

St. James Episcopal Church
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ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Annual Meeting: Sunday, January 25, 2026

Bishop's Committee

Julie Lowery (Co-Warden)
Jackie Shock (Co-Warden)
Pam Heidt
Sandy Riley
Shannon Verbal
Oliver Pung

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Annual Meeting Agenda
January 25, 2026

Call to Order

Opening prayer

Appointment of secretary

Approval of 2025 annual meeting minutes

Nominations for delegates to Annual Diocesan Convention (October 20-21, 2023)

- Thank you to our 2025 delegates: Wendy & Len Arntson and John Oberg.

Nominations for Bishop's Committee

- Call for nominations from the floor.
- Thank you to our outgoing members:

Approval of Vicar's Report, Wardens' Report & Committee Reports

- Thank you so much to all of our parishioners who have served so faithfully to support worship, outreach, pastoral care, Christian formation, stewardship, and building and grounds at St. James'

Treasurer's Report and Budget Presentation

Alton Steinaway Award

Q & A

Closing prayer

St. James' Annual Meeting
January 26, 2025
11:00 a.m.

Present: 33

Norma Amrhein, Wendy and Len Arntson, Margaret Breeden, Linda and Jim Chumney, Janet Cook, Ransom and Andy Duncan, Jack Edington (Zoom), Louise and David French, Julie Frost, John Hansen, Julie Lowery, Megan Masson-Minock, Robin Meloche, John Milligan, John Oberg, Eden and Gwangwon Park, Roger Parker, Sandy Perkins, Barnaby Pung and Melissa Milton-Pung, Coco Pung, Rev. Stacy Salles, Kathie Sandmaier, Pete Schaberg, Lynne Slager, Janet Tornow, Shannon Verbal, Joyce Wallace-Reed.

Rev. Stacy delivered an opening prayer.

Julie Lowery was appointed to serve as secretary for the meeting.

Motion to accept the minutes from 2024 Annual Meeting: David French. Second: Barnaby Pung. All in favor.

Reports

The reports were distributed in advance, except for Stewardship. Our stewardship campaign this past year focused on abundance from something little. This is what we celebrated. Many thanks to Pam for her artwork and to Janet Cook for the idea behind the campaign.

In the "Notes St. James' Financial Statements as of 12/31/2024," #1 under "Balance Sheet" should be Operating funds available \$192,000..." not 1192,000.

Motion to accept 12/31/2024 Treasurer's Report: David French. Second: Megan. All in favor.

Nominations to Bishop's Committee for three-year terms. Wendy Arntson and Oliver Pung volunteered. Motion to accept these nominations: Sandy Perkins. Second: Ransom. All in favor.

Nomination of delegates to Annual Convention: John Oberg, Len Arntson, and Wendy Arntson volunteered. Motion to accept these nominations: David French. Second: Melissa Milton-Pung. All in favor. Shannon Verbal volunteered to serve as an alternate.

2025 Budget

We divided the meeting participants into groups by table to review the 2025 budget. Stacy posed the following questions for discussion:

- What do you notice about the budget?
- What questions do you have about the budget?
- What changes might you make in the budget?

Table 1

- There should be a line item for children's worship with a suggested amount of \$200.
- Why is no income projected for Easter and Christmas? This is combined with the plate offering, because it's small.
- What is the reason for the Building and Grounds increase? This is primarily for snow removal and salting.

Table 2

- The pension premium is low; it should be 18%.
- Choir supplies are less than what was spent last year. Is this appropriate?
- Building maintenance—can any of this be capitalized?
- The Finance Committee suggests using special projects funds to cover some maintenance.

Table 3

1. Unrestricted interest was \$16,000 last year. \$8,000 is projected for this year. Why aren't we projecting the same as last year? \$8,000 is actual dividends/cash. \$16,000 includes gains in the value of what we have in what we invested—not actual cash. Budget shows the cash dividends that we receive.
2. Cleaning in the church has not been very good. Len says this is being addressed.
3. \$335/month is budgeted for internet and telephone (Comcast). This seems really high. Melissa volunteered to help negotiate this with Len.

Table 4

- Expenses for the convention—we reduced these. We might ask our delegates to help pay for some of their expenses. We can also use funds from the rector's discretionary fund.
- Len explained the costs of grounds maintenance.
- Oasis vs. Open Hearts—should we combine these funds? Open Hearts is no longer active. (We should check with the Diocese about this.)

Table 5

- Can we reduce the cost of printing the bulletin? We have beautiful hymnals and prayer books. Could we use these? The bulletin is more user friendly for newcomers. And some of what we're using isn't in the prayer book or hymnal. Our office manager has been trying to reduce the number of pages in the bulletin.

Suggestions

- Maybe we could look for more opportunities to renting our facilities.
- Could the vicar live in the Mission House? Yes, this is an option. We would need to check with the Diocese to see how much this would reduce the salary/housing allowance for the vicar.

BC approved this budget. But we can make changes to this. BC will consider the suggestions from this meeting.

The Alton Steinaway Award was given to Michael Champ for his service to St. James' over the years. Michael wasn't present at the meeting, so Stacy will present the award at an upcoming church service. Stacy thinks that everyone should get the Alton Steinaway Award! Everyone contributes so much to SJ. We also extended our sincere appreciation to Stacy for all that she has been doing for us.

The meeting adjourned 12:00 p.m.

2025 P&L and 2026 Proposed Budget

	Actual	Budget	Proposed
Income	thru12/25	2025	2026
41010 Pledge Payments	\$166,449	\$140,000	\$168,340
41020 Plate Offerings	\$3,463	\$2,000	\$3,000
41021 Other gifts	\$659		
41030 Special Holy Day Offerings	\$400		
41050 Flowers	\$3,055	\$2,500	\$3,000
41080 Discretionary	\$300		
41200 Unrestricted Interest	\$8,042	\$8,000	\$8,000
41210 Parish Hall	\$0	\$0	\$0
41220 Mission House Rental	\$16,050	\$16,200	\$15,900
41280 Gain or Loss on Sale	\$0	\$0	\$0
41300 Fundraisers	<u>\$3,115</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>
41330 Legacy Giving			
Total Operating Income	\$201,533	\$171,700	\$201,240
42200 Special Project Income	\$5,508		
44150 Income Restricted by BC	(\$4,462)		
44550 Gain or Loss in DMIT Endow	\$23,460		
47200 Memorial Fund Income	\$5,499		
Non-Operating Income	\$30,005		
Total Income	\$231,538		
Expense			
51011 Diocesan Allocation	\$20,125	\$20,136	\$19,887
Total Outreach	\$20,125	\$20,136	\$19,887
51021 Rector's Salary	\$42,230	\$50,345	\$52,550 *
51022 Housing Allowance	\$0	\$2,309	\$2,355
51023 Continuing Ed.	\$0	\$867	\$500
51024 Pension Premium	\$0	\$4,570	\$4,000
51025 Health & Dental	\$0	\$3,872	\$4,735 **
51027 Travel & Hospitality	\$0	\$250	\$250
51028 Rector's Cell Phone	\$0	\$360	\$360
51029 Sabbatical Reserve	<u>\$0</u>	\$1,400	\$1,400
Total Rector	\$42,230	\$63,973	\$66,150
51101 Cleaning service	\$3,120	\$3,120	\$3,120
51102 Substitute Organist	\$135	\$300	\$300
51103 Organist	\$24,720	\$24,720	\$25,462 ***
51104 Bookkeeping	\$2,067	\$2,575	\$2,653 ***
51105 Office manager	\$9,368	\$10,712	\$11,034 ***
51108 Director of Religious Ed	\$14,486	\$14,486	\$14,486
51109 Substitute Celebrants	\$300	\$350	\$350
51110 Payroll Processing Fee	\$378	\$360	\$432
51111 Payroll Taxes	\$4,001	\$4,120	\$4,245
51112 Treasurer	\$1,575		\$3,600
51115 Insurance	\$13,403	\$12,000	\$13,600

51120 Utilities	\$7,478	\$6,500	\$7,500
51125 Office Supplies	\$479	\$500	\$500
51127 Office Equip/Tech Service	\$4,357	\$5,500	\$5,230
51130 Equipment Repair/Maint.	\$0	\$900	\$900
51135 Advertising	\$0	\$400	\$400
51142 Christian Education	\$153	\$200	\$200
51143 Christian Education-Youth	\$0		\$200
51144 Christian Educatuin -Adult	\$0		\$200
51146 Outreach Committee	\$0	\$200	\$200
51147 Convention Delegate Exper	\$0	\$400	\$400
51148 Stewardship Expenses	\$0	\$150	\$150
51149 Bishop's Comm. Expenses	\$0	\$100	\$100
51150 Altar Guild	\$256	\$500	\$500
51152 Flower Expense	\$2,503	\$2,500	\$2,500
51155 Choir Supplies	\$2,570	\$3,000	\$3,000
51162 Pastoral Care	\$0	\$300	\$300
51164 Mission Goals	\$0	\$150	\$150
51165 Worship	\$0	\$200	\$200
51166 Fellowship Expense	\$139	\$200	\$200
51170 Telephone/Internet	\$4,426	\$5,270	\$5,230
51175 Publications & Subscrip.	\$50	\$50	\$50
51180 Building Maintenance	\$4,115	\$8,673	\$8,900
51184 Grounds Maintenance	\$5,122	\$5,668	\$6,670
51188 Mission House Expenses	\$1,754	\$2,000	\$1,500
51190 Other Expenses	\$909	\$500	\$1,000
51191 Fundraising Expenses	\$248	\$500	\$500
51199 Depreciation Expense	<u>\$2,088</u>	\$2,000	\$2,800
Total Operating	<u>\$110,200</u>	<u>\$119,104</u>	<u>\$128,762</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$172,555</u>	<u>\$203,213</u>	<u>\$214,799</u>
Difference	\$28,978	(\$31,513)	(\$13,559)
Special Projects	\$5,515		
Endowment Expense	\$2,000		
Memorial Expense	<u>\$1,031</u>		
Non-Operating Expense	\$8,546		
Total Expense	<u>\$181,101</u>		

*Stacy1/2time w/3%COLA = \$29000, Fulltime Rector 4 mns = \$23550

**Highest Single person rate

***3%COLA

Pledge history:

2026 - 33 @ \$144340, 5 guesses @ 21350
2025 - 32 @ \$133,908, 6 guesses @ \$18,000
2024 - 32 @ \$139,254, 7 guesses @ \$23,160
2023 - 41 @ \$134,581, 5 @ \$17,800
2022 - 38 @ \$153,800, 9 @ \$26,640
2021 - 37 @ \$136,548, 8 guesses @ \$36,084

Vicar's Report

Submitted by The Rev Stacy Salles

“Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your Name give glory; because of your love and because of your faithfulness.” Psalm 115:1

I've now been with you for a year and a half, witnessing the great love you have for God, for each other, and for your neighbors, wherever they may abide. You are a congregation not afraid to speak truth to power and put what you believe into action. You do this not for your individual glory, or for the glory of Saint James, but for the glory of God because you have felt God's love and presence.

I want to express gratitude in this report for Julie Lowrey whose term on the Bishop's Committee is up this year. She and Jackie have been superb co-wardens. Julie's style of creating an agenda for our meetings is amazing. She has offered to continue putting together the agenda which is a fantastic gift to me. However, I will miss her quiet and thoughtful presence at our meetings, and those moments when she asks pertinent questions. I also want to thank those who continue on the Bishop's Committee. They are an amazing group of folks and we've accomplished a lot this year: Jackie Shock (co-warden), Shannon Verbal, Pam Heidt, Oliver Pung, Sandy Riley, Wendy Arntson, and even though he is not a part of the Bishop's Committee, Len Arntson, who always brings his building, grounds, and tech reports and advice to the Bishop's Committee. I also appreciate Julie Frost, Janet Cook, Lynn Slager, and Gary Kelley who worked with our new Treasurer, Carol Hoggard, getting her onboard with our budgetary and reporting system.

I give thanks for the outreach mission work of all of you who participate and work with Faith in Action and Crossroads in Detroit.

I give thanks to Kathy Sandmaier for her continued work in providing a Bible Study Class, Compline for Advent, and providing a way to meditate with the weekly psalm. And to Roger Parker for the monthly spiritual gathering at his home called Still Waters (started by Kathie) and the times he has led worship when I was unavailable, or was our musician for the day. Thanks to Alice who also has been our musician when Gwangwon needs some time off.

I give thanks to Gwangwon and the choir for the music they bring to us each Sunday. I grew up in a congregation that loved to sing so the gift they bring lifts up my spirit each week. I appreciate the variety of music that Gwangwon treats us to, which includes lyrics to add to our spiritual learning.

I give thanks to Julie Lowery, Len Arntson and Sarah Shock for the various ways they keep Saint James' in the public eye.

I give thanks to all those on our "Eucharist Table Guild": Joyce Walter-Reed, Julie Frost, Sandy Perkins, Norma Amrhein, Lynn Slager (and her side-kick Gary Kelley), Janet Tornow, and Kristen Novak. They are great at asking questions about my needs and how to meet the needs of the congregation regarding our worship.

I also want to thank Teri, our office administrator. It is amazing the work that she does in the small amount of time she spends each week with us. She is full of great organizational ideas and

works great with all our staff and volunteers. She makes my work life a lot easier to manage and keeps my feet to the fire. Thanks Teri.

We said goodbye (never permanently of course) to Margaret Breeden who moved to another community. We said hello to Lynn Solms, Jane Culp, Charles Davies, Morgan, Aaron, Eleanor, and Sloane Schantz.

What new things have we accomplished in 2025:

- Worked with the Morton-Cox family to set up a scholarship fund. Saint James and Faith in Action work together to give scholarships to people who Faith in Action recommends. We gave out two scholarships this year.
- We received \$100,000 from Debra Wilson's Estate, which she gave with the purpose of starting a Legacy fund for Saint James. Jack Edington and I have been attending modules put out by the Diocese of MI regarding how to start and manage Legacy Accounts. (See the Report on the St. James' Legacy Fellowship Foundation.
- We began a new Church School program based on the Episcopal Lectionary. This provides an opportunity for the children, parents, and grandparents to talk about what they heard on any given Sunday. The children have been coming more consistently and have formed good friendships. We also started Baptism/Confirmation Class. We have one more class to go. We will have three teens confirmed and one who will be baptized. When and where is still TBD. (See Church School Report for more information).
- Our office manager has been putting together a policy and procedure book that will be bound in a notebook kept in the church office as well as a digital version.
- The Bishop's Committee approved the use of a credit card so that the office administrator can purchase necessary supplies to keep our operations going. It can also be used for Building and Grounds purchases as well.

I am sure I am forgetting something as for me, one year runs into another and all of it is amazing. I probably have forgotten to mention other people I am grateful for. Please know this – You all make my presence with you a wonderful joy. Thank you. To the Glory of God – Amen.

Wardens' Report

By Julie Lowery and Jackie Shock

Your 2025 Bishop's Committee included Jackie Shock and Julie Lowery (co-wardens), Wendy Arntson (secretary), Pam Heidt, Oliver Pung, Sandy Riley, and Shannon Verbal.

Our primary goals for 2025 included continuing our focus on outreach and maintaining an important presence in the community (see 2025 Outreach report).

Below is a list of some of the other activities that also received our time and attention during the year:

- Established the St. James'/Morton Cox Legacy Scholarship Fund, in cooperation with Faith in Action. The first scholarship of \$2,000 was awarded this year.
- Discussed plans for using the generous donation from Deb Wilson's estate to establish a legacy fund, which we plan to implement in 2026. (Rev. Stacy and Jack Edington have been attending the Diocesan webinar series on legacy giving.)

- Created and distributed a new photo directory.
- Completed reading the book, *Conversation – The Sacred Art*, and practiced engaging each other in sacred conversation at our vestry retreat.
- Began reading and discussing the book, *The Church Cracked Open*, as part of the spiritual reflection portion of our meetings.
- Discussed and approved plans for revising the church school program.
- Recruited a new treasurer.
- Discussed and approved plans for using the Mission House.
- Discussed and implemented ways to make the church more welcoming to newcomers, especially families with young children.
- Initiated a discussion regarding emergency response planning.
- Agreed to again pay our full apportionment to the Diocese in 2026, paving the way to apply for parish status.

In addition, we established the following goals, based on discussions with parishioners at coffee hour early in the year; and we review and provide updates on these at each BC meeting:

Things we are “on fire for”:

- Engage older youth into leadership roles.
- Continue relationships with FIA and Crossroads.
- Show intention in welcoming and sitting with new people.
- Enhance our social media visibility.
- Attend to facility cleanliness.
- Transition our children’s church program.

Our “heavenly dreams” include the following:

1. Provide more musical events.
2. Share our facility.
3. Update our exterior signage.

Additional, important goals include:

- Create process documents.
- Archive historical documents.

As part of our responsibility to oversee the routine business of the church, we also performed the following activities:

- Monitoring revenues and expenses compared to budgeted projections
- Considering requests for unbudgeted expenditures
- Determining uses for special donations/memorial funds
- Reviewing and approving the initiation of large maintenance projects and purchase of major equipment (including the purchase of a new freezer in 2025)
- Organizing and conducting the stewardship campaign
- Creating a budget for the coming year
- Monitoring and providing feedback to committees; review and approving committee recommendations
- Reviewing and approving transfers of funds into savings, money market, and investment accounts

Julie Lowery will leave BC in January with the expiration of her three-year term. Next year we will be losing four members! According to our by-laws, we need a minimum of six members on the BC, and we can have up to 12 members. We encourage all parishioners to consider serving on BC, even if you have served before. (Many of us have.)

Altar Guild

Submitted by Janet Tornow

The Altar Guild maintains its role as the behind-the-scenes group which prepares for our worship services. We tend to communion supplies, priest's vestments and altar hangings, polish and clean the altar vessels, vases, candle holders and crosses, keep the linens clean and pressed, and decorate the church in seasonally appropriate ways.

We continue to function as a committee of members with specific duties and no one person in charge of the Guild. We are looking forward to having Melissa Pung join us in 2026. Our current members are Norma Amrhein (preparing ashes), Joyce Wallace Reed (scheduling), Sandy Perkins (supply ordering), Julie Frost (flowers), Janet Tornow (linens), Robin Meloche, Lynn Slager (wine), Sandy Riley (liaison to BC & priest), and Kristen Novak.

We were honored to use \$700 from the Deb Wilson Memorial funds to purchase various new altar linens and Advent candles this past year. Thank you to everyone for your continued support of the Altar Guild and its role in the life of our church.

Music and Choir

Submitted by Dr Gwangwon Park

This year marked another season of growth and transition for the St. James Choir. We said farewell to Margaret, who stepped away from the choir following her move to Novi. We also shared a heartfelt goodbye with Robin, who left the choir due to health concerns. We are grateful for her dedication over the years and continue to keep her well-being in our thoughts.

Throughout the year, the choir has remained enthusiastic and committed. A central focus of our rehearsals has been building a unified and blended sound, with particular attention to vowel consistency, posture, and ensemble awareness. These ongoing efforts have steadily strengthened our overall choral quality and cohesion.

Alongside refining our existing repertoire, we have continued to emphasize healthy and efficient voice use. By encouraging effective body use and mindful singing habits, we aim to support sustainable vocal development and long-term musical growth for our choir members.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are considering hiring an additional paid singer to support and strengthen the ensemble. At the same time, Reece is currently in the process of applying to colleges. Depending on her future plans and availability, we hope to continue working with her; however, if circumstances require, we are prepared to seek another soprano to maintain balance within the choir.

In addition to choir-related planning, we are also preparing for a music concert series in 2026 that will feature a wide variety of musical offerings beyond choral repertoire. These concerts are intended to showcase diverse musical expressions and to involve collaborations with musicians from outside the choir, enriching the musical life of both the church and the surrounding community.

Overall, this year has been one of steady progress, thoughtful transition, and forward-looking planning. With a continued focus on unity, sound quality, and broader musical engagement, the St. James Choir and music program remain well positioned for the future.

Building, Grounds and Technology

Submitted by Len Arntson

It is this Committee's mission to ensure, with God's help, that not only are the essential systems we rely on each day at St. James' are dependable, well maintained, and cared for in a thoughtful manner. Being responsible for the church and grounds, as well as the Mission House and Memorial Garden keeps us very busy. We strive to provide facilities that accommodate all members and visitors in a safe, comfortable, and welcoming environment. We are a landmark on Broad Street and in downtown Dexter and take pride in being a good neighbor.

2025 Achievements:

Given the budget constraints for 2025, we focused on what was deemed critical first and moved on from there. In addition to the ongoing maintenance and repairs required throughout the campus, the following major projects were completed with the help of *many* volunteers, in no particular order:

- Parish Hall dining area walls were "refreshed" by being given a new coat of paint.
- A thorough cleaning of the undercroft: taking away a 10yd dumpster filled to the brim of unneeded items and then the reorganization of the entire area.
- A thorough cleaning of the main level kitchenette and updating the oven/range with new drip pans.
- All the windows were cleaned, inside and out.
- Repainting of the Memorial Garden entrance gate.
- Replacement of our freezer, which quit working, after almost 20 years of service. The new unit is "Energy Star" rated.
- Carpets cleaned/shampooed in the Library, Rector's Office, Sacristy, and the lower dining room.
- Below ground level pole supports installed (used for our large lawn signs, i.e. Cookie Walk) eliminating the "trip hazards" that our prior setup created. With the added benefit of making these signs much simpler to install.
- Removed and installed a new concrete sidewalk at the Mission House from the city sidewalk to the front steps.
- Added new hand railing also at the Mission House.

- A new “adult” sized toilet replaced a smaller sized unit on the main level of the Parish Hall, this was funded by a parishioner
- Rerouted cabling in the sanctuary.

Looking forward into 2026, tentative plans include:

- Memorial Garden improvements.
- Removal of scrub trees near the garden shed area.
- Repainting the front porch to the church.
- Renovating the lawn, especially around the church sign.
- Pruning back the hedges in front of and along the Parish Hall.
- Tree pruning, as needed.
- Refurbishing the picnic table and chair.
- Cleanout and reorganization of the garden shed.
- Sanctuary carpet cleaning.

As a final note: 99.9% of all the tasks above were accomplished by you!! Thank you for volunteering to make St. James’ the wonderful body of Christ that it is.

Christian Formation

Submitted by Kathie Sandmaier, Director of Christian Formation

Wednesday Bible Study: 11:15 in the church library has been a part of St. James for almost twenty years with an average of 9 to 12 participants. The "study" emphasizes the formation of our spirits by the building of community, the sharing of thoughts with scripture, freedom of choice in what we work with in any given time, and personal and corporate prayer. The population is always in flux which is fine and we know that no one is likely to be here every single week and adjustments can be made. There is a slight change beginning on January 22. There have been occasions when participants are not ready to end the sessions so we will bring a lunch/beverage of our own choosing and add maybe up to an hour in our "holy chats"

I thank Roger Parker for his attention and skills in Still Waters. He meets with all interested at his home to provide music, particularly of Taize, a meditation, prayer, and a meal. Watch for meeting times, always on a Saturday morning. All are welcome.

During Advent there was a Compline service on zoom. There will be another series during Lent with worship and a meditation on the words of Christ on the Cross. More information will follow. Please consider joining the community in this opportunity to join with Jesus and give yourself the gift of some time to dedicate to Jesus and ourselves.

Report of the Search Committee

Submitted by Michael Champ

The Committee was formed in April, 2024 for the express purpose of finding a permanent priest for St James’. It includes Len Arntson, Jerry Brand, Michael Champ (co-chair), Pam Heidt, Alison Pomerantz, Barnaby Pung (co-chair), and Sandy Riley. Our Diocesan guide to the transition process is Rev. Canon Susie Shaefer.

In January, 2025 , after making changes requested by the Bishop's Committee, we submitted to the Diocese a document containing information required for the transition process.

In May, after approval by the Bishop's Committee, we submitted to the Diocese a congregational profile, describing who we are (including our location and history), what we do, what we want in a priest, etc. It emphasizes our commitment to community service and social justice. Later in May, we received information about two applicants. One accepted a call to another church and the other we elected not to pursue.

In December, we applied for a curacy funding grant; they are intended to support congregations that call a newly ordained priest by paying a percentage of the cost.

Annual Report for Discernment regarding Participation in the College of Congregational Development

Submitted by Rev Stacy Salles

Prior to this report, you have the Annual Report regarding the application to the Diocese for a curate. You are probably wondering what a curate is. A curate is someone fresh out of seminary, ready to be ordained as a priest or just recently ordained as a priest. The Diocese of MI provides a portion of the salary for the curate for 3 years, decreasing each successive year while the congregation increases their portion of the curate's salary. To qualify for this a covenant is made requiring the new priest and at least two lay people from the congregation engage in the program called the College of Congregational Development.

What is the College of Congregational Development? The following is taken from the Diocese of Michigan Website.

The College for Congregational Development is a comprehensive training program that originated in the [Diocese of Olympia in Western Washington](#). It seeks to nurture and develop congregational development practitioners from within existing parish lay and clergy leadership. The College is a two-year program that includes readings, homework, presentation, working in teams, the completion of a content exam and the completion of two back-home projects. Because the College seeks to improve the way that leaders function in congregations, congregations are strongly encouraged to send clergy-lay teams to the College.

The College's aims are:

- *Healthy, faithful, sustainable congregations fulfilling their calling to be the Body of Christ in a particular place and time and among a particular people.*
- *Congregations that are grounded in a robust identity rooted in an Anglican ethos and spirituality.*
- *Leaders that are both self-defined and connected to their communities of faith. Leaders who are both aware of and responsive to the particular challenges and opportunities before them. Leaders who can help their faith communities engage and respond to their challenges and opportunities.*
- *A common language and community of practice around congregational development in the Diocese. Stronger connections among congregational leaders for the purposes of learning, community, mutual encouragement, and inspiration.*
- *The creation of useful training programs that can be shared freely and used by others in the broader Church.*

No need to go out of State. I believe the program will be run from the Cathedral in Detroit.

Our administrative assistant, Teri Landreth, and our Bookkeeper, Janet Cook, have participated in the program. Teri stated that the program was spiritual, hopeful, faithful, and if she could participate again she would.

Here's a quote from Janet, *"When I attended the CCD this past June 2025 I valued the intense and well-planned learning environment. It is a wonderful opportunity to gather as a large group and learn from each other and especially to engage with the small group that is assigned the first day and remains an intact group for the whole week. Each day is bookended by Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer and with the combined singing voices of the attendees is a deeply rich experience. The main gist of the CCD is to have learning models presented, explained and used that are successful in bringing people together to move forward in mission work of the church. You will learn, you will be tired and you will be inspired!"*

While the in-person participation is required by the priest and two lay people the congregation will also be engaged in some manner with the program. It's a great way to engage with God, with Scripture, and with the lay and clergy from our Diocese.

It should be noted that this isn't about just getting a curate. Saint James' has stated, as a congregation, the desire for growth in body, mind, and spirit. This is exactly what the College of Congregational Development was created for. That's something to think about! Let us pray for enlightenment as we continue to seek ways to grow as a congregation that is loving and committed to being their for those who need a congregation of light and love.

If you feel moved to participate in the College of Congregational Development with your new priest, whether fresh out of seminary or not, please speak with Rev. Stacy Salles.

COST: The Website provides a range of costs for MI residents. Saint James' would find a way to pay for those who wish to participate.

WHEN: The Summer 2026 College for Congregational Development Registration

YEAR A - July 12th (Sunday Evening) - July 17th (Friday Noon)

The only required evening participation will be Thursday for special dinner. Overnight accommodations are offered. Lunch and light refreshments will be provided Monday-Friday for all participants. Breakfast and dinner will also be provided Sunday-Friday for participants staying overnight.

Outreach Committee

Submitted by Jackie Shock

Committee members: Wendy Arntson, Grace Brand, Jackie Shock, Janet Tornow.

Meeting dates: Outreach meets in the Spring to plan the year's activities. We conduct most business and communications through email, responding to new needs and issues as they present themselves.

Our mission: Outreach exists to meet the various needs of the at-risk population in the immediate and surrounding geographical area of Washtenaw County.

The major activities of Outreach in 2025:

January – April: Weekly collection of ever-changing needs for the food pantry at Faith in Action. FIA has been dealing with the constant changes in the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program {ie Food Stamps}) and increase demand for help with food due to Governmental shutdowns and job losses. Keeping the shelves stocked has been a challenge, particularly with the increase in the cost of groceries. Your weekly donations allowed St. James' to donate 15-20 pounds of supplies on a weekly basis. This helped to cover some of the pantry's weekly needs. In January during the Dexter Ice Festival St. James' offered a warming station in the Sanctuary, complete with music and hot chocolate, this may become an annual event!

April: Lenten Alms Gathering for Church at the Crossroads: Helped by our Church School children, St. James collected Alms in support of the Church of the Crossroads. Reverend Teresa Wakeen was overwhelmed with the generosity of the congregation when she received the check for \$1,641.76. These funds help Reverend Teresa continue her vital ministry in her parish. See? Those weekly pennies and dollars really add up!!

June and July: – Throughout the late spring and early summer we collected clothing for children aged 2-14 to be delivered to Crossroads. Many families made generous donations of both clothing and money. I heard a few anecdotal stories of our Church School children helping their parents pick and pack their outgrown clothes for delivery. In addition to the multiple bags of clothing delivered in two separate trips we left Reverend Teresa with a check for \$375.00 which was used for back-to-school shopping for some of her families. In July, St. James' supplied funds and helping hands for a lunch at Crossroads for school aged children and their families. We served about 30 people during the lunch time and provided some fun crafts for families to work on together. After the official lunch time we had left over meals for approximately 20 single adults who are served at 1:30.

Dexter Summer Festival – The first weekend of August is the Dexter Summer Festival, and our Strawberry Shortcake Sale. First thing on Saturday we were a starring presence in the parade and then provided shortcakes, lawn activities, music in the Sanctuary and a cooling station throughout the first part of the afternoon. We sold about 125 Strawberry Shortcakes, broke even on expenses and had a lot of fun!

September: Back to School backpacks. St. James' was originally assigned 5 students for back-to-school supplies and backpacks but was also contacted at the last minute for an additional 3. We provided a total of 8 new backpacks packed full of school supplies for Dexter school children.

October: The Annual Crop Walk was held in Dexter this year, next year it will rotate to Chelsea. St. James was approached to "host" the event by opening our space for walkers to gather pre- and post-walk and to provide a welcoming space for snacks and beverages. We were happy to help in this manner, as the most centrally located church in downtown Dexter! For Halloween we collected candy and nonedible treats for the annual Trick or Treat on Main, where Wendy and Wash braved some chilly temperatures and precipitation to pass out treats and smiles to children. October was also the beginning month of our collection of feminine hygiene products for Faith in Action. This is a constant need of the pantry. At the end of the collection, we delivered 62 packages of pads and tampons!

November: In November we concluded our hygiene drive and began our drive for facial tissue and toilet paper to be included in the Christmas packages for families served at Faith in Action. We were asked to contribute 40 of each, and as usual we outdid ourselves and delivered 56 boxes of tissue and 64 packages (4-6 rolls each) of toilet paper.

December: Outreach coordinated with Church at the Crossroads to provide a little holiday cheer in the lives of 9 people. Two large families in Detroit received bags containing clothing, shoes and toys for each child. The moms each received new sauce and frying pans and family sets of bath towels. And, because of your thoughtfulness, we were able to provide a gift card to purchase bed linens for each family. Our Bags of Grace event is one of the most popular and rewarding each year.

Outreach always has room for new members and new ideas. Please just let us know!

Thank you all for your support and generosity this year!

Outreach Contact person: Jackie Shock

Pastoral Care Committee

Submitted by Wendy Arntson

Janet Cook, Grace Brand, Sandy Riley, Pete Schaberg, Linda Chumney, Alice Vanwambeke, Kathie Sandmaier, and Pam Heidt, served this year. Pam continues to share her beautifully illustrated cards for birthdays and other special occasions.

In 2025, we had some “special Coffee Hours” and a picnic. In 2026, we WILL have at least one fun gathering! Suggestions so far include: game nights, spaghetti dinners, those travelogues we never got to last year. Please let us know what you are interested in attending.

Members of the congregation (including very helpful family members) are providing weekly meals to three of our singles. We are also able and willing to provide meals to someone who is just under the weather. You needn't be of a certain age to be added to our list. Some of us have trouble cooking for just one or two people. Having a place to take extra food means we aren't eating the same thing for an entire week.

Readers and Servers Report

Submitted by Wendy Arntson

This year a lot of people stepped up to help with the service. Coco Pung and Joyce Wallace-Reed are reading. Barb Abraham, Linda Chumney, Coco, Roger Parker, Kathie Sandmaier all help when we need two chalices.

As we enter 2026, Joyce, Coco, Roger, and Morgan Schantz will be assisting at the altar; and Julie Frost is returning to serve. These people are a wonderful blessing and we are so thankful for their help.

There is always more room at the altar and the lectern if you would like to step into one or both of these roles, too.

Annual Report on Church School for Young People

Submitted by Rev Stacy Salles

Through the spring and summer of 2025 parents, grandparents, others and I met to look through and discuss a variety of Church School materials that would work for our small group of young children that vary in age. We wanted something that would fit the style of a “one room schoolhouse” that allowed for all the children to think deeply about God and their faith. We wanted a program that would allow them to express what they’ve learned through creativity, discussion, and prayer. We also knew that we would be committing to a rotation of people (always two adults in a class) willing to take a Sunday and teach and assist. Currently we are using a lectionary-based program that comes out of the Episcopal Church called “Lesson Plans that Work”. We took the cross that was sitting in the entrance to the Parish Hall and moved that to the church school room. Each Sunday, the children leave a creative project as an offering to Jesus. The cross is full of wonderful offerings of love the children have made. Each session begins and ends with prayer. Rev. Stacy brings the children the Eucharist Bread at the end of our worship.

Church School happens three Sunday’s a month and join the adults in worship once a month or more depending on how many Sunday’s there are in a month, where there is a Children’s Sermon and activity they participate in. We have a wonderful space for our children in the back of the church, with a table and lots of activities to do. We turned one of the pews around creating more space for children and adults to sit. In the Parish Hall we created a space for children to play with Legos and Jig Saw Puzzles. There is also a baby doll and carriage for very small children. This has helped in keeping our children from wandering off without adult supervision. There seems to be a lot more consistency in children showing up for Church School. They enjoy each other’s company.

Regarding our older youth we have four who are participating in a Baptism/Confirmation class. We’ve had three sessions so far and look forward to having one more session. We have seen Coco participating in worship leadership and we hope that the others will also be able to do this if it is something they desire.

I want to thank these people who are taking the time to spend with our children: Wendy Arntson, Morgan Schantz, Jackie Shock, Paula Britton, Grace Brand, and Shannon Verbal. I also want to thank Len for bringing in a table for the kids’ area in the sanctuary and turning the back pew around to create a better space for them and parents.

May God continue to bless the work we do with our young ones.

Coffee and Conversation

Submitted by Wendy Arntson

In 2025, C&C welcomed the following presentations:

- April: Ella Dunajsky and Harry Rolfes, members of the local Camino de Santiago group (the Way of St. James in Spain); 25 members of the community and parish participated.
- May: Bill Knight, from Holy Faith Saline, spoke on Death and Dying, offering suggestions to ease the burdens of transitions for family and friends; 25 attended.
- October: Dr. Denise Anthony from UM discussed the current state of Medicaid and how the changes might affect everyone, not just Medicaid recipients; 16 attended.
- November: Mary Anne Perrone with Washtenaw Congregational Sanctuary gave a presentation and facilitated a discussion on assisting the immigrants among us from a human rights and faith perspective; 37 people attended.

Our first speaker of 2026 will be Dr. Barnaby Pung offering insights into AI; how to identify it, costs and environmental impacts, as well as other timely items. Watch for the date to be announced as we firm plans.

Report for Outreach from Animal Blessing Day

Submitted by Rev Stacy Salles

Prior to our October, Saint Francis Day Animal Blessing, Clara, Kristen's granddaughter, wanted to find a way to make the event one that could provide needed goods for the Washtenaw County Humane Society. She called the Humane Society to find out what their needs were. We printed them up in our announcements. I'm including the photos taken from that event and her write up about her experience in leadership. Way to go Clara!

Thank you for donating, everyone! I did this with the St. James pet blessing, I had fun planning/gathering everything, and I think the animals at the Huron Valley Humane Society will appreciate all the things you got. Also, I can't believe how much stuff we got, for example: cat food, dog treats, and much more!! This has been one of my passions since I was 7 or 8, and I plan to do more of these drives, and not just for animals. Thank you again!

-Clara"



A Report on Saint James' Legacy Fellowship

Submitted by Rev Stacy Salles & Jack Edington

Deborah Wilson was a very active and involved member of Saint James' prior to her death in December of 2024. I was privileged to get to know Deborah prior to her passing. She was very open about finding a way to give a gift to Saint James' that would continue in perpetuity for the life of the church and its mission to Dexter and Detroit. She informed me and another person in our congregation that she was going to give a gift that she wanted to be used as seed money to begin a Legacy Gift fund for Saint James. Rev. Stacy Salles and Jack Edington have joined a group of folks from other congregations to participate in Modules provided by the Diocese of Michigan for congregations starting Legacy programs.

What is a Legacy Gift? It is an endowment fund, but it functions differently in the sense that it is a fund that anyone can contribute to and the amount of the gift doesn't matter. It is a way for all of us to honor the community of Saint James' that we love so much. It is a simple way to make a lasting impact on the life of Saint James.

How does one contribute to the Saint James' Legacy Fellowship? It all comes down to planned giving, which are gifts made from assets accumulated during one's life, rather than writing a check from current income.

- Gifts in Life: a gift of cash, securities, or other assets such as objects of value and real estate.
- Bequests: provides for loved ones, the church and others through provisions in a donor's Will or Trust.
- Life Insurance: making Saint James' Legacy Fellowship a beneficiary of an existing policy or by purchasing a new policy in the name of the Saint James' Legacy Fellowship.

What will Legacy Funds be used for? Funds from Legacy Gift Endowments can be used for improvements of buildings or grounds, scholarships for pilgrimages or mission trips by members of the congregation, it can help pay for special programming needs. Some congregations gave scholarships to help seminarians from their congregation attend seminary. It allows a congregation to dream its future into being.

Why should I become a part of the Saint James' Legacy Fellowship? The primary benefit of becoming a member of the Saint James' Legacy Fellowship is the knowledge that your gift will provide financial support for the ministry of Saint James far into the future. It's an important way for each of us to give witness to future generations of our stewardship, love, and commitment to Saint James. Gifts can be given anonymously if so desired.

All information obtained from or about prospective donors or donors will be held in the strictest confidence by all representatives of Saint James' Episcopal Church. Names and the amount or conditions of any gift shall not be published without the express written approval of the donor or an authorized representative of the donor.

How can I get more information about becoming a Fellowship donor? The Diocese is also having two webinars in February which will be good even if you do not plan to become a Fellowship member.

- Estate Planning 101: The Basics we all need to know – Feb. 5 from 7 pm – 8:30 pm
- Planned giving 101: How anyone can leave a lasting legacy, Feb. 26 from 7 pm – 8:30pm

If you are interested in becoming a part of the Saint James' Legacy Fellowship, please let Rev. Stacy Salles or Jack Edington know. We will be happy to speak more about this if you are interested.