



St. James Lutheran Church

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

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONGREGATION ANNUAL GOVERNANCE MEETING (ZOOM) 10:15 a.m. June 7, 2020

Schedule

9:30 am Service (YouTube)

10:15 am Annual Meeting (Zoom)

Agenda

Opening Prayer

Call to Order

Report of the Tellers (Quorum is 46 voting members)

Adoption of the Agenda

Approval of the Minutes, January 26, 2020

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 26, 2020

Opening Prayer: Pastor Holmer

Adoption of Agenda: Approved

Approval of June 2019 Minutes: Approved

Opening Remarks: Doug Gerber, President

Financial Report: Jon Paul

- Gives 2019 summary: balanced budget, member giving at 106%; \$35,000 set aside for future benevolence; benevolence climbs to \$217,000; investment of land sale \$37, 000;
- 16% appreciation in the markets; Major Maintenance Fund at \$122,000
- General Fund Receipts: pledged giving \$582,000; non-pledged giving \$35,000; other member giving \$15,000; pledge campaign up \$17,000
- General Fund Expenses: spending up 2%; Benevolence 15% of spending at \$92,000; Personnel 59% of spending to \$376,000; Property 10% of spending at \$62,000; Future Spending at \$35,000
- Benevolence: General Fund \$92,000; Special Benevolence doubled; \$18,000 from other fundraisers; \$14,000 from General Fund reserves for ELCA Disaster and Lutheran World Federation
- Property: 10% of GF spending; snow removal hard to predict
- Investments: \$333,000 Pooled investments; \$1.1 million in Land Sale Fund--back above original balance; annual 4% distribution
- Balance Sheet: Cash up \$59,000; investments 16% return for increase of \$179,000; Prepaid slight increase to \$73,000; GF Reserve \$51,000 w/ \$16,000 left over from 2018
- Fund Balances: GF \$51,000; Special Benevolence \$13,000; Major Maintenance \$124,000; Contingency \$30,000; Benevolence Endowment \$64,000; Viola Long Fund \$164,000; Tony Danielson fund \$94,000; Land Sale \$1.1 million
- General Fund Income Budget: No funds expected for GF from other funds
- **2020 Budget** Unanimously approved

- Special thanks from Jon Paul to Finance Teams
- Special thanks from members and Doug Gerber to Jon Paul for his outstanding work and dedication

Election of Synod Assembly Voting Members for meeting on June 5 & 6 , 2020. Pastor Holmer plus 2 members needed. Doug Gerber asks for volunteers and states he may be able to attend. Synod members will be determined in the coming weeks

Sagrado Corazón

Doug Gerber leads slide presentation

Background: Sagrado Congregation--ELCA, mainly from Honduras and Mexico, mainly a young congregation, large youth group

Key Sagrado Beliefs: activity is a way for evangelism, honoring culture is important

What Sagrado does now: Peace walk against violence, Migration Clinic, work with Messiah in Wauconda, Las Posadas with other churches

Future Plans: create a child care space, develop a Sunday school, teach technology skills to community, become self-sustaining

Ways to become involved: attend a worship service, social gathering, music, Las Posadas, youth groups jointly volunteer, participate in peace walk, help support Thanksgiving drive, use our members to help network with other agencies

Question from congregation about honoring culture: Doug Gerber and Steve Thornberry reply that most of congregation comes from a Catholic background and thus church reflects some aspects

Concluding Statements

Doug Gerber thanks the congregation for continued support and trust and will continue to follow Christ, make disciples, and live the Gospel

Motion to adjourn: 11:35 A.M.

Closing Prayer: Pastor Holmer

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Gerber

Report of the President

Whenever I am given the opportunity to read scripture during a church service, I get goosebumps. Roughly halfway through the reading, I feel the Holy Spirit present in me and in my fellow church members. When I end the reading with “The word of the Lord,” I feel a connection with the Lord and with you. In the past two months, the way in which we meet has drastically changed. The altering of how we “Passed the Peace” when concerns arose about the flu in January morphed into a hiatus from live worship services in March due to Covid-19. But we adapted. Undaunted, we began streaming worship services every Sunday. Church members volunteered their time to produce, to film, to read, to sing, and to perform. Connections were not lost. When my family and I participate in the Sunday online service, I still feel the Holy Spirit present, and I still feel connected to all of you.

Over the course of the last year, we have stayed true to our mission: follow Christ, make disciples, and live the gospel.

Through a series of Lenten Wednesdays, we got to know our fellow brothers and sisters from Sagrado Corazón. We heard about their goals and dreams as we shared a meal together. With your generosity through this year’s campaign and a matching fund, we were able to raise \$42,000 for their congregation. Your donations have recently been extremely beneficial as families from their congregation have met financial hardships due to Covid-19. Once we are able to schedule events with them, we will do so.

We continue to support COOL, PADS, Waukegan to College, and Habitat both with our time and with our donations. I thank those who have helped build homes, helped prepare meals, and helped distribute food for those in need. Your generosity over the past two years has allowed us to use the surplus money to bolster their efforts to provide aid for those they serve.

In the beginning of April we applied for and were granted a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan of \$54,000. This loan converts into a grant after the loan requirements are met concerning payroll.

At our most recent meeting, Council agreed that even after we are able to meet in person, we will continue to offer an on-line version of our worship service. We have been truly blessed to be able to connect each Sunday, and congregational comments echo the same sentiments. I personally thank Susan Holmer, Kristin Haverkamp, and Dean Haverkamp for their time and efforts in getting our digital worship service from non-existent to the wonderful production you see each Sunday.

Also know that Council has created a subcommittee that will discuss our worship service and Covid-19’s impact upon it. The committee will examine our service and implement best practices with our congregation’s safety as top priority.

As president, I have been blessed by God with a Council and a congregation that supports and loves one another. I thank Pastor Holmer for his guidance and wisdom this past year and Council’s time and talents in guiding the church (also their patience while I attempt to load Zoom meetings). I also thank Jon Paul for his service as treasurer these past years. His efforts and financial advice have truly been a blessing. And I thank you, the congregation. Your generosity these past two years has allowed us to continue to minister to those in need, a need greater than ever. I will continue to serve the church as a Sunday school teacher and as a member of the Covid-19 subcommittee.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Gerber

Report of Pastor Holmer

Each year the first step in preparing my annual report is to get out my calendar and review what transpired over the past 12 months. This time around that process brought to mind things we have already missed and events we will miss in the near future. The first Sunday we were not able to gather was the date the Lake Forest High School Choir was scheduled to sing. Then we had a “virtual” Holy Week. Events like the Progressive Dinner and the Women’s Retreat had to be cancelled as were Men’s Breakfasts.

In the coming weeks we have to forgo traditional events like the Father’s Day Pancake Breakfast, Campfirmation and FOODSTOCK (which will be held “virtually” this year). Of course what we miss most of all is gathering for weekly worship in our beautiful sanctuary with all the people we know and love. There is nothing to be gained by whining about what we cannot do at present, but there is a legitimate place for lamenting the absence of what we treasure. Our life as a congregation is centered on gathering around Word and Sacrament as people of God. Online worship is worthwhile, but it cannot match the vitality of being present together in God’s house. We can console one another with the assurance that our exile is temporary.

The past year included many memorable highlights. We elected a new bishop for our synod, Bishop Yehiel Curry. I hope for a visit from him when we are back in church. Give 5/4 Need had two great sessions last summer. Kick-off Sunday had some new activities and new energy. Eight students were confirmed. The Church Council had a constructive retreat. All the events of Advent and Christmas were splendid. Men of St. James had another successful retreat. Four students received their first communion. We initiated a deeper relationship with the congregation of Sagrado Corazón.

Our stewardship theme from last fall now seems prescient. Hope Perseveres is a most appropriate watchword for us as we make our

way through this pandemic. Our hope in God can sustain us through challenges and uncertainty. And we can offer hope to others by our example, our service and our generosity.

So far we have not lost any members to COVID-19. However, over the last year three saints of our congregation have gone home to God. Jim Benton, Gladys Babich and Lyle Neagle were all longtime members and faithful servants. May they rest in God’s grace and peace.

The Great Change came in the middle of March. Since that time, we have had to learn new skills and adjust to a new normal. Zoom meetings, Zoom classes, worship on YouTube are now the order of the day. I am grateful for the technology and the skills of our staff that make these changes workable. We are all adapting as we go and finding new ways to do ministry. I am grateful for everyone’s cooperation.

As to what lies ahead, it is hard to say for sure. Much is still not known about the Corona Virus, how it affects us and how long it will remain a threat. We have formed a team to consider conceptions for ways to gather together for worship – and to do so safely. It is not possible to predict how and when that may happen. Be assured we will keep you informed.

Though there is much we do not know, this we do know: we are blessed to be a blessing. St. James is a healthy congregation, and we are in a position to bless and support others. In a marvelous way, God has prepared us to be useful during this pandemic. A number of events in the past few years have combined to put us in a strong position:

- * Our mortgage is paid—we have no debt.
- * The fiscal year of 2018 and 2019 ended with a total surplus well over \$50,000, thanks to your generous giving.
- * We have built our Contingency Fund up to \$30,000.
- * We received a PPP loan which we are using to cover payroll costs as well as utilities. As long as

Report of Pastor Holmer *(continued)*

we use it as required, we are anticipating that the loan will be forgiven.

Our financial resources enable us to offer significant support to our mission partners. We have already made gifts to COOL Ministries, PADS, Habitat for Humanity Lake County, Waukegan to College and the Synod COVID Relief Fund for congregations in financial stress. In addition, once again you surpassed the matching mission challenge for Sagrado Corazón, providing a total of over \$42,000 to strengthen their ministry. Thanks be to God! God is truly at work through the people of St. James. In these dark days we can shine a way of hope and love.

I am deeply grateful to all our dedicated staff members as we pivot to address new realities. I am thankful for the leadership of our church council, especially those who are completing their

terms: Rob Davis, Madeleine Jorgensen, Secretary Melodi Peters and President Doug Gerber. Special thanks are in order to Jon Paul who is retiring as our Treasurer after nearly two decades of faithful service over the years.

June 10th will be the 41st anniversary of my ordination. These present challenges have renewed my sense of calling as a pastor. I feel the Holy Spirit moving in our congregation and in my ministry. The other day I was moved to enter the sanctuary and to sing a hymn of praise: "Praise to The Lord the Almighty". It was not like singing when the church is full – but that day will surely come. I know that God is with us, God's hand is leading us, God's love is supporting us. By grace, we will persevere.

Peace,
Richard E. Holmer

MILESTONES

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

**Gwendolyn Cotey
Jameson Schlather
Ruth Schneider**

On September 15 and 22, 2019, Bibles were presented to:

**Isabelle Alexander
Elin Bodine
Peter Gerber
Ryder Graf
Amelia Husemoller
Emily Marsch**

On September 22, 2019, these persons were confirmed in Christ:

**Olivia Davoux
Sheppard Graf
Abby Haverkamp
Nathan Shinn
Jackson Sommers
Evan Stresser
Kevin Taylor
Ned Wanda**

On February 23, 2020 these persons were welcomed to the Lord's table to share in Holy Communion:

**Estevan Arazan
Colton Dunford
Kayleigh Dunford
Charlie Sommers**

These persons were welcomed as members of St. James on November 27, 2019:

**Scott and Mary Anne Larson
Eva and Vivian**

The following members have died in the past year:

**Jim Benton
Gladys Babich
Lyle Neagle**

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 2020 to June 2023:

Barb Basgall

Glenn and I started attending St. James in February of 1994 and became members later the same year. We have 4 children – Jennifer, Lauren, Matthew, and Mark – all of whom were baptized here. I have been the chair of the Christian Education Committee for many years now, serve as an Assisting Minister, Communion Assistant, Lector, Usher, or Greeter, and have previously served on Council. I am honored to be considered to serve on Council.

Sue Ebert

I have been a member of St James since 1987. I am current chair of and long time participant in the youth committee and also currently serving on the Fellowship committee. I frequently help to serve the meals at PADS and take care of the inside plants at church. My full time job is working as a physical therapist in the home care setting. Hobbies include gardening of vegetables and flowers, biking and kayaking. I am lucky enough to be able to use the garden plots behind church since my yard is too shady. My husband Tom and I have three children, Nik, Max and Gretta who all live in Chicago. I am looking forward to serving in a new capacity at St James.

Jason Lewis

Jason resides in Lake Forest and is married to Sarah; and has one child, Andrew, age 19 who attends college at Auburn University in Auburn, AL. Jason attended West Virginia University for pre-pharmacy coursework, received a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy from Massachusetts College of Pharmacy, and obtained a Master of Science in Health Care Policy and Management from Carnegie Mellon University. As a registered pharmacist, Jason worked for several years in the critical care setting at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, MA and at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. In addition, Jason worked as a home health pharmacist and for Highmark BCBS in Medical and Pharmacy affairs. For nearly 20 years, Jason has been dedicated to the diabetes space helping companies bring new technologies to market in both a sales and marketing capacity.

In addition to his professional responsibilities, Jason has served as an Assistant Scout Master and Unit Commissioner for the Boy Scouts of America. Jason also enjoys the outdoors, running, cycling and downhill skiing.

Dave Moore

My family and I moved to Lake Forest 25 years ago and shortly became members of St. James. Our 4 children attended Sunday School, were confirmed, and participated in many youth activities including the work trips. My wife, Deb, taught Sunday School for many years and served on both church council and Christian Ed. I have previously chaired the Stewardship committee and had served as a member for several years. I recently retired from my career in the advertising, digital marketing, and business management software industries. I now work with start-ups and emerging companies as an independent consultant. St. James has been, and continues to be, an important part of our family and I look forward to further contributing as a council member.

Current Congregation Council:

Term Expiring June 2020

Rob Davis
Doug Gerber
Madeleine Jorgensen
Melodi Peters

Term Expiring June 2021

Tiffany Alexander
Bob Hughes
Teresa Miller
Steve Thornberry

Term Expiring June 2022

Scott Hill
Tom Meyer
Gail Morgan
Alane Wanda

TREASURER Jon Paul (term expires June, 2020)

Nominee for a 3 year term expiring June, 2023: Mike Bennett

ST. JAMES MEMORIAL GARDEN BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Current members: Mark Taylor (term expires June 2020)
Randy Daniel (term expires June 2022)
Detlef Koska (term expires June 2022)
Cobi Stein (term expires June 2022)

Nominee for a 3-year term, expiring June 2023: Carole Tanner

ST. JAMES ENDOWMENT FUND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Current members: Rob Davis and Jerry Herb (terms expire June 2020)
Jim Davoux (term expires June 2021)
Hans Bodine (term expires June 2021)
Sue Thomas (term expires June 2022)

Nominees for a 3 year term expiring June 2023: Anna Verch and Mark Wanda

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Current members: Linda Berner (term expires June 2020)
Dave Van Singel (term expires June 2021)
Carol Bettendorf (term expires June 2022)

Nominee for a 3-year term, expiring June 2023: Linda Berner (serving another term)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Current members: Alison Graf, Paula Doyle, Lisa Kollmorgen and Jenn Bodine (terms expire June 2020)
Don Bergsrud (term expires June, 2021)
Donna Jarvi (term expires June, 2021)

Nominees for a one year term expiring June, 2021: Doug Gerber and Melodi Peters

Nominees for a two year term expiring June 2022: Glenn Basgall and Craig Linn

To each of those whose term is expiring in June 2020, thank you for your faithful service! By serving the congregation, we come together to strengthen our bonds, to serve the community, to deepen our faith and to do God's work. May the Lord strengthen and guide our nominees and our ongoing members. Special thanks to Jon Paul for his extended term as Treasurer and to Pastor Holmer for his sure and steady leadership.

Respectively submitted

Lisa Kollmorgen

Report of the Engagement Coordinator

As I reflect on the past program year, several highlights stand out that demonstrate the faithful collaboration of St. James members, working together towards a common good. This is what ENGAGEMENT looks like. Thanks to all of you for stepping up in ways too numerous to mention. I am grateful to see faith lived out in such thoughtful and exciting ways.

The Fellowship Committee initiated a revamp of Rally Day and a variety of St. James members were invited to offer input regarding the event. “Kick-off Sunday” was launched as the new title for the day and a variety of fun events were scheduled. Stay tuned to see how our program year will launch in September and rest assured, there is much to do!

The Hallelujah Chorus is a signature piece of music during the Christmas holiday. We were blessed with the gifts of initiative in our directors, tremendous musical talent at St. James and grateful that organ, brass and vocalists joined to share this joy-filled proclamation during the Lessons & Carols service.

As you are aware, the OWLs (Older, Wiser Lutherans) have been meeting regularly and sharing with each other for over two years. The time came for a formal Mission Statement and in swooped a half dozen “OWLs” from the flock to pen a succinct statement, tied to the St. James Mission Statement we all share.

The Give 5/4 Need summer program for middle school youth utilizing senior high school mentors has grown since it was created by Debbie

MacAyeal. The Social Ministry Committee took it on several years ago when it expanded to two weeks. This year, a collaboration with members of the Christian Education Committee and Youth Director, Doug Dusthimer, demonstrates that many hands increase creativity and enthusiasm exponentially! We are excited about the upcoming virtual service oriented camp offered by St. James June 15-19. Please share the registration information at stjameslutheran.org with your friends.

When uncertainty, health risks and societal guidelines told us all to “shelter in place”, what did our family of faith do? Members of the Prayer Team reached out to individuals, committees started meeting via conference or Zoom calls, Sunday School messages were shared in *Connections*, Pastor Holmer’s *Reflections* were reinforced with a mid-week Zoom Bible study, women sewed masks, and individual members stepped into worship roles during Holy Week and for Sunday worship. Our Church Council continues to respond to the enormous need faced by service agency partners such as PADS and COOL and we are growing in relationship with our brothers and sisters at Sagrado Corazón. The list is endless and ongoing – as it should be. We are called to a life of faith that pours out into lives of service. A life that is always ready to make a “defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you” 1 Peter 3:15. With a grateful nod to our stewardship theme: HOPE PERSEVERES!

Shelly Holmstrom

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 continued work 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. Some of the new materials available are:
 - a. "St. James Information Card" for visitors to take with them. These cards have a photo of St. James on one side and our Worship Schedule, Bible Studies

Schedule and Community Service Partnerships on the flip side.

- b. "Connect to St. James Card" for members, visitors, to request more information about St. James.
- c. "St. James Events Card" is a calendar of events representing the events occurring that quarter. The calendar can be taken and shared with friends. Thanks also to Kristin for updating this regularly.

We are also 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 are thankful to Connor Shinn for his assistance.

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 Social Ministry Outreach Committee

Committee Members: Brooke Davis, Choosri Goebel, Shelly Holmstrom, Kim Kazarian, Sarah Lewis, Beth Stresser, 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. We encourage members to get involved and thank those who have volunteered in a variety of ways, including support of our many “asks” on the kiosk each month! This is just one of many ways you make a difference in the daily lives of those struggling in our own community.

Volunteer and Financial Support :

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

Financial Support Only:

- **Bethel New Life**
- **Career Resource Center**
- **ELCA Benevolence**
- **Lake County United**
- **Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI)**
- **Winchester House Chaplaincy**

Planting the seed of Service is our overarching goal. This past year we have continued to focus on synergies with other St. James ministries – Youth, Christian Ed, WOSJ, OWLs, Sewing Group, Evangelism, and Fellowship to name a few – to work together on projects and build relationships.

Beginning in 2018, the committee took over the Give 5/4 Need Program with the intent to plant the seed of Service in our children in 5-8th grades. This dovetails nicely with our Confirmation Outreach, which has our 7th and 8th graders volunteering at PADS in the Fall and Spring. Starting with Give 5 in 5th and 6th grade begins their Service journey and makes for a natural progression to Service during their Confirmation years.

We are excited to report that beginning in 2020, we will be working synergistically with Christian Ed and Youth on Give 5. This allows for the strengths of all committees to be showcased and utilized. We are pleased that we are going to be able to pivot the program in the face of the new reality of coronavirus. We plan for virtual connection and a menu of activities that can be done from home. The committees agree that this flexibility will allow for families to participate together, which is encouraged. We expect even more registrations this year for this dynamic program!

Additionally, we have members who faithfully attend PADS, volunteer at North Chicago Schools, and tutor at Waukegan to College. St. James sponsors FOODSTOCK, which is a COOL fundraiser. Our 2020 congregation focus is Sagrado Corazón in Waukegan, IL. We anticipate many opportunities to partner with them in ministry and service. The Lenten goal of \$10,000 was exceeded, and with matching funds, St. James collected over \$42,000. An example of partnering is introducing their leadership to agencies in Waukegan that can assist any of their members during this “new normal”, especially COOL Food Pantry. Additionally, we have invited their youth to participate in Give 5! God is Good!

We continue to strengthen our relationship with our primary partners – NCCP, COOL, PADS, and Habitat for Humanity.

We are also blessed that our membership approved a budget in January that will continue to support our extensive outreach. It is a joy to give and serve as a congregation family!

Thank you to all the Committee members for their participation and support of our outreach and to Mark Wanda for volunteering to be our representative on the COOL Board of Directors.

Alane Wanda, Chair

Report of the Christian Education Committee

Committee Members: Barb Basgall (chair), Linda Berner, Rob Davis, Richard Holmer, 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 are looking for a few more individuals to join the Christian Education Committee. We would appreciate a member with Sunday School age children for representation. Our group selects and implements the St. James Christian educational curriculum for our adults and children.

Sunday School

- We have 24 families with children enrolled in our Sunday School program.
- This year the rotation curriculum was “the Kingdom Stories.”
- Preschoolers used the Sparkhouse Colaborate curriculum.
- Seventh and eighth graders used the “Created in Christ” by Concordia curriculum.
- During our stay-at-home, Debbie MacAyeal provided an activity for children each week. It was part of the Connections email.

Youth Education

This year’s milestones included the following achievements:

- Six third grade children were presented with their Holy Bibles on September 15 and 22, 2019.
- Eight ninth graders were confirmed on September 22, 2019.
- Our Confirmation students participated in serving a PADS meal once in the fall and once in the spring.
- Four fourth graders received First Communion on February 23, 2020 following their completed classes.

This year’s Youth Programs included the following:

- On Kick-Off Sunday, Debbie MacAyeal provided her horses for the pony rides and the committee members helped coordinate those who wanted to participate.
- We had 7 confirmation students (five 8th graders

and two 7th graders) this church year.

- The High School Education class led by Doug Dusthimer and Doug Gerber continues to take place once each month. While our high school youth may always join our Adult Education class upon graduating from our Sunday School program, for those youth who wish to participate with students their own age, this program allows them to do so.

- Wendy Wieggers led our children’s Christmas Pageant on December 15, 2019 at the 10:45am service.

- Due to COVID-19, Campfirmation will not take place this year.

- June 15-19, 2020—Our Christian Education committee will be joining the Social Ministry committee for a virtual GIVE5/4NEED program. Linda Berner, Kathy Lowell and Debbie MacAyeal are helping create the educational curriculum portion of the program.

- June 22-26, 2020 - Debbie MacAyeal will provide a weeklong virtual VBS program this year. It will be an extension of what she has been providing during our Stay-at-Home Order for our Sunday School children.

Adult Education

Our Adult Education program takes place in the Common Room between the early and late services from fall through spring. This year our adult education viewed/studied the following:

How Lutherans Interpret the Bible by Dr. Mark Allen Powell

Eight Core Stories of the Bible

Good God Questions

- Regarding Advent devotions, our committee chose and helped distribute the book, *God with Us*, for the congregation.

- Led by Pastor Holmer, we created a Tuesday evening book study that started February 11. Our first book was *A Living Gospel* by Robert Ellsberg.

- On April 29, Pastor Holmer started a Stay-at-Home Adult Bible Study via Zoom that takes place each Wednesday at 1:00pm. The group discusses the lessons for the coming Sunday.

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Basgall

Report of the Worship and Music Committee

O be joyful! A great idea from Pastor Holmer's May 24th sermon, but it's not so easy right now.

The last time we worshiped together in our sanctuary was on March 8, 2020. The pastor, musicians, and producers (recording and editing) have been scrambling ever since to put together a worship service that is amenable to in home worship and praise of our Lord. Many thanks to the music staff for providing music and recruiting submissions for our online format of worship. Thanks to Daniel Heiman for the St. James Brass Ensemble recordings from some years back that we were able to use. And thanks to the readers for their recordings.

We are relying on mass emails to keep our congregation informed of worship and other news. You should be receiving an email with a link to the worship service each Sunday morning. Also included in that email is a link to a printable bulletin and, for the past few weeks, printable children's bulletins. If you have not seen the services online, search YouTube for st james lutheran church lake forest il

Before our immersion in internet productions, though, we were busy upgrading the sound system for the spoken word and hearing assistance and Damascus Road. We were busy with rehearsals and plans for Holy Week while respecting the season of Lent. Before that, we walked through the season of Advent, practicing hopeful waiting.

Hopeful waiting and persevering is what we continue to do. Is this a taste of what it was like for the earliest Christians, who had no idea how long their wait would be? How long, they must have wondered, will we wait for Christ to return. They were patient and hopeful. We must be like them.

In the course, *The Bible in 90 Days*, there is a session where the readings involve hardship and awful struggles and woes borne by God's people. The lecturer has this advice: Don't ask why

something bad happened. Rather, ask what for? In other words, asking why is looking back, but asking what for is looking ahead to how we can go forward despite what has happened in a way that honors God, who is with us through hardship.

Just as each of us is both saint and sinner, there have been some positive things among the negatives of this pandemic time. We have worshiped God without fail every week, though not in person. During Lent we added online Vespers. The passion reading tradition continued. The organ played. The brass played. There was singing. All of this will continue, with the added evangelical element that our worship services are seen by a wider audience and have been shared. Many of us have learned new skills in recording and transmitting files electronically. We have seen enthusiastic participation in this new style of worship by readers, musicians, and behind the scenes production. There is a feeling of cooperation and community in this process.

For the foreseeable future, worship will be an online experience. How we come back into our building has not yet been determined. As we study the recommendations for best practices, it is most likely that our return to worship as an in-person congregation will take place in stages, and much more slowly than we would like.

With our building off limits, we are being challenged to be the church, the body of Christ, in this world. God is still calling us to follow Christ, make disciples, and live the Gospel. Thanks be to God.

Respectively submitted,

Carol Bennett, Chair person

Committee members: Rae-Myra Hilliard, Greg MacAyeal, Melinda Voelcker, Ryan Ringnald, Tom Meyer (council liaison), Jineen Heiman, Carol Bennett, Pastor Richard Holmer

Report of the Endowment Fund Board

Members: Jim Davoux, Rob Davis, Jerry Herb, Hans Bodine, Sue Thomas, Pastor Richard Holmer (ex officio)

The Endowment fund began 2019 with a balance of \$278,194 and ended 2019 with a balance of \$333,832. This includes the "matching gift" funds that are currently co-invested with the other endowment funds. In mid-2019, a disbursement of \$24,000 was made from this matching gift fund for the focus on the Homeless campaign. Late in 2019, an additional disbursement of \$6,400 was made to begin the 2020 campaign supporting Sagrado Corazón. In mid-May of 2020, an additional disbursement of \$13,600 was made to bring the full total to \$20,000 in matching funds for the Sagrado Corazón campaign.

The Land Fund began 2019 with a balance of \$985,589 and ended 2019 with a balance of \$1,109,900. During the first half of 2019 the markets performed well, and a 4% disbursement

of \$43,286 was made from the Land Fund in June of 2019. Those funds were made available to the church council for major maintenance and benevolence. The investment performance of the Land Fund did well in the spring of 2019, but then lost ground as the COVID-19 pandemic started. The Land Fund has fared better than the broader markets due to the conservative nature of the investments. 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 St. James OWLs

The St. James OWLs (Older Wiser Lutherans) usually meet on the third Thursday of the month at St James or whichever venue is planned on that date.

The OWLs have had a busy year with diverse trips, concerts, presentations, and of course lunches, too numerous to individually mention. However, a few deserve to be cited:

In October 2019 we flew the coop to Indiana to visit the covered bridges of Parke County. The overnight trip was superbly organized by Cobi Stein and documented by our "unofficial" photographer Owlet Choosri Goebel. We made lefse under the direction of Shelly Holmstrom. We also had an inspirational talk on baptism and confirmation. Detlef Koska gave us interesting and informative presentations, the last on Zoom. Unhappily Covid-19 has somewhat clipped our wings but we pray that our planned activities can resume soon and that our trip to New Glarus,

Wisconsin for Oktoberfest in September will take place without a hitch.

A sub-committee was formed and wrote our Mission Statement: "OWLs are followers of Christ, called to live the Gospel through fellowship, education, service and travel". It certainly reflects the essence of our group.

Our activities are communicated via email and further details can be obtained by contacting Choosri Goebel, Shelly Holmstrom, Madeleine Jorgensen or Cobi Stein.

We thank the OWLs for their enthusiasm and encourage everyone to join us whenever a program appeals.

Respectively submitted,

Madeleine Jorgensen

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)

—Two window panes were replaced in July, 2019. One in Pastor Holmer’s office and one in narthex.

—New refrigerator in Sacristy (old one inoperative).

—Historical roof leaking issues in the common room and back hallway have been fixed—no additional cost to St. James. An overall roof assessment will be done in 2020.

—Two significant access points for rodents and wasps were found and sealed.

Major Maintenance:

—New sound system in the Sanctuary.

—Main office—All ceiling tiles were replaced.

—Other three offices—New drywall ceiling installed as well as new light fixtures.

—Replacement of furnace board for rooftop HVAC .

—Replacement of #2 and #3 stage draft inducers for rooftop HVAC

—Extensive tree trimming was done on our property in July, 2019 and then dormant pruning in December, 2019.

Pete Clemens report on Sanctuary lighting project:

In the sanctuary are 23 floodlight fixtures that use high energy 90 & 500 watt incandescent bulbs. Since we’ve transitioned to LED lighting throughout the church over the past several years, we’ve been waiting for the development of LED floodlights. Recently 17 LED floodlights, 28 and 36 watt, became available. It was decided to replace 8 burned out incandescent bulbs, plus install 5 additional fixtures we had in the storeroom with LEDs. With a total energy savings of 6,000 watts/hour we can try the new LEDs for the next year, and when more incandescent bulbs burn out, they can be replaced with long lasting LEDs. You should see a sanctuary that’s 40% brighter when we all return to regular services.

A special thanks to Pete Clemens for taking on the Sanctuary lighting project and for his continuous vigilance and work on our property. And special thanks to Werner Stein for his electrical expertise and willingness to make our electrical repairs. And lastly, special thanks to John Tanner for coordinating roof repairs (and handling clean up when it leaks!) and all the other behind the scenes jobs John undertakes.

Respectfully submitted,

Josh Hornaday

Report of the Women of St. James

There were multiple opportunities for confirmed women of St. James throughout the year.

Examples of this are:

Faith Enrichment

The Women's Faith Forum meets every Tuesday morning during the year at St. James.

Meetings will resume in the fall and dates will be published in the St. James Connections.

Donna Jarvi graciously organized and led a Bible Study of 7 sessions based upon the book "First Corinthians, Living Love When We Disagree."

Fellowship

There were planning sessions held for the Women of St. James to provide feedback on future events, service opportunities, fellowship, and retreats.

The first session was a brunch on Monday, July 15 at the home of Kathy Lowell. The second session was a "wine and cheese chat" at the home of Shelly Holmstrom. On Sunday, July 21st, St James men and women enjoyed Bluffinia. A beautiful reception for Pastor Richard Holmer was held on June 9th after the 9:30 service, honoring the 40th anniversary of his ordination. The Annual Cookie Exchange was held Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019. The women all enjoyed an informative program consisting of a lively discussion about spending time each day on the real reason for the season. Advent calendars entitled "Slow Down. Quiet. It's Advent," were passed out to all attendees. Sue Ebert coordinated the potluck dinner on Sunday, January 27, 2019. A lovely candlelight dinner was

enjoyed by all. After dinner we collected, sorted, and packed toiletries to be delivered to PADS.

Service/Outreach

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. Meetings 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 statement that needs to be said about all the women of St James is when and where there is a need to serve, to bake, to deliver a meal, to grocery shop, to walk dogs, to drive a member to an appointment, etc. We are there! Time and time again the women have "stepped up to the plate."

Submitted by Kathy Lowell

On behalf of the Women of St. James

Report of the Stewardship Committee



Committee Members:
Madeleine Jorgensen, Craig
Linn, Michael Montalbano,
Dave Van Singel and Joe
Voelcker.

Our theme for the 2020 Stewardship Campaign, introduced in the fall of 2019, was “Hope Perseveres”. This year’s message was a continuation of the past two annual themes of “Love Gives” and most recently “Faith Leaps”. Hope is the energy and the will to keep moving forward, to press on towards the goal of God’s heavenly call.

We shared Hope’s message with the congregation through various mailings, temple talks and the placement of posters throughout the church property. As we moved closer to Commitment Sunday, prior to one service, we handed out “Hope Stones” to everyone. The stones had been engraved with our theme “Hope Perseveres”. We encouraged everyone to keep this stone on their desk, in their pocket or wherever as a reminder of the importance that hope brings to all of us.



We used the aforementioned communication tools, as well as Pastor Holmer’s sermons, to help

us better understand the foundation of hope; that God is for real. That God’s love for us is real. That God’s promise of grace and forgiveness is here with us now and that the resurrection and eternal life are real. People of God have persevered for thousands of years, based on their hope in God.

Pastor shared with us during an early October sermon that St. James has persevered as a congregation for over 57 years. People of God have gathered together in faith, hope and love. Through this congregation God has blessed many lives; the lives of members and the lives of persons in our community and the lives of persons around the world. We have been truly blessed.

“Everything that is done in this world is done by hope.” (Martin Luther)

Our congregation responded positively to our Stewardship message. We had a successful commitment Sunday. Pledges increased 3% in 2020 with two additional families pledging and 26% of pledging families able to increase their pledge over last year. We appreciate the continued commitment and generosity of our members.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Montalbano

Report of the Youth Ministry Team

Doug Dusthimer continues to facilitate a wide range of fun activities for the youth of our congregation while at the same time connecting them to the church and others within the church. The year was started off on Kick-off Sunday with Give 1/4 Others, followed by an outing to a corn maze in October and also a day of paintball. In November the kids helped with set up at PADS and with serving the meal. January had the ever popular NERF wars. In February the youth had

the opportunity to assist at transitional housing. In March there was a laser tag outing. The activities ended early due to quarantine. Summer events TBD. In addition to the Junior high activities Doug has been having a monthly Sunday morning High School program that met through April and held the last meeting via Google meet.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Ebert

Report of the Fellowship Committee

Committee Members: Sue Ebert, Shelly Holmstrom, Madeleine Jorgensen, Kim Kazarian, Gail Morgan, Annie Moss, Cobi Stein

We kicked off the summer with the first Father's Day Pancake Breakfast. We joined before worship to flip pancakes and enjoy a hearty breakfast together.

On July 23, St. James members were invited to sit out near the lake front on a beautiful summer evening to listen to the Waukegan Band Concert conducted by Mark Taylor.

We closed the summer with Kick-off Sunday on September 8th. The weather put a little damper on things but volunteers created a wonderful outdoor environment with plenty of relay games and even pony rides (thanks to Debbie MacAyeal). Many did not want the party to end thanks to Cobi Stein calling out some very heated Bingo games that involved prizes!

In December, Shelly Holmstrom and Cobi Stein put together an amazing beginning to Advent! The annual Advent Potluck Dinner started early in the morning on December 1st with a group of men

rolling Swedish meatballs! The menu was a traditional Swedish meal that left nothing on the buffet table it was so popular! Thank you to Cobi for arranging to have Rachel Pennington present her research and book about the Christmas Schooner.

The Lessons and Carols service was followed by a reception on December 22nd.

February 8th brought together a "highly competitive" group for the second Bocce Ball Bowl! A huge thank you to Cobi Stein for getting this organized! Participants first gathered for a homemade Italian dinner. Now that Illinois allows gaming, apparently the stakes were high!

Just joking! But this event definitely breaks up the long winter days! Thank you Cobi!

The committee hopes to bring back the Progressive Dinner and other opportunities to be together soon!

Respectively submitted,

Kim Kazarian

Report of the Sewing Group

Our Sewing Group works at the church on the first Thursday of the month throughout the year preparing 60" by 80" quilts, teddy bears, and pillows. We deliver quilts to the Church of the Brethren in Elgin, Illinois to be assimilated with other quilts and sent to Lutheran World Relief. Each year we go to a luncheon where we meet with other Lutheran women from our area all devoted to working on the same project, and we also display some of our quilts. We take teddy bears, pillows, and newborn baby caps 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, Judy Grodt, Diane Hansen, Bobbie Hildenbrand, Madeleine Jorgensen, Elaine Koski, Ulla Norberg, Carole Tanner, Chery Voss and Joan Webster.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Anderson for Betty Benton

Report of the Memorial Garden

Burials

We interred the ashes of one person 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 \$225. The outstanding loan owed to the Endowment Fund amounts to \$4,000.

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, 2022

Randy Daniel – thru June, 2022

Mark Taylor - thru June, 2020

Cobi Stein - thru June, 2022

Richard Holmer – ex-officio member

Tom Meyer – Legal Counsel

Respectfully submitted,

Detlef K. Koska, Chairman

Report of the Finance Committee

We are truly in a unique period of social distancing during Covid-19. We are grateful for the ability to still worship together by YouTube each Sunday morning. While we cannot attend St. James in person during this time, our bills have no such restriction. Fortunately, you have blessed us keeping up your support during this time so we can keep up with our expenses including paying our staff. You also continue to be generous with your additional benevolence, helping places like Sagrado Corazón that are especially more vulnerable during this time period.

Like many other churches, we took advantage of the PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) and applied for a loan which we received from the SBA through Lake Forest Bank & Trust.

We are grateful to Joe Voelcker for many years serving as our Financial Secretary including his recruitment and training of our counters. We couldn't get it done without the help that our

counters provide each Sunday after the second service. Many hands lighten the workload. Thanks to all of you who are part of our counting teams.

Chris Meyer has served us well as Business Manager for many years which includes keeping the books. We have much more to keep track of with a number of different funds that didn't exist a few years ago. It is great to have her steady hand in this role.

Thanks to my fellow members of the finance committee for their wisdom and oversight throughout the year- Richard Holmer, Chris Meyer, Joe Voelcker, Bob Kenahan and Teresa Miller.

It's been an honor to serve you as Treasurer for more years than I can remember. You are in very capable hands with Mike Bennett going forward.

Jon Paul, Treasurer

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 circle and all the dedicated individuals who have given service in 2019-2020.

We express our gratitude to all who serve on the Church Council, especially Rob Davis, Doug Gerber (President), Madeleine Jorgensen, Melodi Peters (Secretary) and our Treasurer, Jon Paul, who have completed their terms of office. In addition we acknowledge with great appreciation our other 2019-2020 officers: Steve Thornberry, Vice President and Joe Voelcker, Financial Secretary.

We welcome into our church family the 2 adults and 2 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 Jim Benton, Gladys Babich and Lyle Neagle 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 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.

**2019-2020 Officers of
the Congregation
and Church Council**

- President**
Doug Gerber
- Vice President**
Steve Thornberry
- Secretary**
Melodi Peters
- Treasurer**
Jon Paul
- Financial Secretary**
Joe Voelcker
- Council Members**
Tiffany Alexander
Rob Davis
Doug Gerber
Scott Hill
Bob Hughes
Madeleine Jorgensen
Tom Meyer
Teresa Miller
Gail Morgan
Melodi Peters
Steve Thornberry
Alane Wanda
- Pastor**
Richard E. Holmer
- Church Staff**
- Business Manager**
Chris Meyer
- Administrative Assistants**
Carol Bennett and
Kristin Haverkamp
- Sunday School Director**
Debbie MacAyeal
- Engagement Coordinator**
Shelly Holmstrom
- Youth Ministry Director**
Doug Dusthimer
- Nursery Attendant**
Vanessa Moreno

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**Standing Committee Chairs
and Other Leaders**

- Christian Education**
Barb Basgall
- Church Property**
Josh Hornaday
- Evangelism**
Tom Ebert
- Fellowship**
Kim Kazarian
- Finance**
Jon Paul
- Social Ministry**
Alane Wanda
- Stewardship**
TBD
- Worship & Music**
Carol Bennett
- Endowment Board of Trustees**
Jim Davoux
- Memorial Garden
Board of Trustees**
Detlef Koska
- St. James OWLS**
Choosri Goebel
Madeleine Jorgensen
and Cobi Stein
- Sewing Group**
Betty Benton
- 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