

St. James Episcopal Church
Annual Parish Report
January 31, 2016

ST. JAMES' ANNUAL PARISH GATHERING TOOK PLACE ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2016
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE 9 AM SERVICE.

Senior Warden Report Gina Walcott, Senior Warden

Changes/Transitions/New Beginnings

Well its been a quiet week in Fairhope...to paraphrase Garrison Keilor, the host of "A Prairie Home Companion", a radio show that Mac and I enjoy listening to most Saturday evenings... but as in Lake Wobegon, this is really an oxymoron as its rarely a quiet week at St. James.

The church office is buzzing keeping up with all of us, our worship services, Anchor Lines, meetings, budgets, music, sermons, youth, christian education all the church business that our team takes care of.

For the annual parish meeting, the Senior Warden usually recaps the past year, but as I began listing the changes/transitions /highlights of the year (which there are many), I took a breath, put my pen down (actually quit typing), and I thought instead about how our church family/ community is stronger than ever.

Yes, we have had had many transitions and we have all struggled with these transitions. We mourn the loss of Fr Mark as we passed the 1 year anniversary a few weeks ago and thank him for his lasting ministry.

But God has given us a great team to help heal and move on to our next chapter:

We are thankful for Fr. Don's steadfast and faithful guidance through those difficult months and Eddie was right by his side.

We are thankful for Dean Johnny Cook, who joined our team in October with his wisdom and humor and for Fr. Roy who has now moved on to his new parish.

We are thankful for our staff, who works diligently to make it appear like its always a quiet week at St. James:

- Helen amazes all weekly with her heavenly music,
- Jen is immersed in organizing Happening and keeping the youth engaged
- Leslie is our new Director of Children's ministries having taken over from Meghan
- Meghan is doing a great job as our new parish administrator
- Jennifer Glover is communicating beautifully
- Jim Ketchum knows our finances like the back of his hand
- Rose is our faithful housekeeper
- And its hard to list all the things that Mike, our sexton, takes care of

Our church community, all of you, continue to be a vibrant and healthy parish. The number of ministries we have are a testimony to that. We have 28+ ...just think about all the tables and committee chairs in Green Hall for Sunday for Ministry Fair offering numerous opportunities to participate in God's work.

Our search committee is working hard, helping to prepare us for the next chapter in our church life...

again the list is long...

So my message this morning, is really one of simple thanks to the family of St James for being able to continue our work in God's vineyard.

Junior Warden's Report

John L. Glover, III Junior Warden

After being without a sexton for a number of years we were blessed to find Mike Costigan who joined us back in 2014. Since then we have tried to find a limit to his talents and to date have not done so. Mike is responsible for many things from helping set up for events to carpentry work to grounds maintenance to name a few, but this past year he asked if we would be interested in purchasing a lawn tractor for the church and allow him take over mowing the lawn, which we had been paying a lawn service \$600.00 a month to do. After looking at the cost of an adequate mower vs. what we were paying the lawn service, the vestry voted to move for with that plan and the grounds have never looked better!

We also saw the completion of the upper parking lot which has not only given us an additional 33 parking spaces for our growing family, but has also provided us with a wonderful area for activities such as the youth kickball challenge against St. Paul's Daphne (we smoked 'em ...), our Halloween party, and a Star Gazing cookout and worship. While we initially experienced issues with the run-off from excessive rains, the contractor made some modifications that have corrected this. The lot remains chained during the week to keep out unwanted visitors but should be unlocked prior to our 9:00 Sunday services or other occasions when it is required.

Other items that were addressed are the refinishing of the chapel floors, painting and replacing the floors in both the Narthex and the Bride's room/bathroom. We also replaced some cracked slate flooring at the entrance of the Narthex and in the sanctuary and installed expansion joint in both areas to correct this problem in the future.

Prior to Christmas we had all of the buildings, curbs, and sidewalks pressure washed and after having the Sherwin-Williams rep take a look at the buildings it was determined that we still had considerable life left on our paint. With the exception of some touch up work on some screw heads that were not properly primed at the last painting, we shouldn't have to consider painting again for at least 2-3 years.

We also recoated and re-stripped the parking lot, but due to the weather when it was applied we did not get a good bond. The contractor has agreed to apply another coat when conditions are more favorable at no additional charge.

Should anyone see anything requiring attention or have suggestions regarding grounds or building maintenance please feel free to contact me by e-mail at jglover@al-flaplastics, or leave a message at the St. James office and I will get with you as soon as I can.

God bless,
John L. Glover, III

Treasurer's Report

Jim Gabill, Treasurer

As you can imagine, this year of transition presented issues that made our budgeting process quite different from years past. Two issues were paramount:

- 1.> Projections of contribution budgets are usually based on past experience, pledge card response, and contributions made through the end of November.
- 2.> Clergy expense. We are simply too early on in our search process to know precise numbers.

As to item one above: September, October and November receipts were significantly below budget – in some cases as much as 30%. Therefore the 2016 contribution budget was projected to be below that of 2015. The last few weeks of the year, however, were an answer to prayer as total contributions for December brought our total receipts for the year to \$1,178,661- \$1,180 over budget for the year. As importantly, pledge cards received rose to 195 (one more than 2015) with \$13,127 more in pledges than 2015. Thanks to all!

As I've said in the past, our expenses are essentially fixed unless we want to cancel or significantly reduce ministries or programs. St. James has come so far in recent years, that we have actually increased some programs. The Diocesan pledge was increased for 2016 from \$80,000 to \$100,000 – with a promise to review after we get further into 2016 and know our course. The Outreach Committee has also reorganized and that budget item has been increased for 2016, as have Youth Program, Worship expense, and General Parish Activities.

Other cash needs not of an operating nature include:

- 1.> Clergy Search – onetime - \$45,000
- 2.> Moving Expense - \$20,000
- 3.> Mortgage Principal and Building Maintenance Fund - \$70,055

Net cash for 2016 – again, budgeted in early December – is projected at (\$34,050).

Other items of interest include cash balances of \$420,000 (unrestricted) and building reserves of \$178,641.

In 2015, we began making two mortgage payments per month to accelerate principal reduction. This has been suspended for 2016 but remains under review as we get further into the year.

	2015 Actual	2016 Budget
Revenue	1,178,661	1,159,965
Total Cash Expenses	1,106,428	1,194,015
Pledges	796,302	809,429

The Finance Committee will continue the review and take action as needed on a monthly basis. Once a new Rector is called, the budget will be recast to reflect changes as necessary.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jim Gambill

Search Committee Report

Bob Keyser, Search Committee Chairman

The Transition process began in April with Father Bill King assisting in formulating the procedures for a directed search. That effort included performance of an abbreviated parish survey, and development of a parish portfolio framework. All of that work was performed at minimal expenses to parish. In July the parish was given the direction to perform a full search, resulting in the formation of a search committee and the committee's examination of the available survey results. The committee began a series of meetings with groups within the parish, as well as a series of "town hall" meetings, to obtain additional input from the church family to facilitate the development of our Ministry Portfolio, refine our understanding of the skills the parish is looking for, and the direction for us to be led. By October, a relatively small amount of input had been received.

On 15 October, the vestry approved the hiring of Father Mark Linder to assist the search committee in the conduct of a full search for a new rector, to include completion of the discernment process. Mark is retired from the Diocese of Kentucky, and has served as that diocese's transition officer from 2007 to 2014. At Mark's advice, we conducted a new, on-line survey to assist us in completing the discernment process. The survey was completed on 6 December, and the Search Committee and Vestry met with Mark on 10 December for out-brief of the survey results. An Executive Summary of the survey results is attached. The survey results formed the basis for completion of the St. James Ministry Portfolio. The completed portfolio was uploaded to the Office of Transition Ministry website on 15 January, and will remain active until 15 February. As of 20 January, there were approximately 23 names for consideration by the search committee, although this number is anticipated to grow to between 35 and 40 by the time we stop receiving names on 15 February.

There are several key points to understand regarding the candidate list. First, no candidate will receive endorsement or be "promoted" by anyone in the diocesan office or elsewhere. The identification of a candidate for call is the sole responsibility of the search committee. Each candidate will stand on their ministry and will be interviewed and evaluated accordingly. There are no "preselected" candidates. Secondly, we will conduct a thorough and rigorous examination of applicants to ensure that we call a new rector whose ministry and leadership will best serve the current and future needs of St. James. Finally, the list of candidates will remain strictly confidential.

The search committee will begin evaluating candidates through a review of their OTM profiles beginning in late February. Those candidates who we wish to consider will receive written confirmation from the search committee, along with questions to be answered in writing, and a brochure providing a deeper look at our ministries, our facilities and our community. The interview process can be expected to proceed throughout the Spring and into the Summer. We

do not have a fixed timetable for issuing a call for a new rector, but are proceeding deliberately and diligently. We must keep in mind that we are issuing a call, guided and inspired by the Holy Spirit, and are not simply making a business hire.

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a rector for this parish, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bon Keyser
Search Committee Chairman

Outreach Committee

Members: Bob Doyle, Chairman, Ann Fargason, Dee Gambill, Mary Mullins Redditt, Theresa Smith, Bruce Stone

As of December 31, 2015, our budgeted amount of \$58,539.00 was fully disbursed to the following Outreach recipients:

Alabama Free Clinic	Angel Tree	Beckwith Camp & Conference Center
Boys & Girls Club	Duvall Cursillo Fund	Ecumenical Ministries, Inc.
Family Promise	Happening	Kairos of Alabama
Prodissee Pantry	Read Aloud Baldwin	Syrian Refugee & Relief
The Shoulder	Wilmer Hall	Women's Care Medical
Young Life Mobile Bay		

The St. James Vestry has approved our requested budget increase for 2016 of \$60,000.00. St. James Parish pledged and contributed \$80,000.00 to the Diocese for 2015 Outreach. At \$60.65 per St. James member, we were the largest contributor per capita among the largest congregations in the Diocese.

This year, 2016, your Outreach Committee intends to become more “proactive” rather than “reactive”, and will be re-evaluating our present Outreach recipients, as well as reviewing and assessing new, different and potential Outreach opportunities and recipients for this year.

This week, letters of introduction from the Committee were sent to all of last year's Outreach recipients, together with an application and information update form, requesting that each recipient provide the committee with an update of their financial status and needs, and their requests for 2016. Once the Committee receives these forms, they will be scheduling brief interviews with all current Outreach recipients to personally meet with them, and discuss their Outreach needs for the future. These interviews are expected to take place sometimes during the two-week period of March 7th through 18th.

Your Outreach Committee, with special thanks to Mary Mullins Redditt, has prepared a brochure which not only provides the St. James Parish with a summary of 2015 Outreach activities, but also provides our Parish their opportunity for input in making us aware of possible other Outreach opportunities, as well as providing the Committee, and the Parish in turn, individual Parishioner's personal Outreach stories.

PLEASE PARTICIPATE!!!

Respectfully submitted,
God's Peace+
Bruce B. Stone

Memorial Garden Annual Report

St. James Memorial Garden is a Non-Profit Corporation formed in December 2000 at the direction of the Vestry of St. James to build and operate a place suitable for the interment or burial of the ashes of deceased St. James Parishioners and their families. The Garden (50' deep by 25' wide) is located adjacent to the sacristy and has a Columbarium Wall as its south east boundary. Access is by way of a concrete walk between the sacristy and the Bounds Chapel. The Garden is currently operated by eleven committee members elected for three year terms by the St. James parishioners at the annual meeting, and who volunteered at the annual Ministry Fair.

Current committee members are: Bruce Fahlberg, (chairman), Richard Upchurch, John Barfield, Savan Wilson, Ron Heveran, Sonny Howard, Bill Clarke, Gil Wright, Quida May, Michael DiMartino, Bonnie Gulsby, and serving as clerk, Patty Havard.

The committee members would be happy to meet with you at a mutually convenient time to show you the Garden, answer questions you may have, and assist you in completing a subscription agreement if you desire to do so. Brochures are available in the Church office and the receptionist will be happy to have a committee member call you.

There are 72 companion niches in the Columbarium wall. Each niche accommodates the ashes of two persons, each contained in a bronze urn. In 2015 we had four interments in the Columbarium wall, and completed three niche subscriptions. Of the 72 companion niches, 41 are now reserved (57%).

There are 540 ground plots of one foot square available in the Garden. The ashes of the deceased are poured directly into a hole dug in the center of the plot. In 2015 two interments were completed. In 2015 we received five subscriptions for ground plots making a total of 64 reserved. Thirty-two of the plots contain the cremains of a subscriber.

The Garden committee has future plans to build another brick Columbarium wall on the north side of the Garden containing 72 companion niches. Construction will not begin until niches in the current wall are 75% sold.

- Garden income for 2015: \$ 6154.52--- subscription fees, gifts, interest
- Garden expenses for 2015: \$ 3628.04---tree removal, plaques, urns, operating expenses
- Cash balance December 31, 2015: \$ 9998.78
- The Garden holds three CDs with Compass Bank, with a total amount of \$ 46,218.59.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Havard, Clerk

Youth Annual Report

2015 was a big year for the youth groups of St. James. We had lots of events, programs, and retreats. Our youth spaces have been completely renovated and now take up the 2nd floor of the Christian Education building to accommodate our growing program. We set up and facilitated worship services for the entire parish.

We have gotten stronger as a community and are learning to lean on each other in ways that continue to help us grow in our faith. Some highlights and specifics are below.

A small sample of program topics and other weekly events:

- Forgiveness: How to forgive others and Ourselves
- God Is...
- Learning how to make sushi
- Attending "Voices of Jerusalem" in Mobile
- Kickball tournament with St. Paul's Daphne
- Youth Sunday
- EYC lunches out and coffee time at CoffeeLoft
- Pool parties at the Thompson's house
- Episcopal Night at the Blue Wahoos
- "You Are Enough"
- Afternoons at the bay
- Supper Church - a meal in the context of worship
- Prayer Stations

Trips/Retreats/Overnights:

- Rite 13 Retreat for 8th Graders to Fort Morgan Beach in January
- Sr. High Mission Trip to Dallas in July. A service learning experience where we
- learned about food insecurity and poverty.
- Sr. High Christmas Lock In

Average Attendance:

- Rite 13 Sunday Morning Attendance-22
- Sr. High Sunday School Attendance- 15
- Wednesday Evening EYC- 15
- Sunday Evening EYC- 25

Diocesan Involvement:

- Michael Erwin was a youth delegate at 2015 Diocesan Youth Convention and also read at Bishop Kendrick's consecration

- 8 of our Sr. High went through Happening in other dioceses so that they can staff DioCGC Happening in February
- We currently have 12 Happeners and 8 youth staff for Happening in February 2016
- Jen participated in the “Adults who work with youth” conference with other DioCGC youth workers. She is also the Happening Coordinator for the diocese and on the commission for youth and young adults.
- Natalie Smith was a youth representative for the diocese at the Province IV Leadership Networking Meeting in Charleston, SC. She is also the lay rector for Happening #52 in Feb 2016.

Outreach:

- We have participated bi-monthly in packing boxes at Prodissee Pantry.
- EYC helps at VBS
- Cooking dinner for Family Promise families
- Writing letters to our home bound parishioners and writing letters of love to strangers.

We have hired a Jr. High Youth ministries assistant, Darcy Estefan. She runs the Jr. EYC program on Wednesday night while Jen is with the Sr. High group. And on Sunday nights, she and Jen work with the Jr. High together. She has been a huge help and we are happy to have her on board.

The Sr. EYC have set up and led Taize worship for the entire parish on several occasions in the chapel.

Looking forward into 2016:

- Happening in Feb 2016
- Sr. High mission trip to work at Sawyerville Day Camp in Hale County, AL July 2016.
- Senior Trip to Asheville, NC for our 12th Graders over Spring Break
- 2 of our youth, MaryPratt Byrd and Michael Erwin, will be alternate delegates to
- diocesan convention in February
- We will continue our outreach with Family Promise and Prodissee Pantry
- Jr. High Lock-In in April
- Senior Breakfast, Youth Sunday, Rite 13 Liturgy in May

Submitted by: Jen Manning, Youth Minister