



St. James Lutheran Church

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

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONGREGATION ANNUAL GOVERNANCE MEETING 10:45 a.m. June 7, 2015

Schedule

9:30 a.m. Service of Holy Communion

10:45 a.m. Annual Meeting
(nursery attendant will be on duty)

Agenda

Opening Prayer

Call to Order

Report of the Tellers (Quorum is 46 voting members)

Adoption of the Agenda

Reading of the Minutes, January 25, 2015

Annual Reports

Report of the President

Report of Pastor Holmer

Reports of the Committees

Elections

Resolutions

Adjournment

Closing Prayer

Minutes of the Annual Congregation Financial Meeting January 25, 2015

Pastor Holmer began by noting that it had been an eventful year. We have experienced many blessings and have much to be thankful for. He offered a prayer of thanks.

Randy Daniel, Church Council President, called the meeting to order at 10:50 a.m.

The tellers reported the presence of a quorum.

Randy Daniel reviewed the agenda and asked for a motion to approve it. The agenda was approved unanimously.

The minutes of the June 1, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

Jon Paul, Congregation Treasurer, began an overview of 2014 by saying that it had been an incredible year. (His complete report as well as figures and spreadsheets can be found in the Annual Financial Report.) He noted that \$766,000 had been pledged in the Renewing Appeal. He reviewed the money spent from the Appeal and from the donations of neighbors. Capital projects led to an increase in net assets. The general fund ended 2014 with a slight surplus.

Jon Paul reviewed 2014 financial activity, including the general fund, renewing appeal projects, use of the line of credit, and the return on endowment monies. He asked if there were any questions on the overall picture. There were none.

Jon Paul continued by discussing total assets, the largest of which is the property. He noted that the mortgage should be paid off by April of 2017. In summarizing 2014 general fund activity, he said that member giving was 1% more than budgeted. Property costs were high due to cold weather expenses and replacement of the sanctuary light panel. Expenses in other areas were close to what was anticipated.

Jon Paul then moved on to the proposed 2015 general fund budget. It is a balanced budget with total receipts of \$570,000, which is close to last year's total. Member giving is up 1% from 2014. Expenses are up slightly due to higher medical care

costs and a modest raise for personnel. Changes in benevolence were to lower the donation to the ELCA to 10% of member giving, a decrease of \$5,000, and to increase giving by \$5,000 from the Viola Long endowment earnings to donate to Sagrado Corazon. Jon recapped the pledge campaign, saying that we are blessed to have people in the congregation who pledge and then give what they pledged. In 2014, the church received 99% of the pledged amount. He asked if there were questions on the 2015 budget. There were none.

Shelly Holmstrom thanked Jon Paul for his time and expertise as treasurer. Jon Paul thanked Chris Meyer and the offering counters for the work that they do. Randy Daniel said that a lot of hard work goes into developing the budget. In addition to Jon Paul, he thanked the Finance Committee and Chris Meyer for their time and hard work. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the 2015 general operating budget. The motion was approved unanimously.

Jon Paul gave a brief review of Renewing monies received and spent. The current account balance as of January 7th, 2015 is \$10,900, thanks to nice donations in early 2015.

Peter Clemens reviewed the property projects accomplished so far. \$350,000 had been received from neighbor donations. Some projects funded by these monies were the restoration of the 1.5 acres known as the "little house property," the new garbage enclosure, the island in the parking lot, the storm sewer and the new benches. He reviewed the renewing projects completed in 2014 and described the projects planned for 2015. (Details are in the Annual Financial Report.) He asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Jon Paul thanked Peter Clemens and Chic Martin for all of the work they have done. He reviewed the original Renewing Appeal plan, which included \$38,000 in fundraising costs, \$452,000 in projects and \$260,000 to retire the mortgage. Projected (or known where possible) costs are: \$33,948 in

fundraising costs, \$464,576 in projects, and \$250,008 to pay off the mortgage. This is possible if the funds pledged are received. Paying off the mortgage early in stages reduces the total mortgage payoff.

Randy Daniel discussed the land sale. It took longer than expected to get to closing, but it closed on January 15, 2015. Randy thanked Peter Clemens for the time he spent getting the necessary documents to the right places. He thanked Anne Linn and Tom Meyer for their help and legal expertise. The proceeds from the sale, \$1,012,500, have been turned over to the Endowment Board. The members of this Board are elected by the congregation and they have the authority to manage the money. It will be invested with Wintrust. The congregation will decide how the benevolence portion of the earnings will be spent. Randy noted that Liz Uihlein plans to have walking trails created on her property. Members of the congregation are welcome to use these trails.

Randy Daniel said that the Synod Assembly would take place in Tinley Park on May 29 and 30, 2015. Three voting members are needed from the congregation. Randy Daniel and Chic Martin have volunteered. Tom Ebert also volunteered to attend. These three were elected unanimously.

Randy Daniel asked if there were any questions or comments. John Crotty said that he would like to see us increase our benevolence monies to local agencies such as COOL.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Pastor Holmer led the congregation in a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Berner
Secretary

Report of the President

As my term as President comes to a close, I want to provide the congregation with a review of the truly wonderful year that 2014/2015 was for St. James Lutheran. I want to first say thank you to the congregation for the tremendous support everyone provided me in my leadership role of the general oversight of the life and activities of our congregation.

The theme for my report will be “RENEWING”. This last year was the year of renewing for St. James. It began as the theme of our three-year capital campaign. But I feel it was expanded to encompass the key objectives that the council has been focused on for the last few years. We not only needed to renew our building and property, but also think about how we could increase our benevolence/outreach, and our faithful church attendance.

The first objective of “RENEWING” was our capital renewing campaign and the sale of a portion of our church property to our neighbor. As a church council we spent majority of this year focused on this objective. The capital renewing campaign has been a resounding success in the first twelve months through your generous gifts. We received \$471,000 from our members. This represented over 60% of our expected three-year goal of \$765,000. Thanks be to God and thanks to all of you for your generous contributions. These gifts reflect the vitality and dedication of our St. James Lutheran members. The sale of a portion of our church property provides us with an opportunity to establish a property endowment fund that will help SJLC with the management and maintenance of our building and property for many years in the future. This complicated process was supported by many of our members working behind the scene. I want to personally thank everyone involved for your support of this exciting blessing for our congregation.

The second objective of “RENEWING” was our benevolence/outreach. At our council retreat last fall we had a good discussion regarding this question, “ How can we be better disciples of Christ by helping others in our community?” There are several wonderful examples of new opportunities that our members were given in being better disciples in Christ. I was able to

experience a great opportunity first hand last summer with our youth on the last day of the “GIVE5/NEED4” service program. I joined 35 young people working on cleaning debris from the Des Plaines River. It was an inspiration watching our SJLC youth work with other young people from the community in helping improve our community. What better example for all of us to look to than the SJLC youth to provide direction to all of us about giving to others. In the last twelve months, our members have identified several new opportunities for renewing benevolence. Here are a few of the ways our congregation is helping others in our community in need: Family Care Closet, AJK Family Art Night, Waukegan to College, AJK Wellness Fair, and Refugee One. These all represent new wonderful opportunities for all our members to get involved.

The third objective of “RENEWING” was faithful church attendance. We have seen an increase in faithful attendance by our members. The exciting part of our evangelism effort has been the significant increase with eight new member families joining in the last year. These new member families represent a wonderful example of the evangelism effort by our members.

As I think back on the past year and my own personal reflection on “RENEWING”, I remember an evening the council spent with our 8th grade confirmands and their parents. I listened to these 14 year olds answer the question as they read their essays, “What it means to me to be a Christian?” It was very impactful for me and it clearly showed the future strength of our congregation and a church rooted in Jesus Christ.

You can see how our theme of “RENEWING” carried across our key objectives and our church mission of: ***“God calls us to follow Christ, make disciples, and live the Gospel.”***

Finally, I would like to offer my thanks to Pastor Holmer, the church staff, all the numerous committees, and especially my fellow council members for their support, advice, and friendship.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy G. Daniel
Council President

Report of Pastor Holmer

A year ago at our Youth Service on June 1, two graduating seniors shared faith stories. First up was Jen Basgall. Jen recounted the amazing and moving story of her progress from an early prognosis that said she would likely never read and should probably be institutionalized, to her acceptance as a student at the University of Wisconsin, Whitewater. Many were literally moved to tears, and Jen received a standing ovation as she concluded. Evie Bennett was next, and she began by noting it would not be easy to follow such a presentation! Yet Evie was marvelous as well, sharing how her years at St. James had been very influential in forming her faith.

I remind you of that service, because I feel now, as I did that day, that the stories of these two young women are emblematic of what we are all about as a church. The gathered community of the faithful here at St. James is devoted to following Christ and living the Gospel – and the beneficial outcome of such devotion over time is the making of disciples like Jen Basgall and Evie Bennett. We should not underestimate the formative influence of the life we share together in this place. Spiritual growth most often happens not quickly or spontaneously, but bit by bit, over time. It is the result of abiding together in the gracious love of God – through all the joys and sorrows that the years bring. It is a rich blessing to abide here with all of you.

This has been a year of dramatic transformations. Last summer we lived in a construction zone – yet how wonderful it all is today. Much thought and planning went into the land sale – and now we are blessed with a significant endowment. None of these improvements would have been possible without your faithful and generous support, and the committed and capable leadership of dedicated servants. It was also most encouraging to witness the results of our fall stewardship emphasis, which had the theme, RESPOND. You have responded, as always, with gracious and bounteous giving.

This congregation continues to have a heart for serving. Whether it is support for COOL Ministries through things like FOODSTOCK, COOL 5K/10K & COOL Change, or the Bethel Christmas Store, or boots for LSSI Preschoolers, or quilts for Lutheran World Relief, or meals for PADS, or the Family Care Closet in North Chicago, or the CROPWALK for the Hungry, or putting together health kits and sewing kits for Lutheran World Relief, or the high school mission trip, or the Middle School GIVE5/4NEED program or all the good work with North Chicago Community Partners at A. J. Katzenmaier School – you are always willing and eager to be a blessing to others.

It was a tremendous experience to visit the Holy Land with fellow members from St. James. Having now made the trip twice, I can assure you that it is a transforming encounter with that region's rich history and present realities. Our group bonded through the time we shared and at an adult forum here at St. James were able to communicate some of what we learned. Back in February we were blessed to welcome the Palestinian leader of our trip, Aziz Abu Sarah, who made presentations at our Men's Breakfast, between services, and at an afternoon event attended by many from outside our congregation.

This past year we have had an increase in the number of visitors on Sundays. This has resulted in the reception of some active new members, and a dozen very lively children. A number of additional families have expressed interest in joining.

On Christmas Eve we tried something new: one service only at 4:30. We packed the house with 361 joyful worshipers! And then on Christmas Day we welcomed an additional 65 persons to celebrate Christ's birth. Easter fell on the back end of Spring Break. Nevertheless we had 399 in attendance that day.

Another new thing this year was welcoming fourth graders to the preparation class for first

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communion. With both fourth and fifth graders together (along with parents) it was a big group. And 14 received their first communion on February 15.

Eight new members were welcomed through Holy Baptism. Even as we celebrated these newest members, we also laid to rest one of our dear and faithful members: Betty Albrecht. Betty was a “church lady” in the best sense: an active and devoted servant, always positive, always mindful of others, especially encouraging to the youth of St. James. She will be missed.

The Speaking of Faith series continues to provide both insight and inspiration. As fellow members share some of their faith story, we are reminded that all believers have a story to tell of how God and the people of God have shaped their lives. When will it be your turn to share?

St. James is blessed with strong and capable leaders who lift up a vision for mission and work hard to guide our congregation in fulfilling our mission. It is a joy to gather with church council members on our annual retreat and at monthly meetings. Special thanks are due to council members completing their terms: Randy Daniel (President), Suzanne Gerber, Sarah Lewis and Glenn Basgall. It would be hard to count the hours of faithful service provided this past year by Chic Martin and Pete Clemens in their tireless efforts on our Renewing improvements and the Land Sale. Our music ministry continues to flourish under the capable hands of Tim Haskett, Wendy Unrath,

Wendy Wieggers, Gretchen Haskett, Donna Jarvi and Daniel Heiman. Doug Dusthimer keeps our youth on track and Debbie MacAyeal has many irons in the fire as Director of Discipleship and Sunday School Superintendent. Day to day, week in, week out, Chris Meyer and Donna Jarvi keep things running smoothly in our church office. After seven year we bid farewell to our faithful Nursery Supervisor, Caitlin Chesters. We need a replacement!

There are good things ahead this summer, including:

- June 20 Garrison Keillor at Ravinia
- June 21-26 Campfirmation
- June 28 FOODSTOCK
- July 6-10 GIVE5/4NEED
- July 11-18 Mission Trip
- July 12 Beach Party
- August 4-8 Vacation Bible School
- Sept 13 Rally Day

Finally, this November 26 it will be our turn to host the Community Thanksgiving Service. We will gather together with our Presbyterian and Episcopalian friends—affording us the chance to “show off” all the improvements we have made. More importantly, we can offer our heartfelt thanks for the rich blessings we enjoy as God’s people in this place. God is good—all the time!

Peace,

Richard Holmer

Milestones

These persons were welcomed into the Body of Christ through Holy Baptism:

**Posy Elaine Perry
Samuel Wesley Fiddelke
Jocelyn Louise Duncombe
David Jack Alexander
Isabelle Jane Alexander
Annie Elizabeth O'Brien
Tyler Michael Verch
Anna Paola Arazan**

On October 5, 2014, Bibles were presented to:

**Anne Davis
Elsa MacAyeal
Andrew Marsch
Andrew Sommers
Jackson Sommers
Ned Wanda**

On September 28, 2014, these persons were confirmed in Christ:

**Matthew Jack Hill
Annalisa Ruth MacAyeal
Zachary Sean Morgan
Connor Patrick Reilly
Isabel Sara Rosa
William Connor Shinn**

On February 15, 2015, these persons were welcomed to the Lord's table to share in Holy Communion:

Mark Basgall Olivia Davoux Kate Gerber Abigail Haverkamp Kevin Hill Justin Hornaday Colin Martens	Gus Matkov Nathan Shinn Jackson Sommers Kevin Taylor Blake VanderJeugd Mackenzie Voelcker Ned Wanda
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On November 16, 2014, these persons were welcomed as members of St. James:

**Tiffany and David Alexander, Isabelle and Jack Tracy and Mike Mulqueen
David Roberts
Julie and Walter Sommers, Jackson, Andrew and Charley**

On May 17, 2015, these persons were welcomed as members of St. James:

**Hans and Jenn Bodine, Adah, Kallen, Hallie and Elin
Chris and Adrienne Hott, Carsten and Adelaide
John and Kelly Duncombe, Elijah and Jocelyn
Bob Hughes**

Funeral services were held for these members:

Betty Albrecht, January 24, 2015

May she rest in God's grace and peace.

Report of the Endowment Fund Committee

Members: Jim Davoux, Faye Holm, John Tanner, Ron Kok-Alblas, Pete Clemens, Pastor Richard Holmer (ex officio)

The endowment fund began 2014 with a balance of \$211,390. Over the course of the year the various funds grew and had a balance of \$224,578 in late November. At the end of 2014, the committee met and approved the following disbursements from the Viola Long fund. \$5,000 was disbursed to Sagrado Corazon as continued support for their mission. An additional \$5,000 was disbursed to the St James General Fund. The final endowment balance in 2014 was \$213,182.

In early 2015, the committee began interviewing other investment firms. For a number of years, Blue Prairie Group has been the investment advisor for the fund. It was decided that this was an opportune time to reconsider advisors due to the large increase in the investments from the land sale. The committee selected Wintrust Wealth Management as the investment advisor going forward. A new investment and spending policy

were developed in the first quarter by the committee specifically for the land fund. The proceeds from the land sale were transferred to Wintrust in the first quarter of 2015, and they began investing in March. Wintrust has been using a dollar cost average methodology as they convert cash from the land fund into the various investments. As of early-May they have converted 25% of the funds from cash to investments. Wintrust expects to have 100% of the cash converted to investments by end of the second quarter of 2015. The overall balance of all endowment funds as of April 30, 2015 was \$1,235,700.

The congregation is always welcome and encouraged to submit ideas to the committee for potential disbursements from the endowment fund. Contact any member of the committee to discuss your thoughts.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Davoux
Chairman

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 Terms Expiring June 2018 (Three Year Term):

Mark Eck

My wife, Siri and I joined St. James after moving into our home in Lake Bluff in 1978. Our three children were baptized and confirmed here. The kids helped me teach their Sunday School classes for about ten years. I have worked in trucking, material handling, and vehicle sales and operations for over forty years. I have been a Master Sales Consultant at Napleton Ford, previously Sessler Ford, in Libertyville for over twenty years. I look forward to helping more here at church.

Melinda Hill

I was born in Chicago, but my parents moved to Homer Glen, IL before my first birthday. Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church in Lockport was my home church for 27 years. My mom held many, many leadership roles in the church so I spent oodles of time there and participated in every program she could get me in - Sunday school, vacation bible school, bell choir, children's choir, I helped her in the kitchen, and the senior outreach program. I was married in that church, and until 3yrs. ago spent every Christmas Eve there worshipping with my family and old friends. After becoming pregnant with Kelsey, Scott and I purchased a home in Barrington and became members at Lutheran Church of the Atonement. I loved it there! Kelsey, Matthew and Eric were all baptized there, and Kelsey and Matthew both attended the Lutheran preschool run by that church. I eventually left my position with Hewitt Associates to become a full time mom, and became pregnant with our 4th child. With Scott working at Abbott Labs, we decided to move our family to Lake Forest to be closer to him. We became members at St. James very shortly after settling in. I feel blessed and honored to have the opportunity to serve on church council.

Bud Lowell

Bud and Kathy Lowell joined St. James in 1992, after moving to Lake Forest. Bud has served on St James church council in the 1990's and was President his last year on council. He also served on the church council and was President at Grace Lutheran in Libertyville. Bud is a regular assisting minister and lay reader. Bud & Kathy have four children, Barrett, Tyler, Colby, and Courtney who were all confirmed at St James. They also have two daughter-in-laws, Allie and Kelly who are married to Barrett and Tyler. They also have a new granddaughter, Collins, the daughter of Tyler and Kelly.

Mark Wanda

Mark and Alane Wanda and their three boys (Kyle, Thomas and Ned) joined St. James Lutheran Church in 2014 after moving back to Illinois from Massachusetts in 2013. Mark is a native of the south side of Chicago where he was raised in the St. Peter & St. Paul Russian Orthodox church while Alane, who hails from Whippany, New Jersey, and the boys are all cradle Lutherans. Mark joined the Lutheran Church after meeting Alane in 1996 and they were both very active in Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Westborough, MA, their primary church for the almost 12 years they lived in Massachusetts. At Good Shepherd, Mark was a member of choir and served on the Finance Committee, ultimately becoming chair of the committee and serving on the council for the last several years at the church before their relocation back to Illinois. Mark and his family live in Libertyville.

Current Congregation Council:

Term Expiring June 2015

Glenn Basgall
Suzanne Gerber
Sarah Lewis
Randy Daniel (President)

Term Expiring June 2016

Linda Berner
Brooke Davis
Tom Ebert
Brenda Shinn

Term Expiring June 2017

Carol Bennett
Donna Fortney
Josh Hornaday
Craig Linn

ST. JAMES MEMORIAL GARDEN BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Current members: Mark Taylor (term expires June 2016)
Detlef Koska (term expires June 2017)

Nominee for a 3 year term expiring June 2018: Randy Daniel

Nominee for a 4 year term expiring June 2019: Carey Cotey

ST. JAMES ENDOWMENT FUND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Current members: John Tanner (term expires June 2016)

Nominees for a 2 year term expiring June 2017: Bill Shinn and Dave Van Singel

Nominees for a 3 year term expiring June 2018: Jim Davoux and Ron Kok-Alblas

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Current members: Steve Thornberry (term expires June 2016)
Dave Van Singel (term expires June 2017)

Nominee for a 3-year term, expiring June 2018: Susan Paul

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Nominees: Pete Clemens Randy Daniel
Kathy Lowell Sarah Lewis
Glenn Basgall Suzanne Gerber

Thank you for your faithful service to those members whose terms are expiring this year: David Clough (Audit Committee) and Faye Holm (Endowment Fund Board). And special thanks to Jim Davoux (Endowment Fund) and Randy Daniel (Memorial Garden) for agreeing to another term.

Report of the Memorial Garden

Burials

We interred the ashes of two persons within the last 12 months.

Memorial Plaque

There are still plenty of empty spaces on the Memorial Plaque. If anyone is interested in having a name added, please contact any of the committee members.

Sale of Burial Sites

Two double sites were 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 has a clear view of the church as a background.

Financials

The check book balance is \$4,800. A payment of \$2,500 in the past year reduced our loan amount to \$15,000. We did receive memorial gifts totaling \$2,015 in memory of Betty Albrecht.

Current Rate Structure

The current rates remain 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 2017
- Randy Daniel (thru 2018)
- Mark Taylor (thru 2016)
- David Clough (moving out of area)
- Carey Cotey (nominated for new trustee)
- Richard Holmer – ex-officio member
- Tom Meyer—Legal Counsel

Respectively submitted,

Detlef Koska
Chairman

Report of the Sewing Group

Our Sewing Group works at the church on the first Thursday of the month, September through May, preparing 60" by 80" quilts, teddy bears, and pillows. We deliver the quilts to the Church of the Brethren in Elgin, Illinois to be assimilated with other quilts and sent to Lutheran World Relief.

This year we went to a luncheon where we were privileged to meet the President of Lutheran World Relief, and we also displayed some of our quilts. Teddy bears and pillows are taken to Lutheran Social Services in Des Plaines,

We welcome donations of cotton material large enough to be cut into 21 inch squares. We make our quilts with sewing machines. We need volunteers to stuff the teddy bears, tie the quilts,

iron the material and cut pieces. We can always use ladies who like to sew by hand or on the machine. We can always find work for someone who is interested. We bring our lunch and share a dessert.

Members include Ann Anderson, Carol Bennett, Betty Benton, Mary Gram, Judy Grodt, Bobbie Hildenbrand, Faye Holm, Madeleine Jorgensen, Shirley Norberg, Ulla Norberg, Carole Tanner, and Joan Webster.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Benton

Report of the Stewardship Committee

Committee Members: Randy Daniel, Faye Holm, Craig Linn, Michael Montalbano, Jon Paul, Dave Van Singel, Joe Voelcker, Pastor Holmer

RESPOND

God has done great and wonderful things for us. "His mercies are new every morning." (Lamentations 3:22-23) The good news of Jesus Christ renews our lives. Grace happens in ways both great and small. God offers us abundant life.

One of the significant ways we respond to God is the offerings we give. We return a portion of what God provides. We can be generous in response to God's gracious generosity to us.

St James has been blessed by your generous response! 101 families pledged for 2015, with an average increase of 2.5%. Plus, you have been faithful year by year in keeping commitments; member donations in 2014 even exceeded our budget by 1%.

You have responded as well by volunteering in many ways at St James, coming regularly to worship and praying often.

Outside ministries are fortunate as well with your mission work and support of additional benevolence causes.

Especially generous has been the support for the Renewal Campaign, leading to wonderful improvements throughout our building and our grounds. Just one year into the three year campaign, over 60% of total pledges have been met, allowing us to take on a number of additional projects in summer 2015.

Many thanks for your wonderful response, day by day, week by week!

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Paul

Report of the Youth Ministry Team

Members: Sue Ebert, Doug Gerber, Lori Grauer, Debbie MacAyeal

Youth Director: Doug Dusthimer

We have had monthly Gno-me events for the 5th-8th graders starting in Sept 2014 that will conclude in May 2015, including boating at Independence Grove, corn maze and bonfire, paintball, rock climbing, snow games, laser tag, nerf wars, cosmic bowling and a sleep under. Attendance for these events has been averaging 8-15. Doug Dusthimer is the youth director and leads the events with assistance from parents as needed. Service projects have included participating in the crop walk and volunteering at the Bethel Christmas store. The junior high youth

will again have the opportunity to participate in the Give5/4need summer camp; last summer's projects included working with Bernie's Book Bank, PADS, Lake County Forest Preserve and North Community Partners. This offers a curriculum that builds faith, confidence and enthusiasm for volunteerism; high school youth are mentors. High school youth will also be leading the church service May 31. We have 9 high school students signed up for the mission trip this summer which will be going to Sudbury PA with chaperones Doug Dusthimer and Kari Lee. Please keep them in your prayers.

Susan Ebert
Committee Chair

Report of the Worship and Music Committee

Committee Members: Carol Bennett, Donna Fortney (Council Liaison), Tim Haskett, Kristin Haverkamp, Daniel Heiman, Jineen Heiman, Donna Jarvi, Wendy Wieggers and Pastor Holmer.

The Worship and Music Committee oversees the worship services and coordinates the volunteer groups which contribute to worship at St. James: musical ensembles (Children's Choir, Adult Choir, Handbell Choir, Damascus Road, St. James Brass, and offerings of special music), Altar Guild, and worship servants such as lectors, acolytes and communion assistants. We are blessed that all of these groups are thriving and functioning well.

We always welcome additional workers. To participate in music at St. James, contact Director of Music, Tim Haskett; to join the altar guild, contact Carol Bennett; to join the worship servants, sign up with the stewardship pledge.

New in the sanctuary this year is the seating arrangement with curved rows.

A couple things in the worship schedule were changed:

♪ The late service on Christmas Eve was eliminated due to low attendance. It combined with the 4:30 service and had a large number attending.

♪ The Easter Vigil on Saturday night was not held because of low attendance and spring vacation.

New equipment includes:

·The organ light.

· Black table clothes, made by Carol Bennett, for the extra handbell tables. They will go with the red ones we have. Also "singing sticks", made by Tim Haskett, to use with the bells.

Looking forward we plan to use a different version of the Bible texts this summer, the Contemporary English Version (CEV) for more understandable writing. Also this summer the chalice will be refurbished or replaced as the gold is flaking off into the wine.

Our faith is strengthened each week through our worship together in a way that we cannot do on our own. God is good all the time, and it is always good to gather in praise and thanksgiving for our rich blessings.

The committee wishes to express its gratitude to all who gave of their time and talents in the worship of our Lord. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Fortney
Chairman

Report of the Women of St. James

The mission of the Women of St. James (WSJ) is “to build relationships through faith enrichment, fellowship, service and social awareness” and all adult females of the congregation are welcomed automatically into membership and encouraged to attend. Here is a description of our activities this year:

Faith Enrichment

The Annual Spring Retreat was held April 25 at St. James and coordinated by Donna Jarvi. The curriculum, “Café Chocolat” by Group was explored and enjoyed by a record setting 29 women. The day-long program centered on God’s amazing grace and provided time to grow closer to each other while growing closer to God.

The Women’s Faith Forum meets every Tuesday morning during the program year at St. James. Meetings will resume in the fall and dates will be published in St. James monthly newsletters.

Fellowship

On December 6, we hosted the annual Holiday Sharing and Cookie Exchange. Sue Ebert coordinated the potluck dinner on January 25. The Women of St. James hosted a reception following summer worship.

Service/Outreach

The bake sale the Sunday after the December cookie exchange raised \$600 which was forwarded to COOL to assist their ministry.

The longest running service project for the Women of St. James is the sewing group. The group continues to make pillows, teddy bears and quilts for Lutheran World Relief and LSSI. The “Quilts of Love” team has taken a brief hiatus and has an inventory of handmade quilts which are offered to James members as a demonstration of love and support.

The WSJ leadership is in a period of flux as Cathy Long and Shelly Holmstrom have stepped away as Coordinators this year. It has been wonderful that other women have taken on leadership roles. Thank you to all of the women who helped in key areas throughout the year. Special thanks to Carol Bennett, Sue Ebert, Lori Grauer, Donna Jarvi, Madeleine Jorgensen, Anne Linn, Debbie MacAyeal, Pat Quade, Sonja Stunard and Melinda Voelcker.

We encourage all women to attend these programs throughout the year and guests are welcome. 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.

Submitted by Shelly Holmstrom

On behalf of the Women of St. James

Report of the Christian Education Committee

Committee Members: Barb Basgall (chair), Mike Bennett, Linda Berner, Suzanne Gerber, Richard Holmer, Jason Lewis, Kathy Lowell and Debbie MacAyeal

“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

We welcome all congregational members to join our committee! Our committee selects and implements the St. James Christian educational curriculum for our adults and children.

Youth Education

This year’s milestones included the following achievements:

- 6 Third graders were presented with Bibles on September 21, 2014.
- 6 Ninth graders were confirmed on September 28, 2014.
- 15 Fourth and Fifth graders received First Communion on January 14, 2015 following five classes.

This year’s Youth Programs included the following:

- On Rally Day, Robin’s Dog Stars-Dog Trick Show entertained our children and parents with a variety of dog tricks. The Dwyer Family donated the use of their hot dog boiler.
- Several of our youth and families volunteered at the A. J. Katzenmeier carnival.
- Wendy Wieggers led our children’s Christmas Pageant. Wendy wrote a script that included personal stories that described the family traditions our church families use to keep Christ in Christmas.
- On Mother’s Day, Wendy Wieggers led the Sunday school student’s and several parents and grandparents in the performance of a wonderful choir piece.
- Vacation Bible School 2014 took place August 4 - 8 and the theme was Bethlehem. The children walked in the Lake Forest Day parade with banners promoting VBS and GIVE5/4NEED.
- Taking place August 11 - 15, 2014, a program called GIVE5/4NEED was created to allow our middle school students (with our high school students serving as mentors) to learn what a blessing it is to give to others. Over 30 youth attended and we served Bernie’s Book Bank, North Chicago Community Partners, PAD’S, Lutheran World Relief and the Lake County Forest Preserve.

St. James U

Our St. James U program takes place in the Common Room between services from fall through spring. This year our adult education has viewed/studied the following:

- In the fall, congregation members viewed “Adult Crossings: God’s Journey With Us” DVD.
- During the winter, congregation members viewed the “The Power of Forgiveness” and “A Glimpse at the Spirit of Islam” DVDs.
- In the spring, we studied, “Biology and Belief: Conversations in Faith and Science” and “Da Vinci’s Mystery.”
- Members of our congregation read, The Bright Star of Bethlehem, by Pastor Mitri Raheb as an Advent Devotional.

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(Christian Education continued)

- During Lent, the congregation was encouraged to read “A Wondrous Love, Meditations and Prayers from Henri J.M. Nouwen and C.S. Lewis.”
- On Sunday, February 22, Aziz Sarah, gave an educational talk called, [Thinking Outside the Box: New Approaches to Peace in Israel and Palestine](#), and also spoke between the services.

Sunday School

This year the rotation curriculum was “Most Certainly True,” with lessons adapted by Debbie MacAyeal:

- This year, our Sunday School rooms were completely remodeled providing us with a wonderful new space for faith to grow!
- 56 Students are enrolled in the Sunday School program.
- 16 teachers, including 4 high school students, gave their time to educate our children of St. James.
- Preschoolers and our 7th and 8th grade students continued to use the witness curriculum and study the main stories of the Bible using a two-year plan.
- On October 19, the Sunday School students did a Stewardship skit at both services.
- The Sunday School students ended the year by packing 100 sack lunches for the COOL Food Pantry on May 17.

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Basgall

Report of the Fellowship Committee

St James had another year filled with fun and festive Christian Fellowship! We kicked off the summer with our annual Lake Forest Beach Party Picnic. Families gathered at the beach to share pot luck dishes and cook food on the grill. We had a day filled with sunshine, good food and friendship!

We closed the summer with our Rally Day Picnic. Salads and desserts were provided by the Picnic Basket in Libertyville. Hot dogs were cooked and served by The Shinn Family!

Weather again conflicted with our fall family campout and the event had to be canceled. We are going to try to reschedule this summer when the weather can be more agreeable.

In November the adults in the congregation enjoyed the Progressive Dinner. Kevin and Ann Dwyer opened their home for appetizers and six other family's hosted dinner and dessert.

In December we marked the beginning of Advent with our annual Advent Potluck Dinner. Families gathered in the fellowship hall and shared potluck dishes and made an Advent craft.

In early May, we were blessed with a warm spring day to have our Spring Progressive dinner. Mark and Alane Wanda graciously opened their home for appetizers and six other homes hosted a dinner inspired by the Caribbean!

The Fellowship Committee is seeking volunteers that would like to join our committee and add even more events to our calendar next year! Please contact Brenda Shinn or Debbie MacAyeal if you are interested!

Respectively submitted,

Brenda Shinn

Report of the Evangelism Committee

Committee members currently include Barb Basgall, Barb Davoux and Tom Ebert. Pastor Holmer participates as ex-officio member. This is a very dedicated and caring team. Thanks for your continued giving of your time and talents!

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:

- Continuous improvement of garden plots in the vacant land west of the playground. We have a new perimeter fence and added raised beds. All green thumbs are invited to join us as there is plenty of room for your gardening pleasure. If interested, contact Tom Ebert at 847-295-2048.
- Ongoing weekly updates of James Group and Gno-me related information and scheduled outings on our St. James Facebook page. This media connection presents an exciting forum to enhance the visibility of St. James by sharing information with our fellow members and new friends too. Anyone is welcome to view our page by searching in Facebook for "St. James Lutheran Church (Lake Forest, IL)".

- The faith based "St. James Book Club" continued to meet throughout the year to enhance fellowship and spirituality of our congregation. The club rotated their meetings at different member houses. New members are still welcome! Contact Jon Paul.

Works in progress:

- Our continued focus for the upcoming year will be to support the Council goal of increasing worship attendance by 20%. We are working on a visitor's follow-up package and have developed a list of potential ways to meet this goal.
- We are always working to extend the visibility of St. James within the community by publicizing open events at St. James, including newspaper releases and flyers posted in the community. If you have a St. James event open to the community, please consider a press release.

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 Property Committee

Committee members: Pete Clemens, John Tanner, Dave Van Singel, Josh Hornaday, Hugh Triplett, Carol Bennett, Chris Meyer and Pastor Holmer (ex officio) and Chic Martin (chairperson),

Exterior Work

- New concrete walkway at west & north elevation
- Completed landscaping :
 - Island plantings, walk & lighting
 - New grass sod against new walkways
 - Extended grass border on south & west of the parking areas
 - Cleaned playground area and added mulch
 - Installed partial sprinkler system
 - Trimmed additional trees
 - Installed new grass sod against driveway
 - Added stone boulders alongside driveway
 - Reworked the drain ditch south of driveway
 - Added watering system in the courtyard
 - Added mulch in various areas
- Installed new collector & drainage pipe across parking lot
- Replaced old & rotted underground electrical wiring in the front and rear areas
- Installed new drainage system in the rear yard
- Completed installation of underground ditch drainage system at bike path and raised the grade elevations and sod area
- Completed small area grading and plantings

Interior Work:

- Completed Sunday School renovation
- Partially renovated kitchen
- Completed 80% of the carpet replacement

- Replaced all old single pane windows with new thermos pane units
- Replaced four (4) exit entry door systems.
- Completed Narthex renovation including new lighting
- Replaced various broken glass thermos units
- Completed 60% of painting scheduled
- Completed the renovating of four (4) restrooms
- Installed new custom cabinetry in various areas
- Installed tile on the walls of utility room
- Constructed two (2) storage closets in the Fellowship Hall
- Replaced the drinking fountain
- Installed a new coffee system
- Replaced broken thermos glass in Sanctuary
- Removed, repaired & cleaned stain glass units in Sanctuary
- Professionally cleaned and sealed stone floor
- Professionally cleaned and resealed altar and music oak platforms
- Replaced general lighting control panel

Completed and repaired miscellaneous items around and in the church property.

Many thanks to all the members helping to keep and maintain our Home of Worship. This is accomplished through volunteer labor, extra financial assistance and attending meetings. The Property Committee welcomes any and all suggestions for continuing our stewardship of our Home of Worship, social gatherings and special events.

Motto to remember:

“Be Proactive not Reactive”

Respectfully submitted,

Chic Martin

Report of the Social Ministry Committee

Committee Members: Ann Anderson, Donna Fortney, Michael Grauer, Shelly Holmstrom, Sarah Lewis, Debbie MacAyeal, Elizabeth Takacs Mallory, Tom Meyer, Charlotte Mojden, Jim and Barb Davoux, Rob Davis and Pastor Holmer

The purpose of the committee is to promote and support activities of various agencies and programs serving the needs of the community and beyond. We continue to encourage members to get involved and thank those who have volunteered in a variety of ways.

Volunteer and Financial Support :

- **North Chicago Community Partners:
A.J. Katzenmaier School**
- **Bethel New Life**
- **Christian Outreach of Lutherans (COOL)**
- **CROP Walk**
- **Habitat for Humanity**
- **Help Within the Family**
- **Lake County United**
- **Providing Advocacy, Dignity and Shelter (PADS)**
- **Waukegan 2 College**

Financial Support Only:

- **Career Resource Center**
- **ELCA Benevolence**
- **Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI)**
- **Sagrado Corazon**
- **Winchester House Chaplaincy**

We have encouraged families to get involved in volunteering together. Several families have walked for CROP, worked at the Bethel Christmas Store and served dinner at the new location for the family PADS site. A.J. Katzenmaier offers a variety of volunteer options and times for different ages and we have helped staff a Health

& Wellness Fair, Art Fair, provided volunteers for the after school program and served staff luncheons. We are currently exploring the immediate needs of refugees.

The Committee held a Social Ministry Sunday, March 1 – providing information about ministries through committee members informally between services in the narthex. Debbie MacAyeal coordinated several Sunday morning congregation-wide volunteer projects during the year including assembling sewing and hygiene kits. Drives such as the preschool boots in November and special offerings during the year were also part of the St. James family caring outreach this year.

We are excited to welcome Hannah Grauer and Annalisa MacAyeal to our team during the next year and invite individuals of all ages to attend meetings and assist with ministries. Hannah will help coordinate Bethel and Annalisa, Crop Walk.

An important inreach within St. James is “Help Within the Family”, a program that matches the needs of individual members experiencing illness or loss with willing volunteers to provide meals, transportation, and assistance as able. We invite you to contact Debbie MacAyeal to sign up to be included on a roster of potential volunteers to serve each other in time of great need.

A profound gratitude to Betty Albrecht who served faithfully and earnestly on the Social Ministry Committee for many years. We move forward with her memory of service emblazoned on our hearts. Thank you to all members who so willingly help us follow our collective mission.

Shelly Holmstrom, Acting Chairperson on behalf of Ann Anderson

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 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 circle, quilts of love and all the dedicated individuals who have given service in 2014-2015.

We express our gratitude to all who serve on the Church Council, especially Randy Daniel (President), Glenn Basgall, Suzanne Gerber and Sarah Lewis who have completed their terms of office. We acknowledge with great appreciation our 2014-2015 officers: Randy Daniel, President; Carol Bennett, Vice President; Linda Berner, Secretary, Jon Paul, Treasurer and Joe Voelcker, Financial Secretary.

We welcome into our church family the 14 adults and 13 children who were received into membership during the past year and pray that they here experience growth in faith and service.

We remember in our thoughts and prayers Betty Albrecht who died in the Faith during this year, her family 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 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.

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Randy Daniel

Vice President
Carol Bennett

Secretary
Linda Berner

Treasurer
Jon Paul

Financial Secretary
Joe Voelcker

Council Members

Glenn Basgall
Carol Bennett
Linda Berner
Randy Daniel
Brooke Davis
Tom Ebert
Donna Fortney
Suzanne Gerber
Josh Hornaday
Sarah Lewis
Craig Linn
Brenda Shinn

Pastor
Richard E. Holmer

Church Staff

Business Manager
Chris Meyer

Church Secretary
Donna Jarvi

Director of Discipleship
Debbie MacAyeal

Nursery Supervisor
TBD

Youth Ministry Director
Doug Dusthimer



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Standing Committee Chairs and Other Leaders

Christian Education
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Church Property
Chic Martin

Evangelism
Tom Ebert

Fellowship
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Finance
Jon Paul

Social Ministry
Ann Anderson

Stewardship
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Endowment Board of Trustees
Chair
Jim Davoux

Memorial Garden Board of
Trustees Chair
Detlef Koska

Sewing Group
Betty Benton

Youth Ministry Team
Sue Ebert

Women of St. James
TBD

Altar Guild
Carol Bennett

Church Staff

Director of Music
Tim Haskett

Organist
Wendy Unrath

Damascus Road
Director
Donna Jarvi

Director of
Children's Music
Wendy Wiegars

Bell Choir Director
Gretchen Haskett

Brass Ensemble Director
Daniel Heiman