



St. James'
Episcopal
Church
Annual Report
2022



St. James' Episcopal Church Annual Report 2022

Message from the Senior Warden

The word that best describes the year 2022 is surely, *change*. A year ago, we learned that St. James' would be changing from a full-time rector to a half-time position due to budget constraints. And we also faced the fact that Reverend Denise Cabana would likely be moving to a different church. The spring of 2022 was awkward and full of apprehension and some fear. We began imagining what St. James' would be like without a rector in place and without Denise. With God's help, the plan began to come together.

On May 1, the first of our all-parish meetings was held to begin imagining what the future could be. The discussion included what we should hold onto, what were our church's strengths, and what ministries could use some re-thinking or more work. On June 5, we said good-bye to the Rev. Denise Cabana and began our new journey. The Vestry, Pastoral Care, and Faith in Action and Christian Formation ministry members truly stepped up to lead God's work.

Priest Associate, The Rev. Dr. Don Hamer called on his priest colleagues to help each week for our Worship. We enjoyed the perspectives of these gifted clerics. Minister of Music, Jim Barry, was ever so creative and often found just the right songs that matched our church environment. As the summer changed into the fall, God was pushing us out of our comfortable nest. Learning to fly on our own was hard. Our former "commission" structure wasn't working. To move forward, St. James' needed to make decisions about what kind of a rector are we looking for and make some decisions to shape where God was calling us.

By December and January, taking flight was better described by a St. James' plane that was coming in for a "bumpy landing." The Vestry spent an extended time meeting to re-organize our parish work/ministries and change the way we function to a "missional church" model. We presented the new plan to the congregation after worship on January 15, 2023. The parish response was so very positive. I was left with the feeling that we were a healthy, positive, and strong Christian community. St. James' Episcopal Church has an exciting future to continue God's work in the world!

Debbie O'Donnell, Senior Warden



Priest Associate's Report



It has been my honor and my blessing to serve as your Priest Associate since mid-2021 when Pastor Denise returned from her sabbatical. The role of priest associate is rather ill-defined. In my case, it means I am a retired clergy of the diocese, St. James' is the parish that my wife Debbie and I belong to, and I help out as I can when needed, generally without compensation.

During this interim period when we are discerning where we have been, where we find ourselves presently and where our dreams may take us in the future, my role has been slightly different. Following Denise's departure, and recognizing that it would be the better part of a year before someone might be called as our new Priest In Charge, the Vestry and I entered into the same arrangement that seemed to work so well during Denise's sabbatical: I have been compensated at the "supply clergy" rate for the Episcopal Church of Connecticut to lead services on Sundays and to work in the office the equivalent of one day per week. These latter duties include providing pastoral and administrative support/guidance to the office staff, your officers, Vestry and lay leadership, and to make pastoral calls and contacts as needed or desired.

During this time, ALL responsibility and ultimate "canonical" authority has rested not with me but with your very able and dedicated Senior Warden, Debbie O'Donnell, who is to be commended beyond measure for her dedication and commitment to our congregation and to the ECCT as needed.

Please know what a blessing it has been to get to know you as fellow travelers on the journey.

Your brother in Christ, Don+

Junior Warden's Report

Repairs and improvements to the building and grounds have included:

- ☐ We said goodbye to St. Michael's Chapel. Sadly, it was beyond repair. Men's club took it down. Nick and Mitchell carted it away. (Nick was a demo machine!)
- ☐ The lawn sprinkler system had regular maintenance and some sprinkler heads replaced
- ☐ Repairs to lavatory fixtures and piscina (sacristy sink) (Thanks to Nick and Don Gardner)

- ☐ Repairs to the heating system just in time for the Christmas Eve service. Glastonbury Boiler & Burner to the rescue!
- ☐ Don Gardner has kept up with lighting fixtures and lamps and added new lighting for the St. James' sign along Main Street
- ☐ Ed and Nick rebuilt the entire creche and handled setup and take-down
- ☐ The team of Ed, Nick, John, and Don addressed a LOT of little things that needed attention: e.g. lights, plumbing, electrical issues, extra custodial services, etc.
- ☐ The Men's club plus Boy Scouts did leaf removal.
- ☐ Recognition is due to all that assist with running the audio-visual system

Submitted by Mitch Chester, Junior Warden



Treasurer's Annual Report

The year once again presented a new set of challenges as the Church transitioned with our Rector leaving and changes in staff with a new Parish Administrator and a new Bookkeeper. The 2022 budget contemplated the changes. We were fortunate the level of pledges increased from 2021. The schedule below breaks out income and expenses for 2022 and 2023. 2022 Highlights:

Withdrawals from the Joining Jesus Campaign for 2022 were used to fund additional reopening expenses in 2022 and to pay Diocesan Loan interest.

The Every Member Canvas resulted in 2023 pledges of \$201,950 from 65 pledge units and a 13% decline from pledges of \$232,431 and 78 pledge units for 2022.

The monthly lease with Whole Foods is in renegotiation awaiting Diocesan approval that is expected to increase the monthly lease amount from \$2,500 to \$3,500 during 2023.

The balance of the St James' loan with the Diocese was \$65,355 at 12/31/2022 at an attractive rate of 3.5%, and is being paid over 60 months providing working capital flexibility.

The Year in Review - 2022: St. James' ended 2022 with approximately \$28,400 remaining in the General Fund after beginning the year with \$31,000. Parish members provided important support with actual pledge receipts exceeding budgeted pledges by \$2,400. Other offerings and Holiday Offerings fell short of the budgeted amounts by \$11,600. The Wholefoods lease expired on 10/31/2022 and lease payments were missed for November and December with a payment recently received bringing the lease current with a new lease awaiting Diocese approval. A successful fundraiser was held with the proceeds used directly for the Faith in Action Mission. Budgeted revenues comprised:

Pledge Offerings: \$232,400 (\$234,900 received as of December 31, 2022)

Other Offerings: \$12,000 (\$9,700 received as of December 31, 2022)

Holiday Offerings: \$6,100 (\$4,500 received as of December 31, 2022)

Other Operating Income: \$37,000 (\$30,000 parking rental, \$2,000 facility use donations and \$5,000 fundraisers) (\$25,400 received as of December 31, 2021)

Permanent Endowment: \$10,100 (No amount actually drawn)

For 2022, The majority of the budgeted operating expenses (90% of expenses for 2022) consisted of employee expenses, \$186,000, facilities, \$58,200, and the Diocesan pledge, \$28,700. Total operating expenses budgeted in 2022 were \$302,600 and St James ended 2022 by actually expending approximately \$278,000. Expenses for 2022 were under budget by \$24,600 due mainly to a more optimistic original assumption for the hiring timeline of a part time rector. Other staffing expenses were reported to be \$6,800 above budgeted amounts principally due to the cost of supply clergy and the priest associate and facilities expense were higher by \$7,800 due to higher utility costs, higher plowing costs and certain one-time expenses. As a result, actual operating expenses for 2022 of \$278,000 exceeded actual revenue sources of \$275,500 leading to a deficit of \$(2,500). Most importantly, we were able to operate without a withdrawal from the endowment during a volatile stock market year.

St. James' received \$41,900 of Joining Jesus income this year and spent a total of \$9,600 of the funds. Expenditures were for re-opening expenses of \$6,800 and \$2,800 of Diocesan loan interest. After receipts and expenditures, the balance within the Joining Jesus Fund was \$124,000 at 12/31/2022.

Excess funds were invested in short term US Treasury instruments to allow the funds to gain a return and provide additional amounts for future Joining Jesus activities. Joining Jesus pledge payments of \$334,000 or 72% of the original \$461,000 of pledges, which amounts include Camp Washington contributions, have been received with the remaining balance of pledges to be received totaling \$127,000 as of 12/31/2022.

Income & Expenses Summary

	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	2023 Budget
Income			
Pledge	\$232,431	\$234,852	\$210,000
Offerings	18,094	14,228	16,800
Facilities	32,000	25,390	54,000
Endowment	12,000	0	0
Fundraising	5,000	0	0
Other Income	0	1,020	0
TOTAL	\$299,525	\$275,490	\$280,800
Expenses			
Rector Comp.	\$110,425	\$70,597	\$51,946
Other Staffing	75,550	82,365	87,935
Office	17,410	18,595	19,644
Diocese Cont.	28,745	31,620	35,300
Outreach	4,000	0	5,500
Facilities	58,200	66,008	68,600
Commission	7,265	6,682	10,875
Other	1,000	2,174	1,000
TOTAL	\$302,595	\$278,041	\$280,800
Income vs Expenses		(\$3,070)	(\$2,551)

The Year Ahead – 2023:

St. James' budget indicates total income of \$280,800 for 2022. Budgeted income will be funded with forecasted offerings of \$210,000 from pledges and \$16,800 of estimated income from plate and holiday offerings. Additional revenue of \$54,000 is forecast to be generated from donations for facilities use, mostly from the Whole Foods parking agreement, \$49,000 including \$7,000 from last year. We are planning to not take any funds from the endowment in 2023. The General Endowment balance was \$303,000 as of 10/31/2022. .

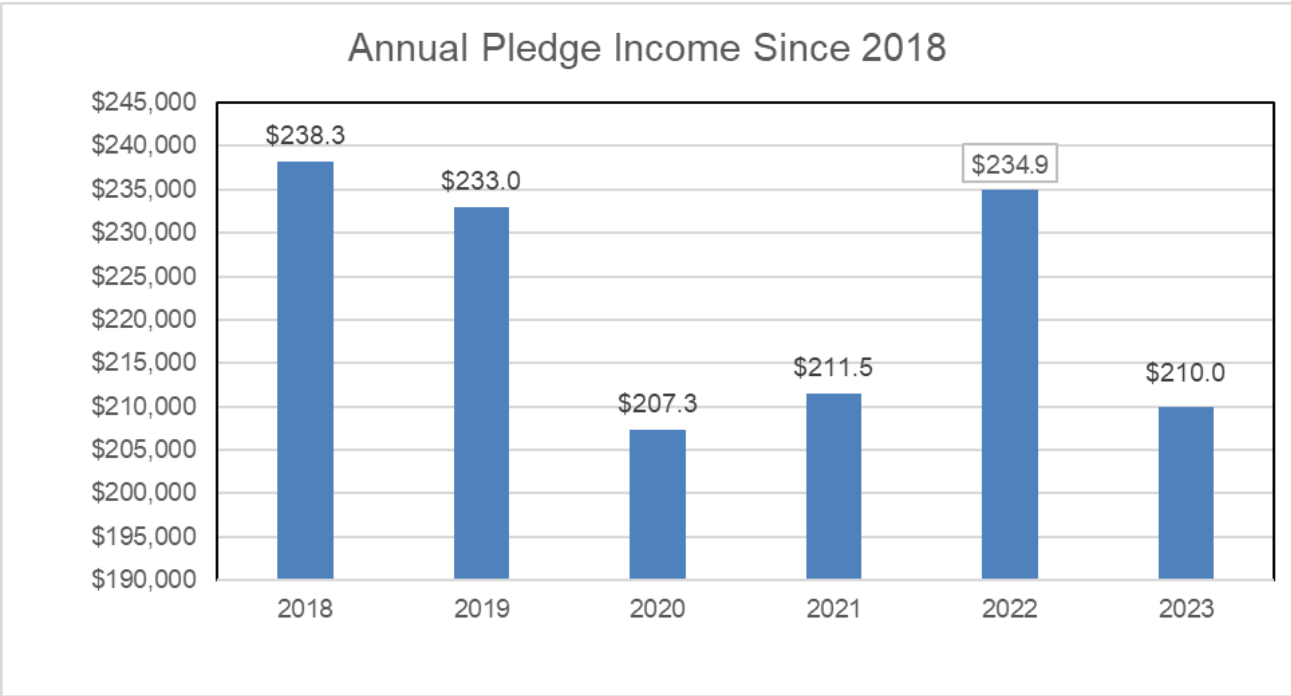
Pledged offerings budgeted for 2023 of \$210,000 are 10.6% below the amount budgeted for 2022. A six year comparison is presented below indicating recent trends with pledges. 2022 Highlights:

Withdrawals from the Joining Jesus Campaign for 2022 were used to fund additional reopening expenses in 2022 and to pay Diocesan Loan interest.

The Every Member Canvas resulted in 2023 pledges of \$201,950 from 65 pledge units and a 13% decline from pledges of \$232,431 and 78 pledge units for 2022.

The monthly lease with Whole Foods is in renegotiation awaiting Diocesan approval that is expected to increase the monthly lease amount from \$2,500 to \$3,500 during 2023.

The balance of the St James' loan with the Diocese was \$65,355 at 12/31/2022 at an attractive rate of 3.5%, and is being paid over 60 months providing working capital flexibility.



On the expense side, the budget reflects eight months with a part time rector and four months with a Priest Associate and Supply Clergy. Expenses reflect raises for personnel in step with the Diocese and other expense items were adjusted based upon the experience in 2022 and anticipation for how the church will operate in 2023. Outreach of \$5,500, equivalent to 2% of revenue, was used for budgeted expenses during 2023. Total budgeted expenses for 2023 are \$280,800, a 7.2% decrease from budgeted expenses of \$302,600 for 2022.

In summary, St. James' has a break even budget for 2023. Pledges for 2023 are down from 2022, however, with the part time rector expected to be in place for 8 months, it allows a balanced budget for 2023.

Respectfully submitted, Robert Dugger, Treasurer

Music Ministry Report



St. James' music ministry offers praise to God through congregational singing, choir anthems, and instrumental/organ selections. We embrace a variety of music from centuries-old traditions to music recently composed. In 2022 we celebrated the gradual return to in-person worship and the Adult Choir returning to regular rehearsals and services. Selections of service music, hymns, and anthems continue to embrace diversity of culture and gender.

2022 highlights:

Music Notes in weekly e-blast providing insight into the music for the coming week

Lenten Wednesday Series (livestream) with services of Compline & Organ Meditation, and Celtic Vespers on St. Patrick's Day

Summer music included Hot Cat Jazz Band, Red Letter Day, and soloist Schauntice Shepard

Acquisition of baby grand piano for the chancel, donated from Cromwell Covenant Church

Celtic Vespers (in-person) on November 13 with Women's Choir and Wild Notes, attended by nearly eighty people, largely visitors

Advent Lessons & Carols on December 4 with Adult Choir, guest singers, and instrumentalists. Music focused on selections by contemporary women composers.

Christmas Eve services: 5 pm: Harp, Choir, Instrumentalists; 9 pm: Women's Choir

BLESSINGS: When asked what the greatest impact was this year, the Adult Choir responded by being able to sit in the congregation during the first half of the service, giving them the opportunity to sit/sing amongst the worship community and see the 'action' (preacher/celebrant, lectors).

Goals for 2023: Restarting the Children's Choir and continuing to provide special music.

Respectfully submitted, Jim Barry

Christian Formation Report



Christian Formation (Sunday School) Report

In 2022, Sunday School K-4 classes were held in-person and simultaneously by Zoom each Sunday except the last Sunday of the month that was designated as an in-church children's service that usually involved children as readers. Beginning in September we continued with in-church classes and zoom also by request.

Church school lessons usually followed the lectionary page, and occasionally revisited classic bible subjects in lieu, such as the Ten Commandments, Noah's Ark, Jesus' Baptism, etc. We also made ornaments for the Jesse Tree!



The middle school grades are known as "MS+5." This group of about one dozen kids works hard to balance church commitments with family, school, and sports commitments. It is a great time in life to ask questions and these kids are exceptional at that. We try to think about the Gospel, and church, and life from different perspectives, sometimes with unusual outcomes....such as our jalapeno pancakes & tuna ice cream breakfast! In the Fall of 2022, we introduced the "Ball of Confusion" which triggers kids to ask each other questions, discuss, and debate. Some questions are basic and others are harder and more profound.....and they love to involve any adults that happen to be near by. Consider yourself warned !

Kids from 4 to 94 also participated in the multi-church Christmas Pageant at Beacon Woods Stable, which included lots of music and live animals.

Christian Formation - Adults

In 2022, adults had the option of two different groups to explore their faith:

Adult Bible study dove into many lessons in the Bible including Revelations, Acts, and the Women of the Bible to name a few. This group meets in the evening via Zoom to make it possible for all to attend.

The Coffee and Conversation Adult Book Club explored Christian themed conversation provoking books chosen by the group. Included this year: Marcus Borg's, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* and John Philip Newell's *Sacred Earth*, *Sacred Soul*, which explored Celtic Spirituality. We meet bi-weekly, in person in the Atrium and on Zoom.



Stewardship Report



This year's Annual Campaign was based on the National Church's materials and theme which highlighted the ways in which we have been blessed by God with "More than Enough" for our own needs. The program invited us to recognize our blessings and to give back to furthering God's work in the world.

It was a challenging year for stewardship at St. James' as we transitioned from the restrictions of Covid concerns. We also faced the change from employing a full-time rector to employing a half-time Priest In Charge. While many see this as an exciting time, others are uncertain.

Thank you to all those who have read the stewardship materials and have been moved to giveback in gratitude for the blessings received. Completing an "Intention of Gift " card is an enormous benefit for the Finance committee and Vestry in planning and setting the budget for the coming year. Because each family's financial circumstances are different and can change from year to year, completing a card can help – even if your offering is not what you gave last year, or not as much as you want to give.

In whatever way you choose to give, online, in person during the passing of the plate, by mail, all in one gift or weekly gifts, thank you. Please know that the leadership and Vestry are careful in the way they use your support of God's work, We appreciate all those whose generous gifts will enable the church to continue God's work in the coming year.

If you are interested in learning about stewardship, please contact Jeannette Brown.

Respectfully submitted, Jeannette L. Brown



Altar Guild Report

The Altar Guild helped St. James' services proceed smoothly each week with safety precautions. This year out of an abundance of caution, we modified procedures for the distribution of consecrated wine by using mini recyclable, plastic cups in communion trays. So that our services may be as inclusive as possible, we continue to offer gluten-free hosts and grape juice.

During 2022, St. James' held Holy Eucharist at 10 AM most Sundays with the Rev. Don Hamer or supply clergy officiating. The church offered two Christmas Eve services at 5 and 9 p.m. as well as a 10 AM service Christmas Day.



This past fall the Altar Guild purchased a new green superfrontal that allows for viewing our beautifully carved wooden altar. The purchase includes green hangings as well as the burse and veil used when the altar is set for a communion service.

Our ministry has been responsible for changing altar hangings based upon the church calendar, care of linens, vestments, candles, wine, and any other needs required by the presiding clergy. Each Sunday a team is responsible for preparing the sanctuary and cleaning after the service; we also prepare and clean up after weddings and funerals. Altar Guild is a quiet, contemplative and rewarding ministry. Members of the current Altar Guild invite all interested parties to join us in this ministry.

Respectfully submitted, Cherie Cooper and Patricia Goodrich

Carol's Closet Report



Mission: Respond to human need through loving service, in partnership with local faith-based communities.

Carol's Closet provides paper goods and personal care items for low-income households, in order to make a difference in the lives of the people we serve. With 2022 ending, Carol's Closet completed eight years of service to the community. This ministry is making a difference in the lives of our neighbors in Glastonbury.

The following are some statistics from the Closet:

Since we opened, we have given 39,716 items in 6,343 bags, serving 11,198 individuals (based on household size).

- ☐ In 2022 we had 802 guests attend Carol's Closet, serving 1,498 individuals based on household size. Average served each month based on household size was 136 individuals.
- ☐ In addition to the bags we give, Carol's Closet receives donations of household goods and clothing. Everything that is donated is also offered to our guests and is given free of charge.
- ☐ The Congregational Church in South Glastonbury offers a ministry of pet food and pet supplies, and has continued to do so at each of our monthly distributions.

We collaborate and network with our faith-based community in Glastonbury who devotedly offer their loving support. Our partners in this ministry are:

- ☐ Buckingham Congregational Church
- ☐ Congregational Church in South Glastonbury
- ☐ Congregation Kol Haverim
- ☐ First Church of Christ Congregational
- ☐ St. Luke's Episcopal Church
- ☐ The Lutheran Church of St. Mark

The Glastonbury Food Bank and Glastonbury Social Services are community organizations that help us identify individuals and families who would benefit from Carol's Closet. Word of mouth by our guests continues to be our best marketing tool.

The ministry of Carol's Closet serves God's Mission as Jesus was reported to have said in Matthew, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters, you did for me." We follow that command and treat all of our guests with love, kindness, dignity, and compassion.

My dream for Carol's Closet is that we can grow and serve other towns in our immediate area.

Submitted by: Marie Dixon, Director

Building A Beloved Community Report

BECOMING BELOVED COMMUNITY



The mission of the "Building a Beloved Community" team is to practice God's way of love and to model what it means to live and bear bold witness to the vision and values of Jesus. We point to the reality of the kingdom (the peaceable reign) of God, and we seek to embody the beloved community, where each person strives for and celebrates the dignity and flourishing of every beloved child of God as much as we do for ourselves. This is the "Good News" of Jesus' Gospel.

In the wider society, this means that we seek to transform a historic culture of racism, hatred, and violence so that all people are treated with justice, respect, compassion and kindness. We hope to create real change through awareness of our past and our present, repentance where appropriate, reconciliation, justice and healing in our individual lives, faith community, and our relationships with all others, right here in Glastonbury and beyond.

In 2022, we sponsored an 11-week course called "Sacred Ground," a dialogue series produced by The Episcopal Church that uses readings and films grounded in faith and part of its Becoming Beloved Community resources. Sixteen members and friends of St. James' participated in the course along with facilitators Rev. Don Hamer and Dr. Suzanne Blancaflor of Trinity, Hartford.

Another series is planned in collaboration with The Lutheran Church of St. Mark, and St. Luke's Episcopal in 2023.

We invite you to join us in this prayer: Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Respectfully Submitted, The Rev. Don Hamer, Priest Associate



Episcopal Church of Connecticut Annual Convention Report

The Rev. Don Hamer, Dan Aramini and Becky Lee were delegates to this year's Annual Convention in Hartford. In addition to all the business that was conducted, it was a great opportunity to connect with the wider Episcopal Church here in Connecticut. We really do love our St James' so much that sometimes we lose track of the wider community. Praying, dining, voting, with clergy and lay friends from around the state is a treat....including some fine time without former rectors Denise Cabana and Keri Aubert!

In addition to a couple elections and budget resolutions, we also saw two sets of mergers. After much hard work St John the Evangelist (Yalesville) merged with St Peter's (Hamden) and St Peter's (Monroe) merged with Grace (Trumbull). There was also debate and acceptance of a resolution "Expressing sorrowing for past statements that harmed indigenous people."

A clear highlight was the convention address by our new Diocesan Bishop the Right Reverend Jeffrey Mello. He is a bundle of excitement, hope, hard work, and vigorously and deeply infused with the spirit of God. Based on all my interactions...never miss an opportunity to interact with Bishop Laura and Bishop Jeff...and even go out of your way to make it happen.

Get all the details at: <https://www.episcopalct.org/annual-convention/>

Thank you for allowing me to participate this year. Dan Aramini



Food Pantry Ministry Report



To support food insecure families in our area, we collect unexpired non-perishable food items and take the donations to an area food pantry (currently the Manna Community Pantry program sponsored by Hands on Hartford). Members of St. James' are asked to consider adding an item or two for this ministry to their shopping cart as they do their weekly food shopping. In the fall of 2022, we reimagined the collection process and set up wire shelving in the atrium to increase the visibility of this ministry plus began to make a single delivery at the end of the month rather than weekly deliveries. From September through December, our average monthly donation was over 150 pounds.

Our goal for 2023 is to maintain and hopefully increase this new level of giving.

Respectfully submitted, Valerie Huestis

River East Resettlement Alliance (RERA) Report

At the beginning of 2022, RERA was still in formation, and in the preparation stages of becoming a co-sponsorship group, working with the Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services (IRIS). The group consisted of about 35 members from six or seven different churches or organizations, including St. James. RERA was approved as a co-sponsorship group ("green lighted") by IRIS in early March and we eagerly awaited assignment of what we thought would be an Afghan refugee family. We had secured an apartment rental in Manchester and had it furnished and ready to house a family. March and April came and went and we still did not have a family.

The leaders of RERA began to look outside of IRIS for a family to sponsor. God put us in the path of a wonderful woman named Nancy Latiff who works with many refugee families. She happened to know a Kurdish family who had recently arrived in Springfield, MA and was looking to move to CT. They were in need of a co-sponsorship group and we were in need of a family. Nancy introduced us (and she joined RERA!) and we were a match that was meant to be!

The family moved into the Manchester apartment in mid-May and have settled in tremendously well. They are a family of five - father, mother, and three 17 year old girls (yes, triplets!)! RERA has helped them financially with rent assistance and a few other expenses. But primarily RERA provides support and has helped them accomplish many aspects of settling into American life. The father has a full time job, the girls were enrolled in Manchester High School as seniors and have taken SATs and have applied to several colleges, the mother has just recently also started a full time job - at the same place as her husband. They have purchased a used car and the father has earned his Driver's License and one daughter has her Learner's Permit. All this while learning English and American customs. It has been a tremendous experience to be a part of this family's growth. There are only a few folks involved in RERA from St. James, but as RERA is considering co-sponsoring another family, there will be new opportunities to join this amazing ministry. If you are interested please contact me.

Respectfully submitted, Lisa Gleason Finance Chair, RERA



Shawl Ministry Annual Report

COVID-19's legacy in 2022 still affected our Shawl Ministry activities at St. James'. While many of our knitters have continued their needlework throughout the pandemic, social distancing has kept us from gathering in person for group crafting, bible study, prayer and fellowship. Nevertheless, our knitters (some even from out of state) have continued to create shawls, lap robes, baby blankets, sweaters, hats, scarves and mittens.

At the end of the summer, sadly for our group, we noted the death of Mary Scott whose prolific crocheting had lovingly created more than 200 baby blankets for our ministry. Amazingly, Mary had continued to crochet baby blankets up until the last weeks before her passing. She will be missed. May she rest in peace.

Few facilities accepted handmade goods to reduce the possibility of spreading COVID. However, the Shawl Ministry distributed a total of 12 shawls to St. Francis Hospital and to parish families. Also, we distributed 12 Baby blankets to St. Francis Hospital, parish families and friends, including 3 for parish baptisms. To the Lakota native reservation, we sent a special delivery of 32 baby blankets, 6 large blankets, 3 lap robes, 6 shawls, 75 adult hats/scarves, 36 children's hats/scarves, 8 youth knitted/crocheted items. And in the fall, each Carol's Closet guest was able to choose a warm knitted hat.

The Shawl Ministry always welcomes donations and/or new crafters to join this rewarding ministry.

Respectfully submitted, Jeannette Brown and Pat Goodrich

Lunch in the Park Report



Lunch in the Park is a ministry that provides bagged lunches following Church by the Pond, a weekly outdoor service near the Bushnell Park carousel in Hartford coordinated by Christ Church Cathedral. The celebrants are Episcopal and Lutheran clergy from Greater Hartford. About 20-60 people, many of them homeless and living in shelters, attend the service and/or gather just for lunch. St. James' is one of many local ecumenical organizations that provide lunch following the service. In May and October St. James' volunteers prepared 45-50 bag lunches containing two sandwiches with condiment packets, chips, cookies, fruit and a napkin plus bottled water and in October actually distributed the lunches to the attendees for the first time since the start of Covid.

In 2023, St. James' is scheduled to prepare and distribute the lunches on April 29th and September 30th.

Respectfully submitted, Valerie Huestis

Glastonbury Links Together Report

Members of the St James' Faith in Action group have been part of developing and participating in the Glastonbury Links together group. Glastonbury Links Together exists to build community from the ground up so that various socio-economic, faith, service, business groups and town organizations experience a robust sense of shared purpose. Glastonbury Links Together is an interfaith grass roots organization developed as the non-profit arm to subsidize the new self-serve Glastonbury food bank and elementary school weekend backpack program.

Glastonbury Links Together was developed in 2020 by 4 area Clergy to address the rise in food insecurity in Glastonbury during the pandemic. The group has grown into a collaboration between Glastonbury's faith based and service organizations, including Glastonbury Social Services, Glastonbury Public Schools, and other charitable groups.

1. The first year we handed out over 500 bags of food collected and filled by and for our community.
2. Because the pandemic guidelines limited food collections, we supplied gift cards to the Glastonbury Public Schools and to residents in need through Glastonbury Social Services department at the Riverfront Community Center. Together with our neighbors at Shop Rite,

Glastonbury Links Together provided almost \$90,000.00 worth of grocery store gift cards to families in Glastonbury.

3. We expanded the elementary school 'Backpack program' to include all Glastonbury elementary schools. Volunteer groups take turns packing and delivering discrete bags of food to eligible students on Fridays for the children to eat over the weekend.

4. We began planning toward our goal of opening a self-select food pantry at the Riverfront Community Center. The Town of Glastonbury renovated a room in the Riverfront Community Center and The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving has provided grants from the Sestero Fund to order equipment and supplies to provide a food distribution area where residents will be able to select their own nonperishable goods.

Glastonbury Links Together is proud to announce that together with the Town of Glastonbury Social Services department/Glastonbury Gives, the Glastonbury self-service Food Bank will be opening soon.

Our dream in 2023 will be to provide perishable or nonperishable food items for the new Food Bank and Backpack Program.

Submitted by Nancy Connell

Spring Fling Tag Sale Report



On Saturday, May 14th we held a Spring Fling Tag Sale to raise funds for our Faith in Action ministry. A dedicated group of volunteers spent many hours sorting, pricing and arranging all the donations, staffing the sale and then packing the items remaining after the half-price sale on Sunday. For most of the leftover items, we "paid it forward" by donating them to other area charities e.g. the Second Chance Shop, Glastonbury Historical Society, Goodwill etc. Some of the remaining "treasures" were stored and sent to auction at Golden Gavel Auctions in East Windsor in December. Altogether we raised \$5,729.94 at the tag sale and an additional \$655.25 from the auctions. Due to the demands placed on the volunteers' time and energy, we currently are not planning to hold the tag sale again in 2023.

Respectfully submitted, Valerie Huestis

Pastoral Care Report

As God's disciples, the Pastoral Care committees work to care for individuals and families in our community. This care spread's God's love to the care givers as well as those individuals families and friends who are cared for. There are several groups that come under this heading:

Prayer Tree (renamed this year from its past name as the Prayer chain) is a group of people who pray for people who request prayers,. The Prayer Tree is different than the way that we publicly pray for the people who are on our list each week in the Prayers of the People prayed during the weekly worship service. The prayers are done by individuals in their homes during their personal prayer time. The people who are prayed for can be part of our St. James' community or family members or friends or even concerns. It is a blessing to the group to see the power of prayer as people share the results.

Lay Eucharistic Visitors are individuals who are licensed and trained to bring communion to people's homes or bedsides who cannot attend church. The visit includes a shortened communion service with the delivery of bread and wine and prayers are offered. Often, information about the church service, the church community or the sermon is also shared so that the people feel up to date and know they are not forgotten.

In 2023 we hope to return to regular team meetings to support this important work.

Meals of Comfort – When requested, this group provides a meal for someone who is ill or isolated. Members say that it warms our hearts to provide a meal and for the recipients to know they are remembered and cared for. These helpful volunteers also provide food for Carol's Closet Saturdays, the Blood Drives, and parish meetings.

Submitted by Gail Lebert and Janet Dunston



Engaging the Community Report

In September a new ministry was begun with the intent to engage the residents of Glastonbury and its surrounding towns in hospitality and fellowship on a monthly basis. Still a work in progress, we plan to offer educational, social, charitable and spiritual events inviting the public to St. James'. In the fall we offered three events:

September – Downsizing Done Right by Ralph Labozzo, auctioneer and appraiser

October - Introduction to Tai Chi Chih by Kasha Breau, an accredited Tai Chi Chih teacher

November – Celtic Vespers featuring music of Wild Notes and women's choir

In 2023 we are planning presentations on caregiving, estate planning, mental health and other selected topics plus additional Celtic Vespers services. Members of St. James' are encouraged to invite family, friends and neighbors to join them in these fellowship events.

Respectively submitted, Valerie Huestis



Newcomers Report

Early in the year the booklet “Let’s Get Acquainted – a user-friendly guide to worship at St. James’” was updated with new information, and in October a welcome page for newcomers containing answers to potential questions about worship at St. James’ was created for the website and also added to the printed newcomers’ information in the atrium.

A Newcomer’s event was postponed until 2023.

In 2022 we received fourteen “Welcome to St. James’” cards with requests for information about worship, music, children/youth programs, etc. In 2023 we are planning to reach out to these new individuals and families, identify their needs and interests, and schedule a social event to welcome them as members of our St. James’ faith community.

Respectfully submitted, Valerie Huestis, Gail Lebert and Cheryl Turner



Communications Committee Report



The Communications Committee works to regularly spread the way that God is working in our community to all - people who are active in our faith community, to those who are interested and those who are curious. In this time of transition it is also a goal to keep communication clear and regular as we search for a new rector.

In 2022 we tackled a variety of activities including:

- ☐ Updated the website with new navigation tabs, new content, and photos (Scan the QR Code above)
- ☐ Regular social media postings on Facebook
- ☐ Gathered photos, created a library for photos and updated the Atrium screen
- ☐ Worked with Dawn Hardwick, our Parish Administrator, to streamline weekly enews, weekly handouts
- ☐ Developed a detailed Media Contact list and created a very effective Press Release template

It is a blessing to see people respond with surprise when they receive a communication - whether it is a photo on the Atrium screen (“ I know that girl on the screen, she is in my class”)

or a comment or sharing a Facebook post (“Best Pageant ever!”) or seeing a press release in the Glastonbury Citizen sharing our event with the community.

Our blessing is the amazing number of ways we are serving God at St. James’ and the talent we have amongst us to take photos, to write content, to organize and process all of the ways we are spreading God’s love in the world

Our dream is to design a new email template and new website that will spread the messages more easily and more visually to more people.

Submitted by Gail Lebert



Editor's note: It is impossible thank all who have been involved in all the the ministries at St. James' in 2022. In order to shorten these reports we have purposely not included specific names. If you would like to read the longer version of the reports, please go to the website and you can find the longer reports under each ministry tab. And now, on to 2023 and all the blessings that God has in store for St. James'.