

# 2023 MINISTRY REPORTS



# WORSHIP

## Vergers, Acolytes and Chalice Bearers

*Submitted by Randy Pierson, Head Verger*

The vergers, acolytes and chalice bearers of St. James Cathedral give of their time and talents to enhance the beauty of our corporate worship. We increased our ranks in 2024 and the team currently numbers approximately 20 people serving as chalice ministers, torchbearers, crucifers, thurifers, head acolytes and vergers. Four of them are seminarians and two are serving internships at St. James.

The team served at approximately 140 services in 2023, including Sunday Eucharists and special services (Ash Wednesday, Easter Vigil, etc.), along with occasional weddings and funerals. In addition to adult acolytes, there are a number of children who serve as torchbearers for the 9 a.m. family Eucharists.

All who are interested in learning more about our acolyte and chalice minister teams are welcome. We have training sessions two or three times a year as well as individual instruction as new teammates join us. The Ministry Scheduler Pro (MSP) app makes it easy for our team members to request substitutes or block out dates when they are not available to serve. Please see me or email me if you would like to know more.

[R.Piersontx@gmail.com](mailto:R.Piersontx@gmail.com)

## Altar Guild

*Submitted by Charles Peterson, Chair*

As Chair of the Altar Guild, I present this annual report of our service to the cathedral. We now have a small group of volunteers serving on Sundays, holidays, special services (including services offered by the Diocese), funerals, and weddings. The Altar Guild is anchored by Jacob, Stefi, Vivian and Charley. We are fortunate to have Mary Jo regularly serving the Sunday 8:00 a.m. St. Andrew's Chapel service and Tom, who regularly serves the weekday noon hour eucharist. Together we are responsible for all the elements of our eucharistic services: wine, bread, linens, candles, oil, silver, brass, vestments, and flowers.

Closely allied with the previous altar guild members, the Linen Team, led by David, maintains our valuable and beautiful fair linen collection. We experimented with using a tawny port for the eucharist; however, we decided to return to using Rosato to limit the staining of our purificators. Nathan shares his excellent talents of design and decoration by managing our use of flowers, greens, and other liturgical elements, especially during holiday seasons. We appreciate the collegial support of the acolytes before and after services.

We are blessed to have the opportunity to serve our parish as well as the Diocese, especially our bishop. Volunteers on the Altar Guild are deeply dedicated to the preparation of the sanctuary for the celebration of the eucharist. Last year we served at 189 Sunday services (8, 9, 11), 10 special holy day services, approximately 245 12:10 pm weekday services, 4 Diocese of Chicago services, 2 funerals, 1 wedding, and one Brotherhood of St. Andrew's eucharist. That totals approximately 452 services. It is also significant that

hundreds of visitors enter our sanctuary each week during the hours the cathedral is open. Many of these visitors express their devotion through prayer, the lighting of votives, and in remembrance of their baptisms. These visitors have expressed how much they value the beauty and serenity of our sanctuary.

This is the work of a Cathedral Altar Guild. We encourage those who would like to join in our work to contact a member of the Altar Guild. We are usually found in the sacristy before and after services. As members of the Altar Guild, we are blessed to be serving through the care and use of some of the cathedral's most beautiful sacred objects.

## Linen Care

*submitted by David Briere, Ministry Leader*

The Linen Care Ministry is a direct offshoot of the Altar Guild Ministry, whose focus is to keep the Cathedral's fine linens in impeccably clean and excellent condition. This involves the weekly gathering of soiled linens and treating, washing, ironing, and folding the linens in a manner that is prescribed for the various services at the Cathedral. Our team follows a regular schedule that consistently provides an ample supply of clean linens for the various services at the Cathedral.

We were very fortunate this year to have received a very generous donation of new linens from a faithful member of our team. These new linens allowed us to "retire" some very old and worn linens and they added to our supply of existing linens, ensuring that clean and ready-for-service linens were always available.

In 2023 we warmly welcomed John Fischer and Molly Cantrell-Kraig to our group of dedicated veteran members. Edith O'Keefe, Jane Marineau, and I round out this team of "unseen" volunteers. We always actively encourage new individuals to inquire about and join this very rewarding ministry.

## Ushers

*Submitted by Allen Moye, Head Usher*

The usher ministry continues to provide a warm welcome for all who worship in person at St. James Cathedral. In the past year we have added 3 new faces, Lynn Bratney, Esther Ekejiuba, and Scott Sumner to our roster of committed volunteers. Each week a team of two to four ushers regularly participate in the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services. We also served during several special events, including the funeral for Harry Porterfield, the annual Hispanic Liturgy, Evensong & Compline Services, Lessons and Carols, and services over the Christmas Holiday weekend.

As 2024 dawns, we remain faithful and committed to supporting the in-person services and events at St. James. Once again, we are asking St. James members to consider participating in this valuable and indispensable ministry. If you are interested in learning more, please speak with an usher, or contact me at [moyear@hotmail.com](mailto:moyear@hotmail.com). We will be more than happy to tell you about our ministry.

## Readers & Intercessors

*Submitted by Jocelyn Colao, Associate for Administration & Communications*

The service of reading and interceding plays a vital role in worship. As representatives of the congregation and the body of Christ, readers and intercessors embody two ministries to which every Christian is called: to share the good news of Christ and to pray. I continue to be amazed at the dedication and enthusiasm for this important ministry.

This past year we continued to successfully use the ministry scheduling system Ministry Scheduler Pro. I am always so surprised to see that, before I am even able to read the notification when a reader or intercessor requests a substitute, someone has filled in for them. The support and flexibility the members of this vital ministry show to one another is truly inspiring.

At the beginning of 2023, we were 22 members strong (11 were also intercessors). As of today, this ministry is made up of 24 members (8 of which are also intercessors), with a handful more interested that are awaiting training.

I extend a heartfelt thank you to each member of this team for their continued commitment and support. We could, of course, always use a few more volunteers! I invite any member of the St. James community who may be interested in reading or interceding to contact me and learn more about joining this important ministry.

## Cathedral Online

*Submitted by Robert Black, Canon for Administration*

Since 2020, at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, St. James Cathedral has dramatically increased its use of online tools, building on our pre-pandemic website,

Facebook, and E-news platforms. In 2023, the primary digital platforms were our website, YouTube, Zoom, Facebook, and Instagram,

**Daily YouTube Meditations:** Videos made by our clergy are posted every weekday and have found an enthusiastic and loyal following. In 2023 we produced 255 daily videos with a combined 17,423 views (68 on average per video) and 3,951 first-time viewers (15 on average per video).

**Zoom Morning Prayer** was offered at 9:00 a.m. on 248 weekdays in 2023. These 15- to 20-minute services are led by members of the Cathedral staff and the participants themselves. Daily attendance is generally 5 to 9 participants. The Zoom link can always be found on the St. James Cathedral website home page.

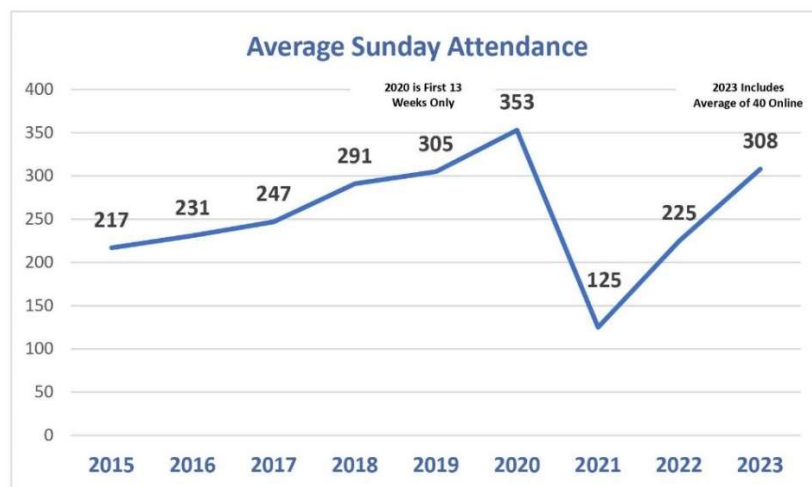
**Live Streaming:** We live-streamed 79 worship services and events with 8,866 total views – a 65% increase in views over the prior year. I am grateful to Paul Bieschke, who edits our daily meditations and video directs our live streams, and to Associate for Administration and Communications Jocelyn Colao for her behind-the-scenes work on all the online offerings.

**Social Media:** In 2023, St. James Cathedral made strategic forays into a more robust and intentional social media presence. In June, the Cathedral staff participated in an intensive

training session that covered brand advocacy, brand personas, and the way both affect and impact St. James Cathedral in the context of a larger community.

A content creation strategy was implemented and deployed during two distinct time frames (3/15 to 6/30 and 9/15 to 12/31) to gauge the impact and engagement of social media activity. Significant increases in both impressions and engagement were seen during those time periods.

Opportunities to expand our digital profile remain available. A key initiative would be the establishment of **Social Media Evangelists ("SMEEs")**. With the efforts of just nine people, the gains shown in 2023 could be built upon and expanded. Content marketing costs 62% less than traditional marketing tactics, yet it generates about three-times as many leads. Conversion rates are six-times higher for those who use content marketing than those who don't. For every person creating content, about nine people engage — comment, reshare, or like — with it, and around 90 other people just observe it.



## MUSIC

### Music Ministry

*Submitted by Canon Director of Music Stephen Buzard*

2023 was a year of growth and vitality for the music ministry at St. James Cathedral. The Cathedral Choir currently comprises 34 members: 14 staff singers and 20 volunteers. The Cathedral Choir rehearses every Thursday for two hours, sings Choral Eucharist on Sundays at 11 a.m., and offers Choral Evensong and special services throughout the year for a total of roughly 95 appearances annually. We have 16 Cathedral Choristers in grades 3-9. The Choristers rehearse every Wednesday, concluding with a brief Evensong at 5:45 p.m. They sing at the 9 a.m. service on most Sundays during the school year and at the 11 a.m. service once a month. Each chorister also receives a weekly voice lesson with one of our music staff. We have 9 Junior Choristers who rehearse each Wednesday for a half an hour and sing once a month at the 9 a.m. service. The entire music program is offered free of charge to all participants.

This year saw the beginning of several new musical initiatives. Most notable was the commencement of a multi-year project to relocate and restore the 1958 J.W. Walker & Sons organ from the London City Temple. The City Temple of London is the Cathedral of the non-conformist churches in England. Partially destroyed during the Blitz, the church was rebuilt in the 1950s thanks to a generous gift from John D. Rockefeller, Jr. No expense was spared, including the installation of this magnificent organ built by the Walker Organ Company and designed by William McKie, Organist at Westminster Abbey. This instrument is one of the finest British organs of its vintage and it will be the first heritage English Cathedral-style organ to be relocated to America. We formally acquired the organ in June 2023 *at no cost to the Cathedral*. Our team of organ builders from the Buzard Organ Company carefully removed and packed the organ for shipment to the United States in July, and the organ arrived at their workshop in September. The projected cost of a new organ for St. James Cathedral was \$4 million. The Walker Organ project will cost \$2.75 million, which includes all removal costs, a comprehensive restoration of the organ, a new console with modern controls to aid the organist, installation at St. James, a full restoration of our 1875 Johnson organ case, and the establishment of a maintenance fund to care for our organ in perpetuity. Thanks to a generous \$1 million leading gift from the Hoover Foundation and the support of dozens of parishioners, we are within striking distance of our goal. I urge you to consider making a pledge toward the organ project and be a part of this historic endeavor. For more information, please visit [www.CathedralOrgan.org](http://www.CathedralOrgan.org).

This year, the Cathedral instituted the Diocesan Choir Festival Evensong. Choirs from across the state sent dozens of singers to join the Cathedral Choir for services of Choral Evensong in February and October. The Cathedral also took a major stride in diversifying our repertoire of choral music by purchasing a set of copies of *The Oxford Book of Choral Music by Black Composers*, a new collection of music by composers of color spanning six centuries. We have already sung several pieces from this anthology in worship. St. James Cathedral was one of the first prominent institutions to purchase this collection, and our promotion of this resource has helped spread awareness of it across the Episcopal Church.

The Cathedral Choristers attended the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) course in Charlotte, NC in July as their annual summer choir camp. St. James made up about half the enrollment in this course, and our choristers were the musical backbone of the festival choir. Before the pandemic, the Charlotte Course enrolled 60-75 children annually from dozens of programs. Now, most of those programs have withered and collapsed, and we find that our relatively young chorister program is one of the few to remain vibrant and active after the pandemic. The Charlotte Course emphasized to me how important our chorister program has become nationally in maintaining the vitality of this beloved Episcopal musical and formational tradition.

In October, St. James Cathedral hosted a sold-out performance by renowned British vocal ensemble, VOCES8. As part of the performance, VOCES8 gave a workshop to our choristers and choristers from around the Diocese, sponsored by the Anglican Association of Musicians and our Friends of Cathedral Music. During the concert, the choristers sang Stanford's "The Blue Bird" with VOCES8, a fantastic experience that they will remember for the rest of their lives.

Intern for Children's Music Jessica McCarthy and Director of Children & Youth Briana Calhoun have worked to reinvigorate the Junior Chorister program this year. This choir for children in early elementary grades has attracted new families to our choral offerings and will provide a steppingstone for children to gain musical knowledge and experience before becoming choristers in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

In response to the growing popularity of Wednesday Night Compline, Associate Director of Music David Boeckh is forming a new Compline Choir. This volunteer ensemble will sing chant, hymns, and anthems at this brief service and provides an opportunity for singers who may not be able to commit to the rigorous schedule of the Cathedral Choir. If you are interested in this new offering, I encourage you to reach out to David and attend our Wednesday evening programming to see what it is like.

Our music program instituted three popular hymn-sings this year, attracting visitors from the neighborhood and further afield to join us for fellowship and festivity. The first hymn-sing in August was called "Hymns & Pimms" led by legendary church musician Bruce Neswick and Stephen Buzard. The second hymn-sing in November called "Songs of Thankfulness" was led by John Sherer from Fourth Presbyterian and David Boeckh. The most recent was "Carols & Cocoa" on New Years Eve, led by Andrew Schaeffer from Luther Memorial Church in Madison, WI, and Stephen Buzard. We are glad to find a way to invite new people into the Cathedral through music.

The Music Institute of Chicago continues to offer dozens of music lessons each week in the undercroft of the Cathedral to students of all ages. Choristers and Junior Choristers receive a 50% scholarship toward this world-class instrumental training. Our partnership with the Rush Hour Concerts, presented by Classical Music Chicago, remains strong and vibrant, welcoming hundreds of music lovers to the Cathedral each Tuesday afternoon in the summer. We have also undertaken new media shares with Apollo's Fire and the William Ferris Chorale, who will perform in our space and are promoting our choral events with their patrons.

Further growth in the musical offerings of St. James is constrained by the limitations of the choir loft and the size of our rehearsal and spaces. As it stands, the full choir and choristers cannot rehearse simultaneously in the choir room, and singing together in the choir loft is a tight squeeze, as you will have witnessed in this morning's liturgy. With even a few more singers in either ensemble, we likely could not sing together except in the chancel, as we do for major choral services like Nine Lessons and Carols. The choristers also lack their own vesting room, posing logistical challenges should we continue to grow. As discussions of the use of our building continue, providing adequate space for our music program will be an important consideration.

I look forward to another year of growth, vitality, and creative energy in the musical offerings at St. James Cathedral as we enter 2024.

## Concerts at St. James Cathedral

St. James Cathedral hosted 21 concerts by an array of performing arts organizations in 2023. Twelve concerts were Summer Rush Hour Concerts, founded by St. James Cathedral in 2000 and now produced by Classical Music Chicago.

Other concerts were performed by the Chicago Bar Association Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Chicago Composers Orchestra, Corde Volanti, and the Chicago Chamber Choir. The highlight of the year was a return engagement concert by the world-renowned VOCES8, presented by St. James Cathedral in October to a sold-out audience.

## FAITH FORMATION

### Adult Formation

*Submitted by The Rev. Canon Steven Balke*

Learning and growing as Christians is one of the tenets of our Baptismal Covenant. Among the opportunities St. James provides for Christian education and formation are The Forum on Sunday mornings and Wednesday Night Formation.

On Sundays, between the 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM services, The Forum meets at 10:00 AM in Kyle's Place for seminars, lectures, and group discussions. In 2023, we held series about Expansive and Inclusive Language in our worship, How Church Works Behind-the-Scenes, our Season of Gratitude series where we learned more about the rich history of St. James, and a tour of English Cathedrals. Our series included guest speakers such as Sally Kalmbach, David Briere and David DuPre, Tom Patterson, and others. In 2024, we are excited to offer new opportunities to learn about theology, scripture, music, church trivia, and more!

As part of our Wednesday Night programming, all are invited to join us after Chorister Choral Evensong and Dinner for an ever-changing educational and group discussion series. In 2023, we held a Mental Health First Aid training, theological series featuring Rob Bell and Walter Bruggeman, and a discourse on Christian Ethics. The series are led by our clergy and members of our St. James community. In 2024, we look forward to new discussions and explorations of our church and our faith.

If you would like to know more about these formation opportunities and how you can be a part of them, please contact The Rev. Canon Steven Balke at [sbalke@saintjamescathedral.org](mailto:sbalke@saintjamescathedral.org)



## Young Adults

*Submitted by Maria Price, Young Adult Leader*

The 2023 year saw increased growth and development within the St. James Young Adults ministry. Previously co-led by Timothy Beltran del Rio and Maria Price, Maria has continued working to facilitate the growth of the Young Adults ministry with the lay support of Nathaniel Weaver and staff/ administrative support of David Boeckh and Provost Lisa Hackey-James.

The increased participation from parishioners in the Young Adults group throughout 2023 is a reflection of the Cathedral's continued commitment to facilitate formation opportunities relevant and suitable to parish young adults. Each second Sunday of the month, Young Adults hosts the Second Supper event which offers an opportunity for individuals interested, or involved, in the ministry to gather in fellowship. Throughout 2023, Young Adult leadership continued to coordinate and carry out the Wednesday evening Compline offering which has recently expanded to feature a volunteer choir headed by David Boeckh.

It is the goal of the Young Adults Ministry to offer reliable gathering, fellowship, and formation opportunities in a space that emphasizes the spirit of welcome the Cathedral holds dear. This emphasis on welcome has served the Young Adults ministry well as we have had the privilege of welcoming many new young adults from the Cathedral community, many of whom have enjoyed acclimating to the Cathedral community through the Young Adults group.

## Centering Prayer

*Submitted by Greg Gerber, Ministry Leader*

The St. James Centering Prayer Practice continued to meet "virtually" every Wednesday evening from 6:45-7:30 pm in 2023. We gather "electronically" through a weekly telephone dial-in. While we originally met in person, this format supports the silent practice very well. Because we have been meeting virtually, we now have participants/practitioners joining from all over the country. We have an interesting, diverse, dedicated group who join us weekly.

Centering Prayer is a contemplative prayer practice. Our weekly leader provides simple instruction to the Centering Prayer "method." The primary purpose of Centering Prayer is to commune and to become centered in God. This age-old Christian practice looks and feels like meditation. Centering Prayer allows connection with God, through the leader's guidance, through the community of practitioners and through silence. John of the Cross suggests "Silence is God's first language." Our practitioners would agree having experienced the unique spiritual communion possible through Centering Prayer.

Our practice group uses two "primary teachers" – Episcopal priest Cynthia Bourgeault and her books "Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening" and "The Heart of Centering Prayer" and Fr. Martin Laird and his book "Into the Silent Land."

Centering Prayer is available to all and new St. James Cathedral congregants who would like to check out Centering prayer are encouraged to do so!

## Parish Retreats

*Submitted by Anne Driscoll & Greg Gerber, Retreat Participants*

In 2023 St. James parishioners had the opportunity to participate in two retreats with our "sister" parish St. Martin's Episcopal Church in the Austin neighborhood of Chicago, where our own Canon for Outreach Ministries, The Rev. Chris Griffin, is the vicar. St. Martin's hosted a Lenten Retreat at their church in March. St. James hosted a Pre-Advent Retreat in November called "Where Do We Go From Here? A Pre-Advent Day of Prayer and Reflection on the Gospel of Mark."

Both retreats were led by Fr. Juan Reed, a wonderful, experienced retreat leader and spiritual director. Fr. Reed is the retired vicar of St. Martin's. The organizing committees for the retreats included St. Martin's and St. James parishioners and Fr. Chris Griffin. The retreats were very well attended and included opportunities for spiritual reflection, facilitated dialogue, song, shared meals, and wonderful opportunities to converse with members of our sister parish.

Our next retreat will be a Lenten Retreat in March of 2024. All St. James parishioners are welcome and encouraged to participate!

## PARISH LIFE

### Pastoral Care

*Submitted by The Rev. Canon Steven Balke*

Pastoral Care is an important pillar of our Christian community. It is chiefly a ministry of presence to one another, particularly in the most difficult and challenging times of our lives. All of us need to be reminded that we are not alone and that our fellow Christians see us for the beloved Children of God that we are. The community of St. James is honored to be pastoral to one another and our neighbors in these important times.

The clergy of St. James maintain pastoral responsibilities to visit those in need, in the church, at home, in the hospital, or to wherever they are called. We extend this care not only to the members of our parish but also to those who find themselves in the north side of Chicago without a church and in need of care. They regularly visit people in need in the local hospitals as a service beyond our walls.

We are also working on growing a Lay Pastoral Care Team at St. James, a team of lay members who are trained to extend the care of our community even beyond the reach of our clergy, providing prayers, hospital visits, and home communion. In 2023 this Lay Pastoral Care Team is still very much behind the scenes and growing. We welcome others to join in this effort to grow our pastoral care reach.

St. James maintains a parish prayer list of people who are prayed for every day by the clergy and members of St. James. Anyone, everyone, member or not, is welcome to add

people to our prayer list and can be assured that there is a community of prayer for them. We welcome others to be a part of this prayer team.

If you would like to know more about how you can play a role in providing a ministry of presence to our community, please contact The Rev. Canon Steven Balke at [sbalke@saintjamescathedral.org](mailto:sbalke@saintjamescathedral.org).

## Sacramental Life

### **Baptisms (17)**

Morgan Sinclair Wade  
Madeline Christine Wade  
Abigail Cecilia Walvoord  
Violet Emma Westbrook  
Nicholas Paul Weddle  
Paul Gregory Devlin  
Charles Thomas Johnson  
Lillian Marie Johnson  
Adewale Adegboyega Ayodele  
Holden For Rizza Shelton  
Theodore William Shelton  
Benjamin Elias Moss  
Elizabeth Leigh Feltman  
Nora Irene Middlebrook  
Crystal Villegas  
Edla Lynn D'Herckens

### **Confirmations (1)**

Russell K. Hatch

### **Receptions (6)**

John Aasmundstad  
Alexis Anderson  
Craig Backhus  
Marcy Lorraine Backhus  
Jessica Rose McCarthy  
Nathaniel Weaver

### **Marriages (3)**

Rob Sayre & Alina Kuchereko  
David Boeckh & Nick Stevens  
Alisa Roadcup & Amarjeet Bhachu

### **Funerals (5)**

Richard Earl Jenkins  
Carol Brawner  
Joyce Brawner  
Harry William Porterfield, Jr.  
Dr. James Shaba

## Invite ~ Welcome ~ Connect

*Submitted by Laura Jenkins, Sean Bala, and Katie Valchar*

2023 continued to be a time of reestablishment and growth of IWC activities. Sean Bala and Katie Valchar stepped into leadership roles, focusing primarily in the "Connect" area. Laura Jenkins continued to lead Welcome activities.

**Newcomer Lunches** returned to a regular schedule and were held in January, April, and September. Approximately 30 new or newly returned members attended. The lunches are structured to provide an opportunity for facilitated, meaningful conversation using the "Quaker Questions." A rotating team of about twenty people served as hosts, with many participating at all three lunches. As in 2022, we also invited active members to attend, ensuring that newcomers meet a broad array of parishioners and providing a space for long-standing members to re-connect. In 2024, we will continue to hold these lunches with new and existing members as part of a larger effort to create spaces for community connection.

The IWC Team hosted a new event to reinvigorate the 'Connect' area of our community life. In our **Cathedral Conversations** lunch held in March, participants were invited to reflect on their own spiritual gifts, the strengths and opportunities of the Cathedral community, and how we might bring those together into new and current ministries. Participants conducted a Spiritual Gift Inventory ahead of time and those results were used to help identify areas of possible engagement in parish life. We consider the event a success and we plan on making it an annual gathering so people can explore current ministries and help us shape new ones.

Based on the results of the Cathedral Conversation, a **Parish Survey** was conducted to gauge interest in 21 current and 13 potential ministries. We received about 60 responses and noted several trends and potential areas of opportunity for our community. The results were presented to the Cathedral Chapter in October 2023.

We note that the survey responses were overwhelmingly from the Sunday 11 a.m. service parishioners. In 2024, we hope to connect with 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. parishioners through another Cathedral Conversation and a new survey specifically targeted to them. It is part of an overall strategy to make sure that we are connecting with all members of our community.

For current ministries, the IWC organized an informal pop-up ministry fair in September after coffee hour with modest results. People who indicated interest in participating or learning more about current ministries in the survey were connected with those ministries in November. In 2024, we aim to streamline the process of connecting people to current ministries.

For potential ministries, organizing efforts are currently underway for several projects and initiatives specifically focused on expanded adult educational opportunities, more spaces for less-formal community gatherings, and Cathedral community support.

The Welcome Team recruited and organized volunteers for the weekend of October 14 and 15 for **Open House Chicago**, the annual free public festival organized by the Chicago Architectural Center that offers behind-the-scenes access to architecturally, historically and culturally significant sites across the city. St. James Cathedral, one of the most popular sites, was invited to participate again in 2023. Over the course of two days, seventeen volunteer

greeters and two volunteer docents welcomed 715 visitors (down from 2022 due to inclement weather). Once again, beautiful music and extraordinarily popular "organ tours" from Canon Director of Music Stephen Buzard and Associate Director of Music David Boeckh were tremendous draws for guests, including two young aspiring organists who were invited to play a few notes.

The institution of "hymn sing" programs in the fall by the Music Department presented an opportunity to create a **Hospitality Team** to help with refreshments at large gatherings such as these popular new events, the celebration after the Easter Vigil, and other gatherings. We expect to see a robust team in place in 2024.

## OUTREACH

### St. James Meals

*Submitted by Steven Balke, Erin Maus, Kevin Rooney*

If you look back through the history of St. James, you will see that the people of St. James have been engaged in the work of feeding those in need for well more than a century. Truly, our feeding ministries have been a part of the life of St. James since nearly its founding. In 2023, we continued that ministry through our semi-monthly hot meal provided right here at St. James. At the heart of this ministry is the belief in not only feeding the hungry but rather lifting up our fellow human beings to the dignity they deserve, treating them with the same hospitality we would extend to guests at our dinner tables at home. On the first Tuesday and third Sunday of each month, dozens of volunteers come together to plan menus, cook in the kitchen, decorate the dining room, staff the welcome table, pass out food at the serving line, and more.

2023 saw a transition when one of the leaders for almost a decade, Susan Barrish, stepped away from her role. After a farewell reception, the St. James Meals volunteers came together to envision new leadership roles and the next chapter of the ministry. By coming together as a team, we continued our meals ministry without missing a single meal. In 2024, we expect to face the increasing needs of our neighbor Chicagoans as well as newly arriving migrant neighbors.

In December 2023 we received a generous gift of \$34,000 in honor of the late Richard H. Driehaus to support of *The St. James Meals Fund*.

The future calls for new volunteers, new roles, and new vision for how we can serve in ways that change people's lives, and we shall do it together. For more information St. James Meals or to learn about how you can help, please contact The Rev. Canon Steven Balke at [sbalke@saintjamescathedral.org](mailto:sbalke@saintjamescathedral.org)

### Socks

Related to St. James Meals is our St. James Socks Ministry. Did you know that St. James Cathedral is the only [Bombas Socks](#) distributor in the River North area? We play a crucial role in distributing warm and clean socks not only to visitors who come to us but also to local churches and social service organizations in our area. We are deeply grateful to Cathy Hill, who has worked directly with Bombas the past several years to coordinate their donation.

Bombas pledges to donate a pair of socks to people in need for every pair they sell. They have partnered with us as the local distributor who receives the socks (10,000 pair in 2023) and we assure that they are delivered to those people in need. We not only give socks to guests at our own meals ministries but also set up shipments to other churches and organizations so that they can help pass them out. Warm and clean socks are among the most needed and most requested items from people in shelters, so we play a crucial role in helping. These socks do not distribute themselves, so if you would like to know more about how you can assist in this important effort, please contact The Rev. Canon Steven Balke at [sbalke@saintjamescathedral.org](mailto:sbalke@saintjamescathedral.org).

## Meals Among Us

*Submitted by The Rev. Canon Steven Balke and Tim Zeller*

Our current meals ministries at St. James have persisted for almost a quarter-century, a testament to our passion for serving others in need. As the meals ministries have evolved over the years, one of the current iterations is our Meals Among Us program. Every week, every Sunday at St. James after worship, volunteers gather to make sandwiches and pack lunches for our fellow Children of God.

In addition to the Sunday sandwich makers, a loyal group of volunteers come each Monday to pack the meals for shipping, load them in their cars, and deliver them to their destinations. We could not do this meal ministry without both our Sunday and Monday teams.

In 2023, we witnessed our Meals Among Us program expand to 150 lunches, going to feed people through our partners at Martin Temple AME Zion Church in Woodlawn and LaTanya and the Youth of Englewood (LYE). Our partnership with LYE began with a grant from Episcopal Charities and we are proud to be able to continue that partnership even after the grant's conclusion through the generosity of members of St. James.

As we look ahead to 2024, we expect that Martin Temple will see even more need in their area. We know that we can supplement even more nutritious meals for them and the after-school program children at LYE. With your support and the support of many generous supporters of the Meals Among Us program we will continue to expand to answer Jesus's call to "feed my sheep." If you would like to know more about how you can support this important ministry, please contact The Rev. Canon Steven Balke at [sbalke@saintjamescathedral.org](mailto:sbalke@saintjamescathedral.org).

## Summer in the City

*Submitted by Briana Calhoun, SITC Director & Director of Youth & Children Ministry*

Summer in the City (SITC) took place from July 24 through August 6, with Staff Training happening the week before. We enrolled 36 campers, surpassing our goal of 35 campers. This year we increased our staff numbers to 4 counselors (18+) and 10 Junior Counselors (15-18 years), many of which were previous campers from the SITC community. We hired a Camp Manager and a Volunteer Coordinator. The SITC Team hosted a Family Kick-Off Day on June 24. This kick-off event was an opportunity for campers to gather, meet the staff, and for parents to complete necessary paperwork.

This year, our two-week camp was a mix of on-campus and off-campus adventures. Off campus adventures included rock climbing at Brooklyn Boulders, paddling in Jackson Harbor, photography lessons with Joel Maisonet Photography, beach day at Rainbow Beach, a trip to Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum and the Lincoln Park Zoo, and much more. On-campus days included cooking classes with Chef Jackie, a Cathedral tour, organ demonstration with

Associate Director of Music, David Boeckh, and improvisation lessons with Jess Elfring-Roberts and some of the members of her Improv group, Part Dog.

We welcomed a new Camp Manager to the SITC team, Ali Pepper. Ali's years of experience working at Camp Chicago, the Diocese of Chicago's summer camp, working for Episcopal Camps and Conference Centers, and teaching kindergarten in diverse environments made her a perfect fit and excellent addition to our team. On the administrative side we welcomed Julia Gilman, a member of the St. James community, as our new Volunteer Coordinator, Julia has a strong work ethic, and her organizational skills were instrumental in our recruitment and management of volunteers from the St. James community. This year we had fifteen volunteers from St. James, each volunteering anywhere from 1-4 days. Throughout the two weeks of camp, volunteers were present every day of the camp and provided hands-on support and supervision of SITC Campers.

Our camper recruitment focused on engaging past campers and continuing our partnership with "LaTanya and the Youth of Englewood" (LYE). SITC was promoted in the Diocese of Chicago and St. James Cathedral newsletters as well as on Facebook and Instagram. Of the 36 campers enrolled in SITC 2022, 15 campers were from LYE, 10 campers were from within the St. James community, and 11 were from word-of-mouth. 25 campers were returning participants, and 11 campers were new to SITC.

The total cost of SITC 2023 was \$38,813, slightly under the \$39,000 budget.

## ReVive Christmas Gifts

*Submitted by The Rev. Canon Steven Balke*

Every year the ReVive Center for Housing and Healing – formerly known as Cathedral Shelter – coordinates the donation of thousands of Christmas gifts to families in need. From single parents of many children to homebound individuals on fixed incomes, there are thousands of people who would not have any gifts for Christmas if not for the generosity of volunteers to play St. Nicholas for them. St. James has long volunteered for this ministry, this year shopping for more than 200 people for Christmas.

This ministry is a great way for volunteers to participate in a once-per-year event that makes a difference in the lives of others. New volunteers are always welcome. One of the biggest needs for this ministry are people skilled at coordinating all of the volunteers, wish lists, and receiving the gifts in time for the ReVive truck to come and take them to the families. If you would like to know more about how you can help in the effort or want to get in on the Christmas spirit, please contact The Rev. Canon Steven Balke at [sbalke@saintjamescathedral.org](mailto:sbalke@saintjamescathedral.org).

## Community Partnerships

*Submitted by the Rev. Canon Christopher Griffin*

THE HARVEST IS PLENTIFUL. The gospels remind us of the importance of, and the need to, work in pairs or partnerships to help spread the good news and build the kingdom of God. St. James has always encouraged a spirit of collaboration in working together with other churches and organizations to share our gifts. In this past year, we intentionally established a partnership with St. Martin's Episcopal Church on the west side of Chicago and established a firm community partnership with them. Together we participated in a shared reading of Kelly

Brown Douglas's book RESURRECTION HOPE with virtual book discussions that culminated in a diocesan forum with the author and our bishop. We also joined St. Martin's at their church for a Lenten Retreat in the spring, which was a very lively, moving experience as both congregations reflected on their respective congregational histories and the ministry and legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin's Luther King, Jr. Later in the year we formed a planning committee comprised of members of both congregations and met here at St. James for a Pre-Advent Retreat.

Together with St. Martin's, we participated in two Back-to-School school supplies & backpack drives for students at Lawrence Hall (which is an Episcopal Charities agency) – a first for both churches. And then, we co-sponsored a drive for fourth through sixth graders of Nash Elementary School on the west side of Chicago near St. Martin's. It has been a wonderful opportunity to partner with St. Martin's and develop ways to support each other and our communities.

Aside from congregational support, in the latter part of the year we welcomed Moms Demand Action as a community partner and provided space for their planning meetings for the local Chicago chapter. Moms Demand Action is a powerful activist group of deeply committed mothers dedicated to ending gun violence. We strongly support their mission as it resonates with our own and we join them in praying weekly for the victims and for the violence to cease.

We look forward to growing and deepening our relationships!

## Charitable Giving

In 2023 the St. James Cathedral community raised **\$87,887** through special offerings and other gifts to support the ministries of:

Cathedral Counseling Center	\$ 3,500
Episcopal Relief & Development Middle East Fund	\$ 5,000
Lawrence Hall Back to School Fund	\$ 600
Revive Christmas Baskets	\$ 2,605
St. James Cathedral Meals Ministry	\$35,484
St. James Cathedral Meals Among Us	\$ 9,879
St. James Cathedral Summer in the City	\$27,319
Trilogy Mental Well Being	\$ 3,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$87,887</b>

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY**



# GOVERNANCE

## Senior Warden Report

*Submitted by Nicole Spencer, Senior Warden*

As I reflect on the work of the Cathedral Chapter in 2023, I recognize the depth of talent and commitment of Chapter members that produced significant accomplishments this past year. I also recognize the blessing of collaboration between clergy and lay leaders.

In the first year since Chapter called our Provost Lisa Hackney-James, Lisa demonstrated her gifts for leadership as she challenged Chapter to live out our parish's culture of stewardship as we engage more deeply with each other, our neighbors, and our Diocese. Your Cathedral Chapter accepted the challenge and rose to meet it.

The Chapter fulfilled two objectives identified in 2022: (1) leading efforts to deepen our financial support of St. James and (2) enhancing the many ways in which members of St. James engage with each other; and how, as a vibrant part of the Body of Christ, we engage our neighbors and our city. These accomplishments support our future as a parish.

Feedback from Cathedral Conversations and the parish-wide survey, which gauged interest in current and potential ministries for future development, was essential to gaining better insight into the gifts and interests of our community. The Chapter welcomed the information and applied it throughout the year.

Chapter member Anne Driscoll led a diverse team of parishioners as they reinvigorated the annual pledge cycle. The emphasis on peer-to-peer communications restored annual pledges to pre-pandemic levels. Chapter is committed to leading the way within our culture of stewardship.

Your Chapter approached the review and approval of the 2024 budget with both discipline and flexibility. The 2024 budget reflects a commitment to supporting our vibrant parish life, meeting our obligations and our role as financial stewards.

The Chapter's Real Estate Working Group (formed in response to the Diocese's announcement that it would sell St. James Commons) continued its work acting upon the needs and best interests of our parish. 2023 brought the opportunity to collaborate with diocesan trustees under the leadership of Bishop Paula E. Clark. The Real Estate Working Group consists of the Provost, Wardens, the Chancellor, Greg Gerber (Chapter Member) and Jones Lang LaSalle. Their work will continue in 2024.

I say with confidence that our Cathedral Chapter is talented, engaged and well suited to serve and lead our Cathedral Parish in 2024.

## Real Estate Working Group

*Submitted by Susan Fickling, Junior Warden*

The Real Estate Working Group is a committee comprised of clergy and lay leaders of the Cathedral, as well as outside experts in the field of real estate. The group was formed in response to the Diocese's announcement that it would sell St. James Commons and spent the majority of its time in 2023 working to reestablish and strengthen relationships between the Cathedral, the Bishop's office, and members of Bishops & Trustees.

In addition, the committee was able to take time to consider our needs for space as we currently operate as well as the needs we foresee as the growing community that we are. I am personally excited by the enthusiasm I hear from other members of our community, our Cathedral Chapter, and the broader Episcopal community of how St James Cathedral can continue to be a thriving parish with considerable external focus on serving our fellow Chicagoans and others in our world, and how our use of real estate can be leveraged to support that work.

We will continue to work internally as well as with the Bishop and her Trustees to determine a path forward that is mutually beneficial to both the Cathedral as well as the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago.

For 2023, the Real Estate Working Group included the following members:

- Lisa Hackney-James, Provost
- Robert Black, Canon for Finance and Administration
- Erin Maus, Cathedral Chancellor and attorney (Venable LLP)
- Nicole Spencer, Senior Warden
- Susan Fickling, Junior Warden and transfer pricing and valuation economist (Kroll LLC)
- Greg Gerber, Member of the Chapter and commercial real estate expert (JLL)
- Thomas Kirschbaum, Managing Director of JLL Capital Markets

## FINANCES

### Finance Commission

*Submitted by Paul W. Thompson, Treasurer*

In 2023, the Finance Commission consisted of members George Culver and Kevin Godsil, with *ex officio* members Nicole Spencer (Senior Warden), Susan Fickling (Junior Warden), Alan Gunn (Investment Officer) and Paul Thompson (Treasurer). The Treasurer served as Chair. The Commission invited Canon for Finance and Administration Robert Black and Accountant Christine Price to join in the Commission's meetings, along with Provost Lisa Hackney-James. Ten meetings were held during the year via Zoom, typically on the fourth Wednesday of the month at noon.

The role of the Finance Commission is to advise and assist the Treasurer, the Chapter and the staff on financial matters such as budgeting and financial planning, bookkeeping, banking, credit cards, investing, and fraud protection, and to closely monitor the Cathedral's financial performance and reporting, including stewardship results and activity pertaining to designated funds. The Commission monitors revenue, expenses and cash flow related to the Capital Campaign. The Commission also meets with the Cathedral's auditors, Selden Fox, Ltd., in coordination with the Cathedral's Audit Chair, Sean Smith.

The Finance Commission is a resource as well as a working group. I would like to thank the members of the Commission for their time, expertise, and commitment during this past year.

## Investments

*Submitted by Alan Gunn, Finance Commission Chief Investment Officer*

St. James Cathedral's reserve financial assets are overseen by the Finance Commission, which meets monthly. The Cathedral began 2023 with \$4,142,302 in assets in restricted and unrestricted investment accounts and ended the year with \$3,584,100. The year-end amount includes \$215,381 in a separate account set up in 2020 to receive Capital Campaign donations.

The total rate of return for these assets in 2023 was 18.3%. Asset appreciation was \$551,771 and income was \$96,358. Draws from the investment assets in 2023 for Cathedral operational expenses totaled \$1,150,000.

The Cathedral's assets in 2023 were invested in four Vanguard exchange-traded funds (ETFs): a domestic bond index ETF (BND: 5.70% return in 2023), an international bond index ETF (BNDX: 8.75% return in 2023), a domestic stock ETF (VTI: 26.11% return in 2023), and an international stock index ETF (VXUS: 15.92% return in 2023). Invested cash was held in a money market fund (VMFXX: 5.09% return in 2023). Fees charged by Vanguard were approximately \$1,177 in 2023 based on average balances, asset allocation and an 0.044% average fee.

## Count Ministry

*Submitted by Marianne Culver, Chair*

The Count Ministry handles all the various items that appear in the collection plates and drop boxes at St. James Cathedral. The team counts and tabulates all cash collected at services and deposits it in the Cathedral bank account each week. We count special collections, too, like the Lenten and Christmas collections for special charities. Our happy band of human calculators includes Alexis Anderson, Mary Jo Barton, David Briere, Sue Cloud (Emerita), David DuPre, Fran Horn, Laura Jenkins, Tom Patterson, and Norman Sunderman. All perform a demanding job with accuracy and good cheer.

## 2024 Season of Gratitude Annual Pledge Drive

*Submitted by Anne Driscoll, Chair*

### **Background**

In October of 2023, the Season of Gratitude Pledge Drive team was formed to conduct a highly focused effort to engage the St. James community in understanding the importance of making a financial commitment to our parish.

It had been several years (pre-pandemic) since a committee-led Pledge Drive was conducted. There was a clear disconnect between increased attendance at St. James, a high degree of energy and participation in mission, formation, and fellowship activities and a decrease in the number of pledges received. The goal of this Pledge Drive was to reach 190 pledges – one pledging unit for each year St. James has been in business.

### **Action Steps**

The Pledge Drive Kick Off took place on Sunday, October 22, 2023. The team invited parishioners to give personal testimonials about their gratitude for being part of the St. James

community at each Sunday service during October and November. Other St. James members and friends were invited to write a reflection about their personal gratitude for being part of St. James; these reflections were published in the weekly eNews messages. We created an "I AM ST. JAMES" Brochure for the Pledge Drive. Our desire was to communicate not only an explanation of what a "pledge" is, but also the importance of linking our spiritual and physical commitment to St. James with making a financial commitment to the parish community. In early November, a letter from the Pledge Drive Chair containing a Pledge Card and envelope was sent to over 400 members and friends. We created a social media presence on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn to drive participation.

The pledges began to roll in. Some of the first pledges received were from our choristers, a joyous way to begin the Pledge Drive. Upon receiving pledges, members of the Pledge Drive team wrote personal thank you notes to every single pledger. We also created a "Gratitude Banner" and invited members and friends to write personal words of gratitude on the banner for all to see.

We began inserting pledge cards and envelopes into the Service Leaflets to make it easy for people to pledge using a card as well as encouraged parishioners, friends, and online worshipers to pledge online. On November 26, Ingathering Sunday, all those who had made a pledge were asked to place a symbolic pledge card in the Alms Basket during communion. This was a profoundly moving event where we offered our gifts to God and to St. James as one community.

In early December, members of the Pledge Drive Team, along with the help of Chapter members, followed up with those parishioners and friends who had not yet pledged. Between the Christmas and New Year's holidays, another outreach was made, and one last email appeal was sent in mid-January. **As of January 28, 2024, we have received 195 pledges and \$761,153** in financial commitments – exceeding goals of 190 pledges and \$760,000. Thanks to all of you, we have had a fantastic outcome.

### **Reflection**

The Pledge Drive Team had a great time working together, and we all sensed a deepening connection within our community based on making a financial as well as spiritual commitment to our beloved St. James. To each person who pledged, we wrote, "Thank you for your participation in ensuring St. James remains a beacon of hope in God's world." Thank you all.

### **Members of the Committee**

The Rev. Steven Balke, Briana Calhoun, Molly Cantrell-Kraig, Frank Donaghue, The Very Rev. Lisa Hackney-James, Jim Paddleford, Jacob Perkins, and Anne Driscoll, Chair.

## **Capital Campaign: *Restore. Reimagine. Rebuild.***

The St. James Cathedral Capital Campaign moved forward slowly but surely in 2023, with a total of **71 pledges** and **\$3,118,180** in financial commitments. A \$1 Million gift from the Miriam U. and H. Earl Hoover Foundation in support of a new organ dramatically increased the total.

More than 30 volunteers have been trained to solicit pledges and nearly 40 people have contributed testimonials about their love for St. James Cathedral. Several "Campaign Corner" events were held during Sunday coffee hours.

As is often the case with capital campaigns, the scope of our campaign is changing as circumstances change. Phase One of the campaign, which we are in now, was to restore the exterior, the narthex, the bell tower, St. Andrew's Chapel, and commission a new organ. But the acquisition of the Walker Organ from England has prompted us to reconsider our original plan and to incorporate the second phase of the campaign now, to renovate the nave and chancel of the cathedral. We recently formed a liturgical space planning committee to explore how best to move the choirs into the chancel (the altar area), to improve our acoustics, lighting, and sound system, and make the space more beautiful than it already is.

