



St. James Lutheran Church

God calls us to follow Christ, make disciples, and live the Gospel

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONGREGATION ANNUAL GOVERNANCE MEETING 10:30 a.m. June 6, 2021

Schedule

9:30 am Service

10:30 am Annual Meeting

Agenda

Opening Prayer

Call to Order

Report of the Tellers (Quorum is 29 voting members)

Adoption of the Agenda

Approval of the Minutes, January 31, 2021

Annual Reports

 Report of the President

 Report of Pastor Holmer

 Reports of the Committees

Elections

Resolutions

Adjournment

Closing Prayer



Minutes of the Annual Financial Meeting January 31, 2021

Opening Prayer: Mike Bennett

Call to Order: 10:20 am Steve Thornberry, Council President

Report of the Tellers: 56

Motion to Approve Agenda: Mike Bennett

Motion Seconded: Mark Wanda

Motion Approved: Unanimous

Motion to Approve Minutes, June 7, 2020: Unanimous

Final 2020 Review & 2021 General Fund Budget: Mike Bennett, Treasurer

Member Giving & Pledges – faithful through the pandemic with financial support and in all areas outlined in the Annual Financial Report of the Congregation

- December is historically our highest giving month, and member giving exceeded the budget despite the pandemic, deferring \$21,000 of spending into 2021 (“Future Spend”)
- 2021 pledges have decreased a bit due to membership loss (4 family units) and lack of new membership due to restricted in-person worship

Cash and Investments – ensure that our property is maintained and we can increase our benevolence. Annual return on investments was 8%

- 2020 Benevolences from Future Spend account totaled \$36,745; Balance for 2021 is \$67,600

Personnel – pandemic has changed how everyone does their duties. Communication Producer position created to produce weekly recorded service. Decreased 2021 pledges resulted in paying bonuses at the end of 2020 instead of 2021 salary increases

Property – below budget due almost entirely to the building not being used for in-person worship. 2021 budget anticipates return to in-person worship sometime during the year. Major portion of the Land Sale Fund income is available for major maintenance as required

Motion to Approve the 2021 General Fund Budget as presented: Laurie Whistler

Motion Seconded: Josh Hornaday

Motion Approved: Unanimous

Election of Synod Assembly Voting Members:

Two nominees and one alternate who have volunteered to attend are Steve Thornberry, Alane Wanda, and Ron Koepke (in addition to Pastor Holmer).

Motion to approve candidates as nominated: Mike Bennett

Motion Seconded: Joe Voelker

Motion Approved: Unanimous

St James Congregation Focus is FAITH: Building Up the Body of Christ

Initial phase will focus on making our congregation bonds strong while we are apart, then fortifying those connections so when we can go out and be of service to others we are refreshed and renewed:

- Encourage each other to grow in faith
- Strengthen the ties that bind us together
- Serve to be a blessing to others

We will continue to stay close to our outreach partners and seek out ways to help when needed.

Steve Thornberry thanked the Council for its thoughtfulness and participation during this year.

Pastor Holmer thanked everyone for their faithfulness and generosity and the staff for making countless adjustments and going the extra mile. Mike Bennett and Chris Meyer were thanked for the extra hours they put in to prepare for this meeting.

Pastor noted that we will be reading a book during Lent, Love is the Way by Bishop Michael Curry. Zoom discussion will follow recorded Vespers each Wednesday. Also announced that indoor worship will be offered beginning February 21 for limited number. Details to come.

Motion to adjourn: Susan Jarzembksi

Motion Seconded: Madeleine Jorgenson

Closing Prayer: Pastor Richard Holmer

Report of the President

It would be easy to review the challenges faced by St. James Council of the past year. I prefer to recount the blessings.

In a year that will be remembered by COVID-19, social unrest, loneliness, and economic challenges, my most vivid St James memories are the countless victories in between the heartbreaks. Victories that could not have been earned without your faithful response to adversity.

In no particular order, I was moved by:

- ◇ The warmth of the chilly outdoor Christmas Eve service.
- ◇ Mark Taylor's recorded musical montage.
- ◇ 150+ attending Easter Worship on the lawn.
- ◇ Tom Meyer's duets with Pastor Holmer.
- ◇ Zoom Council members to thoughtfully decide how to safely progress.
- ◇ Marilyn Koepke's piano at the indoor services.
- ◇ Benevolence fund approvals that never ran out, despite high demand for help.
- ◇ St. James decision to cover Sagrado Corazón Pastor Espinoza's health insurance, weeks prior to his COVID diagnosis.
- ◇ Damascus Road's endless enthusiasm at outdoor and recorded services.
- ◇ Shelly Holmstrom's retirement...and the amazing work she's done since.
- ◇ The first indoor worship service.
- ◇ The weekly knowledge that a beautiful video service was available on YouTube—thanks to Susan Jarzembki.
- ◇ St. James Brass crisp sound in the outdoor services.
- ◇ Watching countless hands set up and dismantle the outdoor worship set up.
- ◇ The amazing virtual Christmas youth performance.
- ◇ Every monthly finance review...in which the numbers got better and better.
- ◇ I could go on and on. We are just so blessed.

Shifting gears, as I look forward, I am most excited by the idea of being fully back together.

To sing. To worship. To share communion. To be 'fully back together' will require yet another leap of faith for some of us. The Council welcomes your feedback, thoughts, concerns and of course prayers.

Tom Meyer is ready to lead Council for the next year. He is an amazing leader with a wonderful team around him.

Thank you for the encouraging support and your faithfulness of the past year. It has meant everything to me.

Faithfully,

Steve Thornberry

Report of Pastor Holmer

The past year has been quite unlike any other that we have experienced. The pandemic has brought changes and adjustments across the scope of all our lives. Along with the behavioral adaptations that were made, the pandemic has brought emotional and spiritual changes. Because the church is a communal organization, the restrictions on gathering affected things central to our identity. Coming together for worship to sing praise to God is a primary function of our congregation – yet singing in an enclosed space with a large group of unvaccinated persons became a health hazard. And so we had to adjust.

I am grateful that over the long haul of these past fifteen months our congregation has maintained a spirit of unity and commitment to our mission. We have learned to function in new ways and have been able to look not only to our own needs but to the needs of those around us. Our lay leaders and staff members have been devoted to doing what it takes to keep our congregation on course. We have employed technology to operate remotely via Zoom and YouTube. Our musicians have adapted diligently and creatively. To attend worship on a screen in your living room is not ideal – but it is far better than having no worship. It is encouraging that the generous giving of our members has continued throughout this peculiar period in our life.

Thankfully, we are now clearly rounding the corner toward what is familiar and routine. As vaccines have become widely available a high percentage of our members are fully vaccinated. We are moving back to gathering in person, indoors, for worship, for learning, for meeting and for serving. I am confident that when we get to September in most ways church life will be back to normal. I recognize that some will take longer to adjust to new realities. The summer months will provide time for transitioning from a pandemic mindset to a post-pandemic approach. I encourage everyone to be patient: those who think we are moving too slowly and those who think we may be going too fast. By God's grace we have come this far safely, and I

believe we can safely get to where we all want to be.

Here are some things worth noting from the past year:

Worship

- We held our last worship service in person on March 8, 2020. Recorded services began two weeks later.
- We had our first outdoor service on July 12, and continued outside until early November.
- On September 20 we had a confirmation service for five of our members.
- Bishop Curry was our special guest on Kick-off Sunday.
- The Community Thanksgiving Service was a livestream event. I preached to a camera and a handful of people from the Church of the Holy Spirit.
- We braved a bitterly cold day to celebrate Christmas Eve outside. It was a memorable service, and many attended despite the weather.
- On Ash Wednesday, we offered "Drive-by Ashes" – which I found quite meaningful.
- We returned to indoor worship for the six Sundays during Lent – and offered video Vespers on Wednesdays.
- Easter Worship was held outside, and a very large group turned out to celebrate Christ's resurrection.
- Pentecost was celebrated indoors due to weather – and was well attended.

Learning

- Sunday School shifted to a remote format, and Debbie MacAyeal created new resources to adjust to this format.
- I began a weekly bible study on Zoom, based on the readings for the coming Sunday. It continues to be well attended.
- In response to concerns about racial reconciliation we provided three online video presentations, followed by discussion.
- Confirmation classes began outside last fall, and then went remote. This semester,

Report of Pastor Holmer *(continued)*

however, we were able to conduct all nine sessions in person.

- The Sunday School Christmas pageant was one of our best ever – all done on video.
- We offered two special presentations at Christmas and Easter: live Zoom with Christians in the Holy Land.
- Our congregational book for Lent was Love is the Way, by Michael Curry. We had excellent participation in the Zoom discussion.
- First Communion Classes are being held in person.

Stewardship

- The generosity of our members is very heartening. The theme of our stewardship campaign was REMEMBER. I will always recall how our giving exceeded expectations during this challenging time.
- In 2020 our mission focus was on supporting our sister congregation in Waukegan, Sagrado Corazón. The pandemic kept us from getting together in person, but we were able to provide significant support, totaling \$37,787.
- Over the course of 2020, we were able to provide \$37,990 in additional benevolent support to our mission partners.
- The Souper Bowl of Caring raised \$1,903 for the ELCA World Hunger Appeal.
- So far this year we have disbursed \$40,000 in extra mile benevolence to our partners at Habitat for Humanity, Waukegan to College, and North Chicago Community Partners.

MILESTONES

One person was welcomed into the Body of Christ through Holy Baptism:

Bodie Lala

On September 27 and October 3, 2020, Bibles were presented to:

Paige Bonfante
Connor Dunford
Elijah Duncombe
Luke Husemoller

In Summary

- We had to wait for a COVID vaccine, but last September we had our annual flu shot clinic, courtesy of Nancy Davis.
- Three saints of our congregation passed from this Kingdom of Grace to the Kingdom of Glory: Betty Benton, Walter Whisler and Al Albrecht. We thank God for their faithful example.
- We welcomed a new member through Baptism: Bodie Lala, son of Patrick and Mara Hilgenberg Lala
- We added a new staff member and another retired. I know our Director of Communication very well: Susan Jarzemski. Shelly Holmstrom retired as our Engagement Coordinator, but she remains very active as a volunteer.
- I am grateful to all our staff members for their diligence and adaptability. We have been well served in these challenging times.
- I also appreciate the faithfulness of our committees and our church council. Four council members are completing their terms: Bob Hughes, Teresa Miller, Tiffany Alexander and Steve Thornberry (President). They helped to navigate the troubled waters of COVID.
- Thanks to all of you for your continuing faithfulness. Despite the difficulties, I found much joy this past year in serving as your pastor.

Peace,

Richard Holmer

On September 27, 2020, these persons were confirmed in Christ:

Adah Bodine
Anne Davis
Elsa MacAyeal
Andrew Marsch
Andrew Sommers

The following members have died in the past year:

Al Albrecht
Betty Benton
Walter Whisler

May they rest in God's grace and peace.

Report of the Nominating Committee

The following individuals have expressed their willingness and commitment to serve. Other members of the Congregation who wish to be considered for election to any of the positions below may have their names placed in nomination at the Annual Governance Meeting.

CHURCH COUNCIL - Nominations for three year terms from June 2021 to June 2024:

Shelly Holmstrom

I respectfully accept the nomination to serve on the St. James Church Council. My late husband Skip and I, along with our children Elise and Ben, joined St. James in 1990. My involvement has included programs such as the Women of St. James and youth, volunteering as a Sunday School teacher and VBS director and serving on altar guild. I am a long time member of the adult and handbell choirs. A number of years ago I served on Council, culminating that term as President. I was also invited back on Council to complete the unexpired term Skip held when he died. Over the last ten years I have focused my efforts around the expansive social ministry outreach program at St. James and currently serve as Co-chair of the Committee. In November 2020, I retired from over three years on staff as Engagement Coordinator. I am committed to our mission statement, look forward to serving on Council if elected and grateful for all the ways my faith is encouraged to grow as a member of the body of Christ at St. James.

Ron Koepke

I grew up in India where my parents were Lutheran missionaries for 26 years. I attended Valparaiso University and met my wife, Marilyn, there. I received my medical school training in St. Louis and my postgraduate specialty training in New Orleans. We raised our three children in Monroe, LA where I practiced cardiology for 35 years. We joined St. James in 2018, shortly after moving to Lake Forest where our oldest daughter and her family live. St. James has been a very welcoming congregation, and I particularly appreciate its social ministry and outreach. I look forward to serving on the Church Council.

Greg MacAyeal

My wife Debbie and I joined in 2002 when we moved back to live in our home town, Libertyville. I can say without question that St James has been hugely important to me since those early days. I have been playing in Damascus Road for many years, and for the last three, acting as the co-director. I serve on the Worship and Music Committee, and now on the subgroup looking at developing streaming services. I have also been a communion assistant – I probably spilled wine on you at some point (many apologies). Being a part of our congregation's faith and worship life is a blessing, and I am looking forward to serving you as a member of the Church Council.

Council Member—TBD

Current Congregation Council:

Term Expiring June 2021

Tiffany Alexander
Bob Hughes
Teresa Miller
Steve Thornberry

Term Expiring June 2022

Scott Hill
Tom Meyer
Gail Morgan
Alane Wanda

Term Expiring June 2023

Barb Davoux
Sue Ebert
Michael Montalbano
Dave Moore

TREASURER Michael Bennett (term expires June 2023)

ST. JAMES MEMORIAL GARDEN BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Current members: Detlef Koska (term expires June 2021)
Cobi Stein (term expires June 2022)
Carole Tanner (term expires June 2023)
Randy Daniel (term expires June 2024)

Nominee for a 4-year term, expiring June 2025: Detlef Koska has agreed to serve another term.

ST. JAMES ENDOWMENT FUND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Current members: Jim Davoux (term expires June 2021)
Hans Bodine (term expires June 2021)
Sue Thomas (term expires June 2022)
Anna Verch and Mark Wanda (term expires June 2023)

Nominees for a 3 year term expiring June 2024: Jim Davoux and Hans Bodine have agreed to serve another term .

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Current members: Dave Van Singel (term expires June 2021)
Carol Bettendorf (term expires June 2022)
Linda Berner (term expires June 2023)

Nominee for a 3-year term, expiring June 2024: TBD by Church Council

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Current members: Don Bergsrud (term expires June 2021)
Doug Gerber (term expires June 2021)
Melodi Peters (term expires June 2021)
Donna Jarvi (term expires June 2021)
Glenn Basgall (term expires June 2022)
Craig Linn (term expires June 2022)

Nominees for a one year term expiring June, 2022: TBD by Church Council

Nominees for a two year term expiring June 2023: TBD by Church Council

I thank those on the Nominating Committee for their help. For all those whose term expires in June of 2021, thank you for your devoted service, service that allows us to follow Christ, make disciples, and live the Gospel. May the Lord bless our nominees and our ongoing members.

Respectively submitted,

Doug Gerber

Report of the Social Ministry Outreach Committee

Committee Members: Tiffany Alexander, Brooke Davis, Shelly Holmstrom, Ron Koepke, Alane Wanda and Pastor Holmer

The purpose of the committee is to promote and support activities of various agencies and programs serving the needs of the local community and the ELCA.

Volunteer and Financial Support :

- **COOL Ministries**
- **Habitat for Humanity**
- **Help Within the Family**
- **Lake County United**
- **North Chicago Community Partners (NCCP)**
- **Providing Advocacy, Dignity and Shelter (PADS)**
- **Sagrado Corazón**
- **Waukegan 2 College**

Financial Support Only:

- **Bethel New Life**
- **Career Resource Center**
- **ELCA Benevolence**
- **Lake County United**
- **Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI)**
- **Pastoral Care at Lake Forest Hospital**

Planting the seed of Service is our overarching goal. Traditionally, we depend heavily on the kiosk to communicate the needs of our partners. During the past year we were grateful that the office staff ably developed virtual alternatives such as Sign Up Genius to handle these requirements. We were blessed to continue many of our vital outreach programs, including NCCP kits, PADS meals, and the Waukegan To College Shower.

In 2020, the Give 5/4 Need summer camp benefited from a collaboration with Christian Ed and Youth, allowing the experience and strength of each committee to enhance the program. While COVID prevented an in-person experience, we pivoted to orchestrate a virtual connection and a menu of activities that each participant completed from home. The art project – a

colorful cross – is permanently installed in the backyard, providing a lovely backdrop for outdoor worship.

Our 2021 Congregation focus shifted under the reality of COVID as well. With prolonged absence of in person worship and fellowship, it was decided that we focus efforts on strengthening our relationship with one another. “Faith Builds: Building Up the Body of Christ”, will carry us through as we come back together in person and continue outreach efforts.

We continue to stay in close contact with our primary partners – COOL, Habitat for Humanity, NCCP, PADS, Sagrado Corazón, and W2C. Recently, Council approved benevolence surplus to support the Habitat for Humanity Lake County Faith Build project, NCCP teacher appreciation and support efforts after a stressful school year, W2C plans to renovate their offices to meet safety standards, and Lutheran Disaster Response for India. We are also blessed that our membership approved a budget in January that will continue to support our extensive outreach.

The Committee launched the Inspire U speaker series in February as a way to update St. James’ members on the tremendous impact our agency partners are making in the community. Thank you to Susan Jarzembki for her assistance in communicating these events. Watch Connections for information regarding future programs. Thank you to the congregation and Council for emphasizing outreach and service as a key focus of our ministry together and the Committee for their commitment and leadership. We are grateful to Mark Wanda for being our representative on the COOL Board of Directors. Please contact a Committee member with questions and to explore how to re-engage in service. It is a joy to give and serve as a congregation family. God is Good!

Shelly Holmstrom & Alane Wanda, Co-Chairs

Report of the Christian Education Committee

Committee Members: Linda Berner (acting chair), Barb Davoux (Council Liaison), Kathy Lowell, Debbie MacAyeal and Richard Holmer.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of age.” Matthew 28:19-20

As we read in the Bible, being a Christian involves continuous teaching and learning. As you may have noticed in various announcements over the past year, educational opportunities have been adapted and reinvented through our time in various levels of quarantine. As we begin to return to our normal activities, the committee invites you to give prayerful consideration to how you should be involved in learning, teaching or planning.

Sunday School

Due to Covid, our Sunday School has happened at home during this program year. Debbie MacAyeal modified the rotational curriculum so that activities could be done as a family. Kits were made with materials for each week wrapped up like a gift for the children to open. These along with a notebook with written information about Zoom meetings, activity directions and a list of materials were placed in plastic bins which families picked up on Kick-Off Sunday. Each Sunday morning students participated in a short Zoom meeting according to their grade level. Debbie worked with the younger students using a format similar to the usual Sunday School opening. She also made a video of the activity for parents to use as a guide for the week's project - art, science, cooking, or a movie with popcorn! Doug Gerber and Josh Hornaday provided a Bible enrichment time for third through sixth grade students. Seventh and eighth grade students met with one of their teachers, Lisa Kollmorgen, Kim Kazarian or Jim Davoux, each Sunday morning.

Youth Education

Third graders received their Bibles at an outdoor service in September.

The Rite of Confirmation was held outdoors on September 20, 2020, following the 9:30 service.

Tuesday confirmation classes began their fall meeting outdoors. They moved to the Common Room in October. Everyone wore a mask, no dinner was served and the time was limited to 45 minutes. In December the classes were suspended until it was safe to return. Students were encouraged to continue attending the Sunday morning class on Zoom. In-person classes resumed on March 2, 2021.

Wendy Wiegers put together a wonderful virtual Christmas pageant which was part of the service on December 13, 2020. Costumes were delivered to homes and families videotaped their children saying their lines and singing.

First Communion classes started mid-May.

During summer, 2020, Give 5/4 Need, planned in conjunction with the Social Ministry Committee, was done mostly virtually with families participating together in some of the service projects. Members of this committee are again cooperating with members of the Social Ministry Committee to plan and implement this summer's Give 5/4 Need program. Last summer's VBS was done through a video program which taught the lesson and explained the activities.

Adult Education

The Wednesday Zoom adult Bible study that Pastor Holmer started in April, 2020, continued through the program year. There has been a core group of 10 - 12 people attending. They discuss the lessons for the following Sunday.

Advent devotions for adults and children were mailed to the congregation in November.

During Lent, adults read the book Love is the Way by Bishop Michael Curry. Zoom discussions were held on Wednesdays after the on-line Vespers service.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Berner

Report of the Worship and Music Committee

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is to be flexible and adaptable. God has blessed our congregation with these gifts in abundance as we have continued to be faithful in our weekly worship life here at St. James.

In July, we began to gather once again for in-person worship services on our beautiful back lawn. With capacity, social distancing, tracing and masking measures in place, our members were able to come and worship with one another. The weekly video worship services were also offered as an alternative for those not comfortable attending worship in person. Many individuals and families contributed musical offerings and readings for our in-person and video services.

As the church program year kicked off in September, our music ensembles resumed their regular schedules of rehearsing and presenting musical offerings for worship. Some groups met in person at church with strict safety measures in place, while others met remotely over virtual rehearsals. While there were challenges aplenty for all the groups, we are extraordinarily grateful for the abundant blessing of our devoted musicians.

In the autumn, as weather became colder, we returned to offering video services as our primary mode of worship. But a Christmas miracle was in store! Despite snow, well-below-freezing temperatures, and a frosty breeze, our back lawn was beautifully transformed by candelaria and lights into a peaceful and joyous space to worship the birth of the Savior.

During Lent, we experimented with a return to in-person services in our Sanctuary. These services provided the first indoor worship opportunities at St. James in almost a year. At Easter, the

congregation once again moved its worship outdoors to a slightly reconfigured lawn space. Subsequent Sunday services during the Easter season were also held outdoors. On Sunday, June 6, with vaccinations among our members increasing, we will be returning to regular weekly worship in the Sanctuary.

Throughout all these incremental steps back toward worshipping together, we continued to offer video services as an alternative. In many cases, this required our ensemble directors and their musicians to serve double duty by not only preparing music for the live services, but a video version as well for the recorded services.

Our gratitude goes out to Susan Jarzembksi Holmer for taking on the new role of Communications Director for our online services; to Dean Haverkamp for offering his recording technology and skills; and to our Administrative Assistants, Carol Bennett and Kristin Haverkamp for keeping schedules and music ministers organized and on track.

During the past year we had some members conclude their time of service on our committee. Jineen Heiman served many years on the committee, several as Chair; Tom Meyer was our Council liaison; and Carol Bennett, our most recent Chair, remains on the committee in her capacity as Altar Guild coordinator (as we continue seeking another individual to take over this role). We also welcomed Michael Montalbano as our new Council liaison. As a new Chair of the Worship and Music Committee, I am thankful for these faithful stewards of our worship life at St. James.

Respectively submitted,
Mark Taylor

Report of the Stewardship Committee



Our theme for the 2021 Stewardship Campaign, introduced in the fall of 2020, was “REMEMBER”. This year’s message serves as a catalyst to reflection. As Pastor

Holmer shared with us in one of his late 2020 weekly readings and reflections: “Our notion of who God is results from the accumulated recollections of our experiences of God; at worship, reading scripture and other resources, at prayer, in creation, in conversation, with fellow Christians, in ordinary and extraordinary moments. Much of what we know of God comes from the collective memories handed down from one generation to the next. We have not met Jesus personally, but we have the recollections of those who did”.

We shared our REMEMBER message with the congregation through various mailings, recorded temple talks, a service banner and a beautiful and truly amazing “All Saints Tribute Video”, shown during our All Saints Sunday Service, which featured images of those in our congregation that have passed before us. Additionally, in keeping with this committee’s desire to create and share a tangible reminder of our annual Stewardship theme, we distributed 150 REMEMBER Votives during the week prior to All Saints Sunday. Since we could not meet in person that Sunday and light a candle for our loved ones as we usually do, we encouraged everyone to do so privately, at home, with their own St. James REMEMBER votive candle.



Our congregation responded positively to our Stewardship message. We had a successful commitment Sunday! We are blessed and thankful for the continued gratitude that is shared by our St. James Family. The financial commitments that are made each year allow us to do so much of what we wish to accomplish with the various organizations that we support.

Last, it is through remembering that we are able to retain a clear sense of identity and to maintain a wide array of meaningful relationships. Most astounding, it is the realization that God remembers every one of us. Even when we forget God for a time, God always keeps us in mind. The only thing God forgets is our sins. It’s good to remember that!

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Psalm 103:2

Many thanks to our Stewardship Committee Members for their dedication and energy throughout the year.

Committee Members: Madeleine Jorgensen, Craig Linn, Michael Montalbano, Dave Moore, Joe Voelcker and Pastor Richard Holmer

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Montalbano

Report of the Women of St. James

The women of St. James were very active throughout the year, in spite of the pandemic. To say the least, we were all creative and flexible.

August 25th and September 2nd

St. James women gathered in the church parking lot with our chairs (socially distanced) and our masks to chat and check-in with each other. We then wrote thank you cards with Life Savers attached to all the staff at COOL, PADS, Waukegan to College, Habitat for Humanity, and North Chicago Community Partners. We received several notes from the organizations saying how surprised they were to receive our cards and, also expressed sincere gratitude.

Outreach and Fellowship

At Christmas, several women volunteered to write Christmas cards to all the members of Sagrado Corazón.

In December and February, we had many women involved in baking, plating, and then delivering delicious cookies to specific St. James' member groups. We had wonderful feedback from our church families for this effort.

In mid-March, we repeated the outreach along side the OWLS and Fellowship Committee by distributing "goodie bags" to more of our members.

Eighteen St James Women recently completed a book study and discussion over Zoom for six consecutive Wednesday evenings. The book was titled "Living Above Worry and Stress." We had fabulous discussions which brought us all closer

together. We thank all the participants for their genuine commitment.

An Invitation

The bake sale December 8 utilizing goodies from the Cookie Exchange raised \$800 which was donated to Habitat for Humanity.

Women's Retreat

The 2019 Women's Retreat scheduled at Carole Tanner's house was postponed.

An Invitation

All women are invited to attend these programs throughout the year and guests are welcome. Gatherings – whether over zoom, outside in the church parking lot, or socially distanced inside the church building – provide opportunities for sharing laughter and building friendships. Rides will gladly be arranged, and childcare is available upon request. We learn from each other and enjoy the blessings of abundant life that God has promised us when we gather in His name.

In Closing...

A very special thank you to Carol Bennett and Kristin Haverkamp for always willingly assisting the Women of St. James in producing cards, sending group emails, developing member lists to assist in distribution, etc. etc. etc. We could not survive without you two! Thank you!

Submitted by Kathy Lowell

On behalf of the Women of St. James

Report of the Endowment Fund Board

Members: Jim Davoux, Anna Verch, Hans Bodine, Sue Thomas, Mark Wanda, Pastor Richard Holmer (ex officio)

The Endowment fund began 2020 with a balance of \$333,687 and ended 2020 with a balance of \$366,767. This includes the “matching gift” funds that are currently co-invested with the other endowment funds. No disbursements were made in 2020. In April of 2021, a disbursement of \$2,000 was made from the Danielson Fund to provide financial support for a seminary student from Sagrado Corazón.

The Land Fund began 2020 with a balance of \$1,109,275 and ended 2020 with a balance of \$1,162,578. During the first half of 2020 the markets were impacted by the Covid pandemic, but they rebounded by July so the full 4% disbursement of \$43,353 was made from the Land

Fund. Those funds were made available to the church council for major maintenance and benevolence. The investment performance of the Land Fund has done well during the ups and downs of the Covid pandemic due to the conservative nature of the investments. We are on track to be able to take the full 4% disbursement here in July of 2021. The committee will continue to monitor the markets during these uncertain times with the assistance of Wintrust as our investment advisors.

The congregation is always welcome and encouraged to submit ideas to the board for potential disbursements from the Endowment Fund. Contact any member of the board to discuss your thoughts.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Davoux

Report of the Communications Director

What a rewarding opportunity to serve the church during the past year. With the past shutdown of in-person worship and the activities in our building, the need for digital communications through a variety of channels greatly increased. Many thanks go to the small, but mighty team of Carol Bennett and Kristin Haverkamp who together diligently produce quality work.

We had already begun the digital venture with Connections and other regular email communications and these have continued to be a method of engagement to keep the membership informed and hopefully inspired.

Our video worship services made the lap of a full year. Viewers—or should I say worshippers—have watched the video services literally from across the world and we have reached more people than ever on Sunday mornings through this medium. Many thanks go to the members who sent in their

recordings last summer and fall and then started coming into the sanctuary to be recorded. It has been a true joy and privilege to connect with members this way. Kudos and appreciation go to Kristin for her handling of the editing of the bells and choir selections each week for the recorded services.

In the field of communications change is part of the game. So as we are starting to come back into the building and sanctuary, we will be exploring the possibility of live-streaming and determining next steps in re-engaging the congregation. Be assured we will explore best practices and gain insights from fellow congregations as we strategically plan for the future—with a heart for the mission of the church.

In His Service,
Susan Jarzembksi Holmer

Report of the Property Committee

Committee members: Carol Bennett, Hans Bodine, Pete Clemens, Josh Hornaday (current chairman), Chris Meyer, Werner Stein, Dave Stresser, John Tanner, Hugh Triplett, Dave Van Singel and Pastor Holmer (ex officio)

We are planning to have a property day sometime in July or August. Once this date is scheduled it will be listed in the bulletin. Usually this is held earlier in the year but has been delayed because of COVID.

Pete coordinated additional bulb replacement in the sanctuary on three different occasions most recently in January of 2021.

Two Linden trees were planted on our property in the past year, one to replace a previous tree that had graciously been donated by Cobi and Werner Stein in memory of Werner's parents, Marta and Franz Stein and another tree donated by Cobi and Werner Stein in memory of Werner's brother, Wilfried Stein. Thank you, Cobi and Werner, for helping to beautify our property.

Going forward, we will try to keep track of trees that have been donated by members to ensure they are not unintentionally removed.

A special thanks to Pete Clemens who is officially retiring as our "behind the scenes" guy who vigilantly has worked to maintain our property. From spot cleaning our carpets, cleaning baptismal font, regulating sprinkler system usage, making sure our sanctuary has operating light bulbs, the list goes on and on (it really does go on and on, I have seen it). We owe Pete a debt of gratitude for 25 years of faithful service.

Whether we can have other congregation members step in and help with the things that Pete would usually address is something the property committee will consider. You can't replace Pete with just one person, and we will be looking at our options.

And lastly, thanks to John Tanner for all the various jobs he does around our property and Werner Stein for his electrical expertise and willingness to make our electrical repairs.

Respectfully submitted,

Josh Hornaday

Report of the St. James OWLS

The St. James OWLS (Older Wiser Lutherans) usually meet on the third Thursday of the month. However the COVID 19 pandemic again somewhat clipped their wings and some of the activities planned had to be cancelled or postponed.

They still managed to meet for service and fun, in person (socially distancing) when necessary, and virtually.

We assembled goodie bags for PADS children and kits for NCCP program. We teamed up with the Fellowship Committee members to bake and deliver Valentine's Day treats to the pent-up over 60 St. James members.

We learned how to outsmart fraud and ID theft.

Detlef Koska entertained us with a 2-part presentation on the Great Cathedrals of the World.

Shelly Holmstrom and Madeleine Jorgensen took us to France on a virtual trip on the Canal du Midi. The planned trip to New Glarus for Oktoberfest was postponed, but not cancelled and we hope we can safely do it this fall. Cobi Stein is following up on this.

Our activities are listed in advance in Connections and any member of St. James, their families and friends are welcome to attend. Further details can be obtained by contacting Ann Anderson, Choosri Goebel or Madeleine Jorgensen.

Respectfully submitted,
Madeleine Jorgensen

Report of the Engagement Coordinator (6/20-11/20)

As you may be aware, I "retired" from the position of Engagement Coordinator the end of November. I am grateful for the tremendous opportunity Council, Pastor Holmer and the St. James membership afforded me for over three years. From the vantage point of that position what I saw last summer and fall continued to make my heart grateful that I am a member of the St. James church family. "Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ." 1 Corinthians 12:12

As you read over these reports, I encourage you to reflect on verses 24-25 in Hebrews 10, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but

encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

As we each consider the many avenues available to re-engage in the vibrant life of our church and reach past hurdles that have seemed insurmountable this past year, let us discover new ways to reinforce our congregational theme for this year, "Faith Builds: Building Up the Body of Christ". Thanks be to God for the faith building He does in each of us. In celebrating the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost recently, we are secure in God's promises and, "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." 2 Corinthians 13:14

Shelly Holmstrom

Report of the Fellowship Committee

Committee Members: Sue Ebert, Madeleine Jorgensen, Kim Kazarian, Gail Morgan and Annie Moss

The Fellowship Committee met last fall and planned three socially distanced events.

1) Saturday, Oct. 10 - Outdoor movie night in the church backyard showing "Remember the Titans". Thank you to Doug Dusthimer for helping as tech crew!

2) Sunday, October 25 - Fire pit in the church parking lot. We appreciate Tom & Chris Meyer loaning out their fire pits for the event.

3) Saturday, November 21 - a cheese and wine tasting event via zoom, led by Madeleine

Jorgensen and Paul Moss.

A postcard was mailed to all members to publicize these opportunities to gather safely. Thank you to Kristin and Carol for designing the card and to Susan Jarzembki for her support.

In February, the Fellowship Committee teamed up with the OWLs to put together and deliver Valentine care packages to members.

Please contact a committee member with ideas for future events! We look forward to many more opportunities to be together.

Shelly Holmstrom

Submitted on behalf of the Committee

Report of the Youth Ministry Team

When we had our planning meeting last fall Doug said "So, lets make a plan of all the things we can't do this year". However, it turned out that with a little creativity we were able to do a number of things.

In August we had an outdoor movie night for the High School youth and in September for the Junior High youth. Doug made a large screen by stapling a white sheet to an 8x8 frame and showed Ground Hog Day.

Starting in November we asked our High School youth to collect food and place it on their porches which would then be picked up and taken to the First Presbyterian church in Libertyville. We had a good response with this and have continued monthly through May.

In December, the youth filled the many luminaries we needed for the Christmas Eve outdoor service. If you remember, this was a very cold day! They filled enough to have a bag for each square marked out and only had one minor melt down due to the wind.

Confirmation began in the fall outside at the picnic tables in the playground area and continued outside until it got too cold. Classes were then suspended for awhile but able to be resumed later at a more frequent schedule inside staying distanced and all classes will be completed.

The mission trip for last year was cancelled.

Respectively submitted,

Sue Ebert

Report of the Evangelism Committee

Members: Barb Davoux, Melinda Voelcker, Tom Ebert, Scott Hill (Council Liaison) and Shelly Holmstrom (Engagement Coordinator).

From our governing documents C13.07.12, There shall be an Evangelism Committee, which shall lead and stimulate the members of the congregation in continuous and, from time to time, concerted endeavors to reawaken the member's spirituality, and to reach others, who are as yet unknown, with the Gospel and introduce them to Christ's Church.

Projects and activities of Evangelism this past year included:

- Ongoing postings are done on St. James Facebook and Instagram pages thanks to Kristin Haverkamp. These postings can be shared with non-members to help engage a wider community. Anyone is welcome to view our page by searching in Facebook for "St. James Lutheran Church (Lake Forest, IL)".
- The committee and office staff developed announcement postcards for Kickoff Sunday in September, and Advent and Christmas Events, which were mailed to the congregation. Special thanks to Melinda Voelcker for getting the postcards printed!

As we prepare for the return of "normal" indoor worship activities, we will continue our efforts on a "Connection Center" which will be located in the narthex adjacent to the coffee pots. The focus of the Center will be to display "Opportunities to Connect" and provide opportunities to serve and invite. We will also be looking to "reformat" the Bulletin Board to make it more user friendly and draw attention to the important news and information that is available to members and visitors.

We encourage you to "evangelize from home" by sharing St. James YouTube worship services, the weekly Connections and Reflections and electronic posts with neighbors and friends!

All of us at St. James are part of Evangelism. We welcome your participation on the committee, or as a facilitator of your interest area. Please feel free to call or pass on your comments and concerns to any committee members. Together we join hands to serve as God's people.

God's Peace,

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Ebert, Acting Chair

Report of the Sewing Group

We met in the fall to share memories of Betty Benton. Teddy bears, pillows, and baby hats were picked up by LSSI and the quilts were delivered to be shipped where needed. Since we have been vaccinated, we met at St. James on May 6th. We decided to meet again this summer on the first Thursday of the month. We will bring our lunch, but decided not to share a dessert. We begin around 10:00 AM and clean up by 2:00 PM. We are working on cutting squares that can be sewn

together for the quilt top. If anyone is interested in sewing at home, we will send home a kit. It is called Sewing Group, but one does not need to sew. Knitters for the baby caps and stuffers for the teddy bears are needed. We enjoy the great fellowship and getting to know each other. Come join us!

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Anderson

Report of the Memorial Garden

Burials

There were no interments within the last 12 months.

Memorial Plaque

There are no current plans to add a new name to the plaque. But there is still plenty of space to engrave more names. Please contact any of the trustees with any questions.

Sale of Burial Sites

No site was sold during the year. A number of sites are still available, especially on the "outside" (north side) of the Garden. The "outside" is very attractive because one can enjoy a clear view of the Church as a background.

Financials

The check book balance amount is \$799. The outstanding loan owed to the Endowment Fund is \$4,000 and the outstanding loan owed to General Fund is \$1,000.

Current Rate Structure

The current rate structure remains unchanged as follows:

- Full site for 6 urn interments \$2,200
- Quad site for 4 urn interments \$1,500
- Half site for 3 urn interments \$1,100
- Double site for 2 urn interments \$ 750
- Memorial Wall engraving per name \$ 650
- Interment Service \$ 750

Board Members

The current composition of the Board is as follows:

Detlef Koska, Chairman – thru June, 2021 (has agreed to serve another term - thru June, 2025)

Cobi Stein - thru June, 2022

Carole Tanner—thru June, 2023

Randy Daniel – thru June, 2024

Richard Holmer – ex-officio member

Tom Meyer – Legal Counsel

Respectfully submitted,

Detlef K. Koska, Chairman

Report of the Finance Committee

In the past year St. James has continued to evolve and thrive through challenging circumstances, due to wise stewardship and the grace of our many blessings. We have been able to exceed our social ministry commitments and truly make a difference to our mission partners.

The Finance committee is well served by our Treasurer, Mike Bennett and Business Manager, Chris Meyer, whose careful planning, accounting and reporting ensure financial transparency and accuracy. The committee also benefits from continued guidance from past Treasurer and committee member, Jon Paul, who also managed

the smooth transition of Treasurer responsibilities. Fellow Finance committee members Bob Kenehan and Richard Holmer contributed to financial management and especially the annual budget process, which was especially interesting in the past year as we adapted to new worship patterns, facility utilization, service delivery and the needs of our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa Miller,
Finance Committee Chair

Resolutions

WE, THE MEMBERS OF ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH, DO HEREBY RESOLVE THAT:

We thank God for the Gift of the Holy Spirit, alive and active in this congregation, and we pray that the power of the Spirit will bring about increased spiritual growth and commitment among our members, that Christ's work may truly be our own.

We express our thanks to our Pastor, Richard Holmer, all our salaried staff and our many volunteers -- committee chairpersons and members, organizational leaders, church school staff, choir members and musicians, ushers, worship assistants, nursery attendants, altar guild, sewing group and all the dedicated individuals who have given service in 2020-2021.

We express our gratitude to all who serve on the Church Council, especially Tiffany Alexander, Bob Hughes, Teresa Miller and Steve Thornberry (President) who have completed their terms of office. In addition we acknowledge with great appreciation our other 2020-2021 officers: Tom Meyer, Vice President, Alane Wanda, Secretary, Joe Voelcker, Financial Secretary and Treasurer, Mike Bennett.

We remember in our thoughts and prayers Al Albrecht, Betty Benton and Walter Whisler who died in the Faith during this year, their families and others who mourn the loss of loved ones through death; those who have been hospitalized or seriously ill at home due to the loss of good health; those who have known the fear and frustration of job loss; those who in any way have experienced the pain of great sacrifice. We pray that all may find comfort and help in the promises of our loving and merciful Lord, Jesus Christ, the Risen Savior.

We give thanks for all the blessings bestowed upon us individually and upon our congregation. We are particularly mindful of the material blessings that are ours to share with others and we are grateful for the ever increasing evidence of faithful stewardship of our resources.

We thank God for guiding and preserving us through the challenges of the pandemic. We express our gratitude to all those who stepped up and went the extra mile in so many ways, enabling us to continue to function as a church despite all the obstacles. We share our hope that the Spirit will lead us in the process of returning to life together as a congregation.

WE GIVE THANKS ALWAYS TO GOD THE CREATOR STILL CREATING, TO HIS OWN SON WHO LIVES TO SAVE, AND TO HIS SPIRIT EVER GUIDING AND PROTECTING.

**2020-2021 Officers of
the Congregation
and Church Council**

President
Steve Thornberry

Vice President
Tom Meyer

Secretary
Alane Wanda

Treasurer
Mike Bennett

Financial Secretary
Joe Voelcker

Council Members

Tiffany Alexander

Barb Davoux

Sue Ebert

Scott Hill

Bob Hughes

Tom Meyer

Teresa Miller

Michael Montalbano

Dave Moore

Gail Morgan

Steve Thornberry

Alane Wanda

Pastor

Richard E. Holmer

Church Staff

Business Manager
Chris Meyer

Administrative Assistants

Carol Bennett and
Kristin Haverkamp

Communications Director

Susan Jarzembski

Sunday School Director

Debbie MacAyeal

Youth Ministry Director

Doug Dusthimer

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**Standing Committee Chairs
and Other Leaders**

Christian Education
Linda Berner

Church Property
Josh Hornaday

Evangelism
Tom Ebert

Fellowship
TBD

Finance
Teresa Miller

Social Ministry
Shelly Holmstrom and
Alane Wanda

Stewardship
Michael Montalbano

Worship & Music
Mark Taylor

Endowment Board of Trustees
Jim Davoux

**Memorial Garden
Board of Trustees**

Detlef Koska

St. James Owls
Ann Anderson,
Madeleine Jorgensen
And Choosri Goebel

Sewing Group
Ann Anderson

Youth Ministry Team
Sue Ebert

Women of St. James
Kathy Lowell

Altar Guild
Gail Morgan

Church Staff

Director of Music
Rae-Myra Hilliard

Organist
Wendy Unrath

Damascus Road Directors
Greg MacAyeal and
Melinda Voelcker

**Director of
Children's Music**
Wendy Wieggers

Brass Ensemble Director
Ryan Ringnalda