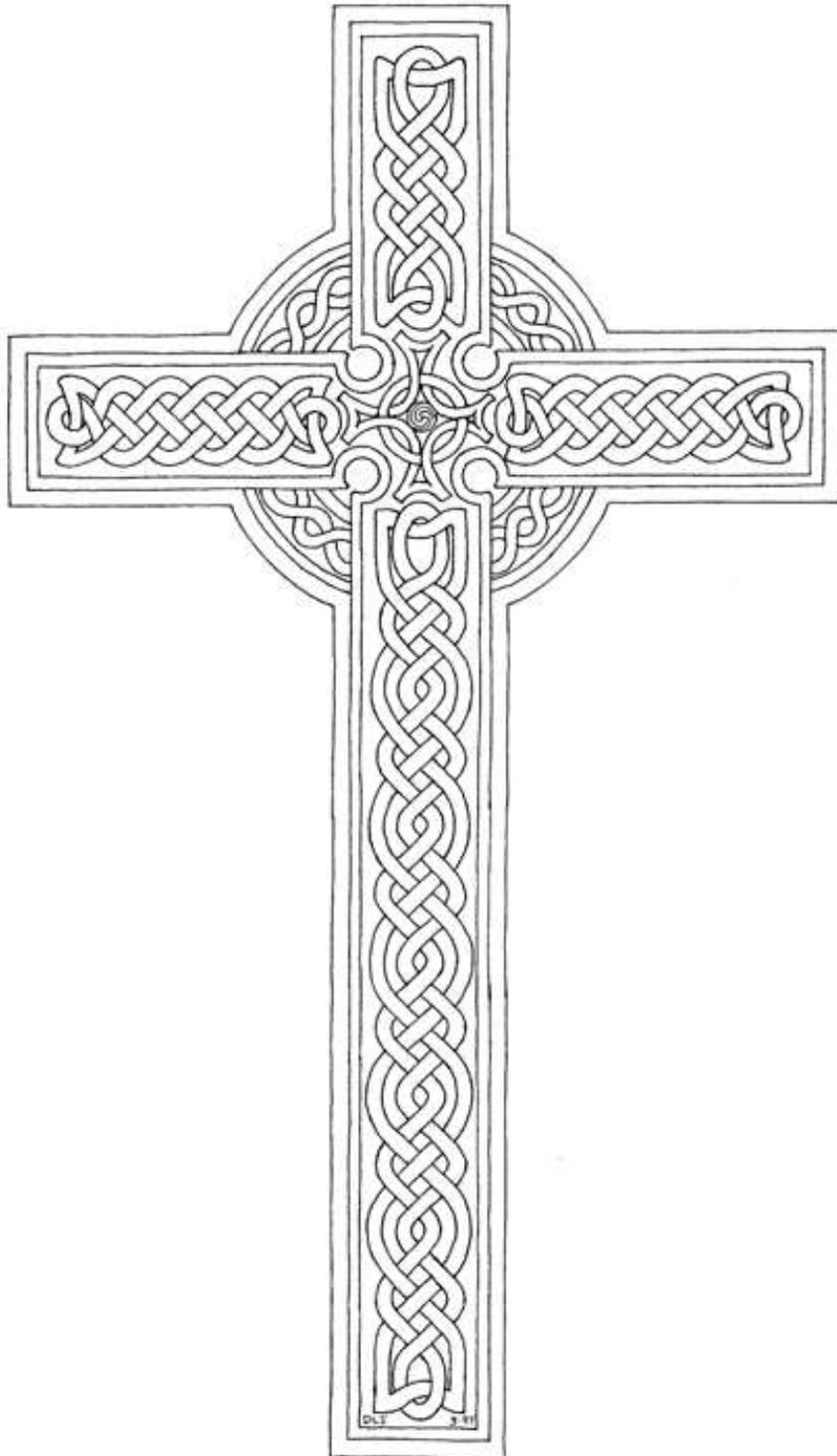


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ST. JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 6, 2016



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The Leadership of St. James' Church 2015

Vestry Members:

Chika Okoye (2016)
Janice Cipriani (2016 – (appointed to unfulfilled term)
Claudia Scala (2017 – (appointed to unfulfilled term)
Paul Bartkus (2017)
William Critchley (2017)
Nancy Miller (2018)
Peter Quelly (2018)
Chris Krauss (2018)

Senior Warden

Dave Lacouture (2016)

Junior Warden

Barbara Olesen (2017)

Treasurer

Janice Cipriani

Bookkeeper

Claudia Scala

Minute Recorder

Nancy Miller

Vestry Clerk

Claudia Scala

Priest in Charge

The Rev. Arthur “Guy” Fouts

Bishop, Diocese of Newark

The Rt. Rev. Mark Beckwith

Our Staff:

Parish Administrator

Julie Mills

Sexton

Pauline Volkert

Music Director

Dmitry Nikolaev

Bell Choir Director

Louise Olshan

St. James' Annual Meeting Minutes-March 8, 2015

Call to Order

The Annual Meeting was called to order with prayer by the Rev. Robert Solon at 10:50 a.m.

Acceptance of 2014 Annual Meeting Minutes

The Annual Meeting Minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting were accepted without change.

Recognition

Recognition of Junior and Senior Wardens, Outgoing Officers, Church Administrator: Barbara Olesen for stepping up as Junior Warden and Dave Lacouture for his job as Senior Warden, Peter Gartleman and Ellen Infante rotating off the Vestry and Julie Mills as Office Administrator.

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: Barbara Olesen (3 year term)-**CORRECTION** (2 year term as Jr. Warden)
Peter Quelly (3 year term)
Chris Krauss (3 year term)
Nancy Miller (3 year term)

Delegate to Diocesan Convention: Cheryl Perkins (3 year term)

Alternates to Diocesan Convention: Peg Faust and Pam Laura

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

Financial Report and Annual Budget

Carol Novrit provided and discussed the 2015 budget with all in attendance. The Finance Committee was thanked for their continued hard work on such an important matter. It was noted that the budget for 2015 was drafted and approved in August of 2014 and that it needs to be redrafted as some of the line items have changed. Some of the items discussed by Carol were:

- The Building Account and the Capital Improvement accounts have been combined.
- No income was drawn the Snyder Fund for operating costs.
- ADP is now processing payroll.
- The cost for a priest including benefits were budgeted and that the Rev. Guy Fouts does not need any of those benefits. He will just be paid a salary.
- Line Item 509, Organist, should have budgeted at \$10,000 for 2015.

Mortgage Discussion

Thanks to Anne Edens and Roy Smith and the Vestry, Fulton Bank lowered our mortgage interest which is saving us roughly \$12,000 per year. Because of that, reduced expenses as a result of not having a full-time rector and donations, it was announced that St. James' is financially healthy through at least the first half of 2017.

Closing Prayer and Hymn

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

As I conclude my tenure as Senior Warden I want to sincerely thank everyone in the St. James' Church family for their patience and support over the past two and half years.

I'm not afraid to admit that during my time as Junior, and then Senior Warden, I have experienced a gambit of emotions, challenges and doubts. The transition of clergy for any church can be stressful. We were blessed to have a full time Rector with a long tenure that performed many wide and varied duties. The rapid change left many gaps in roles and responsibilities that had to be assessed and addressed. It was like a big puzzle. Some of the puzzle pieces were on the table and just had to be located and placed. Other pieces had not even been manufactured yet. It was a challenge.

Through this process however, the Vestry, other leaders and all the members of St James' Church learned, worked, worshiped and prayed together. Yes, some folks decided to depart but others have joined us. This has been the history at St James' for over 150 years. But for the most part our worship, our ministries, our care for our buildings and most importantly our care for each other and God's community never wavered and still thrives.

I'm very proud to say that during this period, my fellow Wardens, and the Vestry were very committed to maintaining a weekly worship schedule that included the Holy Eucharist. This to me was more important than most anything else since through it, we participate personally and deeply in the love and renewal of Christ. The Eucharist is a gift and a blessing that we can never take for granted. I'm sure it is as important to you as it is to me.

Fortunately, I did not have to tackle all these challenges alone. I have been honored to serve and work side by side with some of the most dedicated and faithful people I know. I truly believe our church is in good hands moving forward. We have excellent clergy and lay leadership and a congregation who collectively offer their many talents and gifts to share.

In conclusion, please keep in mind that the role of the Vestry has changed dramatically in the last two years. Many operational functions and decisions are now in the hands of the Wardens and Vestry. This is just how we have evolved in our transition and it has worked for us. But please be patient and supportive of your Wardens and Vestry. Although the role of the Vestry may seem "behind the scenes" in many respects, their hard work and service "sets the stage" and "opens the doors" for all of us to be able to worship and pray together at our beloved St. James'.

I really look forward to whatever new roles at St James' come my way. But in the meantime, I'm going to take the Rev. Guy Fouts advice and take some time and pray.

God Bless,
David Lacouture

MISSION STRATEGY

The mission strategy group supports our church's outreach ministries. As stated previously, our mission is to concentrate efforts locally, trying not to duplicate programs hosted by other churches or agencies. We often, however, contribute to or support those programs. We welcome opportunities to support outreach undertaken by parishioners in activities approved by the Vestry.

We sell grocery gift cards from Shop Rite and Weis Markets as a means of raising money for outreach and as a fund raiser for our church. These stores donate 5% of our sales back to us. (We receive \$5 for every \$100 of cards that we sell.) This year we sold just over \$69,000 worth of cards. Thus, we earned approximately \$3450 for outreach. We transferred \$3000 to the general

operating fund of the church. Contributions of support were also made for the Market Street Mission, community food needs, and for a banner for the BackPack Program.

This year's Christmas Tree of Giving supported three local families by collecting about 56 presents that were divided among 2 girls and 3 boys, ages five to twelve. Our congregation provided wrapped gifts that included clothing, toys, games, art supplies, and (of course) ShopRite gift cards. Thank you to our Sunday School children who colored paper angels to hang on the tree to replace the gift tag candy canes that were taken.

Thanks to the many in-gathering donations made by the congregation, the Sunday School children helped with the assembly of over 60 food bags distributed over Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Each bag consisted of nonperishable foods and some paper goods, as well as at least one ShopRite gift card also donated by parishioners. Thank you to Miss Jennifer, Miss Alicia, Miss Jeanette, and Miss Millie for your super bag-organizing-packing skills and support. Thanks also to Jerry Sheard for supervising the delivery of the bags.

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.

Respectively submitted,
Paul Bartkus

YARN TWISTERS

Although the Yarn Twisters did not hold any meetings during 2015 due to weather, vacations, etc., we did still manage to send three boxes of items to the Seamen's Church Institute (SCI) "Christmas at Sea" containing hats, scarves and neck warmers, as well as assorted toiletries. The St. James' Yarn Twisters have paired up with the needle workers group at Heath Village since their coordinator, Betty Riles, passed away last year. Already we have a very healthy number of items in the bin, so I would like to thank the ladies at Heath Village, Louise Olshan, Phyllis Bartkus, and Pat Taylor for their ongoing support of the program.

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.

For more information on this program, please visit the 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 continued to plan events to enhance fellowship throughout the year and met monthly on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. The committee has joined with Fundraising Committee, Summer Backpack, and Stewardship Committee to assist with some specific events. The committee is open to ideas for new events and is always looking for new members. If there is

something you would like to suggest, please contact us via the office stjames214@comcast.net or send to lockwood88@comast.net.

2015 Highlights:

January : Boars Head Epiphany Dinner
March: St Patrick's Day Parade
May: Memorial Day Parade
July: Summer Movie Night
October: Community Day (rained out)
November: Bunco Night
In Gathering Dinner

Respectfully submitted by
Kathy Erwood Lacouture

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

We continue to be blessed with property and structures that facilitate our worship, fellowship, and outreach. Clean-up Saturday crews meet at least twice annually to make minor repairs and touch-ups here and there, or if needed, for a specific project. This is the time to change air-conditioning filters, adjust doors, make sure that the pews are tightly nailed or screwed together, and clean the gutters. Additionally, this year we replaced the chains that connect the bells in our tower (our carillon) to the levers which ring them. A number of missing Parish Hall gutter-guards were also replaced. We refinished and installed the last stainless steel table in the kitchen. The Mitcham House porch was painted. Finally, the elevator was inspected each month as required by law.

We had occasions this year to call on the expertise of licensed contractors to make repairs of a more complicated nature. We needed to replace an old cast iron drain pipe in the Mitcham House that required opening the wall. Electricians were needed to replace the light that illuminates our sign on the corner of Washington and Moore, and to replace light switches in the sacristy. The roof over the priest's office was replaced due to a problem with ice damming and leaking. Finally, the guides for the elevator doors had to be replaced.

We anticipate that we will be making additional repairs and maintenance to the buildings this year. Painting is needed in the early spring to freshen-up the walls and doors in the Parish Hall. This area sees a lot of use because of the Summer Backpack Program. The exterior of the sanctuary also needs painting. The batteries in a few of the emergency lights in the Parish Hall need to be replaced. At some point we may have to replace the Mitcham House roof, and there is a light fixture in the Sanctuary which will need to be replaced. Finally, the trees overhanging the Parish Hall will need to be trimmed back to minimize leaf debris.

Faithful stewardship of our property will insure that it is available for future generations. The key to maintaining it is to make repairs when they are still minor, and before they become too expensive. To that end, please remember that if you see something, say something.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paul Bartkus

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 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 lead of the kitchen crew along with Pete and Gerri Huryk on the first Sunday of each month for St. James' famous Sunday Breakfast. 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.

We will be missing the Huryk's who have moved to Maryland, but hope to see them from time to time when they come back to New Jersey to visit!

ST. FIACRE'S GUILD

Let me begin by thanking all those who were faithful stewards of the St. James' gardens during 2015. Known as the St. Fiacre's Guild, we officially met twice on scheduled maintenance mornings this year. Because of the diligent efforts put forth in the spring with trimming and pruning, the work during the fall seemed easier. Our usual tasks involve raking up debris, pruning our shrubs and

perennials, and weeding the beds where needed. This kept the St. James' grounds looking tidy. As with any property, the key to maintaining it is to tend it regularly, which we try to do.

Visitors to the Mitcham House were greeted by two new planters as they climbed the steps, as the old wooden ones were weather-worn and falling apart. We filled them with begonias, which bloomed from the spring through the fall.

In a few months it will be a surprise to see what blooms in our gardens because of the unusually warm weather in December. You many have noticed that many bulb plants began to pop up, and that buds even appeared on some shrubs. Flowers actually bloomed on azalea bushes at the Moore Street entrance! We will see what develops as spring draws near; hopefully our plants will bounce back.

Our gardeners take pride in keeping the St. James' grounds looking beautiful. It's a rewarding experience and we welcome anyone who may feel called to share in this ministry.

Please join us, and remember you don't have to know how to spell chrysanthemum!

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 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 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 and special services such as weddings and funerals involve the joint efforts of all teams. A local dry cleaner donates his services to help clean and maintain the vestments, paraments, and frontals. One Altar Guild members washes and irons the linens used at the Eucharist. Replacement linens are purchased as holes appeared/or stubborn stains makes linens no longer liturgically white.

We reluctantly accepted the resignation of Ellen Infante during 2015 due to health reasons. Nancy Miller joined Altar Guild on the third week team and has been bringing her granddaughters with her on Saturday mornings and training them to prepare the altar for weekly services. It has been exciting to watch their understanding and skills grow. We invite anyone who is interested in preparing the Lord's Table to stop in after services and speak to the Altar Guild member busy in the sacristy.

The Altar Guild is grateful 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. Parishioners are encouraged to sponsor weekly flowers in memory of departed loved ones or in thanksgiving for special occasions by selecting and signing the particular Sunday as found in the Altar Flower Donor booklet located in the Narthex.

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 a privilege to serve St James'.

Meg Critchley

USHERS

The main responsibilities of our ushers include collecting the offering, assisting during communion and preparing the church for the next service. However, just a friendly “Hello” or “Good Morning” or smile is the most important function of the ushers/greeters. A warm welcome on a Sunday morning into a place we are familiar with, or for first-time attendees can set the tone for a more meaningful and positive experience.

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

MUSIC COMMITTEE

This has been a very hectic year for the St. James music program. Most of the year was taken up with a search for an organist. Fortunately we were able to employ Dmitry Nicolaev, our Russian trained Organist, in October. While Dmitry is an excellent musician he is not familiar with the Episcopal Church and is still learning his way around our different services. He will eventually develop a choir and we look forward to welcoming all who would want to participate. Julie Mills has been very patient and helpful during this period, when it comes to getting the music into the bulletin and we thank her for that.

Louise Olshan also retired (for real) this year but has graciously offered to continue conducting an occasional bell choir as well as serve on the music committee and help Dmitry settle into St. James. While we do not have an official choir we have had Pat and Richard Hawkins sing and play bells as we try to develop a more consistent music program; this coming year will be a year of development in that area.

I would like to thank the vestry and the wardens for making the music of the church a priority by allowing me to take on the search for an organist. The vestry developed a fiscally responsible approach to the whole matter. I would also like to thank all those who serve on the music committee, Louise Olshan, Marge Schafetz, Wendie Germain, Melissa Vitalos, and Paul Bartkus, who contributed to the organist search. Thank you to Nancy Miller, Pam Laura, Louise Olshan, Pat Hawkins and Richard Hawkins, for being part of the impromptu singing choir. We are also in the process of reviving the bell choir although we did play recently and look forward to playing for Easter and the Bishop’s visit.

We appreciate the comments and patience of the congregation regarding the music at church and while we go through this period of transition we are grateful for your appreciation of our efforts. We look forward to a more productive year as Dmitry gets more familiar with our services, and hope that more of us will seek to participate in this very vital aspect of the church. Thank you all and come join us as we make a joyful noise!

Chika Okoye

SUPPLY ORGANIST/BELL AND CHORAL MUSIC

For many Sundays starting on April 12 and continuing through September 27, I served as Supply Organist. It was a pleasure to serve again as your organist and to share worship with the congregation of St. James'.

In addition to playing the organ, many musical additions were made to the services:

Bells

- April 19:** David Bernauer and Pam Laura rang an accompaniment with the final hymn.
May 3: The Bell Choir rang *Prelude* from the *Second Suite for Handbells* by Michael Helman.
May 17: The Bell Choir rang *Echoes* by Bill Ingram.
Sept. 27: Pat Hawkins, Richard Hawkins, Chika Okoye and Marge Schafetz rang a version of *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*.

For 2015 the ringers were David Bernauer, Scott Carson, Pat Hawkins, Richard Hawkins, Drew Lacouture, Pam Laura, Chika Okoye, Tina Okoye, Sam Olshan, Marge Schafetz and Melissa Vitalos.

Choral

On April 26 Pat Hawkins, Richard Hawkins and Stan Wantrobski sang *This Alone* by Tim Manion. During the Easter season, Tina Okoye sang the descant to the Communion Hymn. For the rest of the time I served as organist, the **Joyful Noise Casual Choir** sang an anthem at almost every service. As an idea of some of the things we tried during this time, on May 17 the choir sang *Down by the Riverside* as the Postlude. The congregation enthusiastically joined in on the refrain. On June 21 David Bernauer along with Pat and Richard Hawkins sang *Pass It On*. David Bernauer sang the melody and Pat and Richard Hawkins created an alto part and bass part, respectively. What talented singers to create a singing part. On another Sunday the group sang a round in three parts. It was a joy to welcome David Bernauer, Pat Hawkins and Richard Hawkins back to St. James'. Pat Hawkins was instrumental in selecting many of the pieces and the choir members found them fun to prepare and sing. Regular members of this informal group were David Bernauer, Pat Hawkins, Richard Hawkins, Nancy Miller and Chika Okoye. They were joined by Pam Laura, Stella Oyegbite, Kayode Oyegbite, Tina Okoye and Melissa Vitalos on some of the Sundays. While I was not compensated for any of this extra work, it was rewarding to work with each of these musicians. Hopefully this additional music, both choral and bell, added to the worship experience of the congregation.

Louise Olshan

YOUTH CHOIR

Despite the ups and downs of the music program at St James' during 2015, the Youth Choir, under the on-going direction of Pam Laura, continued to sing away at our Easter and Christmas Eve services. They signed as well, and Fr. Guy was very impressed when he saw them sign at Christmas Eve. This choir's members fluctuate with the Sunday School attendance but they are an enthusiastic group no matter how many there are! Look for them to be singing an African song about Jesus at our 10am Easter service in 2016.

Submitted by Pam Laura

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Once again we had a great team of auditors-from-within to handle our 2014 Audit Report tasks. Turn-around time for this audit was reduced by more than half from the turn-around time of the 2013 audit work, due in large part to the efforts of Janice Cipriani and Julie Mills in getting all the documents organized in one place. The Audit results were much better than they were in 2013, too, due to many people's efforts to get and keep all the required documents organized. Our goal is to get the 2015 Audit in on time! It's an easy job, really, but does require you to spend some time at the church reviewing your assigned documents and noting your findings so if anyone is interested, and you weren't on Vestry in 2015, please see Pam Laura. The 2015 audit work will be the last time Pam Laura will be able to lead this effort since Vestry members cannot audit a year for which they were on Vestry.

Submitted by Pam Laura

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 2015 featured Stewardship Letters, Vestry Updates, upcoming events or programs, and parish life and outreach information. The Journal featured articles and pictures about Maintenance Mornings, Special Events, Service schedules, Sunday School events; 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, pictures and information about our parish life. The articles highlight the dedicated and ongoing service of everyone from Altar Guild to Music and Worship, Sunday School teachers and those serving as committee chairs.

Please think about contributing to the St. James' Journal. The deadline is the last Sunday of the month, in order that it may be distributed on the 1st Sunday of the following month. . 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 provide updated information for anyone who visits our website thanks to our Webmaster, Mary Echeverria who does this at no charge to the church. The pictures and information that can be found on this website who we are and what we do. Our monthly

calendar is available for parish and community to show what events are coming up. Our service times and upcoming weekly events are listed on the Home Page. And the St. James' Journal is available on the website shortly after it is posted to the congregation, which is the first Sunday of each month.

The monthly Journal provides great articles written by leaders in our church community, or anyone else who wants to submit an article. Updates on committees show us what is going on with the mission and ministry at St. James. Most receive the Journal (with color pictures) via email. There are print copies for those who prefer to receive hardcopies and visitors.

The weekly bulletin used for worship contains announcements and calendar dates, too. Our Parish Administrator, Julie Mills, has gone to great lengths to keep us informed each week, along with displaying upcoming events.

Julie has also been in contact with newspapers and other media to get our word out. Please look for announcements and articles in local papers.

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 email is a colorful notice sent to you about special events and reminders – the next family breakfast, event, or special worship service. Please open your Constant Contact email from St. James' to get the latest information on events and church notices.

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 11 students, from Pre-K to 5th grade, enrolled in Sunday School, and an average of approximately 8 students attends each week. The teachers/coordinators this year are Jennifer Howlin, Alicia LaForge, and Jeannette Nolan.

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 third year in a row, the children presented a wonderful pageant during the 4:30pm Christmas Eve service. For the second year in a row, 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

EFM

We continue to meet on Tuesday nights at 6 PM. For the year 2015-2016, there are 6 students. EFM will be meeting in church on Tues at 7 PM for evening prayer during lent. Nancy Miller has taken mentor training and is able to take over the class if I cannot make it. If anyone is interest in EFM please contact me at 973-691-8885 or 973-214-5625. We may need to join with St. Luke's in Hope for next year's EFM. They meet on Friday nights and their priest mentors the group.

Peg Faust

WINTER COATS

EFM was instrumental in getting the winter coats and distributing for winter, thanks to an anonymous donor. 130 coats were provided for those who needed warmth.

Peg Faust

SUMMER BACKPACK

360 children were served every two weeks in 2015 with food from the Summer Backpack program. Volunteers from both St. James' and the community committed their time to organize and hand out food bags as well as donate peanut butter. A monetary donation was made by an anonymous donor in order to provide this food. In order to be fully funded for this program again in 2016, the Summer Backpack program needs volunteers. Please see me if you can help us.

Linda Deloreto

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 2015. 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 emphasize our opportunities to share our time, talent and treasure. We encourage all our parishioners to prayerfully discern their stewardship commitment to the ministries at St. James' throughout the year.

This fall our activities included an in-gathering fellowship dinner. This fun evening was well attended and featured a Pete Huryk production of the "Match-Family Feud Game". Our autumn call for pledges has been answered by 35 folks, to date. This was down from last year's number of 45. We have commitments for the operation of the general fund in the amount of \$58,800, which is also down from last year's \$74,400. There were three new pledgers. This year's average annual pledge was up compared to last year. Last year the average pledge was about \$1650, while this year was is \$1680. Twenty-six people have pledged \$23,200 to the Building Fund, which is about the same as from last year. (Dollar numbers have been rounded.)

Thirty-one pledges of time and talent were received for participation in our parish ministries. Eighteen of those volunteered for more than one ministry. The most frequently chosen included;

serving on the altar during worship as an Acolyte, a Lay Eucharistic Minister or Lector. Others included helping with the Backpack Program and knitting with the Yarn-Twisters. More help could be used with counting and coffee hour. If you are interested in any activity you can join in without having filled out a pledge card.

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

Respectively submitted,
Paul Bartkus

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising for 2015 is as follows: St. Patrick's Day Dinner, \$161.55; Gertrude Hawk, \$212.62; Golf Outing, \$6,712.76 (almost double from last year!); Rummage Sale and eBay, \$1,804.00; See's Candy; \$102.05 and Scrip Pro, \$469.59. The total raised from these events was \$9,462.57!

Since the FRC is unable to support a Tricky Tray, the committee will put their efforts in support of our Golf Outing Committee. This event in 2015 had approximately 100 golfers and was our biggest fundraising event last year. We hope to continue to grow this into an even bigger, well-known event. Watch for more details in the coming months.

We are also looking to expand our eBay fundraising. If you have any items of possible value that you would like to donate, see any member of the FRC. We have taken many items from rummage sale donations that were sellable on eBay. Tupperware in good condition along with Pyrex and Corningware are big sellers...who knew?

In 2015 we switched to a new provider of gift cards. We started doing business with "Shop with Script" in November when our other provider went out of business. Our new provider offers even more of a selection. Please consider using gift cards for everyday shopping, gas, home improvements as well as for gifts.

The Ink Cartridge recycling program is now a part of the FRC. We need to get this back working for us again this year. If you or someone you know from the parish would be interested in taking on this easy fundraising task, please contact me.

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.

Offices for the priest and parish administrator are located in the Mitcham House. Space is provided there for the Karen Ann Quinlan Bereavement Center and Literacy Volunteers of Sussex County. Mitcham House also serves as the meeting place for EFM (Education for Ministry), and the Fundraising, Special Events, and Finance committees.

Since 2011, we have provided space in our Parish Hall for the North Porch Program, the Summer Backpack Program and the Church of El Shaddai, whose congregation holds twice weekly worship and Bible study in our Parish Hall and sanctuary.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Our goal for 2015 was to switch the accounting software from Connectnow to Quickbooks. After trying this for several months, we have decided to remain with Connectnow.

Reports are generated each month for the Vestry to review the income and expenses for the previous month and to assess where we are financially with respect to our budget.

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 two checking accounts within our financial system: The Operating Account and the Building Account. The Snyder Fund is a separate investment account

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, 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 to allow for more interest to accumulate. Based on the salary differential between a full-time rector and a part-time interim, we were able to effectively do without this transfer for almost two years.

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.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

SENIOR WARDEN	David Lacouture
JUNIOR WARDEN	Barbara Olesen
SENIOR WARDEN-ELECT	Paul Bartkus
MISSION STRATEGY	Paul Bartkus
YARN TWISTERS	Linda Miller
SPECIAL EVENTS	Kathy Lacouture
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	Paul Bartkus/David Lacouture
FAMILY BREAKFAST	Peter Quelly
ST. FIACRE'S GUILD	Phyllis Bartkus
ALTAR GUILD	Meg Critchley
USHERS	Janice Cipriani
MUSIC	Chika Okoye
BELL CHOIR	Louise Olshan
YOUTH CHOIR	Pam Laura
AUDIT COMMITTEE	Pam Laura (2015) –now open
ST. JAMES' JOURNAL	Barbara Olesen
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN	Alicia LaForge
EFM	Peg Faust
WINTER COATS	Peg Faust
PRAYER MINISTRY	Barbara Olesen
CARES	Barbara Olesen
STEWARDSHIP	Paul Bartkus
FUNDRAISING	Barbara Olesen
COUNTERS	Barbara Olesen
FACILITIES	Wardens
TREASURER	Janice Cipriani