing and watching a movie, it is also a small gift of time for parents. Barbara Mulligan and Toni Shellon supported the afternoon and joined in the fun with four children attending.

The Advent Evening was themed around beginnings and endings, the start of a new church year as the calendar year winds down, and A-Z. Thirty-four people had chance to make pieces to help illustrate boards as part of the A-Z project we were working on for the Christmas Eve Pageant. Angels, sheep, and the City of David were among the projects worked on.

We joined together with Jennifer Ravera to sing Christmas songs and carols (just a little early!) and then shared a meal together in the Parish Hall.

Altar Guild – Katie Cunningham

The purpose of the Altar Guild Ministry is to prepare the sanctuaries of both churches for Sunday worship and other liturgical services such as Bishops visit, Baptisms, Confirmations and Celebration of Life Memorials. Altar Guild cleans up after the church services are over. Members care for the altar, vestments, vessels and linens of the parish. They supervise the ordering and picking up of the fresh flowers each week.

The Altar Guild Ministry is under the direction of Rev. Lori Walton. Rev. Lori will communicate any changes or special instructions concerning Altar Guild duties to the Altar Guild members.

The St. James' Altar Guild is made up of 15 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. Six parishioners joined the Altar Guild Ministry during the last year. The new members are Paula McKinney, Terri Fountain, Toni Verdin, Lisa Alday, Katherine Paine and Maria Ortiz. We welcome these new members to our Altar Guild Ministry.

The Altar Guild is responsible for keeping the Sanctus Candle replenished and lit 24/7. The Sanctus Candle is positioned over the Church Ambry, which houses the consecrated wine and wafers that are used for home visits.

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.

The Altar Guild would like to thank the following members for their additional ongoing generous donations.

- Barbara Johnsen: Providing fresh flowers monthly for the Columbarium area in the Little Church.
- Vivienne Paratore: Baking fresh communion bread for the 10:30am service.
- Lauren Doherty: Donating wine for weekly communion.
- Ruth Poole: Donating bottles of drinking water, water to be blessed, birthday candles, garbage bags and various other items.

Designated members of the Altar Guild are tasked with ordering communion supplies, overseeing the purchase of seasonal flower orders, performing yearly inventory, maintaining communion wine inventory, blessed water, and other essential communion supplies, as well as maintaining church vessels and clean linens. Jan Scrutton helps with sewing, mending and alterations of aged frontal and accessories for the Altar Guild. Mary Casas orders our communion supplies.

We are always looking for new members to join our ministry. If you are interested in becoming part of the St. James' Altar Guild, please contact Rev. Lori Walton or any Altar Guild member for more information. We would love to have you join us.

Thank you to all the parishioners who make up the St. James' Altar Guild Ministry. Week after week they lovingly prepare the two Churches for Sunday services and clean up after each service has ended. These dedicated members work behind the scenes creating beautiful spaces for the St. James' church community to worship in. We thank them all.

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

St. James' ASL (SJASL) conducts a Sunday Zoom service in American Sign Language (ASL). Participants join in from both California and other states. The service is Deaf-centered. Prayers, scriptures, songs/poetry, reflections and discussions are all signed directly in ASL making everything fully accessible to Deaf/ASL participants. In addition to weekly services, SJASL engaged in the following activities this year:

1. The planning committee, which meets monthly on Zoom, held a retreat - similar to a Vestry retreat. Since two members of the committee are from Oregon, they flew in for the event. We rented an Airbnb in Newark for a weekend and created a vision for 2025.
2. Four members of SJASL continued their studies with "Education for Ministry (EfM)", a program of theological education-at-a-distance through the University of the South School of Theology in Sewanee, TN. The Deaf EfM cohort is also conducted in ASL.
3. Some members participated in an Oregon based mid-week Bible study.
4. We joined the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf (ECD) for an Easter service on Zoom.
5. Two committee members attended ECD's spiritual retreat with ELM in Austin, TX.
6. Many contributed to a daily Advent collection of video clips about relevant scriptures and reflections about them.
7. Our weekly services are being privately uploaded to YouTube.
8. Every year in December, SJASL makes holiday donations to worthy Deaf causes. This year we gave:
    a) $2,000 to Deaf International Community Church in Olathe, KS, run by a Deaf pastor, Rev. Dr. Debbie Buccholz. Our money will support their program for education and care for Deaf refugees/immigrants in the USA.
    b) $2,000 to a Jamaican relief fund for Deaf victims severe hurricane damage in provinces with unusually large Deaf populations.

c) $1,000 (matched to $2,000) for Deaf orphans in Ukraine. The $2,000 will be used for clothing, extracurricular activities at the Deaf school, summer camp and outings.
d) $500 for Wings of Warmth, a program that provides food and holiday gifts for needy families of students at California School for the Deaf here in Fremont.
e) $2,200 to individuals impacted by the temporary shutdown of SNAP and other government programs.
f) $500 for legal and related needs of a Deaf individual potentially facing deportation.

Blessing Bags – Mary Frances Leopold & Marcus Pun

In 2025, Blessings Bags distributions were limited both by a smaller budget and concern over the City of Fremont Rules regarding assisting the homeless within city limits which limited distribution.

Blessing Bag budget started at $2,694.01 in January 2025

We made two orders of blankets, 30 each. February and October 2025.

First blessings bag build of the year was March 1, 2025, with 48 bags. The next on October 18, and then a group-build / coffee hour on the day after Thanksgiving, November 29. Total number of bags, 144.

We also made Cottonelle wipe packages and snacks available for the Safe Parking months.

We have essentially spent out the budget for 2025.

Financing:

- We currently have little or no outside sources of funding.
- Assistance with getting grants would be greatly appreciated.
- We were able to get a few hundred socks donated which has been very helpful, they are
- expensive.
- Should St. James want to continue the blessings bag program a spreadsheet has been created with the cost breakdowns. With the current economy, each build of 48 blessings bags costs $1100.00.
- In addition, the current pricing on the blankets is $225 for 30, or $7.50 each.

Should we continue the program the church needs to decide the scope and if we want to make it larger or smaller. As everyone knows, 2025 has been a bit of a rough year but we hope that 2026 will have fewer interruptions and distractions so that we can work more on funding and other ways of getting assistance to the homeless.

Campus Care Team (formerly known as Work Parties) – Dave Nelsen

Formerly known as the Work Parties, we came up with a new ministry name which better describes our purpose, caring for the entire campus of St. James'. Our core team includes John and Meg Amouroux, Al Casas, Bob Doherty, Gregg Feeney, Mary Frances Leopold, Samir Kalitta, John Kimber, Dave Nelsen, Charlie Paratore, Marcus Pun, Bruce Roberts, Ken Trant, Scott Whitaker and Laura Winter. We meet each month, generally on the third Saturday. On odd-numbered months we meet for breakfast, discuss issues, and make plans for different projects around the church. On even-numbered months we meet at church and work toward completing projects and taking care of routine maintenance.

During the many campus care days this year we washed all the windows and screens, cleared leaves from roofs, gutters and downspouts (multiple times), trimmed our many trees and shrubs and we have tried to control the grass which cover our abundant open space by mowing, whacking or covering with wood chips.

These occasions working on the campus offer opportunities for parishioners to socialize with folks while working together and over lunch we share following our work. There are many people who participate in the maintenance of our campus and their time and talent is appreciated very much.

Chair Exercise / Tai Chi Class – Sylvia Ma

Chair Exercise/Tai Chi classes, a ministry of St. James', are being held on Zoom every Tuesday from 10:00-11:00am. All are welcome to join and there is no fee for the class.

We gather to do stretching and warm-up exercises, to learn the relaxing breathing/meditation exercises of QiGong, to learn some Bagua (internal martial arts) movements, and to do self-massage. The exercises are not strenuous, and we do them sitting down. No prior experience is necessary.

In 2025, we had 47 classes with an average of 5 participants per class. Participants include St. James' parishioners and non-parishioners.

In 2026, we will continue to have the Tuesday morning Chair Exercise/QiGong class 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 to participants 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.

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), 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.

Corazon Home Build – The Rev. Lori Walton

St. James' participated in the deanery's annual trip to Mexico to help build a house for an underserved family. We provided financial support and eight people representing St. James' traveled to Mexico. Our new bishop, Austin Rios, joined the team in the build.

Counters Report – Jan Brandt

The Counters assist the parish and treasurer by counting and documenting pledges, non-pledged offerings, and funds from users of the parish. The counters are conscientious and faithful behind-the-scenes workers, many of whom serve on over three additional parish committees.

Two of the six counters had served since the inception of the group in 2002. The members are committed to accurately recording and keeping the confidentiality of your donations. The late Gail Blalock is truly missed by the team; we appreciate that she was a counter for over two decades. In 2025 we added two new counters, Sylvia Ma and Katie Porter. We appreciate their efforts to learn all the details of the different accounts and procedures. It can be a challenge to learn the system.

Counting includes documenting donations in the Church Windows Software, and preparation of quarterly/annual giving statements. Counters also frequently volunteer as cashiers and counters for special events such as the Pancake Supper.

Please be kind to your Counters by including your pledge number on your check or bank Bill Pay.

Deanery Report, Southern Alameda County Deanery – The Rev. Lori Walton

The Southern Alameda County Deanery met in person three times in 2025. Three additional meetings were held via zoom by the Diocese to cover the Diocesan budget and to cover convention resolutions and cannon changes. In June, the deanery sponsored the annual Corazon build. From our parish, Mike Scrutton represents the deanery on the Nominations Committee. The deanery President is Rev. Justin Cannon, and the Vice President is Shawn Anderson. Our Deanery Representatives are John Wagas, Mike Scrutton, Ken Trant and Bev Mosier. Jim McConnell is the Alternate.

Endowment Fund Report – Meg Amouroux

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'. Gifts can be given at any time of the year.

The funds are presently invested with the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF) and are overseen by the Endowment Board. In 2025, the Endowment Board included Jan Brandt (Chair), Tom Blalock, Patty Lacy, Giri Singh, Meg Amouroux (Secretary) and St. James' Treasurer Bruce Roberts, who is an *ex officio* member of the Board.

While protecting the principal, distributions can be made annually and reflect the growth of the fund. As of this writing, we have not yet received year-end numbers but can share numbers from the end of the 3rd Quarter of 2025: the Principal Value at the end of September 2025 was $256,435 and the Market Value was $363,396. This reflects a market value increase of $33,375 for the year (at the end of Q3), which is approximately 10.1%.

The Board has made one distribution this year: $9700 from the General Fund at the direction of the Vestry. The Little Church and Memorial Garden committees both elected not to receive distributions this year.

Facilities – Dave Nelsen

The purpose of the facilities team is to manage the maintenance of the buildings and grounds of St. James'. Similar to our homes, equipment and appliances grow old and break, trees grow too large for their space, issues with electrical and plumbing systems need to be addressed. The facilities team addresses needs for repairs and maintenance by organizing volunteer work parties or finding suitable contractors to do necessary repairs. 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.
- J.T.S. Tree Service did major pruning of three trees and removed three trees from the memorial garden.
- The wooden cross in the big church was re-hung with new line and a pulley system so the cross can be reached without a tall ladder.
- The sewer line close to the parish hall restrooms has been an issue for years due to root incursion into the pipe. This was finally solved by digging a hole through the concrete in that hallway and one outside, exposing the drainpipe. A new pipe was then "burst" through the old pipe, replacing a 12-foot section. After the new concrete had cured enough, new tiles were glued in place by Charlie Paratore. A short length of drainpipe was also replaced near the big church restrooms where roots had made their way into that pipe.
- New photocells were installed atop the two parking lot light fixtures. This involved the use of a very tall ladder, provided by Ron Larson and help from Charlie Paratore, Samir Kalitta, Al Casas, Scott Whitaker and Dave Nelsen. The two light poles were also painted.
- While the tall ladder was up, we also replaced several light bulbs in the little church.
- Two speakers were added under the eaves facing the memorial garden. Thanks go to Mike for buying the appropriate speakers, to Dave and Samir for mounting them, and to Ian for routing the wire under the building.
- The gutter outside the vestry room was replaced as well as several wooden eves which had decayed. Several other areas where wooden eaves and siding had decayed were also replaced or repaired, all this in preparation for painting.
- The big church, office, parish hall and the education building all received a fresh coat of paint.
- The flat portion of the big church roof is covered with special foam and top coated with waterproof paint. Unbeknownst to us when we decided to install this type of roof, crows like to peck holes through the topcoat and into the foam. Approximately 170 holes were washed, decayed material loosened and removed, vacuumed clean and filled

with a special roofing caulk. The education building has the same roof type and issue, but with far fewer holes. We started repairs on this roof but were delayed by rain. Although a method to stop the crows from pecking holes has evaded us, patching this way has proven to be a reasonable fix for the issue.

Faith Formation – The Rev. Lori Walton

The Faith Formation program remained robust during 2025. The Monday morning bible study continued, using a study on the Gospel according to Mark. The Wednesday bible study undertook a multiple week learning of the Sermon on the Mount. When completed, they engaged in a study of the women in the New Testament. Both studies are held on Zoom. For the Lenten program, we used the Living Compass program, "Living Well Through Lent" which allowed a daily reading and a weekly gathering to discuss it. The course was facilitated by me and Jan.

In March, Canon Amy Cook, the Canon for Faith Formation joined St. James' to lead a day retreat for women with a focus on the topic of wilderness.

In May, we had a four session "Foundations of our Faith" course meant to educate newer parishioners and prepare some for confirmation or reception. The course was well attended and resulted in several confirmations.

In the fall, a new offering called a "mini speaking series" was offered. This was three sessions where selected parishioners were invited to share their stories of immigration. The panels consisted of George V. (Croatia), Marlene B. (Nicaragua), Xiyun F. (China), Reena D. (India), Sylvia M. (Hong Kong), and Tom V. (Ethiopia). The gatherings were so well received we will likely continue that format with varied subjects into the future.

Other forums were held between the 8:00 and 10:30 services which included a review of the Diocesan proposed resolutions, a discussion of our new outreach with Imara International, and a budget review meeting.

We had one adult baptism in November which provided an opportunity for education around the baptismal rite and the history and theology of baptism. Baptism classes were also offered to families of children being baptized.

For Advent, we explored a series of art, scripture, and meditations offered by Loyola Press. The four-week series was facilitated by me, Jan, and Rev. Ingrid.

Faith & Fellowship Dinners – The Rev. Lori Walton

For 2025, we did not organize any Faith & Fellowship dinners. The plan is to start them again in the spring of 2026.

Finance Committee – Jan Brandt

In 2025, no topic or situation arose necessitating a meeting by the Finance Committee. Committee Members: Jan Brandt (Chair, Endowment Chair, Counters Lead, Pledge Assistant, Rev. Lori Walton, Mike Scrutton (Pledge Chair, Tech), Bruce Roberts (Treasurer), Giri Singh.

Flatlanders – Ladies' Weekend – Laura Winter

St. James' has a long history of fellowship opportunities. Over the past 50+ years, the women of St. James' have gone out of town to spend a weekend together, sharing, caring and bonding with each other. The group started out camping at various Bay Area parks, switching to townhome living at Pajaro Dunes overlooking Monterey Bay about 15 years ago.

In 2025, we met again on the shores of Monterey Bay mid-September for our annual fellowship weekend. It was a great chance to relax and recharge. We stayed at a different home this year, as the new unit is more accessible for all of us with mobility issues and aging bodies. We welcomed back a couple of long-distance travelers, Lin from Phoenix and Connie from Florida. This year is the first time Connie could attend since retiring to Tampa in 2015 with Jack. Jay drove over on Friday, meeting up with us after her retirement to live by the water last year. Jasmine fit in smoothly as a first-time participant and taught us one of her favorite games. Others attending were Marlene, Linda, Mary, Linda, Nancy, Jan, Linda, Julie, and Laura.

The weather was perfect for long walks on the beach. We also watched the surf from our balcony, observing dolphins and whales swim by, birds dive-bomb for fish, and saw many people playing, fishing and surfing along the shore. Friday evening, we roasted marshmallows for s'mores on our beach bonfire, later checking out the visible Milky Way soaring overhead.

Inside, we shared stories as we relaxed in our weekend home. We played games, cooked and ate delicious meals, and assembled a pair of jigsaw puzzles. There was time for conversations with the whole group, and opportunities for quiet discussions among two or three at a time. Naps were plentiful too. We strive to provide a place of belonging for all who attend, and for all who wonder if they would be comfortable joining the group.

Sunday morning closed with our traditional morning prayer service. We reflected on our time together and shared our experiences.

We already have the 2026 weekend scheduled and would love to have more women join us September 17-20. We have reserved two units – the one we stayed in this year and the adjacent unit. Ladies, mark your calendars and join in the fun!

Greeters – Dave Nelsen

The purpose of the Greeters ministry is to welcome visitors and guests to St. James'. 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 members of St. James' a visitor encounters. The greeter represents St. James' and serves the rector by being a host to visitors at a time the rector is often too busy to give a visitor the time or attention they may need. Thank you to Gregg Feeney, Scott Whitaker, Alice Johnson and Dave Nelsen for your welcoming presence.

Hospitality/Coffee Hour Hosts – Mary Frances Leopold & Marcus Pun

Marcus and I have enjoyed our time steering the Hospitality Team. We want to thank all of you for your patience and very kind thoughts and words as we have had a bit of a rough year in our personal lives. The St. James' family always comes through and 2025 was no different.

Our regular Sunday teams have been such a blessing; working to provide each service's coffee hour with beverages and snacks and supporting special events as well. We have also welcomed three new people who are floating around helping as needed: Isaiah Zachariah, Lisa Alday and Barry Kearns.

Not much has changed this year for Hospitality. Oh, I take that back. More people are regularly bringing food and drinks for both coffee hours. Our table is always bountiful and overflowing. Please remember to use the sign-up sheet on the Parish Hall bulletin board to the left of the kitchen roll-up window. This lets others know if they should bring something.

We tried our luck with a Coffee-and-Pie social the day after Thanksgiving. This was a joint effort with the Blessing Bag Ministry. It was a great success; delicious desserts and a workday to assemble bags for the winter.

Ruth Poole has graciously offered to donate new coffee makers, and we are just waiting for the ones we have to breathe their last breaths. She is also facilitating monthly donations of sweet treats and such from Costco. Thank you so much, Ruth!

2026 goals: Reminding people to sort their trash is still on the list for this coming year. Keeping the kitchen clean and "ready for the next crew" is also important. If you are interested in joining our team, ask your coffee hour hosts or contact Marcus or me. Please have a cup of coffee and sit awhile.

Hunger and Homelessness Vigil, with Abode Services and the Tri City Interfaith Council – The Rev. Ingrid Jacobson

Approximately 60 people attended the 12th annual vigil on December 1st, organized by St. James', in collaboration with Abode Services and the Tri-City Interfaith Council. 118 people who died unhoused or as the result of the impacts of intermittent homelessness during the past year were remembered with a candle lit for each of them, their names read aloud, and with a brief personal remembrance of nearly all of them.

I officially hosted the event, but with a huge amount of planning and logistical help from Jan Scrutton and help and advice on gathering local leaders from other faiths from Toni Shellan,

who is a very active member of the Tri-City Interfaith Council. We were also greatly assisted by two members of Abode Services' communications staff, who provided the names of the 118 people remembered and offered creative promotional support. Opening and closing remarks were offered by Rev. Charlene Hinckley, President of the Tri-City Interfaith Council, and Vivian Wan, Chief Executive of Abode Services. Traditional prayers were offered by Muslim and Buddhist faith leaders, interspersed with the names and remembrances of each of the 118 deceased people, which were read aloud by Katie Fantin, Abode Services' VP of Programs for Santa Clara County, and Andy Madeira, Abode Board member. Jennifer Ravera offered music while the candles were being lit, and I closed the event with an Episcopal commendation of the souls.

St. James' blessing bags were made available to anyone who wanted to take one to someone in need. We donated the food collected in our November Food Drive to Abode Services, along with some of the socks collected in the autumn shoe and sock drive. The event was covered later that night on the 11pm local news (Channel 2, Fox), with the reporter noting that the event "emphasized that each individual deserved to be honored and recognized as a valued human being."

Imara International – The Rev. Lori Walton

In 2024, the vestry identified Imara International as our new international outreach to start in 2026. During the year, we held a forum introducing Imara International to the parish, showed a short video of Imara during worship, met with one of the board members of Imara, and made a plan to launch our formal relationship in January 2026. We are excited to begin this new ministry. Moving forward, the program will be under the supervision of Rev. Ingrid. For more information on Imara International, check out their website at www.imarainternational.org.

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. There were no notable upgrades this past year.

Lay Eucharistic Visitors – The Rev. Lori Walton & The Rev. Ingrid Jacobson

Our Lay Eucharistic Visitor program continues to be an important expression of pastoral care for the parish. Homebound and hospitalized members of the church are brought communion and prayers of the congregation. Our visitors are Marilyn Rose, Missy Bontempo, George Siegmann, Vivienne Paratore, Bev Mosier and Jasmine Reynolds. As of this writing, three LEVs are seeing three homebound parishioners on a routine basis. For 2026, the supervision of the Lay Eucharistic Visitor program will be under Rev. Ingrid.

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 2025 were Bob Doherty, Brian Cochran, Lilia Gomez, Patty Lacy, Mary Frances Leopold, John Amouroux, Marcus Pun, Tom Blalock, Laura Winter and Lisa Alday. Vivienne Paratore and Meg Amouroux served as Lectors when needed.

Lectors serving at the 10:30 a.m. Communion Service were Amy Davis, Victor Bontempo, Jim McConnell, Ken Trant, Barbara Milligan, Samir Kalitta, Will Feliciano, Emily Dunn, Tom Varghese, Jasmine Reynolds, Bruce Roberts, Mike Scrutton, Katherine Poltorak, Matt Poltorak and Nadia Singh. George Siegmann served as a Lector when needed.

Victor Bontempo, Tom Varghese, Lilia Gomez, Lisa Alday, Katherine Poltorak and Matt Poltorak were welcome additions to the Lector Ministry this year. We will also be having someone from the Youth Group reading every other month in 2026.

At the 8:00 a.m. Communion Service, LEMs light the candles, lead the procession to the altar by carrying the Cross, read the Prayers of the People and assist the Celebrant. LEMs serving at the 8:00 a.m. service during 2024 were Vivienne Paratore, Meg Amouroux, Brian Cochran and Laura Winter.

When there are no Acolytes at the 10:30 a.m. Communion Service, the LEMs performed the same duties as those at the 8:00 a.m. service. When there are Acolytes at the service, the LEMs light the candles and read the Prayers of the People.

LEMs serving at the 10:30 a.m. service were John Wagas, Matt Hurley, Will Feliciano, Marilyn Rose, Isaiah Zacharia, Barbara Milligan and George Siegmann.

I am so appreciative of the service that the Lectors and LEMs perform and for their willingness to volunteer when staff are needed for additional services.

Little Church Renovation Committee – Sylvia Ma

In 2025, thanks to the works of Ron Larson, Dave Nelsen, and the Campus Care Team, a proposal for lighting improvement of the Little Church was put forth in front of the Vestry. The Vestry approved the $1250 funding of the project. The money will come out of the Special Interest Little Church Fund. The new lighting will be installed in 2026.

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.

Mike Scrutton 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 we use an additional 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 Samir Kalitta, with Jan Scrutton, Meg Amouroux and Ian Kalitta assisting on occasion.

In addition to our regular services, this year we provided live streams for seven memorial services including the Celebration of Life for Rev Beth Phillips (viewed 827 times), the Pride Prayer Service in June, and Rev Ingrid's Priestly Ordination in December (viewed 112 times). We also streamed the Annual Meeting.

Our YouTube channel has 185 subscribers (up 20 from last year) on December 31st 2025. In 2025, Sunday Worship streams were watched live an average of 11 times (up 2 from 2024). Sunday services were streamed on average 18 times on the first day (up 2, including those watching live), and 31 times in the first week (down 1). Our Easter Sunday service was streamed 61 times in the first week (up 2). Our Christmas Eve Family service was streamed 29 times (up 14), and our traditional Christmas Eve Holy Communion was streamed 50 times (up 25).

Our website and YouTube channel features an introductory "Welcome to St. James'" video, which was watched 138 times (up 62).

This year we acquired a new, brighter projector which was used to relay the Celebration of Life for Rev. Beth Phillips to the Little Church. This projector will be installed in the Big Church for weekly use before the Annual Meeting.

Local Discernment Committee – Bev Mosier

Discernment is a set of practices to help determine God's will in our lives. A Local (aka Lay) Discernment Committee (LDC) is a small group of parishioners who walk alongside a person during the process of discerning a call to ordained ministry.

John Wagas' LDC was formed in the fall of 2022 with Sylvia Ma, Brian Cochran, Bev Mosier and Jim McConnell serving as co-explorers on his journey. After a period of getting to know John and hearing his heart, goals, aspirations and sacred experiences, we began a monthly diocesan curriculum of twenty lessons to guide us in directions we should be sure to consider. During 2025, we have continued to meet regularly to further support John's process, now as a postulant for Holy Orders. He will begin seminary this fall.

Maisha Bora – Bev Mosier

"Maisha Bora" is a Kenyan non-profit, which provides scholarships for girls/young women from poor families who could not otherwise afford educations. Through Maisha Bora, and with the assistance of its director, Anne Mwaura, St. James' has covered tuition, fees, books and housing for two students, Hope Nanyole and Miriam Nangila, for all of high school and college. Both young women have chosen medical careers. Hope's major at Moi University is nursing. Miriam is at Kijabe Medical School in surgical technology.

During 2005, both Hope and Miriam completed several practicums in a variety of medical settings and fields. Miriam reported that her favorite was assisting surgeons in the "Theater," i.e., operating room. Due to political unrest at and near Hope's college, resulting in school shutdowns and disruptions to Hope's progress in school, it was predicted that her graduation would be delayed. But she worked hard and was able to catch up. Therefore, both Miriam and Hope will be graduating on time this spring.

Thus, our commitment to Hope and Miriam has been fulfilled, since we have already paid for the remainder of their expenses. It has been an enlightening and rewarding 8-year journey with them. Now it is time to wish them well and transfer our focus to another outreach endeavor. Toward that end, we will begin a new partnership with another Kenyan mission, Imara International, soon.

Men's Trip – Gregg Feeney

For the last 17+ years, a group of men from St. James' head east to Arnold or Twain Hart areas on the third Thursday in August. We rent one or two homes and stay from Thursday evening to Sunday morning. The group carpools as we try to reduce our carbon footprint as we travel east to the mountains. Our group hikes, golf, wine & beer taste, short trips to areas of interest.

This year our trip cost $220 per person, which included food, housing, and non-alcoholic beverages. This year we found a large home to accommodate all 10 of us in the hills of Twain Hart. It was a little more remote, but it met all our other expectations. A group of us played golf on Friday and Saturday while another took a tour of the old Railtown in Jamestown. We visited this site in 2015 and had the same old engineer to show our group around. During

mealtimes and afternoon get togethers, the group shares stories, participate in great ideas on making St. James' even better and allow us to get to know attendees on a more personal level.

We still need to grow our group and bring in younger folks. A note will go out in February for a Save the Date so our group can attract more and do more planning.

Memorial Garden and Columbarium – Bob Doherty

The Columbarium located inside the Little Church and the Memorial Garden on the south side of the Little Church are two important sacred spaces on the St. James' campus. The Columbarium and Memorial Garden Committee has been busy in 2025 maintaining and improving these areas.

Everyone is invited to visit both areas and experience the peace and tranquility they offer. Take a moment to look over the names and dates on the brass plates of the Columbarium. Take a walk through the Memorial Garden, notice the names and dates on the headstones, and sit on a bench and take in the beauty that will surround you. You are among fellow parishioners who have gone before us.

A lot of effort has gone into improving the Memorial Garden during 2025. We have removed three big dead or dying trees, and the garden now basks in sunlight which is allowing us to bring back some plants that had died due to lack of sunlight, such as climbing roses over the rear arbor. We have retained the services of a landscape contractor to do major quarterly pruning, trimming and weeding. New mulch has been added to help retain moisture, conserve water and improve the ambiance. In addition to the existing headstones for the plots, where ashes have already been interred, we have added "RESERVED" markers for future plot locations for those who have paid for a plot reservation. A Plot Locator chart and Garden map have been developed to help locate existing and reserved plots. A step-by step guide on the interment of ashes has been developed to help parishioners who wish to have their ashes interred in the garden. We will soon have 100 headstones in the garden.

The Columbarium currently has 64 niches to hold the ashes of fellow parishioners, and plans for expansion are being evaluated (43 are occupied, 19 are reserved and 2 are available to be reserved).

If you are interested in more information or would like to join the Columbarium and Memorial Garden Committee, please contact our committee chairperson Bob Doherty.

Newsletter: The Window – Laura Winter

The parish newsletter is produced monthly to provide information about the goings-on at St. James', sharing information about upcoming events and recaps of recent occasions.

The team works hard to present a cross-section of the events at church. Classes are promoted. Special services are advertised beforehand and presented afterward with pictures or stories or both. Services of Easter and St. Francis Day are well documented. Work done around campus, such as painting the light poles, rehanging the Church cross, and work parties are presented in subsequent issues.

This year we included articles about Bishop Austin's multiple visits to St James'. He attended a Senior Lunch, and served at Rev. Beth Phillips' memorial, and at Ingrid Jacobson's ordination in December. The Window published pictures of each gathering.

Church leadership instructed The Window team to stop printing birthdays and anniversaries of members earlier this year, so they are no longer included. The prayer list still appears each month. Regular classes or meetings are listed each month.

The newsletter is only as good as the articles submitted. We appreciate and thank all those who contribute to the content, especially the vestry for the front page article each month. It is wonderful to hear so many voices. If you would like to submit articles or pictures of life at St. James', send it to newsletter@saintj.com by the 20th of each month.

The Window team in 2025 consisted of Laura Winter and John Wagas creating the issues, with Gregg Feeney inserting the financial summary and prayer list. Brian Cochran and Barbara Milligan (new team member this year) do a great job proofreading each issue to help maintain the high-quality St. James' always strives for. We would like to have more people to assist in the newsletter production. Speak with any team member if you are interested. The team thanks Ron Cook and Mike Scrutton for printing and posting each issue.

Analytics show The Window was accessed over 800 times in 2025. Thank you for your readership.

Outreach (General) & Community Engagement – The Rev. Ingrid Jacobson

We delivered almost 50 pairs of shoes to City Serve's Compassion Network in support of their weekly shoe giveaway, along with an abundance of socks from our autumn shoe and sock drive. We donated more socks to Abode Services after the Candlelight Vigil (more on that event in a separate report), as well as the food from our November Food Drive. Our Blessing Bags team has also included some of the socks we'd collected in the current bags, with still more in supply for the next round of Blessing Bags (There is more detail in the Blessing Bags Team's report).

I have begun to build relationships with the Tri-City Interfaith Council and its members, subscribing to their "*Friends of*" newsletter, reading the minutes of their monthly meetings, and promoting the events of some of the other faith group members. I've been greatly helped in

better understanding TCIC's aims and activities by meeting with Toni Shellen, who is an active member of this group. Though I haven't been able to attend any of their monthly meetings yet (due to a prior commitment to another bi-monthly meeting scheduled for roughly the same time), I represented St. James' by participating in TCIC's Annual Prayers for Peace Day event in September, offering some Episcopal prayers for peace. My goal is to attend all or most of TCIC's monthly meetings going forward (having managed to shift some of the meeting times of the other group).

Outreach (Children) – Jan Scrutton

2025 started with us being able to respond to a call from Union City Family Center (UCFC) for school backpacks and supplies for high school children. A spike in the number of young people they were aware of with needs left them short of supplies. I'm grateful that our commitment to being able to respond to such calls from groups we partner with meant I could shop and deliver eight sets to the Center quickly.

Our regular school supplies drive in the summer saw us delivering over $1500 of supplies to UCFC and Abode Services. Contact with these groups enables us to know exactly what their most needed items are, and donated funds can be spent accordingly.

For the second year, the Vestry agreed to sponsor the Fremont City After School programs (including summer camp and swimming lessons) as a silver level sponsor, which means we were included on the Aqua Adventure website and on a board outside the facility.

Receptions – Nancy Casteneda & Lauren Doherty

At St. James' we have a built a solid reputation for welcoming gatherings for a variety of events.

Our Receptions committee organizes food and decorations for on-campus church events such as weddings, memorial services, Bishop's visits, and special farewells. All are welcome to help prepare and/or set up food as needed, set up the gathering spaces, assist with the flow of visitors, and pitch in to clean up. Help is generally sought via email and direct announcement to the parish.

In 2025, we hosted five Celebration of Life receptions, three of which included interments, and an Ordination Reception for Rev. Ingrid Jacobson.

Our sincere thanks to all the hands and hearts that helped us be gracious hosts to those we served.

Safe Parking Program – Charisma Pangilinan

2025 was our second year as hosts for the City of Fremont's Safe Parking Program. The program helps address the urgent needs of individuals in our community who are experiencing homelessness and living in their vehicles. We provide participants with a safe place to park overnight with dedicated porta potties and garbage cans for their use.

Along with five other host churches, St. James' hosted twice this year, in January and October. As site coordinator, I also attend a monthly Zoom meeting with the City of Fremont and other site representatives. Together, we kept up to date on the program and heard about any concerns or successes from the other churches. Typically, we also reviewed the draft schedule for the upcoming months so each church can have ample time to plan before their next host month.

The six host churches in Fremont are: Niles Discovery Church, Christ the King Lutheran Church, Southbay Community Church, Grace Church, St. James' Episcopal Church and First United Methodist Church.

During our host months, we typically fill the month with volunteers signing up for both check-in's at 7pm and check-out's at 6:30am. Each day, our volunteers have generously offered hospitality items such as breakfast, dinners, snacks, drinks and ice. As a result of successful fundraisers, St. James' was able to provide each participant vehicle with a $100 Costco gas card in January and a $90 card in October.

When we host, we rarely have inconveniences or issues we need to address. This year, we ultimately needed to tow about five illegally parked cars from our lot. We also needed to juggle the schedule of porta potty and dumpster delivery and cleanings, which is a constant concern of all host sites.

The program is consistently at full capacity with 15 participant vehicles and 16 individuals (one current participant vehicle shelters two people). Some participants have been in the program for 2+ years. Over 20 individuals remain on the wait list. This year during our monthly meetings, we brainstormed ideas on how to graduate participants from the program. Additionally, we discussed ideas on how to bring on more host sites, including a recommendation letter I provided on behalf of St. James' about the effectiveness of the program. All efforts are with the desire to help more people in need and reduce the growing wait list.

Forward looking to 2026, St. James' is currently scheduled to host in February and October.

Senior Lunches – Jan Scrutton

In 2025 Senior Lunches took place in March, June and September with the first one in 2026 scheduled for January 13th. While these lunches continue to be focused on retirees, everyone is welcome and we often have people who are working from home or just available on the given date, joining us. The event is funded by $5 donations and further supported by food donations.

Our June 3 Lunch had the highest turnout with over 55 in attendance- encouraged to attend by the fact Bishop Austin and his wife Maleah were joining us. After lunch the Bishop took questions from the group – and we didn't just ask easy questions. He shared his ideas on how we as Christians should be responding to current world and national issues and used examples from his personal experiences.

Thank you to everyone who supports the lunches, with food, setting up or cleaning away, and to all those who attend – who chat with old friends and new and make our Parish Hall a busy lunchtime venue each time.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper – Dave Nelsen

Shrove Tuesday follows the season of Epiphany and is the last day before the fasting period of Lent. It is a day when people would traditionally use up "luxurious" foods like lard and sugar to ensure they wouldn't be wasted during Lent.

Following a long St. James' tradition we once again joined together to share a meal of pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage and ice cream. The men of the parish coordinated the operation, setting up, cooking, making plates, serving drinks and food and cleaning up afterward. People of the youth group helped with serving, bussing tables and flipping cakes. A second griddle was available again this year thanks to Kimo Awana. Dealing with all the tickets and guest coordinating were several women lead by Jan Brandt. This was a no-cost event again this year thanks to the generosity of a parishioner.

This is a wonderful occasion to serve, to be served and to reflect on the upcoming Lenten season. Thanks to everyone who helped and participated.

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.

St. James' is present on Facebook and Instagram with regular service live streams and recordings of past services available on Facebook created by Mike Scrutton. Links to the weekly newsletter are posted automatically to Facebook by our administrator Ron Cook. Other posts appearing on Facebook & Instagram are shared by John Wagas, Jan Scrutton and Mike Scrutton, with occasional Instagram posts shared by John Wagas.

On December 31st, 2025, our Facebook page has 633 followers with a "Facebook Page views" of 11,993 (up from 10,873 - the number of times any content from or about our page was seen). We posted to Facebook 126 times (down from 156 in 2024), including 56 links to weekly and

special service livestreams and 52 weekly emails. Our Instagram feed has 289 followers (down 1 from last year), where we posted 6 times (down 37 from last year).

St. James' Cares – Nancy Casteneda

St. James' has long been a loving community that cares for one another. We know that there are times in everyone's lives when we could use some help. St. James' Cares continues to be a confidential resource for help – for our parishioners, supported by our parishioners.

Everyone can participate in some way. Perhaps you can volunteer to make phone calls, visit home-bound parishioners, prepare meals, provide transportation or run simple local errands. Alternatively, you may need one these services.

If you have a need or would like to volunteer, please contact the St. James' Cares team in one of these ways:

- Fill out a form (found in the pews and in other places around campus) and place it in the collection plate
- Call the church office
- Email the team at care@saintj.com
- Fill out the form on the website (click here for link)

Stewardship – The Rev. Lori Walton

The vestry continues to be responsible for the stewardship campaign for the parish with support from Jan Brandt, Mike Scrutton, and Bruce Roberts. Like last year, the campaign consisted of a vestry sermon and encouragement for all members to pledge through a direct mailing and verbal announcements.

While the 2025 budget was passed with a deficit of more than $14,000, we will end the year in the black by over $36,000 (this does include monies transferred from Special Interest to Operating for salaries). For the upcoming year, 2026, we have pledges of over $437,000. We have received 16 new pledges, and approximately 35% of returning pledgers increased their donations from the previous year. For 2026, our income from pledge increases and new pledges is $85,000. From a financial and spiritual perspective, we are healthy and thriving. Our deepest thanks to those who have contributed to the ministry of St. James'.

Vital & Thriving – Mike Scrutton

Vital and Thriving has been a Diocesan initiative which uses Church Innovations materials and system for discerning God's vision for individual churches. St. James' elected to participate in this three-year process. We started by forming a steering committee and then a listening team

in the fall of 2022. Your Vital and Thriving Steering Committee has comprised of Jim McConnell, John Amouroux, Mike Scrutton, Brian Cochran, Vivienne Paratore and Rev. Lori Walton.

In the period from Epiphany through Easter, a group of 12 parishioners were interviewed on the subject of "Your Welcome at St. James". These interviews were conducted with help from Sylvia Ma, Meg Amouroux, Bob and Lauren Doherty. They produced some interesting insights on our ministry focused towards those seeking a church home, and on our accessibility to newcomers.

Vital & Thriving wrapped up in 2025. The Steering Committee would like to extend their thanks to all who took part in this program over the past three years.

Website – Mike Scrutton

The purpose of the website, saintj.com, is to act as the portal to the online ministry of St. James'. Its 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.

There were 13,825 website "sessions" this year and 33,122 "page views".

Wednesday Ante-Communion Service – Sylvia Ma

In 2025, The Rev. Lori led the Wednesday Ante-Communion services from January through April 2, at which point The Rev. Bill Hale led the service for the remaining of the year. This service continues to be held on Zoom and is a place where the prayers and concerns of the parish are gathered. We also spend time discussing the upcoming Sunday lessons. The group numbers are between 8-10 participants each week.

In 2026, Rev. Bill will continue to lead us on Wednesdays from 10-11am. Everyone is welcome to participate. The Zoom link could be found on the St. James' website, www.saintj.com, on the Parish Events Calendar page for Wednesdays.

Thank you to all the authors, editors, and readers
who made this report possible!