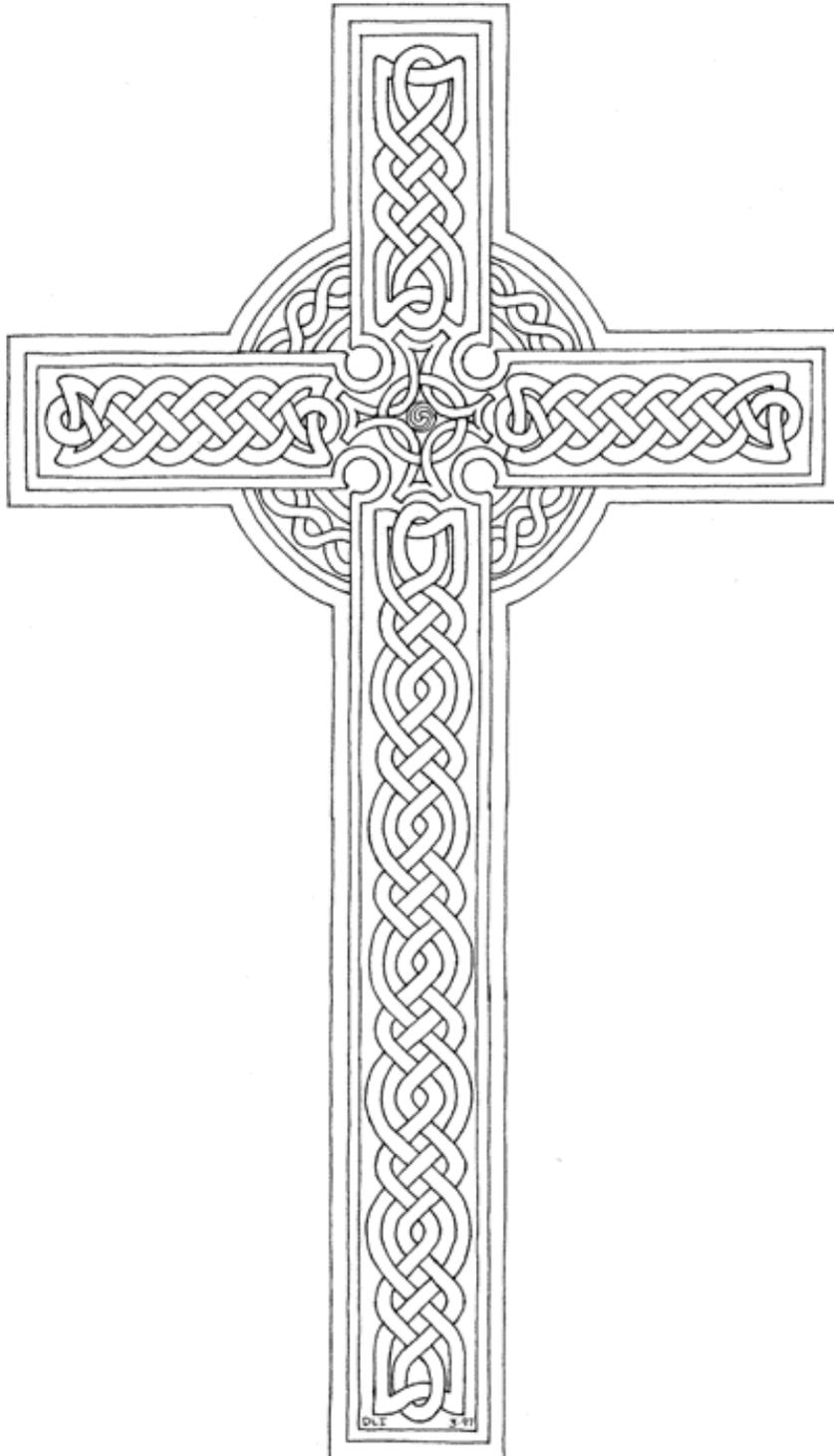


- ST. JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 8, 2015



CONTENTS

PAGE	
3	THE LEADERSHIP OF ST. JAMES' CHURCH 2014
4	ST. JAMES' ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
5	SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT
5	MISSION STRATEGY
6	YARN TWISTERS
6	SPECIAL EVENTS
6	PROPERTY MAINTENANCE
7	UNITED THANK OFFERING
8	NORTH PORCH
8	COFFEE HOUR
8	FAMILY BREAKFAST
9	ST. FIACRE'S GUILD
9	ALTAR GUILD
10	LAY EUCHARISTIC VISITORS
10	USHERS
10	MULTI-GENERATIONAL BELL CHOIR
11	ORGANIST AND CHOIR ACCOMPANIST
11	ST. JAMES' JOURNAL
12	COMMUNICATIONS
13	CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN
13	YOUTH GROUP
13	PRAYER MINISTRY
13	CARES
13	STEWARDSHIP
14	FUNDRAISING
14	COUNTERS
15	FACILITY USE
15	TREASURER'S REPORT

The Leadership of St. James' Church 2014

Vestry Members:

Peter Quelly (2015 - not elected)
Peter Gartelmann (2015)
Ellen Infante (2015)
Chika Okoye (2016)
Barbara Olesen (2016)
Janice Cipriani (2016 - not elected)
Claudia Scala (2017 - not elected)
Paul Bartkus (2017)
William Critchley (2017)

Senior Warden

Dave Lacouture

Junior Warden

Carol Novrit

Treasurer

Janice Cipriani

Bookkeeper

Ellen Infante

Minute Taker

Julie Mills

Vestry Clerk

Claudia Scala

Supply Priest

The Rev. Elizabeth Myers

Bishop, Diocese of Newark

The Rt. Rev. Mark Beckwith

Our Staff:

Parish Administrator

Julie Mills

Sexton

Pauline Volkert

Music Director

Pam Laura

Organist & Bell Choir Director

Louise Olshan

St. James' Annual Meeting Minutes

February 9, 2014

Call to Order

The Annual Meeting was called to order with prayer by Sr. Warden, Dave Lacouture at 10:30 AM.

Acceptance of 2013 Annual Meeting Minutes

The Annual Meeting Minutes of the 2013 Annual Meeting were accepted without change.

Recognition

Recognition of Church Administrator, Supply Priest, Outgoing Officers, Convention Delegate:

Linda Ayres

Rev. Betsy Meyers

Roy Smith, David Bernauer, David Jenkins

Wendy Germaine

Election of Vestry Members and Convention Delegates

Biographical information on candidates was provided to all in attendance. The following slate was proposed by the Nominating Committee:

Vestry: William Critchley (3 year)

Dave Handville (3 year)

Paul Bartkus (3 year)

Deputy to Diocesan Convention: Jules Quelly

Alternate to Diocesan Convention: Mary Ann Simmons

Elections: Nominating Committee slate was accepted and a unanimous vote was cast.

Budget Discussion

Carol Novrit provided and discussed the 2014 budget with all in attendance.

The Finance Committee was thanked for their continued hard work on such an important matter.

Mortgage Discussion

Greg Malejko shared the history of the finances surrounding the building the Great Hall including the plan to pay the mortgage.

Carol Novrit discussed the current situation regarding the funds available to pay the mortgage. There is only enough money to pay the mortgage for about 15 more months. Ideas on how to raise money to pay the mortgage were discussed. **Paul Bartkus** will be creating a plan on how to raise money to pay the mortgage.

- ❖ *A request was made of the Vestry to include Pre-paying the mortgage with the money saved resulting from the re-finance savings.*

Transition

Dave Lacouture provided an update on the Transition Process. The Vestry will work with a consultant from the Diocese to create a Transition Plan.

- ❖ *A request was made of the Vestry to provide a weekly update on the Transition via email, announcement and/or forum.*

Youth Ministry

Wanda Smith and Linda DeLoreto provided an update on the Youth Ministry for 6th grade and up. The Youth Ministry is centered on Self, Church, Community and World. It has a similar format as Education For Ministry. There is a calendar of events and the program is well received by the participants.

Closing Prayer

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Technically and officially, St. James was in “transition” in 2014. For the first several months we collectively seemed to be finding our way. Some of us could not help but reflect on how things “used to be” when we had a full time priest who took care of every detail of the churches’ administration and worship life

But truthfully, I ask, what does it mean for a church to be in “transition”? What has it meant for St. James’ this past year? Did we really do anything differently this year without a full time priest or rector? Did we change at the core or did we continue exploring? Did we fret over money or families choosing to go elsewhere to the point of stagnation? Did we put our ministries on-hold at the risk those families who count on us? Did we stop the stewardship of our 150 plus year-old church and newer Great Hall? Did we stop having the weekly Holy Eucharist that sustains us? Did we curtail or stop fellowship activities, outreach, or making our presence known in the community? Did we stop any of the critical aspects that make St James’ what and who it is? Did we close the doors in fear and wait for a priest to remove our fear and anxieties about the future and make in “all better?”

No, we did not stop! We opened our doors and continued being who we are. With dedication and faith, you yes, you helped St. James’ hardly skip a beat

Sure there were changes and adjustments this year...that is natural for any person or organization. But in the end, every single person connected to St James’, clergy, staff, Vestry, and lay persons and family members affirmed their faith, our mission and sense of purpose in Hackettstown with direct action. I could list all the activities that continued in 2014 with the good work of key leaders and their helpers but these are outlined in this report. What I’m most proud of personally is that we ensured weekly worship along with the Holy Eucharist.

As we look forward to the next step in our “journey” and welcome a new part-time priest in 2015, I’m confident that we will not only grow stronger in our faith but also in our commitment to who we are as church. We should feel truly blessed that we have had each other during this transition and that collectively our gifts are undeniable and special. Good things are yet to come.

Peace,
Dave

MISSION STRATEGY

The mission strategy committee supports the outreach efforts of our church. As stated previously, our mission is to concentrate efforts locally, trying not to duplicate programs hosted by other churches or agencies. We often, however, may contribute to or support those programs. We also seek to support outreach undertaken by parishioners in activities approved by the Vestry.

The sale of grocery gift cards is the primary means by which we raise money for outreach. This year we added cards from Weis Markets to our sale of ShopRite cards. Both stores donate 5% of the sales to our efforts (we receive \$5 for every \$100 of cards that we sell). This year we sold just over \$88,000 worth of cards! Thus, we earned approximately \$4400 for outreach. We transferred \$4000 to the general operating fund of the church. This transfer included \$1000 that was withdrawn from our CD for the Deaf Ministry. Our CD has been drawn down to a little over \$3000. Given this balance, there are three more years remaining for similar withdrawals. It is noteworthy that the Summer Back Pack Program purchased \$15,000 worth of Weis Market Gift Cards for inclusion in their food bags.

This year's Christmas Tree of Giving supported two local families by collecting about sixty presents that were divided among four girls and four boys (including a set of twins), ages eight to sixteen. Our congregation provided wrapped gifts that included clothing, toys, games, art supplies, movie tickets, and restaurant and ShopRite gift cards. Thank you to our Sunday School children who colored paper angels to hang on the tree when the candy canes were taken.

Our holiday food collections generated about 50 bags that were assembled by the Sunday school and distributed at Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Each bag consisted of nonperishable foods

and some paper goods, as well as at least one ShopRite gift card donated by parishioners. Thank you to Miss Jennifer, Miss Alicia, Miss Jeanette, and Miss Pam for your super bag-organizing-packing skills and support.

As we have said in the past, we are all members of this committee and welcome the opportunity to underwrite an outreach project that you wish to start.

Paul Bartkus

YARN TWISTERS

The Yarn Twisters did not hold many meetings during 2014 due to weather, vacations, etc. but we did still manage to send a box of items to the Seamen's Church Institute (SCI) "Christmas at Sea" containing 41 hats and scarves, as well as assorted toiletries. Unfortunately, a few participants have had to drop out of the group due to work or family commitment, retirement or moved away, so we are actively seeking new participants.

The SCI is a voluntary ecumenical agency affiliated with the Episcopal Church that provides pastoral care, maritime education, and legal and advocacy services for mariners.

The historic name of this volunteer program, "Christmas at Sea", only partially describes the work of the people who make holidays a little warmer for mariners. While gift distribution happens during winter months, collection and creation of items happens year round, and while many gifts go to international mariners working "at sea," thousands of gifts also go to mariners working on inland waterways here in the United States. It is located in Port Newark, NJ.

I am confident that the Yarn Twisters will be able to continue to donate a couple or more boxes of hand knitted/crocheted items for the hardworking men and women seafarers who supply us with so many things that make our lives more comfortable. For more information on this program, please visit their website at www.seamenschurch.org. Anyone interested in joining the group is welcome to contact me at 908-684-3566 or email me at frlbailey1@comcast.net.

Linda Miller

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Special Events Committee continues to meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month and plans fellowship activities among other events throughout the year. Highlights from 2014 include: The Epiphany Dinner, St. Patrick's Day Parade Participation, Memorial Day Parade Participation, "Eucharist, Dinner and Movie," Homecoming Sunday, Hackettstown Community Day, Bowling Night, and "Potluck and Game Night." We are always looking for new ideas and members to join in.

Kathy Lacouture

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

St. James' is extremely fortunate and blessed to have a beautiful historic church, a large and functional gathering place and meeting rooms for ourselves and the community all in a central location dating back more than 150 years. Of course like any physical structure, our facilities are affected and impacted by regular day-to-day use and environmental factors. Anyone who has ever owned a home can appreciate that repairs and upkeep is truly a never ending challenge. Yet, supporting St. James' facilities through stewardship of either time or talent, or treasure is the best gift to ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy the space as have we and our families. Some of the major repairs that were addressed in 2014 were:

- Rotted still plate and fascia due to water damage. The Moore street side of church and Great Hall was repaired.
- Wood foundation on the side and frontage of the church and Great Hall was wrapped with aluminum.
- Upgrade and repairs to lighting controls in the sanctuary.
- Mitcham House porch steps, rotted floor boards and old railing replaced. Work to be completed in the spring.
- Sanctuary Furnace worn parts replaced.
- Hot water circulator pump installed in the main kitchen to improve hot water recovery time.
- Sanctuary Sound system repaired.

In addition to these repairs there were two maintenance mornings where repair, small tasks, clean-up and landscaping was accomplished. The building and grounds of St. James' is our worship home and so much more. Everyone is encouraged to do what they can by supporting the building fund through a pledge or contribution or volunteering on maintenance mornings or other similar projects that supports our beloved home.

Dave Lacouture

UNITED THANK OFFERING

I would like to take this opportunity to talk to you a little about the United Thank Offering in the Episcopal Church.

This is a program that originated in the late 1800's for the sole purpose of building our churches and helping others who needed help. Even though this is the simplistic version of what the program is all about, it has not changed drastically in its purpose.

The basis for this program is not only to raise money for churches and families, but it is a way for us to give thanks for all the many blessings in each day, month and year. We take so much for granted. It is important to step back, and look at the blessings of the day...and thank God for including us in His glorious plans.

Today's UTO monies will be granted in support of programs within Anglican provinces and dioceses:

1. That implement actions within the requesting diocese or province to:
 - a) Address compelling human needs, and/or
 - b) Expand mission and ministry;
2. That are expended during the twelve months following grant award;
3. That are a new work, a new phase of work, or an expansion of existing work;
4. That give special attention to disadvantaged persons, places, organizations;
5. That are apart of provincial or diocesan planned mission strategy; and
6. In which the United Thank Offering participation is clearly identifiable.

The UTO is one of the older programs in our church that has done the most good for many church families, clergy and organizations in the church that are trying to make life better for those less fortunate.

I am proud to be a part of this program for I have been a part of this program since childhood with the Mite boxes – now UTO boxes.

As you can see, we have UTO boxes on the windowsills and in the back of the church as you come in. Envelopes are also available. This offering of "Thanks" will be given with love from our church family here at St. James'. Our next Ingathering will be November 17th at which time these boxes and envelopes will be collected. It will be taken to the General Convention as our donation.

Please help, if you can. You can have boxes and envelopes all throughout the year. Help as a family with your pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters.

Ellen Infante
UTO Coordinator

NORTH PORCH

St. James' became host to North Porch in October of 2011. North Porch Women's and Infants' Center is a non-profit organization which provides emergency seven-day supplies of formula, diapers, baby food, clothing, bed linens and other items for needy mothers who are referred by social agencies that work cooperatively with some of the area churches. A project of the Episcopal Church Women in the Diocese of Newark, it maintains sites in Newark, Paterson, Dover, and now, Hackettstown.

On behalf of the North Porch Board, The Rev. Margaret Otterburn extends thanks to St. James' for the space to serve needy families in the Hackettstown community.

COFFEE HOUR

Coffee Hour extends our fellowship at God's holy table (the altar) to the tables in the Great Hall!

We enjoy goodies, catch up with each other, collect children from Sunday School or Youth Group, read the latest Journal posted on the boards or...sign up to host a Coffee Hour!

You can sign up to host a Sunday this year. There is always a signup sheet in the Great Hall. We have hosts who are celebrating a family event like birthday or baptism, hosts who like to bake, and hosts who like to bring Shop-Rite goodies! We also love to have your group (Choir, Altar Guild, etc.) host a coffee hour, and that makes the work easier. As a church which believes strongly in accessibility, our goodies are not all sweet but often include cheese and crackers or fruit.

We would love you to host a coffee hour! Your setup responsibility is to continue to make the coffee for after the 10 am service using our brewer (coffee is premeasured and easy to prepare!), bring and set out the goodies, and clean up or arrange for cleanup. Think about teaming with someone else and divide prep and cleanup.

Join us in celebrating what Episcopalians have called "the eighth sacrament"!

FAMILY BREAKFAST

Pete Quelly has taken the reigns from DJ Hoffman (who relocated this autumn) to lead the kitchen crew on the first Sunday of each month for St. James' famous Sunday Breakfast. The team consists of Pete and Gerri Huryk, Chris, Amelia, and Lillian Vitalos, Emilia Quelly, various other volunteers. The team has been preparing breakfast classics as well as offering some new dishes such as breakfast pitas, interesting quiches, and morning casseroles. The team is really in need of volunteers to help. In a perfect world, the team would have members who can help with setup, cooking, and/or cleanup so the members could get to attend services, even on a rotating basis. On an average Sunday, 25 guests are served.

The team is currently working on reorganizing the kitchen. The food stores are being sorted and rotated better and unused dishes and equipment are being relocated for better efficiency. The hope is that the St. James Kitchen and Great Hall will become a friendlier place for those interested in renting the space for personal use. The team thanks you in advance for your help with keeping the kitchen clean and organized.

ST. FIACRE'S GUILD

If you have ever helped tend the gardens around the church and Mitcham House you have been part of the St. Fiacre's Guild. We are stewards of the perennial plants and shrubs that grace the St. James' property.

Our work follows the seasons of the year. In the spring we raked and weeded the garden beds, and planted annual flowers. We also planted any daffodils or tulips that did not find a home after Easter. Begonias were put in the wooden planters on the Mitcham House front steps, and mums were planted in the cement pots in the front of the church in the fall. (The wooden boxes will need to be replaced in the near future.) Weeding was done during the summer from time to time, and the planters watered when necessary.

This past fall, on a maintenance morning, the garden beds were raked and perennials cut back and put to rest. St. Fiacre volunteers did a great job cleaning up the areas in front of and around the church, and what a difference it made! One member took special care to prune the rose bushes which grow along the retaining wall. We also had help from the maintenance committee pruning shrubs that had become overgrown. Most of our work is scheduled on maintenance mornings, three or four times a year for this reason.

It is very rewarding to keep the gardens around St. James looking beautiful, and help is always welcomed and most appreciated. So please consider joining us and becoming a part of this St. James' ministry.

Respectfully submitted,
Phyllis Bartkus

ALTAR GUILD

In the early days of the church, priests and nuns were responsible for the care of the altar and sanctuary. Later these tasks were entrusted to a chosen group of women who became known as the Altar Guild. Because congregations vary in degree of ceremony followed, our service ranges from simple to elaborate but is always grounded in faith and focused on detail and tradition that is offered to the glory of God.

St. James' Altar Guild functions with four teams of two or more women (and sometimes men!) who prepare for the weekly Eucharist, care for the sacred vessels and linens, and serve the congregation by arranging for other liturgical services. This requires about one hour of work on either Friday or Saturday at a mutually convenient time set by the weekly team members. Preparations for Easter and Christmas involve the joint efforts of all teams. The vessels and linens for any weekly chapel service are set out in the sacristy after services on Sunday. A local dry cleaner donates his services to help clean and maintain the vestments, paraments, and frontals. One Altar Guild member washes and irons the linens used at the Eucharist.

Replacement linens are purchased as holes appear and/or stubborn stains make the linens no longer liturgically white. We still hope to be able to replace the woolen white and gold frontal. This is our "go-to" set used for Baptisms and funerals...correct in color and much easier to handle than the pure white Jacobean used for Christmas and Easter.

We reluctantly accepted the resignations of Linda Ayres and Barbara Olesen from Altar Guild during 2014. We hope that they will return as their family and other Church obligations permit. Rae Aron returned to St James' and to serve with the Altar Guild. We are grateful for her knowledge, experience and energy. We have also had a few inquiries from other members of the congregation, and we invite anyone who is interested in preparing the Lord's Table to stop in after services and speak to the Altar Guild members busy in the Sacristy.

The Altar Guild is very thankful for the continued support of the St. James' parishioners. Without your generous contributions we would not be able to have the beautiful flowers for our weekly Eucharist or Christmas or Easter. Additional donations from lighting the Sanctuary Lamp (in memory of a deceased

loved one) are greatly appreciated. The Altar Guild is also responsible for purchasing communion bread and wine, linens, candles and candle wax, weekly flowers not sponsored by a parishioner, and other “odds and ends.”

Altar Guild is not just another church job. It requires dedication, attention to detail and a cheerful willingness to respond to the needs of our congregation. It is our privilege to serve St. James’.

Meg Critchley

LAY EUCHARISTIC VISITORS

Three new Lay Eucharistic Visitors have been trained to join the existing members of this important ministry. When there is a request for communion to be brought to a parishioner’s home or healthcare facility, a member of the LEV is available to do so. Most commonly this will be done on Sundays after church services with the blessing of the priest. The priest and church office are the main sources of communication for any new requests and then coordinated with the available LEV’s.

Kathy Lacouture

USHERS

Ushers play an important part in welcoming folks as they enter our church. They can set the tone for a person’s experience, especially if they are first-time visitors.

Their main responsibilities include collecting the offering, assisting during communion and preparing the church for the next service.

For anyone who would like to participate in a ministry that requires minimal training or preparation, but one that is significant in many ways, you can just see any of our current ushers or wardens for additional information.

Thank you to all of our current ushers.

Janice Cipriani

MULTI-GENERATIONAL BELL CHOIR

Worship Services at St. James’

- March 16 10 AM service
- April 13 (Palm Sunday) 10 AM service
- April 18 (Good Friday) 7:30 PM service
- May 4 10 AM service
- June 22 (Choir Recognition) 10 AM service
- August 17 9 AM service
- August 24 9 AM service
- October 5 10 AM service
- December 14 10 AM service

Community Activities

- January 12 House of the Good Shepherd
- November 23 Gethsemane Lutheran Church, Hackettstown Hymn Sing
- December 14 Donaldson Farms

2014 began with the untimely death of Bell Choir member, Helen Wise. Helen was a faithful member of the Bell Choir for many years. She is missed by all of us. A beautiful shadow box hangs in the balcony containing Helen’s gloves, color dots, folder nametag, Bell Choir pins and the memorial card from the funeral home.

One of my thoughts is that choir should not be all work and no play. So on May 4 members of the Bell Choir met after rehearsal for a potluck lunch. Everyone enjoyed sharing the delicious food and especially having a chance to sit and talk and share fellowship.

When the program year came to an end in June and I was looking forward to a more restful summer season, Bell Choir members asked if they could ring during the summer. Was I happy to hear that members wanted to ring even during their “vacation” time! Since we were worshiping in the Great Hall during the summer, we experimented with having the Bell Choir ring in this environment and ended up ringing behind the dividers used for Sunday School. This seemed to help with the acoustics. A small group on volunteers rang on two Sundays in August. Ringers were Brian and Meredith Nolan, Scott Carson, Chika Okoye and Marge Schafetz.

We joyfully rejoiced in the birth of Brian III on October 5 to Bell Choir members, Brian and Meredith Nolan.

A very sincere thank you to all the members of the Bell Choir for their dedication and commitment. During the year 2014 the Bell Choir members were: David Bernauer, Scott Carson, Drew Lacouture, Pam Laura, Brian Nolan, Meredith Nolan, Chika Okoye, Sam Olshan, Marge Schafetz, Amelia Vitalos and Melissa Vitalos. St. James’ is blessed to have such a faithful group of people who are willing to share their time and talents with the congregation and the community. I hope that the efforts of all the members of the Bell Choir added to the worship experience at St. James’ this past year. As we go “on the road,” I hope that the Bell Choir is helping to spread the Good News of the Gospels and also showing the community at large what St. James’ has to offer.

Louise Olshan
Director

ORGANIST AND CHOIR ACCOMPANIST

There have been no problems with the organ in 2014. The organ bench and console, however, sometimes have some crumbs from the ceiling on them. I had been assured that I did not have to worry about anything really big falling on me.

It is a pleasure to work with the members of the Senior Choir. St. James’ is blessed to have members who give so freely of their time and talents week after week.

Louise Olshan
Organist and Choir
Accompanist

ST. JAMES’ JOURNAL

The Journal serves to connect a wide readership to the life of St. James’ including people at home, friends, and others beyond our community. The newsletter is distributed by mail or email to more than 100 families or individuals on the first Sunday of each month.

The email Journal helps to save postage, paper, and trees. The email edition allows you to see our photos and illustrations in color. It is also available on our Church website’s home page, along with archived copies of previous editions. As of year end, we were emailing to about two thirds of our subscribers, and print mailing to the other third. The Journal is still available in a hard copy to either pick up at church or receive by mail. Sign up to receive the Journal by email at stjames214@comcast.net

Ten monthly issues in 2014 featured pastoral letters from the Rector, Words from the Wardens, upcoming events or programs, and parish life and outreach information. The Journal featured articles and pictures about Maintenance Mornings, Special Events, and all the great fundraising events - too many to mention. Service schedules, Sunday School events, and special seasonal events were also featured along with pictures.

The Journal's content and production depend on the contributions of many. Our thanks go to all who contribute articles and information about our parish life. The articles highlight the dedicated and ongoing service of everyone from Altar Guild to Choirs to Fundraisers to Sunday School teachers and Youth Group leaders (to name only a few). David and Kathy Lacouture, and Brian Nolan have provided photographs that are truly worth "a thousand words" on Journal pages.

Please contribute to the Journal. The deadline is one Sunday before publication; or simply check the parish calendar on our website. Personal reflections in poetry or prose, milestones, information or reports on church life, and photos are more than welcome. All articles should be submitted to stjames214@comcast.net **and** olesen@comcast.net. Do you have an idea for a new feature or any suggestions or comments? Please let us know!

Barbara Olesen

COMMUNICATIONS

The St. James' website continues to grow as we expand into new communications methods. The pictures which tell who we are on our pages are updated about twice a year. On our "members" page, you can find the weekly Scripture readings and the Ministry Schedule. The scheduling system, Ministry Scheduler Pro, was new in 2012 and gives servers an opportunity to control their schedules better, make changes and substitute with others, and receive reminders of their times to serve. As with all conversions to something new, there were a few bugs which are nearly all resolved.

Many of our groups use listservs, email lists with a central location for ease of use and updating, to communicate. The Sunday School or Youth Group might want to send an email to all members or students, and Lay Eucharistic Ministers and Education for Ministry use the lists to remind members of meetings or arrange substitutes. Our calendar is printed in the Journal as well as maintained on our website. Forgot the time of a dinner or event? Go to the calendar and the answer is there! We choose events to highlight via the calendar to get the word out.

The weekly bulletin used for worship contains announcements and calendar dates, too. This bulletin is mailed to people who cannot get to our building so they can keep up with the news regularly.

The Journal uses an email list to get the monthly newsletter to members before it is even printed! Many still prefer the printed copy, and those are produced each month for people who choose that option as well as visitors.

Our latest addition, Constant Contact, is a way to get word to the St. James' List (which you can join on the website or by contacting the church office at stjames214@comcast.net). This "occasional" email is a colorful notice sent to you about special events and reminders – the next family breakfast, event, or special worship service.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

St. James' Sunday School continues to meet three of four Sundays a month at 10 am in the Parish Hall. Currently, there are 14 students, from Pre-K to 5th grade, enrolled in Sunday School, and an average of approximately 8 students attends each week. The coordinators this year are Jennifer Howlin and Alicia LaForge. We welcomed Jeannette Nolan this year as a new teacher.

Sunday School students participate each year in sorting and bagging up the donated food for the Mission Strategy Committee at Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. They also prepare holiday songs which they sing during the Christmas Eve and Easter services. For the second year in a row, the children presented a wonderful pageant during the 4:30pm Christmas Eve service. This year, the children also reprised the pageant at the Boars Head Epiphany dinner. Also this year, the children continued the tradition of making and distributing Valentine Cards for residents of House of Good Shepherd. The Children's Sabbath is being planned for the last Sunday of the Sunday School year in May.

Respectfully submitted,
Alicia LaForge and Jennifer Howlin

YOUTH GROUP

St. James' Youth Group has gone through a year of programmatic changes during 2014. This followed after our Deacon and Priest, both serving as youth group leaders, left St. James' to pursue their careers in other churches.

During the summer months, the Sr. Warden, Dave Lacouture, initiated meetings with youth group parents to discuss the needs for continuing the youth group program. St. James' was also very fortunate to receive the professional facilitation services of Kaileen Alston, Youth Ministry Coordinator, Diocese of Newark, during its meetings. Kaileen helped parents identify the important elements of a youth group program at St. James'. This was instrumental in jump-starting a new youth group program at St. James'.

Following the parents meetings, Paula Van Clef volunteered as Youth Group Coordinator. She put out a call for youth group instructors during summer worship services, and Kathy Lacouture, Pam Laura, Cheryl Perkins, Jewels Quelly, and Wanda Smith volunteered to help out. Instructors all took online "Safeguarding God's Children" safety training through the Diocese of Newark prior to teaching. Instructors are using "Living the Good News" as the youth group curriculum.

Youth Group meets on the second, third and fourth Sunday's of the month. All youth in Middle School and up are welcome to share in the faith and fellowship of Youth Group.

Paula Van Clef

PRAYER MINISTRY

The Prayer Ministry is a group of parishioners who faithfully pray, each in our own way, wherever each of us lives or works, for people known or unknown to us when they are in need of prayer. Prayers might be requested for someone who is critically ill, preparing to undergo surgery or in recovery, or mourning the loss of a family member or friend. We have prayed for people in hard times, families in crisis, and people who have lost a job. We pray for the protection and care of loved ones.

Email requests for prayers are sent to olesen@comcast.net. Many of the requests are confidential and we faithfully hold those people and their requests for prayer in our confidence. Members are notified by e-mail (or by phone if email is unavailable).

We welcome all who would like to pray for others in their time of need. Please consider becoming a part of this ministry. Speak to Barbara Olesen or notify the church office at stjames214@comcast.net.

Barbara Olesen

CARES

The CARES group continues to provide meals for parishioners in immediate need. We have delivered food to several families in 2014. We also try to provide transportation to doctor's appointments when there is a need. The CARES group is always looking for someone who can provide a meal on occasion. Please contact Barbara Olesen (908-850-5645) if you are interested.

Barbara Olesen

STEWARDSHIP

We believe that stewardship is a year-round practice and that it goes hand-in-hand with discipleship. Our theme in this year of transition has been to enhance awareness of the opportunities for congregational participation. It is summed up in the story of Samuel, when he said, "Here I am, Lord." as he discerned God's call. We encourage all our parishioners to prayerfully discern their commitment of time, talent and treasure to the ministries at St. James'.

Our fall ingathering and call for pledges has been answered by 45 folks, to date. This is down from last year's number of 55. We have commitments for the operation of the general fund in the amount of \$74,400, which is also down from last year's \$84,000. However, there are three new pledgers. Twenty-five people have pledged \$23,200 to the Building Fund, which is also down from the \$25,800 pledge from last year. (Dollar numbers have been rounded.)

Thirty-two pledges of time and talent were received for participation in our parish ministries. The most frequently chosen included; serving on the altar during worship, being a lecture, lay Eucharistic ministry, altar guild, counting, coffee hour, backpack program, and the hospitality group. Not everyone who filled out a financial pledge also signed-up for a ministry, even though they are participating. Thus, the numbers reported may under represent our actual status.

If you have not yet handed in your pledge, please consider doing so now and make your commitment to the ministries and mission of St. James' for the coming year.

Respectively submitted,
Paul Bartkus

FUNDRAISING

The reigns of the Fundraising Committee (FRC) was handed over to Barbara Olesen in February of 2014. Barbara White did a fantastic job in organizing our efforts since its inception 8 years ago. We will miss her expertise in coordinating all of our events.

Fundraising for 2014 is as follows: St. Patrick's Day Dinner, \$285; Gertrude Hawk, \$228.52; Golf Outing, \$3,390.23; Rummage Sale, \$606; See's Candy; \$212.40 and Scrip Pro, \$216. The total raised from these events was \$4,938.15.

Unfortunately, we missed our biggest fundraiser, the Tricky Tray. In a year of transition, we saw less participation on many levels and could not sustain an event that would prove as successful as in previous years. This is our year to re-group and we ask that you help in any way you can.

The Committee would love to explore new ideas with a few more volunteers. One idea that we have recently launched is fundraising through eBay. We have already made \$40 on items culled from rummage sale donations. If you have any items of possible value that you would like to donate, see any member of the FRC. We might be able to profit from these donations.

Please consider coming to a fundraising meeting, held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 6 PM - we promise to NOT put you in charge of fundraising; we just need a few more hands, a few more ideas and a little more energy. Fundraising is a year-long event but you need only volunteer for a specific project. Please share your ideas, your time and your talents; there is great reward in planning and organizing a successful fundraiser for the community that I know we all love so dearly.

Please watch for future fundraising events in the Journal and Sunday bulletins. Thank you for your support, for all the time, talent and treasure you so willingly give to St. James'.

Barbara Olesen

COUNTERS

Many parishioners have chosen to go the electronic route to keep on track with their pledges, but we still need to have an account of the offerings on Sunday morning and that is when "counters" are needed.

On Sunday mornings after the 10AM service, there are volunteers quietly working in the Mitcham House office. Their responsibility is to count/record the pledges/donations/memorials from both services for that particular day and then prepare deposit tickets for the bank deposits.

Currently there are four teams (two per team) that rotate Sundays so that volunteers are usually scheduled every four weeks.

If this is a ministry that interests you, we'd be happy to "train" you according to our policies and procedures, and welcome you to our team.

Please contact the church office if you would like to be a counter.

FACILITY USE

St. James' facilities are available to both our parishioners and outside organizations. Guidelines for use of the buildings and donations are available through the church office or on the St. James' website. A Building Use Application should be completed and approved by the Senior Warden prior to using the facilities. Please call the church office and speak with the Parish Administrator if you are interested in using the St. James' facilities.

The Rector's and Administrator's offices are located in the Mitcham House, along with the Joseph Quinlan Bereavement Center. In addition, monthly Vestry Meetings, weekly EFM meetings, Fundraising meetings, Special Events meetings, Finance meetings and Literacy Volunteers of Sussex County meet in the Mitcham House.

Since 2012, our space has also been shared with North Porch Program and The Church El-Shaddai to share space in our Sanctuary and Great Hall two days per week for worship and Bible Study.

TREASURER'S REPORT

2014 was a challenging year for St. James', in many ways. Aside from our major transition as a parish, we have all had some learning experiences and have taken on new responsibilities. Over the past year, I have worked with ADP to outsource our payroll and tax responsibilities. This is something that is highly recommended by the Diocese no matter how small or large the staff may be.

During the past year we continued to use the accounting system called ConnectNow. However, we are in the process of converting our system to Quickbooks, a program that is used by many parishes and who have reported it to be more user-friendly than our present system. Like Connectnow, it is a web based system that allows us to access the program from any computer. We are looking forward to improved reports to the Vestry, etc.

St. James' uses a unified budget that includes both operating and building income and expenses. The building income and expenses are shown as line items for specificity.

There are currently three bank accounts within our financial system: The Operating Account, the Building Account and the Snyder Family Endowment Fund.

- **The Operating Account** is used for the day- to- day operation of the parish. The funds used to support this fund come from pledges, special offerings, fundraising and other undesignated income. The expenses include salaries, occupancy, utilities and any other miscellaneous expenses.
- **The Building Account** is used primarily for mortgage payment, major repairs as well as any other significant improvements needed in our church buildings. This account is funded with pledges and specific donations or bequests.
- **The Snyder Family Endowment Fund** was designated as a fund to generate interest that could be used for the general operations of the church, if needed. Based on earnings and the common practice of using between 4 and 4.5% of the 5-year average endowment value, the Fund has contributed approximately \$22,000 annually to the Operating Account over the past few years. However, the Vestry voted to suspend that transfer about mid-year. Based on the salary differential between a full-time rector and a part-time interim priest, we were able to effectively manage without this transfer.

Respectfully submitted,
Janice Cipriani

Prayer for St. James' Church

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within you holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Hymn

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
O'er the world's tempestuous sea,
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
For we have no help but thee,
Yet possessing every blessing,
If our God our Father be.

Savior, breathe forgiveness o'er us;
All our weakness thou dost know;
Thou didst tread this earth before us;
Thou didst feel its keenest woe;
Yet unfearing, persevering;
To thy passion thou didst go.

Spirit of our God, descending
Fill our hearts with heavenly joy;
Love with every passion blending
Pleasure that can never cloy;
Thus provided, pardoned, guided,
Nothing can our peace destroy.